

## Teacher Trainees' Perspectives on Storytelling in Primary EFL Classrooms: The Case of Online Training to Tell Stories Effectively

**Şule Çelik Korkmaz**

scelik@uludag.edu.tr

Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa, Turkey

### Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has obliged EFL teacher trainers to find new pathways to prepare teacher trainees (TTs) for future classrooms. For the TTs enrolled in the Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYLs) course, telling stories effectively is of utmost important. Thus, this study aimed to investigate the TTs' perspectives on creating and telling storybooks in EFL primary classrooms besides the necessity for being trained to tell stories effectively via their out-of-class video-recorded microteaching sessions. The data were collected via the questionnaire and the focus group interviews. The findings revealed: (1) the TTs approved the necessity of creating and telling stories in primary EFL classrooms, which indicates their developed cognition regarding the pedagogical advantages of telling stories to children; (2) effective and interactive storytelling skills were associated with the story teller's narration skills, tone of voice, mimicry, gesture, and interaction skills; (3) the TTs were more in favor of the necessity for being trained to tell a story effectively through face-to-face education than through online education despite reporting several pros and cons of both ways; (4) female TTs were more in favour of creating story books and the necessity for being trained to tell a story effectively via face-to-face training.

### Keywords:

*online teaching, out-of-class video recorded microteaching, storytelling, training teacher trainees, young EFL learners*

### How to cite:

Korkmaz, S.C. (2021). Teacher Trainees' Perspectives on Storytelling in Primary EFL Classrooms: The Case of Online Training to Tell Stories Effectively. *Journal of English teaching*, 7(2), 202-215. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33541/jet.v7i2.2883>

## INTRODUCTION

The importance of integrating multimodal materials into language teaching has increased because learners get benefit from multiple semiotic systems such as oral, visual, audio, gestural, tactile and spatial semiotic modes besides written-linguistic modes (Eisenmann & Summer, 2020). Accordingly, picture story books as multimodal materials are valuable language teaching materials as they foster YLs' all basic language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing and the repetitive and predictable chunks involved in them (Read, 2007; Çubukçu, 2012; Porrás González, 2010; Novasyari, 2019). Furthermore, YLs can make sense of what is being told in a story from representational language of stories (Hsu, 2015) and multimodal input such as contextual, physical and visual clues reflected by the story teller's well-coordinated gestures, facial expressions and voice modulation (Lwin, 2016). However, storytelling which is considered as the most ancient form of teaching is not frequently used even by proficient and native teachers in EFL contexts (Masoni, 2019). Teachers and TTs who lack the required skills in integrating literature in classrooms and who do not feel sense of security to tell a story effectively need to be trained to become storytellers via preparation, practice, and rehearsal and by being well aware of storytelling techniques (Vojtková, 2006; Mair, 2018).

Although some effective storytelling strategies such as brainstorming through showing the picture of the book cover to the students as a pre-activity, asking guided questions by taking the setting and characters into account as a while-activity, and performing the story as a post-activity were explained in the literature (for details see Gillanders and Castro, 2011; Satriani, 2019; Eisenmann & Summer, 2020), teachers are anxious about using stories in EFL classrooms due to their lack of confidence in using English to tell a story (Gillanders & Castro, 2011; Kovač, 2016; Mair, 2018).

Despite loving the idea of using stories, non-native primary teachers might use stories randomly and intuitively rather than in a systematic (Read, 2006). In respect to this, teachers' storytelling competencies might be developed at a pre-service level via increasing their awareness regarding the features of interaction and strategies to be used during storytelling and boosting their confidence and pleasure in telling stories (Mair, 2018). Therefore, empowering TTs specializing in YLs to tell a story should be stressed in a consistent and systematic way in teacher education courses to enable TTs to link culture and language, to develop visual analytical skills, to provide pedagogical models, and to help them select and practice picturebooks in the realms of their future EFL classes (Daly and Blakeney-Williams, 2015; Meyerson, 2006; Vojtková, 2006).

