

# Pedagogical Dimensions of Using Stories in Enhancing Young Learners' English Learning Motivation

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**Pedagogical Dimensions of Using Stories in Enhancing Young Learners'  
English Learning Motivation**

Graduation Thesis

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Zagreb, May, 2021

Sveučilište u Zagrebu  
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**Pedagoške dimenzije priča kao sredstvo povećanja motivacije za učenjem  
engleskog jezika učenika mlađe školske dobi**

Diplomski rad

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Izjavljujem pod punom moralnom odgovornošću da sam diplomski rad „Pedagoške dimenzije priča kao sredstvo povećanja motivacije za učenjem engleskog jezika učenika mlađe školske dobi“ izradila potpuno samostalno uz stručno vodstvo mentorica dr. sc. Renate Geld i dr. sc. Ivone Slunjski. Svi podaci navedeni u radu su istiniti i prikupljeni u skladu s etičkim standardom struke. Rad je pisan u duhu dobre akademske prakse koja izričito podržava nepovredivost autorskog prava te ispravno citiranje i referenciranje radova drugih autora.

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## **Abstract**

This graduation thesis focuses on the influence of stories on young learners' English learning motivation, motivation for storytelling activities and pedagogical dimensions. The paper starts with the presentation of theoretical framework, which touches upon research dealing with the topics of motivation for learning English, motivation for storytelling activities and pedagogical and educational aspects of stories. Attention is also given to some practical advices on how to implement stories in an English foreign language classroom. The research conducted among third grade participants of "Hrvatski Leskovac" primary school investigated whether the storytelling sessions (over a period of 10 weeks) improved the students' general motivation for learning English, motivation for storytelling activities and whether the stories transmitted pedagogical and educational values onto students. Methodology of this study is followed by results and discussion which further problematizes the factors influencing the already mentioned topics. Conclusion sums up the findings, showing that general motivation for learning English did not change after storytelling sessions during a 10-week period. Research also showed no enhancement in motivation for storytelling activities. Results are followed by an in-depth interview which examines the differences between three learners whose motivation for storytelling activities increased and three whose motivation decreased or stayed the same. Research also concludes that stories transmit pedagogical and educational values. A detailed description of possible reasons for such results is presented in the discussion section.

*Key words: motivation, EFL, pedagogical dimensions, storytelling, story reading*

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## **1. Introduction**

The 1980s have brought literature integration (especially short stories) in the ESL classroom. The reasons behind this decision were improving the learners' language skills, as well as communicative and cultural competence and now highly valued critical thinking skills (Butler, 2006) as cited in (Osman Abdel Haliem, 2018). Recent years have displayed an ongoing interest in employing short stories in SLA classrooms. When thinking about what interests me most about learning languages, I realized I wished to investigate stories and their role in children's motivation to learn English. The origin of this idea is rooted in my personal experience. In my childhood, English picture story books helped me develop affection towards the English language and affection towards reading in general. Storytelling has been much neglected in this modern, multimedia society for the reason of technology expansion. More than 80% of children prefer watching television rather than reading a book. I wished to provide new evidence, from my own position and point of view, that that storytelling helps and benefits learning languages and engagement in storytelling activities. People tend to report on learning foreign languages, especially English, by watching TV or surfing the Internet. They also often claim their children learn them quite effortlessly that way. However, it seems that there are much less accounts about foreign languages being mastered by reading or listening to stories. There are many reasons why children tend to learn English more by watching Tv than reading a book. Reading is more demanding and takes up more time, we listen before we read and listening requires less effort than reading. The children's parents may not speak / read the language their kids are learning or trying to learn and media is present and available 24/7. Parents tend to show children videos and cartoons than read to them when they are very busy.

Because of these habits, the aim of my research was to emphasize the importance of stories not just for acquiring a foreign language, but also for raising motivation for engaging in storytelling activities. More specifically, my basic aim was to investigate the role of storytelling in children's motivation to learn English as a FL as well as raising their motivation to engage in storytelling activities. Furthermore, I wished to investigate their potential to transmit a number of pedagogical and educational values. In the section that follows I will present an overview of the literature relevant for the topic.

In the sections that follow I will discuss the following: general motivation and how it relates to reading, the reasons for employing stories in the classroom, how stories influence general motivation for learning English and which are the factors that enhance reading



motivation. I will also touch upon the implementation of story reading and storytelling in the classroom. Lastly, I will present my research with the aim of finding out whether the implementation of stories played a role in raising the young learners' general motivation for learning English, their motivation for storytelling activities, and whether these stories have transmitted pedagogical and educational values onto children.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1. Motivation**

Before we tackle the issue of using stories in an English classroom, we first need to explain motivation and how it relates to our context of research. There is no universal definition of motivation. It is a very complex phenomenon. The researchers claim that it is not possible to give a simple definition of motivation. However, there are many characteristics which make up a motivated individual. Motivated individuals are goal-directed, they expend effort, they are attentive, persistent, full of desire, exhibit positive affect, have expectancies, they are aroused, demonstrate self-confidence and have motives (Gardner and Smythe, 1975).

There is great awareness of the importance of motivation for learning a foreign or a second language. Motivation is one of the key factors in foreign/second (L2) language learning. One of the pioneering researchers in SLA who focused on motivation are Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert. As proposed by Cheng and Dornyei, “It serves as an impetus to generate learning initially and later as a sustaining force to the tedious process of acquiring a target language. Gardner proposed a socio-educational model that focuses attention on 4 variables, which are “intelligence, language aptitude, motivation, and situational anxiety” (Gardner, Lalonde and Pierson, 1983:2). The model also hypothesises that the learners’ level of motivation is influenced by two classes of attitudes, integrativeness and attitudes toward the language learning situation. The former one refers to attitudes concerning foreign languages and outgroups, specific language community and orientations to language study. The latter one involves attitudes to the course, the teacher, etc. The concept of motivation is defined as involving three components: “attitudes toward learning the second language, desire to learn the language, and effort expended in learning the language“ (Gardner, Lalonde and Pierson, 1983:2). This means that, for one to be truly motivated, he needs to have a positive attitude towards the task, must want to achieve the goal and must work for this goal.

Dörnyei (1994) describes the occurrence of motivation theories throughout years. The early 1990s marked a shift in the research of motivation in foreign/second language learning. Researchers recognized the importance of Gardner's socioeducational model, but called for more education-centered and pragmatic approach to motivation. The main emphasis in Gardner's model is on general motivational components which lack grounding in the foreign language classroom. Additionally, the model does not contain cognitive aspects of motivation to learn.

Social relevance is another factor that plays a huge role in language learning. In this respect, Gardner and Lambert (1959) mention two types of motivation, integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation aims at learning about language groups and meeting different people, while instrumental motivation focuses on the utilitarian value of linguistic achievement (prestige, power, access of information, passing a course, business opportunities). However, it showed to be too simplistic and these dimensions can be called broad tendencies rather than universals. Some studies then extended the Gardnerian construct by adding extrinsic/intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is aimed at receiving an extrinsic reward (grades, money), while intrinsic motivation aims at gaining the internal rewards (curiosity, joy). The intrinsic motivation is believed to be the crucial motivator of the educational process. Another crucial factor for L2 learning motivation is goal setting. Goals should be specific, achievable, accompanied by feedback, etc. Cognitive theories introduced 3 major cognitive conceptual systems: self-efficacy theory (a person's judgement of his or her abilities to perform a task), attribution theory (how past successes and failures influence future goal-expectancy) and learned helplessness (a person feels success is impossible). An important dimension of self-concept is self-confidence and a stable personality trait is need for achievement. People with this trait initiate more activities and work more intensely.