After evaluating the English Language Teacher Education Program (ELTEP) of Turkey, Yastibaş (2021) revealed that the program can prepare TTs to teach at unprecedented times such as COVID -19 through three psychological courses, five technology courses, and 21 pedagogical courses. As a matter of fact, "uncertainty" was used to mark the COVID-19 time by Agnoletto and Queiroz (2020) who reported several challenges in education including students' profiles, validation of the effectiveness and relevance of the methodology used, and diversity of didactic-pedagogical materials and resources. On the other hand, Nasr (2020) reported an opportunity for tremendous

learning and growth for educators by explaining how she adapted to online methods of instructions and assessment by relying on technological proficiency, creative methods of assessment, and underutilized pedagogies of care.

Furthermore, in their experimental study, Pozo-Rico, Gilar-Corbí, Izquierdo, & Castejón (2020) indicated that the primary school teachers in the experimental group who received the 14-week teacher training program outperformed in their abilities to cope with stress and avoid burnout, their information and communication technology competency, and their emotional intelligence competency. Similarly, Pardede (2021) examined the use of short stories in EFL classrooms and suggested that future research should be conducted to focus on obstacles encountered by teachers in using short stories and information communication technology use in EFL learning using short stories. It is quite apparent that training teacher competencies is a key point to deal with uncertainty due to the pandemic situation with regard to storytelling.

Accordingly, microteaching which has been widely used as one of the best teacher training techniques since 1960s was reported beneficial for TTs to reveal their strengths and weaknesses and to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Cho, 2017; Onwuagboke, Osuala, & Nzeako, 2017). For instance, in the study by Deneme (2020), the TTs reported advantages of out-of-class video-recorded microteaching sessions to practice their teaching skills in general without time limitation. Furthermore, Gillanders and Castro (2011) suggested that teachers can get benefit from their fellow teachers to reflect on weaknesses and strengths of teaching and discuss about the ways for professional development. Once teachers equip themselves with the required storytelling skills and strategies to be used in EFL classrooms, the quality of EFL teaching and learning can be increased (Hsu, 2015). Hence, it is very vital for TTs to be engaged in microteaching sessions in which they can practice several storytelling skills and think critically about their performances.

Despite stressing the values of picturebooks in teacher education settings, previously conducted studies in different teacher education contexts considered commercial picturebooks (Johnston & Bainbridge, 2013; Daly & Blakeney-Williams, 2015). To the knowledge of the researcher, no study to date has investigated the perspectives and experiences of TTs in telling child-appropriate picture story books which were created and told by themselves during their out-of-class video-recorded microteaching sessions. Hence, the study firstly aimed to fill this gap by believing that providing opportunities to TTs for scrutinizing their perspectives and experiences regarding storytelling can increase not only their cognition in creating and telling EFL picturebooks but also their teaching competencies in general. Considering the changes in the image of storytelling in the history from the prevalence of female leading narrators to male ones until the beginning of the 20th century, Kiliánová (1999) questioned whether storytelling mainly a male or female-dominated activity and reported the prevalence of male leading narrators due to the limited social rules which enabled women to perform storytelling in women's circles. The researcher, therefore, secondly aimed to investigate whether there were differences in the perspectives of the TTs in terms of gender. Accordingly, the researcher asked the following research questions:

1. What are the perspectives of the TTs on creating and telling stories in EFL primary classrooms in addition to the necessity for being trained to tell stories effectively?
2. Are there any statistical differences in the perspectives of the TTs on creating and telling stories in addition to the necessity for being trained to tell a story effectively based on their gender?

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

A mixed method research design was utilized to answer the aforementioned research questions by following both the quantitative method via the questionnaire and the qualitative method through conducting an online focus group interview.

### **Participants and Settings**

The participants were 55 3rd year (46.6 %) and 63 4th year (53.4%) ELT teacher trainees (total 121) enrolled at Bursa Uludag University in Turkey. 38 of whom (31.4%) were male and 83 of whom (68.6%) were female. The study was conducted with the TTs who took the “Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYLs) II” course with two hours of theory and two hours of practice which was placed in the sixth term of the ELT program in Turkey. The course requires TTs to perform various tasks including creating and telling child appropriate picture story books collaboratively as a group of 4-7 members.