Mihaljević Djigunović (1998) agrees with the extension of Gardner's socio-educational model and states that there are three variables which mediate between attitudes towards language and motivated behaviour. They are goal salience, importance and self-efficacy. Authors believe that specific goals and frequent mention of these goals leads to an enhanced level of motivated behaviour. Goals support performance by enhancing intensity, perseverance and attention. In this model, goal salience is connected to language attitudes. Positive attitudes towards language encourage learners to set specific goals in learning a language. Language attitudes also influence goal importance. The more important goal leads to a higher level of motivated behaviour. Self-efficacy is also under influence of attitudes towards a language. Self-efficacy leads to motivated behaviour.

Motives related to the learning situation gained more importance in the 1980s. These motivational components can be divided into three groups: course-specific motivational components (syllabus, materials, teaching method, learning tasks), teacher-specific motivational components (personality, teaching style, relationship with the students, feedback) and group-specific motivational components (the dynamics of the learning group). Most researchers believe that the learner's motivation and the teacher's motivation influence

teaching. However, English language teaching also influences the learner's motivation to learn. Teaching is a component that is most easily manipulated and accommodated to situational needs (Stern, 1983, as cited in Mihaljević Djigunović, 1998). When doing a research on motivation for English foreign language learning, it needs to include several variables: motivation for learning English as a foreign language, learning abilities, a will for learning the English language, the English language teacher, English language classes, an effort the learner makes for learning the English language at school, success at learning the English language, age and gender of the learner.

Mihaljević (1990) claims that, in the foreign language context, the greatest influence appears to have intelligence and aptitude because classroom instruction more often than not focuses on academic skills such as translation, grammar, memorization of vocabulary. Furthermore, the investigation of motivation in foreign language context has to include the teaching variable. As we have pointed out, the classroom tends to be the main or the only source of language exposure, so the teacher, the techniques and the materials influence the learners' attitudes and motivation.

In the process of teaching, the learner of English as a foreign language comes with a certain level of general abilities for learning, a certain type and intensity of initial motivation and attitudes towards learning the English language. We can assume that this input will directly influence the learner's experience of teaching. The effort the learner makes in learning the English language will be a consequence of his abilities, motivation, will and teaching experience. An invested effort should result in a certain level of success in learning English as a foreign language. The connection between these variables can go in a reversed direction.

To conclude, a general framework of L2 motivation can be conceptualized as consisting the following three levels: the *Language Level*, the *Learner Level* and the *Learning Situation Level*, coinciding with the basic components of L2 learning process- the L2 learner (need for achievement and self-confidence), the L2 (culture the L2 conveys, community in which it is spoken, its usefulness) and the L2 learning environment (course-specific motivational components, teacher-specific motivational components and group-specific motivational components) and showing different aspects of language- the personal dimension, the social dimension and the educational subject matter dimension (Dörnyei, 1994).

## **2.2. Motivation for reading**

Protacio (2012) points out that it is crucial to put importance on motivation so our students can become persistent, proficient and passionate readers. Some of the factors that motivate students to read is access to interesting books, self-efficacy beliefs about reading, autonomy support, social interactions around books and self-selection. However, we do not know whether these factors apply to the motivation of English learners (ELs) to read books in English. In order to give more attention to these areas, we should consider motivation and EL pedagogy. There isn't much research done on EL's motivation to read in the USA. First, when considering EL's reading motivation, we need to consider the motivation for learning the second language. Thus we should consider the roles of integrative and instrumental motivation in motivating English learners to read in English because these motivate learners to learn a new language. “Instrumental motivation centers on utilitarian value or affordances of a task“ (Gardner and Lambert, 1972 as cited in Protacio, 2012). For example, students who are instrumentally motivated may choose to read a textbook because this will help them achieve a good grade. “ Meanwhile, integrative motivation has to do with learning about a new culture and the people in that culture“ (Gardner and Lambert, 1972 as cited in Protacio, 2012). Learners who are integratively motivated desire to learn a new language or to read in it so as to identify with the native speakers or learn about their culture.

Another thing we should consider is ELs' interaction with and within the larger sociocultural context in relation to their reading motivation (Protacio, 2012). This means that the English language classroom and/or home environments may influence the learners' motivation to read in English. Environments which are motivated are those in which reading is encouraged. The influence of family and motivation on the students' motivation to read also belongs to the sociocultural environment. Protacio (2012) claims that Latino learners whose families pursue literacy activities in both Spanish and English value reading more than those learners whose families do not. Another factor to play role in motivating English learners to read in English is the learners' perceived competence. However, the results are conflicting. Some research suggests that learners who have higher levels of English proficiency have higher levels of reading motivation as opposed to learners with lower levels of English proficiency. However, Yamashita (2004) as cited in Protacio (2012) found no difference in reading attitudes of those learners who were proficient and those who were not proficient in English.. Lastly, reading materials are one of the crucial variables influencing students to read in the second

language. In motivating learners to read in English, it is important that we provide them with interesting texts.

There are three sets of constructs prominent in the motivation field. These are self-efficacy beliefs, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as well as goals for learning and social aspects of motivation (Wigfield and Gunthrie, 1997). The first construct self-efficacy beliefs postulates that learners who believe they are competent in reading are more likely to engage in reading. This is in line with what Bandura (1977) as cited in Wigfield and Gunthrie (1997) proposes and that is that individuals' efficacy expectations are a major determinant of persistence, activity choice and willingness to expend effort. However, perceived competence is not enough. A contrast which is related to interest value component is intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity for its own sake. Many theorists believe that when learners are intrinsically motivated, the readers' engagement will be facilitated. Another construct is achievement goals. It is important to look into children's attitudes towards reading. Wigfield and Gunthrie (1997) say that learners' feelings about reading influence their engagement in the reading activity. The second construct is children's interest in reading. This is related to intrinsic motivation we have discussed.

### **2.3. Why use stories in a foreign language classroom?**

Storytelling is natural to every man's life. "Stories shape our lives and our culture--we cannot live without them" (Barton and Booth, 1990:12, as cited in Sorensen and Lehman, 1995:71). The authors give reasons why stories carry such importance to children. Stories connect all aspects of life, serve as a source of comfort, give opportunity to children to experience language and communicate meaning. Storytelling also serves a social function. It is enjoyable and it connects people, families and generations. Stories are part of most children's experience from a very young age and the short story is a fundamental use of language known to humans. Stories connect cultures and thus bridge cultural disparities. Osman Abdel Haliem (2018) claims that when learners read literary works, they gain different insights of the world, observe different kinds of living and human values and in the end, discover that we live in very different societies. Mart (2012) further emphasizes the importance of storybooks. The author says that storybooks are part of the country's culture, stories connect language learning and cultural awareness, they challenge the imagination, expand the children's world, help them cope with reality. Storybooks provide grammatical structures of authentic language and language in

a meaningful context. Storybooks provide language and topics in a child-oriented way and they help children develop creativity.

We are all familiar with storytelling and story reading from our childhood independent of the culture or society we were born in. For this reason, it is not strange that we aim to explore more about what makes it so present and great. There are many different aspects of stories which could be studied. In this paper, the focus will be on how stories affect motivation in the English language learning as well as reading motivation. In the present research, we use the method of storytelling. Storytelling is:

*“... a process where a person (the teller), using vocalization, narrative structure, and mental imagery, communicates with the audience who also use mental imagery and, in turn, communicate back to the teller primarily through body language and facial expression in an on-going communication cycle. (Roney, 1996 as cited in Karunakar, 2017:65/66) “*

Sorensen and Lehman (1995) place stories at the core of the classroom and say that children are born with an ability to form their thoughts and feelings into story form, meaning that children are good at making up stories. There are a number of reasons why we should use story books in classroom and why children love them. Mart (2012) mentions that children love stories, they are eager to listen to them, enjoy hearing them in English, enjoy flipping through storybooks.

Multidimensional benefits of the use of literature in English language teaching are that it offers moral, spiritual and aesthetic values. Learners also view literature differently than other activities ordinary textbooks provide. Ghasemi (2002) points out that literature can be appealing to students because it expresses their natural feelings. The advocates of incorporating literature in the everyday classroom base their reasons on its high educational potential, suitable context, discussion-motivating qualities and class-cultural awareness. Karunakar (2017) concludes that storytelling is co-creative and interactive. It is a powerful form of art/communication known to humans and it possesses great potential as a teaching-learning tool.

#### **2.4. Pedagogical Dimensions of Stories**

Today, we are witnesses of the negligence of the spiritual, cultural and human values and the increase of the social, economic, moral and political crisis. This is supported by the appearance of the religious, political and class antagonisms, conflicts between nations, disturbed human relations, international terrorism, antisocial groups, as well as inappropriate

behaviour of youth and adults (Vukasović, 1991). For these reasons, humanity must aim at finding true human values and value criteria that respect the human dignity of all human beings and that guarantee everyone the same rights and opportunities. The human being is an intellectual being (*homo sapiens*), which enables him to familiarize with the world around him, and develop science, manufacture, economy and society. However, the human being is also a being of values (*homo moralis*). Value standards determine a person, encourage and indicate on how to act. Value standards enable the human being to have a sense of good and evil, sense of human responsibility and duty and sense of humanity and solidarity (Vukasović, 1991). Thus, the cognitive level corresponds to the educational process, while the value level corresponds to care. The task of the school then is to mediate, not only knowledge, but also values.

It is unquestionable that education for values should be systematized. Children and young people grow up and mature within an imaginary triangle: school - family - media. In this pedagogical-social triangle they are exposed to different value systems whose influences are difficult to predict and control (Jukić, 2013). The safest course of action according to education for values is action through school (institutionalized educational system). Jukić (2013) defines values as an organized set of opinions, beliefs and attitudes about which is right, good and desirable. Teaching for values could be summarized in two prevailing approaches today, known as the direct and indirect approach, that is the “prescriptive” and “descriptive” approach. The direct or prescriptive approach refers to the direct teaching of basic moral imperatives or values that are considered common to all people. On the other side, in the indirect or descriptive approach, emphasis is placed on critical and creative thinking, problem solving and reasoning, which enables learners to see for themselves what is moral and right.

"Education for values is education for life", they encompass the human rational, emotional and active dimension, and "values are anything that enhances individual life or human survival without harming others people and societies as a whole (Zecha, 2007 as cited in Jukić, 2013:413). There arises a question of which values are important for the educational system and which should be included in the curriculum. We can reach for universal values in an attempt to answer this question. However, there is no single opinion on whether there exists a set of values that transcend the boundaries of a community, society or religion or culture.

Values also stand in the Croatian Curriculum, where among the goals of upbringing and education in primary school intellectual, social, moral, spiritual development of students (in accordance with their abilities and preferences) is encouraged (Rakić and Vukušić, 2010). The authors suggest that for the development of moral personality, it is necessary to determine the



virtues which are common to all cultures and societies. As an example, the author gives justice and honesty.

In search of a set of universal human values, or “a global code of ethics“, which applies to all people Rushworth M. Kidder, the president of the Institute for Global Ethics interviewed dozens of men and women who are perceived as people with developed conscience and who come from different cultural backgrounds. They listed eight common values that can lead to “a troubled world through a troubled future” (Kidder, 1994:8 as cited in Rakić and Vukušić, 2010:782). These values are: love, truthfulness, honesty, freedom, unity, tolerance, responsibility and respect for life. A similar structure of core values was established in research on the value systems of young people in Croatia, where love and friendship were given the most important place among values. It should be noted that there is no strictly defined or accepted hierarchy of values. Values are interrelated, and each individual chooses certain values during life according to the context in which he finds himself, his own goals or thoughts about himself and the world.

Mart (2012) believes that motivating young learners to learn English through stories at an early age gives them the opportunity to widen their horizons and enhance their early enthusiasm and awareness of the rich use of English. The author further explains that reading to children does not only influence their academic achievement, but extends to their behavioural and emotional learning. Reading is believed to be crucial even in the earliest years. The author goes on to explain that stories are carriers of life’s messages and they play a very important part in the young child’s education, especially in the development of language. The author suggests that the teacher produces the environment where children are interested in and enjoy stories as well as offers meaning potential.

Storytelling has become an accepted approach widely used in the English language learning classrooms. Mart (2012) sees storytelling as a holistic approach based on the learners’ needs to be familiar with rich and authentic examples of language. It is believed that literature-based instruction has positive influence on young learners’ language development. Literature

*“entertains and ... informs” and “it enables young people to explore and understand their world” and “enriches their lives and widens their horizons” and through literature children “learn about people and places on the other side of the world as well as ones down the street. They can travel back and forth in time to visit familiar places and people, to meet new friends, and to see new worlds. They can explore their own feelings, shape their own values,*

*and imagine lives beyond the one they live”* (Galda and Cullinan, 2002:7, as cited in Mart, 2012 ).

Mixon and Temu (2006) talk about how both adults and children learn better with stories, how easily it is to get somebody's attention by using stories and how stories not only educate young learners, but also entertain them. Moreover, pedagogical theory strongly supports storytelling. The authors point out that storytelling occupies a fundamental position in education, especially language teaching and that story reading and storytelling are natural ways to learn a language. Stories promote transformative powers of education because they help learners understand and respect the values and culture of different groups. Stories lead to understanding, harmony and peace. Stories make learners learn more easily by lowering their affective filter. Using local and national stories enhances learners' confidence, reduces classroom anxiety and lowers stress.

As we have already mentioned, storytelling does not only provide children with a lot of meaningful input, but it also has strong pedagogical values.

*“ Stories are effective as educational tools because they are believable, rememberable, and entertaining. The believability stems from the fact that stories deal with human-like experience that we tend to perceive as an authentic and credible source of knowledge. Stories make information more rememberable because they involve us in actions of the characters. In so doing, stories invite active meaning making* (Rossiter, 2002:1, as cited in Porras Gonzalez, 2010:97)“.

Osman Abdel Haliem (2018) believes that the integration of literature in classrooms increases students' exposure to authentic language, enhances their language and leads to personal involvement, cultural enrichment and artistic evaluation. The author nicely puts that “Literature plays a critical role in our life, often without our notice. It helps us to explore both ourselves and others, to define and redefine who we are, who we might become, and how the world might be” (Osman Abdel Haliem, 2018:34). Literature plays a great role in cultural relations. It can be a powerful tool in teaching about the relativity of cultural values and helps with issues in cross-cultural communication.

Critical thinking can be fostered by children's books. Literature plays a great role in increasing critical thinking skills because students learn to make judgments, be decisive, synthesize information, come to conclusions, predict, organize, evaluate and apply skills. One recent and controversial topic has been the focus on Christopher Columbus and his "discovery"

of the Western Hemisphere. The many books about Columbus provide children with an opportunity to examine this controversy by comparing and contrasting "facts," questioning their previously held ideas about Columbus, and reaching their own conclusions about the contributions of this historical figure. Books also can awaken children's social conscience, sensitivity to others' needs, and empathy for those whose life situations may be very difficult. For example, many children are concerned about the homeless in America.