The TTs performed the three TEYLs tasks in traditional microteaching sessions after being trained via face-to-face education throughout five weeks. However, they were obligated to perform the remaining seven tasks including the task of creating and telling child-appropriate picture story books via out-of-class video-recorded microteaching sessions as a result of the COVID-19. To scaffold the online process, all the supplementary documents including related articles, PowerPoint presentations of the instructor, video-recordings showing the previously micro teaching sessions performed by the previous TTs, and a detailed guideline with preliminary study questions, critical and reflective questions were shared with the TTs. The TTs’ were evaluated by rubric-based assessment to enable them to reflect on their and their peers’ performances.

Similar to the suggestions of Kovač (2016), the researcher planned three step sessions to train the TTs to tell a story effectively: firstly, theoretical considerations to gain insight into the reasons for using stories to TEYLs and how to create child appropriate picture story books including basic literary elements were discussed; secondly, TTs were asked to examine both commercial picture books and the books created by the previous TTs to discuss their weaknesses and strengths by taking into account the characteristic of YLs; and finally, how to tell stories effectively and interactively via using pre-, while, and post story telling techniques were explained and demonstrated by the researcher. In addition, in the synchronous online course sessions via Zoom, the researcher explained and demonstrated how to tell a story effectively. Furthermore, following the suggestions in the studies in the field of health (Keswani, Sethi, Repici, Messmann, & Chiu, 2020), the researcher shared the links of webinars by a few experts on story-telling to YLs.

Furthermore, five groups of TTs who were willing to share their ideas via online zoom meeting were assigned as the focus group. Among 29 group members, 17 volunteer TTs attended to the focus group interview (3-6 members in each group).

## **Instruments**

### ***Questionnaire***

The researcher formed draft five-point Likert-type questions ranging from one (strongly agree) to five (strongly disagree) on Google Docs by taking the related literature into account. For content validation of the instrument, the questionnaire was given to five experts who were asked to rate each item by taking three-level ratings (three-essential, two-useful but not essential and one-not necessary) to find out how well the questionnaire represents the domain being examined (Lawshe, 1975). Thus, 8 items which were failed to meet the rated “essential” by the experts were eliminated from the instrument so that content validity index for the remaining 7 item questionnaire was found to be 0.89, which is considered to be the evidence of good content validity (Davis, 1992). The Alpha value for reliability was found to be .81 for the final questionnaire which was conducted in the spring semester of the academic year 2019-20. The participation of the study was voluntary and the data were collected throughout two weeks.

### ***Focus Group Interview***

An online focus group interview was used as a qualitative data collection technique to shed light on the results of the questionnaire and to gain in-depth perspectives of the TTs besides the applicability of the data collection technique due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Gibbs, 2012). In line with this purpose, the following interview questions were framed in accordance with the questionnaire items and were checked by an expert with PhD in TEYLs. The interview questions which were revised by the researcher considering the suggestions of the expert were as follows:

1. What are your views about using creating and telling stories in YLs’ classrooms?
2. What kinds of skills are necessary to create and tell a picture-story book?
3. Do you think that every teacher trainee should have the knowledge and skills to tell stories to YLs?
4. What were some pros & cons of telling stories through out-of-class video-recorded microteaching sessions?

The researcher hosted five group meetings with three-six interviewees via Zoom which 315 minutes in total. The interviews which were in the TTs’ native language were translated in English and transcribed as the texts. The translated scripts were sent back to the interviewees who were asked to accept or reject their expressions in the transcripts to ensure the trustworthiness of the transcripts and to enhance the validity of the transcript. Although the TTs contributed the study voluntarily, both data were collected after getting approval from the ethical committee of Bursa Uludağ University.

## **Data Analysis**

The quantitative data were analysed through descriptive statistics through a computer statistical program (SPSS-Statistical Package for Social Sciences) to investigate the participants’ views whereas the Mann-Whitney U statistical test was used to reveal whether statistical differences appeared in their perspectives based on gender. The qualitative data were processed through Weft QDA, a qualitative data storage programme

through which codes were defined and refined over time. At first categorisation, the researcher considered the key words of the interview questions such as story books, storytelling, skills, children/young learners, teacher training, face-to-face learning/teaching, and online learning/teaching. Secondly, the researcher reviewed coding and reindexed the documents by adding themes under the codes of story books such as creating and telling; under the skills as interaction, narration, story teller's characters, gesture, mimicry, tone of voice; under the storytelling as motivating, effective, fun, interesting, different, and inspiring; and finally under the children as imagination, creativity, curiosity, and sociability.