Yang (2009) suggests three pedagogical and educational benefits of using stories. These are personal, linguistic and conceptual development. Stories enable children develop feelings and emotions by identifying with the story characters and plots. This means that stories offer children with an imaginary world, which is created by language and that children can enter and enjoy. They can be personally involved in a story, identify with the characters and try to interpret the narrative and illustrations. This imaginative experience helps students develop their own creativity. Using stories fosters learners' language development (through exposure to different language patterns and natural language). Stories transmit knowledge, traditions and values and stimulate the development of new ideas and thus facilitate conceptual development. As already mentioned, Yang (2009) highlights that choosing stories carefully has effect on the attitudes towards the language being learned. This means that interesting stories may make the language being learned seem interesting as well. Stories also contribute to the development of different types of "intelligences" (including emotional intelligence) which contribute to language learning. The author further emphasizes the benefit of stories on the enhancement of children's learning strategies like predicting, hypothesizing, meaning guessing and listening for global understanding.

The story-based syllabus also puts great emphasis on developing the child's ability of "learning to learn". Loukia (2006) states that "learning to learn" should be incorporated explicitly in the curriculum in order to develop learning awareness and responsibility. Learners between the ages of 8 and 10 start developing greater self-awareness and responsibility. In class, developing metacognitive awareness can be increased through learners' diaries, portfolios, questionnaires. Furthermore, stories should be linked with cross-thematic learning (learning about the time, nature, animals, space, numbers, games). This kind of syllabus is also beneficial for raising cultural awareness and presenting knowledge about a different culture. By connecting school with community, learners also realize how learning is an everyday experience. Lesson stages and the activities are clearly defined. Piaget claims that children's

developmental stages act as an important part in the way they learn. The teacher must therefore be aware of this and be able to provide alternative organizational patterns for their classes.

Miller and Pennycuff (2008) found out that using storytelling as a pedagogical strategy improves cultural knowledge, self-awareness and visual imagery. The authors examine Navajo storytelling practices and reveals that in Navajo culture, stories are a means for knowledge transmission and construction of some important concepts. What they also acknowledged from their observations is that stories convey some concepts such as respect and moral behaviour and responsibility to others, oneself and the environment. Stories are therefore used to convey important life lessons. Storytelling enhances identification and reflection in the classroom. Miller and Pennycuff (2008:38) observe; “The phenomenon of storytelling actually becomes a common language that facilitates meaningful communication; we can hear and understand each other’s stories because we can usually recognize ourselves in the stories of others- no matter how varied our cultural backgrounds”. Miller and Pennycuff (2008) in their article show that storytelling does not only improve language achievement and logic skills in children, but it also develops positive attitudes towards learning, which we can conclude benefits general learning motivation.

Ajibade and Ndububa (2008) claim that motivation occupies a central position in foreign language learning and that this notion and the motivational value of classroom activities such as games, songs, riddles, drama and stories has been recognized. These activities are believed to help alleviate practice and drill in classroom. The authors claim that stories are effective educational tools because they are believable, entertaining and easy to recollect. They deal with human and human-like content and experiences which are authentic. Stories not only convey information, but they also lead to transformation. They are student-centered and contribute to one's personal growth and change.

To conclude why stories are so important in language learning and learning in general, the author claims:

*“Good books can do so much for children. At their best, they expand horizons and instil in children a sense of the wonderful complexity of life. No other pastime available to children is so conducive to empathy and the enlargement of the human sympathies. No other pleasure can so richly furnish a child’s mind with the symbols, patterns, depths, and possibilities of civilisation (Michele Landsberg, 1987:34, as cited in Mart, 2012:104)”.*

We can read that Landsberg introduces concepts like horizon expansion, empathy, pleasure and from this we can assume that stories do not only contribute to one's language learning achievement and motivation, but they carry deep pedagogical and educational values. Whatever the topic or the interest of students, a book can be found to expand and deepen children's knowledge. Through using children's literature across the elementary curriculum, students have the opportunity to gain facts, develop critical thinking skills and empathy, see models of expository writing, and satisfy their curiosity about the world. Like a good friend, a good book supports the learning and living of all children.

## **2.5. The role of stories on English language learning motivation**

Sorensen and Lehman (1995) give two important reasons for telling stories. First, powerful motivational factors in encouraging children to become readers are authentic literary experiences. The second reason is that "by building on children's enjoyment with literary experiences, teachers can shape a literary framework from which to focus on elements of story structure and common features of all stories as they integrate reading, writing, and oral language in their classrooms" (Sorensen and Lehman, 1995:83). Stories convey personal values and stimulate emotional response in children.

Recognizing the importance of motivation of learning is important for learners, but also parents, teachers and material developers. Teachers should create a collaborative classroom atmosphere, praise their students and shape less complex and more enjoyable learning interactions. Motivation has been found to be positively correlated with cultural materials such as songs, games and stories. They are found to improve students' motivation to learn and consequently enhance their language achievement. Stories can serve as a basis for various activities. They could also be used in educational programs for the promotion of tolerance and diversity.

Storytelling is believed to be an efficient pedagogical strategy which can be incorporated in classrooms in order to improve students' competencies such as oral language, reading and writing. The paper written by Miller and Pennycuff (2008) investigates how storytelling used as a pedagogical strategy can enhance literacy learning in reading and writing. "Engaging in storytelling activities is a way to motivate even the most reluctant reader or writer" (Miller and Pennycuff, 2008:37). Storytelling employs the social element of language because it includes the teller and the listener. Researchers have found that the effectiveness of literacy instruction

depends on collaboration and social interaction. Some researchers have even observed that the weakest writers and readers are adept at storytelling.

Storytelling is a basic method for sharing knowledge among people because it allows participants to be transported to another place and time (Remenyi, 2005, as cited in Miller and Pennycuff, 2008). Storytelling incorporates the experience of the aesthetic way of knowing, which means that it is a reflective process which changes how we perceive the world. Miller and Pennycuff (2008) identify the importance of the aesthetic way of knowing in the field of education. There are two functions; the referential function and the consummatory function. The referential function refers to the learners' abilities to understand and appreciate the qualities of learning. The consummatory function means recognizing the importance of journey and finding joy in the process rather than merely the goal.

There are reasons why using stories is beneficial for young learners teaching and learning English.

*“The purpose of telling a story is genuinely communicative. Storytelling is linguistically honest (It is oral language, meant to be heard). Storytelling is real (people do it all the time). Storytelling appeals to the affective domain. Storytelling caters to the individual while forging a community in the classroom. Storytelling provides listening experiences with reduced anxiety (Curtain and Dahlberg, 2004, as cited in Mart, 2012:103)”.*

Elley and Mangubhai (1983) say that story books provide strong intrinsic motivation and an emphasis of meaning, rather than form. By reading often, one is more exposed to language and learning naturally from the context. Story books also provide models of written English. When they are young, children express an urgent need to communicate which means that intrinsic motivation in L1 is very high. When learning a second language, one depends more on extrinsic or instrumental motivation. For this reason, we must find ways to enhance intrinsic motivation in learning foreign languages.

Since storytelling impacts the affective domain, we can say that stories have great impact on English learning motivation.

*“Stories may bridge the gap between language study and language use and also to link classroom learning with the world outside. Some of the activities do not always have a very large language element but are nevertheless important in creating a feeling among the pupils*

*that learning English means fun, activity, creativity and enjoyment”* (Ellis and Brewster 2002:17 as cited in Mart, 2010:104).

Stories can be challenging, motivating and fun for the learners. They can develop positive attitudes towards the language, learning and culture. Referring to literature-based instruction, the author writes “storytelling and hearing stories read aloud, expose children to linguistic and narrative conventions in the course of the power and pleasure they experience in the play” (Fox, 1993:185, as cited in Mart, 2012:104). Yang (2009) says that stories belong naturally to a child's life and that good stories can draw children's attention and stimulate their imagination and desire to use that language. Also, stories are effective tools in classrooms in which children are not motivated. Choosing the right stories may affect children's motivation for the language. The tasks done in the reading stages provide opportunities for the learners to use the language. The author also emphasizes how interesting content enhances the students' motivation and participation in class.

A model by Willis can explain to us the reasons of employing stories in learning a foreign language. What is essential to the language learner is: exposure to the language, opportunity to use it and the motivation to learn (Willis, 1996, as cited in Yang, 2009). The language presented in stories, which can be understood by the students, is a source of “comprehensible input“. If presented with great amount of natural language presented in the stories, language acquisition can occur incidentally.

There are numerous benefits of storytelling for children and these are developing thinking skills, better understanding of spoken language, becoming aware of different cultural values, strengthening their memory and developing spontaneous language expression (González, 2010). The purpose of story reading, on the other hand, is to bridge a gap between oral and written language. It is important in the early stages of learning to first do a pre-reading work (through activities such as songs, games, puzzles) so the learners can understand the story and engage in a post-reading work afterwards, which moves focus from receptive to productive skills (González, 2010). Stories containing illustrations are effective because they help children make connections between words and pictures and help children better understand and remember the story. Children enjoy listening to stories more than once, which is beneficial for learning and memorizing new vocabulary, structures. The findings of the study propose some suggestions on how to promote learning in a fun way. It is important to know students' interests and preferences and involve the students in the learning process. That way they will be more motivated to learn. By using the children's existing schema and prior knowledge, they could

better understand the stories. Using game activities in story reading and storytelling motivated children and supported interaction with one another. Besides that, they are great tools for developing social, communicative and thinking skills in a relaxed environment.

Loukia (2006) writes a paper based on the conviction that stories can be a treasure to every young learner. He does his research in the context of teaching English in primary schools in Greece. The story-based approach is not normally favoured in Greek schools and the area of using stories for the production of various language activities is less developed. There are several benefits of using storybooks:

*“Storybooks can enrich the pupils’ learning experience. Stories are motivating and fun and can help develop positive attitudes towards the foreign language. • Stories exercise the imagination and are a useful tool in linking fantasy and the 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 gain. This repetition allows language items to be acquired and reinforced. • Listening to stories develops the child’s listening and concentrating skills. • Stories create opportunities for developing continuity in children’s learning (among others, school subjects across the curriculum)”* (Ellis and Brewster, 1991, as cited in Loukia, 2006:27).

Similarly, Porras González (2010) conducted a study which implemented children's stories in teaching English to young learners in a Colombian public elementary school. This was initiated by a group of student teachers who were interested into turning English learning classrooms into fun and enjoyable environments. The project was conducted under the name of *Implementation of story reading and storytelling as a teaching tool for teaching English to young learners* (González, 2010:96). The objectives of the project were to create and implement stories based on students' interests, then to teach English in the context of the stories and finally to make the learning process enjoyable and sustain the lifelong process of learning. It is well-known that children learn differently than adults, often faster, but only if exposed to natural learning environments. This means that they should be exposed to real communication situations and suitable teaching practises, as well as presented with a lot of qualitative input (listening and reading). This is where the strategies of story reading and storytelling take place.

Osman Abdel Haliem (2018) claims that literature (short stories in particular) enhances motivation. Yang (2009) investigated whether the use of short stories would make children more interested in learning English and whether they would become confident in using it through the use of different activities during reading stages. The storybooks selected for the



study were “Pooh's Honey Tree“, a simple story which narrates the popular character of Winnie the Pooh finding honey in the tree which is accompanied with many colourful pictures. The other famous storybook is “Pinocchio“, a short story also accompanied with many colourful illustrations. Short stories enable one to finish them throughout one or two lessons and the vocabulary is usually simple and this makes them suitable for young learners or learners with lower language proficiency. The stories were presented to the students by the method of storytelling. When storytelling, the teachers can vary their voice, use body language and adjust the language to make the story comprehensible to each student. The methods used in the study were pre- and post-test questionnaires as well as a semistructured group interview and class observations.

The results of the study show that not many participants were highly interested in learning English. Their affection towards English did not change significantly even after the usage of storytelling. One third of participants indicated that they liked having English lessons, while after storytelling the percentages of those who liked and disliked having English lessons was the same. More than half of the students prior to storytelling regarded English as uninteresting. Surprisingly, after the intervention, even more students expressed their lack of interest in the language. Lastly, using short stories did not enhance students' satisfaction in learning English. What is more, there were more students after storytelling who disagreed with the statement that learning English is satisfying.

Generally, the participants in the study did not have high confidence in English. Both before and after using storytelling, the great majority of students thought that English was not easy to learn. They also lacked confidence in reading English, even after the adoption of storytelling. The same applies to writing in English. Of all the four skills, it is presumed that using storytelling benefits the listening skill most. However, the percentages of students who were confident in listening before and after storytelling were very similar. The active participation in English classes was low before storytelling, but increased significantly after it.

The observations in the two teaching sessions varied considerably. In the first session, most students liked the story and found it interesting, participated actively in guessing the story and the characters. They understood the story by the teacher's help of using body language, voice variation and storybook illustrations. All of this made the English lesson enjoyable to the students. In the second session, though, the majority of students found the story boring and did not participate. The semistructured group interview showed general positive views about English learning. They liked having English classes because they can learn something new.

Only one student disagreed because he found English difficult. In the interview, one student expressed great interest in the use of short stories: *"I like it so much. I hope you (the English teacher) can tell us more stories"* (Yang, 2009:43). The students also preferred storytelling to reading silently because storytelling helps them understand stories more easily. One of the responses is: *"We don't understand what the story is about if we read it by ourselves"* (Yang, 2009:43).

We can conclude that the study showed very contradictory results. This can be explained by some technicalities regarding the questionnaire design and the number of participants. The important element which affects students' interest in English is the already discussed choice of stories. Students are more attentive to interesting stories which mostly contain simple vocabulary. It is improbable to expect greater gains in language proficiency in the short duration of this study. Suggestion for future studies includes the use of a larger-scale study and a larger number of participants. Some pedagogical implications of this research indicate the care with which teachers should choose stories, especially when dealing with students with lower learning motivation. The stories should be interesting, present some new knowledge, but too many new items should be avoided because this can affect understanding.

In her article, Osman Abdel Haliem (2018) points out that research on using stories in classroom and L2 acquisition shows that it increases students' motivation. When using short stories in classroom, students learn something new with each story and feel more involved. Students are emotionally involved. The presence of literature in classrooms (especially short stories) increases students' motivation and the more they read, the more they end up doing some extra activities individually. The author tried to implement short stories in her teaching in order to enhance students' language proficiency, motivation and critical thinking. The story-based teaching lasted for one semester and students were given 12 short stories. Data was collected with three questionnaires, an interview and teacher's and students' reflective journals. The results of the questionnaires show that 30 out of 49 students liked the implementation of short stories in the curriculum. 60% of students reported on short stories serving as motivation enhancers, while 50.9% of students believe that short stories helped develop their critical thinking skills. The answers given by the students which are concerned with the development of motivation are that short stories "motivated" them to "read more," "encouraged" them to "do extra work," and "persuaded" them that "reading is fun" and "made" them "inspired" (Osman Abdel Haliem, 2018:42). The third questionnaire shows that 45 out of 65 participants regard the assignment of short stories in enhancing their motivation as "very true". 43 students believe

it made the learning process interesting and 38 that it motivated them to reflect upon their views. Eight students were interviewed at the end of the course. Six out of eight students said they liked implementing short stories to the curriculum because the language could reflect their culture, make them realise that everybody around the world faces the same challenge and stories enhance their vocabulary knowledge. When it comes to personal reflections, five out of eight participants thought that questions following short stories helped them think. One participant pointed out:

*“The questions of opinion made me think and try to put thought on paper. At first, I thought it would be difficult and my teacher would not accept my views but I learned that all opinions are acceptable as long as they are supported by reasons and evidence”* (Osman Abdel Haliem, 2018:43).