Furthermore, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), the codes were identified separately by another researcher who was explained the aims of the study. The convenience of the codes was discussed by this researcher with MA in ELT to identify compliance percentage to ensure the reliability of the study. The compliance percentage is calculated as follows:  $\text{reliability} = \frac{\text{number of agreements}}{\text{total number of agreements} + \text{disagreements}} \times 100$  (p.64). Based on this formula, the compliance percentage between the two encoders was found to be 85% for the codes and 78% for the themes of the codes, which means that that the coding process was reliable.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

*RQ1: What are the perspectives of the TTs on creating and telling stories in EFL primary classrooms in addition to the necessity for being trained to tell stories effectively?*

Table 1.

*Descriptive statistics for the TTs' perspectives regarding storytelling*

Items	M	SD
1. Stories are one of the most effective techniques to be used in YLs' classrooms.	4.39	.67
2. Primary EFL teachers should be able create story books to be used in their classrooms.	4.29	.77
3. Primary EFL teachers should be able to tell stories effectively.	4.43	.85
4. Being supported by the trainer's modelling through online story telling session helped us understand how to tell a story more effectively.	4.49	.78
5. Primary EFL teacher trainees should be trained to tell stories effectively through classroom-based education.	4.39	.76
6. Including the experts' videos showing how to tell a story effectively as an online-course package helped us understand how to tell a story more effectively.	4.15	.79
7. Primary EFL teacher trainees should be trained to tell stories effectively through online-education.	3.85	1.01

As seen in Table 1, most of the TTs agreed that stories are one of the most effective techniques to be used in YLs' classrooms (item 1). Qualitative data indicated that most of the interviewees attributed the effectiveness of stories to children's natural characteristics such as their imagination (N= 6), creativity (N=3), curiosity (N=3), and sociability (N=2) as seen in the extract below.

*"Every student teacher should learn how to tell a story. Children are very imaginative and they want to become the heroes of their own stories. They are also*

*curious. We can introduce different worlds. We can improve their emotional aspect through happy and sad plots so that we can reveal their feelings” (Interviewee 5)*

Furthermore, the term storytelling was marked frequently (N=29) in the qualitative documents. The interviewees described storytelling by using the following terms as effective (N=16), motivating (N=6), fun (N=6), different (N=6), interesting (N=5), and inspiring (N=3) as reported in the following extracts.

*“When I was a child, my uncle told me different stories, which made me happy. I think stories might be inspiring for children as it was very inspiring for me to learn that my uncle created all those stories for us. His telling stories increased my motivation and also I had fun as a child. Thus, if teachers use stories in the classroom, children will like English and want to practice language again and again. They are likely to have positive attitudes towards English lesson.” (Interviewee 7)*

In table 1 above, it can be seen that most of the TTs agreed that primary EFL teachers should be able to tell stories effectively in their classes (item 3). Similarly, the qualitative analysis revealed the code “skills” which was frequently used by the interviewees (N= 20) with the following themes such as a story teller’s character (N=12), narration (N=9), tone of voice (N=8), mimicry (N=8), gesture (N=6), and interaction (N=5) as some of them mentioned in the following extract:

*“Teachers should be qualified to be able to tell stories effectively. They should learn how to support storytelling process based on students’ immediate reactions by using gesture, mimicry and sometimes doing exaggerated actions” (Interviewee 9).*

As for creating story books, the TTs agreed that teachers should be able to create story books to be used in their classes (item 2). Similarly, the interviewees stated positive views about using story books in EFL classrooms (N=6) by providing suggestions for creating better books as seen in the extract below.

*“For want of a better word, today’s children are not interested in simple books. We need to reorganize our storybooks, not as a book style but as a computer-game style. We need to combine books and technology. Teachers can involve more students by integrating more interactive tools. Creating and using paper-based books require teachers to use more skills such as tone of voice etc.” (Interviewee 4)*

It is evident in table 1 that majority of the TTs agreed that teacher trainers should model the process of telling stories (item 4) as seen in the following interview extract:

*“It is very important for a TT to gain the required skills and knowledge. I used to think that I was able to use gesture and mimicry. I thought that using hand movement is using body language. However, when you told your story as a sample and gave feedback to us about our performances, I noticed what it really meant to*