Another participant stated: “Reading short stories made me think and understand that any writer may include many ideas in one piece of writing. Also, discussing with my classmates made me get the idea that different people understand the idea differently. I liked the idea of commenting on the short stories as it made me think about them” (Osman Abdel Haliem, 2018:43). To conclude, the students’ responses indicated that using short stories in the classroom motivated them and enhanced their critical thinking. Apart from that, they expressed better ability in expressing their own opinion and interpretations of the presented stories, which means that short stories serve as a vehicle for self-expression. The results indicate strong pedagogical and educational values such as the enhancement of critical thinking skills, cultural tolerance, acceptance of differences in opinion and personal reflection.

A study conducted by Yamashita (2013) investigated how a course implementing extensive reading (ER) inside and outside class affects L2 reading attitudes. Impacts of ER were seen on three variables: increased students' feeling of comfort and anxiety reduction towards EFL reading and the intellectual value attached to reading. The author found out that experiencing positive feelings makes one more motivated than not experiencing negative feelings. The study concluded positive effects of extensive reading on L2 learning attitudes. Reading attitude may foster intrinsic motivation and consequently may lead to enhanced language acquisition.

Now let us consider the benefits of picture-story books. Children should read picture-story books for the following reasons:

*“Consider the fact that children born into the first years of the twenty-first century are likely to possess a richer and more deft understanding of visual imagery and its modes of deployment than any other generation in the history of humankind. Their world is saturated with imagines, moving and still, alone and in all manner of hybrid combinations with texts and sounds. This is the world in which they must function (Lewis, 2001:59, as cited in Mart, 2010:101).”*

Another paper written by Hsiu-Chih (2008) presents a study on how EFL teachers perceive the educational values of English picture story books. The methodology used in this study consisted of semi-structured interviews to understand the teachers' views on using English speaking story books in their classrooms and a questionnaire which explored the teachers' general attitudes towards English picture story books. The participants were forty English teachers in Taiwan. The results were categorized in three areas: linguistic value, the value of the stories and the value of the pictures. Most teachers pointed out onto how English picture story books helped their students review the vocabulary they had previously learnt in a meaningful context (Hsiu-Chih, 2008). We can conclude that one of the main educational values of picture story books is that they provide a meaningful context which fosters deeper understanding. Also, one of the teachers mentioned that stories served as a reminder to trigger students' memory of some words and phrases used in the story (Hsiu-Chih, 2008). Stories engage learners to use their existing knowledge as well as knowledge of the world to understand and remember the meaning of some words and phrases (Hsiu-Chih, 2008). Moreover, teachers reported on how story books helped them find a way to explain a situation in a simpler way and enhance their productive skills. When discussing the value of the story, nine out of ten teachers reported on the potential of stories to motivate learning. One teacher exemplifies this by saying:

*A good story will always attract students. They like to read pictures, but for a story to be attractive to students, the story itself is very important. The ending had better be very dramatic. Something they could not expect. My motivation to use English picture books is very simple. I just want to use stories to motivate students to learn English (Hsiu-Chih, 2008:49).*

The teachers also emphasized the students' enthusiasm for stories. Stories help children make connections with their prior knowledge. The narratives are familiar to children from their first language so by reading stories, the foreign language may seem “less foreign“ to them (Hsiu-Chih, 2008). Textbooks used in classrooms are often dull and do not engage students in their content, while picture story books provide children with the alternative world which is much more interesting and pleasurable. Another benefit of reading stories the teachers reported on is the sustainment of reading because of the interesting content and making children aware

of the alternative ways to learn English which leads to raised learning awareness and, as a result, enhanced motivation (Hsiu-Chih, 2008). By making the learning process more personal to each student, they will put more effort in learning and they will be more intrinsically motivated. Finally, the value of the picture contributes to the increase in comprehension and imagination stimulation (Hsiu-Chih, 2008). Pictures promote willingness to learn, which is again naturally connected to enhanced motivation. Pictures help students better understand the text, thus facilitating their learning and boosting their confidence. Seven out of nine teachers reported on to how picture books stimulate imagination, allow students to express their ideas and generate different interpretations. Furthermore, using picture story books in class promotes student autonomy because the role of the teacher is that of a mediator. The conclusions of this research are in line with what Safdarian (2012:212/213) claims and that is that: “In classroom, storytelling, among all different options of activities and literary material, is really helpful in learning because it appeals to learners’ imagination, increases motivation and, above all, creates a rich and meaningful context.”

Ajibade and Ndububa (2008) conducted a study which investigated how much word games and culturally relevant stories and songs can motivate secondary students in Nigeria. The results showed the increase in motivation in the students who were taught through word games, songs and stories and an increased motivation and improvement in their performance of English. From this study we can conclude that motivation helps direct goal-directed movements which then leads to success in the learning of English.

Chou (2014) agrees and believes that using various activities in classroom from a young age is crucial for maintaining motivation to learn English. The author emphasizes the importance of auditory and visual input stimuli for learning a language and notes how using play and games is often marginalised in classroom and avoided as a means of learning. She conducted a study with the aim of finding out the degree to which songs, games and stories help raise primary pupils' vocabulary size and learning motivation. The results showed that more than 85% of the pupils said that using games in the classroom motivated them to learn and that they memorised the vocabulary through games more quickly. More than 80% of pupils agreed that listening to stories and singing English songs helped them better understand the vocabulary and the content. They also favoured using pictures in the stories because they helped them better understand what was written. Some pupils reported on liking the gestures and body movements the teacher expressed when telling stories.

## **2.6. The role of stories on reading motivation**

The results of the research done by Protacio (2012) in which the author wanted to find out “What motivates upper elementary ELs to read in English?” consider several motivational factors in English Learners' reading motivation. The first one is sociocultural environment. This means that English learners are motivated to read due to family and friends in their environment. The participants see their parents as role models. If their parents have a habit to read, then they want to be like them. Other mention how their parents require them to read for some time every day. This shows that parents influence the learners' motivation to read in English. The influence of friends was also prominent in their discussing about the books' plot and end and having competitions among them. The second one is integrative orientation, in which English learners read in order to bond with their peers whose native language is English. Those who were motivated to read engaged in interactions. However, one participant showed a decline in motivation for reading because her peers did not like to read. The next factor is instrumental motivation and the author's finding is that English learners are motivated to read because they know reading helps them develop their competence in English. The fourth factor is EL's perceived competence. English learners' perceived competence of English is related to their motivation to read in English. The participants who highly perceived their competence to read in English indicated their likeness for books. However, the learners with lower levels of perceived competence indicated how they didn't like reading in English because they lacked knowledge of some words. The last factor is reading materials and the finding is that English learners are motivated to read interesting texts and books which are at their independent reading level. The participants expressed how they didn't like reading books that contain “hard words“ in them which confirms the assertion that it is important to match reading material to the readers' linguistic level. What is more, the students identified the importance of teacher recommendations in book selection. The participants indicated how it is important for teachers to pick out reading material for them at the beginning of their learning.