*use gesture and mimicry besides the importance of tone of voice when telling stories” (Interviewee 9).*

Furthermore, they agreed that primary EFL teachers should improve their story telling techniques by attending or watching story-telling webinars (item 6). As for being trained, the TTs agreed that they should be trained to tell a story effectively through face-to-face education (item 5) more than through online education (item 7). In the qualitative analysis, the coding teacher training (N=8) was divided into two themes such as face-to-face learning/teaching (N=8) and online learning/teaching (N=21). Some of the interviews reported the benefits of telling stories in their out-of-class video-recorded microteachings such as discovering their own imaginary world, opportunities for rehearsing several times via mirroring technique (mirroring their gestures, mimicry, and hand gestures), compensating their weaknesses regarding telling stories via getting support from the technology, and being in their comfort zones.

On the other hand, some of them underlined the advantages of face to face story telling sessions such as living the moment due to experiencing in natural process, developing storytelling skills more as a result of not being in their comfort-zones, namely school environment when compared to home environment, making an eye-contact with students easily, activating not only students’ visual and auditory senses but also tactual and kinaesthetic senses, and getting immediate feedback in a way that they can adjust their storytelling techniques. A few samples indicating some of the aforementioned pros and cons of online versus face-to-face teacher training are reported as follows:

*“Although online-teaching might not have an effect on teaching, it is certain that it does on our learning. I really miss my school. In fact, I am torn between two options. Technology is really rewarding. However, we need to live the moment in real classrooms, and experience different feelings” (Interviewee 2).*

Interviewee 5: “It was very tiring to be able show our storytelling skills on zoom platforms. In a real classroom I think I can tell a story more effectively. I am good at using mimicry and gesture but it is too difficult to make eye-contact through online lessons. I had anxiety about making pronunciation mistakes. I always criticize myself. I think face-to face teaching would be easier as you say that everything comes and goes”.

*“I do not believe that online story-telling would be effective. In addition, every human being has individual comfort zone. As I know, people need to get out of their comfort zones to be able to learn new things and develop new skills. Thus, we learn better in real classrooms in which we are not in our comfort zones ” (Interviewee 9)*

RQ2: *Are there any statistical differences in the perspectives of the TTs on creating and telling stories in addition to the necessity for being trained to tell a story effectively based on their gender?*

The Mann-Whitney U test results displayed in Table 2 revealed that female participants (MR= 65.93) agreed more than male ones (MR= 50.24) that teachers should

create story books. As for being trained to tell a story effectively, female TTs (MR= 65.84) preferred face-to-face training more than male TTs (MR= 50.42).

Table 2

***The Mann-whitney U test results in the TTs' perspectives on storytelling based on gender***

<b>The Items</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Ranks</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>p</b>
2. Primary EFL teachers should be able to create story books.	Male	38	50.24	1168.000	-2.506	.012
	Female	83	65.93			
5. Primary EFL teacher trainees should be trained to read-aloud stories effectively through classroom-based education.	Male	38	50.42	1175.000	-2.529	.011
	Female	83	65.84			

With regard to gender, one of the interviewees with teaching experience shared her views about storytelling by taking into account gender as seen in the extract below:

*“The male teacher in my practicum school was very calm and tended to avoid action-based activities whereas the female one was open to new ideas and very motivated to try new types of activities. He thought that female teachers are more energetic and male ones are calmer. We need to get rid of gender-based prejudices and try to utilize the requirements of becoming an effective teacher”*  
(Interviewee 6)

**DISCUSSION**

Agreeing with Farrell (2006) who stated that the belief systems of TTs serve as a lens through which they can examine the content of the teacher education program, the researcher firstly aimed to find out to what extent the TTs were in favour of creating and telling stories in YLs' classrooms. In line with the related literature (Çubukçu, 2012; Moon, 2000; Read, 2007), both the quantitative and qualitative findings revealed that the TTs valued the necessity of telling stories effectively because they considered storytelling as one of the most effective techniques to be used in YLs' classrooms. In accordance with the teachers in the study by Vojtková (2006), the TT in the study reported the benefits of storytelling as effective, motivating, fun, different, interesting, and inspiring for children who are defined as imaginative, creative, curious, and sociable.

In accordance with Daly and Blakeney-Williams (2015) who reported that TTs, as readers of picture story books now, could be one of those authors one day due to becoming passionate about the literature and lovers for books, some of the participants in the study expressed their sincere desire and willingness to create and tell picture story books in their future classes. Similar to the students of project groups in the study by Lecon (2020), the TTs collaborated successfully depending on the competency of every group member and tended to use both current and traditional tools in blended and meaningful ways to be able to tell their stories more effectively.

As for the required skills to tell stories effectively, they were all of one mind about the importance of making eye-contact, using gestures and mimicry, and disguising the

voice effectively, as also emphasized by Gillanders and Castro (2011). As also suggested by Andrews, Hull and Donahue (2009), the study aimed to show how to harness the power of well-designed stories to enhance YL's language development by asking TTs to find ways to increase YLs' curiosity and enable them to practice language by activating their senses. Additionally, they attributed the success of telling stories effectively to story teller's character, narration skill, tone of voice, mimicry, gesture, and interaction skills.

With regard to the necessity for being trained to tell a story to YLs, the TTs were in favour of face-to-face education more than online education, which is in accordance with the findings of the study by Lecon (2020). Furthermore, during focus group interviews, the term online learning/ teaching was mentioned more frequently than face-to-face teaching / learning, which shows that they need to discuss online education with its' advantages and disadvantages more than face-to-face education. When the setting becomes online platforms instead of the realms of classroom environments, telling stories effectively becomes a new and more complex skill to be used by the narrators. However, it was seen that telling stories online provided them different opportunities such as attending to story-telling webinars, developing their story-telling skills via applying the mirror technique, concentrating more on what is being told, discovering their personal imaginary world, and compensating their weaknesses regarding storytelling skills with technological support such as sound, which are mostly related to managing their own learning. The aforementioned advantages the TTs reported were similar to what were suggested by Baru, Tenggara and Mataram (2020) that the use of web 2.0 technologies, particularly schoology, enabled learners to promote their autonomy such as controlling over materials, improving their cognitive processes, achievements, and learning management.

Regardless of how autonomous learners were, Fotiadou, Angelaki and Mavroidis (2017) highlighted students' needs for effective interaction both with their peers and their tutors who were supposed to constantly facilitate, encourage and foster effective interaction among students via setting written group assignment particularly in distance learning environments. Supporting the aforementioned findings, this study revealed that the TTs benefited from the teacher trainer's tutoring and modelling to tell stories effectively besides their out-of-class video-recorded microteaching sessions assigned as a collaborative group work story telling task. In line with Daly and Blakeney-Williams (2015) and Lecon (2020), the TTs also suggested the use of picturestory books in teacher education courses as a modeling pedagogy by watching their teacher educator's telling stories to better understand how to tell stories more effectively. Therefore, the positive views of the TTs regarding creating and telling stories may be attributed to the fact that they were supervised immediate before their performances by the teacher trainer who tried to ensure accessibility among the instructor and TTs via using different online communication tools such as email, text messages, and google classrooms to scaffold not only TT's storytelling skills but also general teaching skills.

Finally, one of the most striking findings of the study was the effect of gender on the TTs' perspectives. In line with Kiliánová (1999) who emphasized that storytelling was accepted as the natural activity for women until the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to their home

craft works such as spinning and knitting, the female TTs agreed more that they should be able to create picture-story books to be used in their classes. In addition, the effect of teacher's gender on the use of story-telling strategies was also evident in the case of one of the interviewees during her teaching practicum process. In line with Durán (2006), Kiliánová (1999) and Tischler (1996) who underlined that people's perceptions related to gender were shaped by the ways of being taught regarding stereotypes and prejudices in taking different social roles and exhibiting behaviors, the gender-based differences in this study might be associated with the common accepted roles for telling stories in the society. Whether it is a male or a female-dominated role to tell stories can be investigated in Turkish society to clarify the issue.