## **2.7. Criteria for student reading engagement**

Let us now consider a few factors that are found crucial for student engagement in reading. Cho, Xu and Rhodes (2010) claim that studies often overlook the affective aspect of the intervention used, such as student motivation and engagement. If we want learners to benefit from the stories we read with them, we must make sure that the stories are engaging. In order for reading to affect one's motivation to learn the language, we first need to see what motivates

them to read. The authors postulate the importance of intrinsic motivation for reading that relates to curiosity, interest, challenge, self-efficacy and social connections. A number of studies discuss the criteria which engage learners to read. The teacher should use diverse texts, provide authentic reasons to read, promote collaborative learning, offer options and choices and challenge students (Asselin, 2004; Brozo and Flynt, 2008; Gee, 1999, as cited in Cho, Xu and Rhodes, 2010)“. This is important because the authors claim that the effectiveness of reading instruction is dependant not only on learners‘ literacy skills and language but on the level of interest, too. What is also important is the teachers’ reading enthusiasm and the quality of instruction. The findings of the study conducted by Cho, Xu and Rhodes (2010) suggest a few implications for teaching which will be discussed further.

### **3. Implementation of stories in an English language classroom**

#### **3.1. How to choose stories for an English language classroom?**

Safdarian (2012) believes that stories can be motivating for children because when they read them in a foreign language, they use all the resources they know to reach a level of understanding which results in their satisfaction from using a foreign language to meet that goal. He conducted a study with the aim of assessing the effect of storytelling on motivation and general English proficiency level of Iranian EFL learners. 102 secondary school students were selected for experimental and control groups. The control group was instructed in a traditional way, while teaching in the experimental group included storytelling. For the purpose of this research, I will present the results connected to motivation. To explore the influence of storytelling on students' motivation, the author used Attribute/Motivation test battery (AMTB) questionnaire. To better verify the results of this quantitative instrument, the author also used a semi-structured interview. The study showed that the motivation in the experimental group did not change. The author put this down to inappropriate choice of the stories which weren't aligned to the students' interests and age. That is why the author emphasizes how important the choice of the stories is and the way teachers implement them.

Before we can speak about incorporating stories in an English language classroom, we need to take into account various stages which are inevitable for their successful implementation. Before we tackle the issue of how to implement the story, we first need to deal with the topic of story choice. When choosing stories, the teachers should take into account the content, language used and illustrations. Yang (2009) suggests that what makes an interesting content is a clear plot, interesting characters and a surprising ending. Also, the stories should convey appropriate attitudes and values. From a linguistic perspective, a story is considered good if it contains parallelism (occurrence of the same language pattern) in natural contexts. The stories should contain the language which students can understand and some new words and phrases. The topics of the stories should be both challenging and comprehensible containing language which is in the students' range.

The authors identify seven components which should be taken into account in order to choose the right short story:

*“appropriateness to students' interests; emotional and social involvement; selection and previewing by the teacher; clear purpose for reading the text; teacher involvement; use of*



*animation and expression; periodic students' questioning to focus on specifics of the text; and connections to independent reading and writing"* (Fisher and Medvic, 2003, as cited in Osman Abdel Haliem, 2018:36).

The author first emphasized the importance of choosing the right storybook. A good storybook should be able to engage learners and motivate them (Karunakar, 2017). Cho, Xu and Rhodes (2010) agree and state that choosing interesting and challenging materials motivate learners to read. Another important feature is age-appropriateness. The teachers should know how to choose and adapt the reading material to grade-level curriculum. A good choice would be multicultural books and ones which contain rich cultural and authentic English examples (Karunakar, 2017). Multicultural books also carry deep pedagogical and educational values. Rich illustrations which can complement the narrative would also be an advantage. When children tell the stories, they are given a chance to put their imagination in reality. Therefore, much less focus is put on language technicalities, which makes them relax and become unaware of their production of the language they had previously internalized. This helps them overcome the fear of language inhibition and failure and makes them more confident and satisfied to learn, which in turn affects their language learning motivation. Yang (2009) agrees and states that the stories are also better if they contain illustrations. This is especially important for those who are least motivated because all children like pictures and they help them better understand the text.

What makes storytelling even more interesting is the teacher's ability to use intonation, voice modulation, body language. However, this strategy involves a lot of dedication, planning, creativity, classroom management skills. The stories could be used as a primary source or a supplement to the core materials. Finally, literacy needs should be chosen not only by school, but should reflect the wishes and needs of families and communities (Rubinstein-Ávila, 2003/2004:300 prema Cho, Xu and Rhodes, 2010).

Osman Abdel Haliem (2018) believes the text should be selected on the basis of how much the student can play a role in it. Exercises which foster self-expression can be commenting, summarizing and comparing. Exercises which are aimed at developing critical thinking contain discussion and open-ended questions. There are numerous criteria on how to select the appropriate story book. Different authors mention and enlist different criteria and pose certain questions. Mart (2012) mentions criteria like age-appropriate content, simple language, use of rhyme, authentic but simple dialogue, unambiguous plot, limited use of metaphor, good illustrations and brevity. Furthermore, the author poses some questions:

*“Does the book help meet curriculum objectives or enhance the thematic units being studied? Is the book’s content appropriate to the children’s age and intellectual level? Does the book use language that is at or slightly above the level of the learners? Does the book contain repeated, predictable language patterns? Are there clear illustrations that help the story (Smallwood, 1988:66, as cited in Mart, 2012:102)?”*

We need to ask ourselves what makes authentic literature so valuable to children. Authentic literature provides a motivating, meaningful context for language learning, since children are naturally drawn to stories. Reading authentic and non-simplified material helps students with their confidence. There are a few reasons why reading authentic literature is beneficial for children. It contributes to language learning. It presents natural language and fosters vocabulary development in context. It promotes academic literacy and thinking skills as well as prepares learners for the English-medium instruction. Good literature can also contribute to the children’s emotional development and interpersonal and intercultural attitudes.

Steinback (2008) as cited in Mart (2012:102) further lists some characteristics of stories for young learners:

*“Stories should be action oriented. Stories should be personal (the use of familiar characters, the pre- and post- activities should make use of the personalization technique. Stories should not be too detailed, both in terms of the story and the visuals used. Stories should allow for context extension. Stories should use comprehensible input (the language that is at the right cognitive and linguistic level) so that the output is more structured.”*

Story book selection can be directed with different questions which can help the parents. Some of the questions are whether different types of storybooks, such as fantasy stories, fables, etc., are represented in the classroom, whether there is a difference in the style of illustrations, are the main characters both boys and girls, is the story psychologically suitable for the learners’ age, can children identify with the characters of the story, will they be able to connect the story to their own lives, are the stories humorous, is the language at the appropriate age level, does the book include extracurricular topics and is it a story that learners can read by themselves (Heide Niemann, 2002, as cited in Mart, 2012).

To conclude, regarding the choice of stories, teachers can choose from many kinds of storybooks: fairy tales and traditional stories, picture stories, fantasy stories, fables. Loukia (2006:28) also lists some criteria for selecting a story. These are: fun and interesting content, attractive visuals, appropriate language level, raising motivation (developing imagination,

arousing curiosity, drawing on personal experience), language learning potential (language practice, skills development, prediction, recycling, etc.) and potential of learning other subjects, culture, metacognition.