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this study, the necessity for creating and telling stories in primary EFL classrooms was approved by the TTs. However, vivid storytelling process depends on how creative and skilful teachers are; therefore, it is critical to address the issue in ELT teacher education programs. Transmitting theoretical knowledge about telling stories can be effective to a certain extent to develop teacher cognition on the benefits of storytelling for young EFL learners. However, no matter whether through online or face-to-face training, the study proved that the TTs were in need of being trained to tell stories. The teacher trainer's modelling of telling stories and setting storytelling tasks to be performed by TTs either via traditional or out-of class video-recorded micro-teaching sessions seem worthwhile applying in the TEYLs course. By this way, they increase their awareness of creating and telling stories besides discovering their strengths and weaknesses as narrators. Teachers might get a raw deal if everything is over-expected from them. Thus, they should be supported by well-designed picture-story books with the required tactual materials such as stickers and puppets as course book packages in addition to story-related activities together with suggestions for using them effectively.

To sum up, there appears a need to have a more effective network among university, practice schools, and technology-driven platforms such as the story-telling webinars as seen in the case of this study so as to help TTs to internalize the given theoretical knowledge at university which might shape their personal practical knowledge and teaching methodology in their future classrooms.

### REFERENCES

- Agnoletto, R., & Queiroz, V. (2020). COVID-19 and the challenges in Education. *Centro de Estudos Sociedade e Tecnologia, Universidade de Sao Paulo, Bulletin*, 5(2), 1-2. Retrieved from <http://www.cest.poli.usp.br/download/covid-19-and-the-challengesin-education/>
- Andrews, D. H., Hull, T. D., & Donahue, J. A. (2009). Storytelling as an instructional method: Descriptions and research questions. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning*, 3 (2), 6-23.

- Baru, M., Tenggara, W. N., & Mataram, M. U. (2020). Promoting Students' Autonomy through Online Learning Media in EFL Class. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 9(4), 320-331.
- Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education: Research and practice*. London: Continuum
- Cho, M. (2017). Pre-service L2 Teacher Trainees' Reflections: What Do They Focus on. *English Teaching*, 72(1), 105-129.
- Çubukçu, F. (2012). Literature. In Gürsoy, E. & Arıkan, A. (Eds.), *Teaching English to young learners: An activity based guide for prospective teachers* (pp. 343-353). Ankara: Eğiten Yayıncılık.
- Daly, N., & Blakeney-Williams, M. M. (2015). Picturebooks in Teacher Education: Eight Teacher Educators Share their Practice. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(3).
- Davis L.L. (1992). Instrument review: getting the most from a panel of experts. *Applied Nursing Research*. 5 (4), 194-197. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0897-1897\(05\)80008-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0897-1897(05)80008-4)
- Deneme, S. (2020). Teacher Trainees' Opinions Regarding Video-Recorded Microteaching Sessions. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-TOJET*, 19(2), 24-33.
- Durán, N. C. (2006). Exploring gender differences in the EFL classroom. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, (8), 123-136.
- Eisenmann, M., & Summer, T. (2020). Multimodal Literature in ELT: Theory and Practice. *CLELE Journal*, 8(1), 52-73,
- Ellis, G., & Brewster, J. (2014). *Tell it again: the storytelling handbook for primary English language teachers*. London: British Council
- Farrell, T. S. (2006). The Teacher is an Octopus' Uncovering Preservice English Language Teachers' Prior Beliefs through Metaphor Analysis. *Relc Journal*, 37(2), 236-248.
- Fotiadou, A., Angelaki, C., & Mavroidis, I. (2017). Learner autonomy as a factor of the learning process in distance education. *European Journal of Open, Distance and E-learning*, 20(1), 95-110.
- Gibbs, A. (2012). Focus Groups and Group interviews. In James Arthur, Michael Waring, Robert Coe, & Larry V Hedges (Eds.), *Research methods & methodologies in education* (pp. 186-192). London: SAGE Publications.
- Gillanders, C., & Castro, D. C. (2011). Storybook Reading for Young Dual Language Learners. *YC Young Children*, 66(1), 91.
- Hsu, T. C. J. (2015). Telling tales: Using storytelling to teach EFL kindergarten students in Taiwan. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, 4(4), 13-26.
- Johnston, I. & Bainbridge, J. (2013). *Reading diversity through Canadian picture books: Pre-service teachers explore issues of identity, ideology and pedagogy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Kiliánová, G. (1999). Women's and men's storytelling: what is the difference? Some observations in contemporary slovak storytelling communities. *ELO: Estudos de Literatura Oral*, 5, 99-108.
- Kovač, S. N. (2016). Picturebooks in Educating Teachers of English to Young Learners. *CLELEjournal-Children's Literature in English Language Education*, 4(2), 6.

- Keswani, R. N., Sethi, A., Repici, A., Messmann, H., & Chiu, P. W. (2020). How to Maximize Trainee Education during the Coronavirus Disease-2019 Pandemic: Perspectives from around the World. *Gastroenterology*, 159(1), 26-29.
- Lawshe, C. H. (1975). A Quantitative Approach to Content Validity. *Personnel Psychology*, 28, 563–575.
- Lecon, C. (2020). Corona e-learning cocktail: sustainability of university education in times of pandemics. In 2020 15th International Conference on Computer Science & Education (ICCSE) (pp. 57-65). IEEE.
- Lwin, S. M. (2016). It's Story Time!: Exploring The Potential of Multimodality in Oral Storytelling to Support Children's Vocabulary Learning. *Literacy*, 50(2), 72–82.
- Masoni, L. (2019). *Tale, performance, and culture in EFL storytelling with young learners: Stories meant to be told*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Mair, O. (2018). Teachers' Attitudes to Using Picturebooks in the L2 Classroom. In Mair, O. & Murphy, A. (Eds.) *English for young learners from pre-school to lower secondary: A CLIL teacher training project in Italian schools (99-114)*, 27, 99.
- Meyerson, P. M. (2006). Using Children's Picturebooks as Tools to Facilitate Undergraduates' Learning. *College Teaching*, 54(3), 259-262.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *An expanded sourcebook qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oak, London, New Delphi, CA:Sage.
- Moon, J. (2000). *Children learning english*. Hong Kong: Macmillan Publishers Limited.
- Moon, J. & De Backer, C. (2013). The Design and Pilot Evaluation of an Interactive Learning Environment for Introductory Programming Influenced by Cognitive Load Theory and Constructivism. *Computers & Education*. 60(1), 368–384.
- Nasr, N. (2020). Teachers as Students. *The Electronic Journal for Research in Science & Mathematics Education*, 24(2), 168-171.
- Novasyari, R. (2019). Significant Roles of Children's Literature in EFL. *Global Expert: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 8(1).
- Onwuagboke, B. B. C., Osuala, R. C., & Nzeako, R. C. (2017). The Impact of Microteaching in Developing Teaching Skills among Pre-Service Teachers in Alvan Ikoku College of Education Owerri, *Nigeria. African Research Review*, 11(2), 237-250.
- Pardede, P. (2021). A Review of Current Conceptual Research on Short Stories Use in EFL Classrooms. *JET (Journal of English Teaching)*, 7(1), 31-42.
- Porrás González, N. I. (2010). Teaching English through Stories: A Meaningful and Fun Way for Children to Learn the Language. *Profile Issues in Teachers Professional Development*, 12(1), 95-106.
- Pozo-Rico, T., Gilar-Corbí, R., Izquierdo, A., & Castejón, J. L. (2020). Teacher Training Can Make a Difference: Tools to Overcome the Impact of COVID-19 on Primary Schools. An Experimental Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(22), 8633.
- Read, C. (2006). Supporting Teachers in Supporting Learners. In Enever, J. & Schmid-Schönbein, G. (Eds.). *Picture books and young learners of English (pp. 11-22)*. Langenscheidt.
- Read, C. (2007). *500 Activities for the primary classroom*. Australia: Macmillan Education.
- Satriani, I. (2019). Storytelling in Teaching Literacy: Benefits and Challenges. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 8(1), 113-120.

- Tischler, L. (1996). *Introduction to sociology*. Sixth edition. Harcourt Brace College publishers. USA.
- Vojtková, N. (2006). What do Teachers Find Challenging in Introducing Picture Storybooks? In Enever, J. (Ed.), Proceeding. *Picture books and young learners of English*. MAFF series, Mnichov, Německo: Langenscheidt ELT GmbH, Munchen, pp. 109-113. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/sule/Downloads/Picturebooks\_and\_young\_learners\_of\_Engli.pdf
- Yastibas, A. E. (2021). Preparing Preservice English Language Teachers to Teach at Unprecedented Times: The Case of Turkey. *JET (Journal of English Teaching)*, 7(1), 1-14.