### **3.2. How to implement stories in an English language classroom?**

Porrás González (2010) divides *The implementation of storyreading* into three stages: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading. Before storyreading, it is important for children to become acquainted with the new language through various activities such as teacher's talk, games, songs. This is used to raise the students' interest and to make them familiar with the topic. The teacher should select some new vocabulary, but not too many. Crucial phrases and words should be pre-taught and the text should be supported with some visuals. In the while-reading stage, it is advisable that teachers focus on the connection between the written text and illustrations, predictions, and questions. First, the teacher introduces a story, makes comments about it and assesses the students' prior knowledge. Then the reading process takes place, focusing on some crucial words and connections with pictures. The author points out that in the stories, it is important to consider the role of pictures combined with the text. In the stories, they have a central role to play. They serve as a stimulus for predicting, forming hypotheses, exercising memory, sequencing. They should be closely related to the text and structure the text to support the children's understanding and guide them to the key points of the story. Pictures are also great tools for designing the activities, especially written and oral ones.

The second strategy the teacher should use is predicting, that is asking questions about what might happen next in the story. This way children make connections between their prior knowledge and new information. Furthermore, to test children's comprehension and deeper understanding of the story, the teacher can use the questioning strategy. A post-reading stage involves various speaking and writing activities. The findings of the study showed how children enjoyed the lessons and how this was reflected on their communication of English. They produced language both orally and in writing (i.e. they had to produce a dialogue and finish a book using new language). In the presented lesson, what made children motivated to learn English are the various activities which are fun and enjoyable.

Mixon and Temu (2006) suggest some activities which can be carried out in classrooms. They firstly mention the type of stories that can be used: fairy tales, fables, folk stories, children's books, everyday objects, nursery rhymes and little stories. For speaking skills, children can tell a story by making it up on the basis of objects or pictures they get. For listening

skills teachers can read or tell simple stories and then let students retell them. For reading, the teacher can read the stories aloud or let the students do it aloud or silently. The teacher can also use the method of *choral reading* which implies the teacher reading a sentence and the students repeating it. After first reading, the teacher can ask comprehension questions. One story can serve as a basis for many various activities like role playing, discussion, making up individual books. For the writing skill, learners can draw a scene with a small text from the story underneath it or they can make up and write their own stories. To combine all the skills, students can retell the story, use total physical response, make a story timeline, read the story repeatedly, create a story board, rewrite a story, create a chant from the story, teach sentence patterns, create story cards, use story theatre, create books, dictate short stories (Mixon and Temu, 2006).

In the study by Loukia (2006) the story-based parallel syllabus was created to accompany the main syllabus. The story-based syllabus was created to teach the students different usage contexts of some language elements. It also benefits the development of their personality because the learners are expected to develop a positive attitude towards learning a foreign language. The reasons for this are that stories are easily memorable (language elements are recycled and this makes students predict and exercise their imagination), pictures and illustrations are closely related to the story content (this supports understanding, meaning inference of words from the text, colours and shapes guide learners to key points in the text), stories should motivate the learners to learn more about the foreign language and culture. The activities following the stories are also based on guidelines which follow the theories on how children learn and think. The design principles of activities are that they are enjoyable and motivating, exercise imagination (through predicting, sequencing, planning, hypothesizing, classifying), exemplify real life language use, allow frequent repetition (to acquire and reinforce language items), enhance children's confidence (in a non-threatening learning environment and background knowledge activation), encourage social skills and interaction (cooperation, pair work, group work), they are presented through concrete objects taking into account the child's conceptual development (visuals, illustrations, touch-and-see things), they promote learning by doing through action songs, games and creative activities and lastly, they take into consideration the child's shorter concentration span through good class management.

Discussing children's shorter concentration span, Loukia (2006) suggests that lessons should incorporate many different activities since children are not able to concentrate on one activity for a long period of time. The activities should thus last for about 5 to 10 minutes. The author emphasizes the importance of pictures in storybooks. Pictures and illustrations serve as

a stimulus for predicting, hypothesizing, memory exercising and sequencing. Children can better associate words with pictures, pictures make stories more memorable, they serve as great tools for various activities. One example is reconstructing the story (on paper or orally) with the help of pictures. Children enjoy rereading stories. Well-organized story sessions are very important because they motivate students to learn the language.

### **3.3. Storytelling techniques**

Mart (2012) recommends some storytelling techniques. Firstly, the teachers should begin with shorter sessions which are within the learners' concentration span. They should read slowly and clearly and give the learners time to think about what they hear or see in the pictures and to make some comments and ask questions. Also, they should direct the learners' attention to the illustrations and make comments about them and repeat key vocabulary words and phrases. The teacher should try to involve the learners into storytelling by having a questioning face expression. The teacher should use gestures, facial gestures to help convey meaning.

Feng and Chen (2009) even stress the importance of teacher's personality for learning. A considerate and an enthusiastic teacher offers satisfaction to the learners' extra needs which then helps raise the learners' study motivation. Also, the teacher's attitude towards the learners carries major influence on the learners' learning. Teachers who pour physically and mentally into their teaching and teachers who are filled with affection help arouse the enthusiasm of the learners. On the other hand, if the teacher works only as a "teaching craftsmen", the classroom will become static and will not raise the students' enthusiasm for learning.

Cho, Xu and Rhodes (2010) stress that teachers should also be skilled enough to engage students beyond text comprehension in order to activate their background knowledge. A collaborative program where learners can become familiar with the perspectives of others is recommended to foster the processes of language learning. The teachers should have high, but realistic expectations of their students. It is also suggested that they use other non-verbal activities in addition to reading such as writing predictions and silent reading. Teachers should also take into account that some students are not comfortable with reading out loud. The teachers should vary the volume, pace and tone of their voice. One can whisper to build up suspense and raise voice to introduce an element of surprise. One should pause to give the learners time to assimilate what they hear or to add dramatic effect. One can disguise one's

voice to act as different characters. It is important that the teachers ask questions to try to involve children as much as they can.

It is important to mention, especially in young learners, that an interesting and fun learning process makes learning meaningful. Choosing storyreading and storytelling is a great option because the appealing characters help children get involved in the stories and stories help teachers contextualize the language (children can grasp language use and functions) (González, 2010). What should be highly highlighted is the need to take into consideration students' interests and to follow each stage of the process appropriately.

## **4. The study**

### **4.1. The Purpose of the study**

Lepp-Kaethler and Dörnyei (2013) claim that it is important to investigate motivation in second language learning because it can help us understand why some learners are more or less successful. It can also give insight into how the language should be taught and learned. It is believed that studying motivation is important because without it, even the students with the highest abilities cannot be successful in the long run (Babae, 2012). Motivation builds the learners' self-confidence and in that way produces successful learners. Also, learners tend to continue their learning even after having achieved the desired goal.

On the basis of the literature review, we can conclude that there is a considerable body of research related to story reading and storytelling, but there is still plenty left for future research. There is a great number of studies dealing with the role of stories in English language acquisition, but in my opinion, there is not many exploring the relationship between stories and the students' motivation to learn English and to read in English.

Various researchers have concluded that stories widen children's horizons, shape their own values, stimulate the development of new ideas, lead to self-awareness, transmit cultural knowledge, reduce classroom anxiety and generally promote transformative powers of education. The purpose of this study was to investigate the learners' perspective on the role of stories in EFL learning and motivation to learn.

### **4.2. Participants**

The research was carried out in a Croatian elementary school and involved 32 third-graders. The participants were selected based on their motivation and willingness to participate in the research and permission given by the parents. The participants were divided into two groups, the intervention group (G1) with 17 participants and the control group (G2) with 15 participants. For the purpose of the study, the researcher organised an extracurricular storytelling sessions. They were carried out once a week. The participants were divided into two groups due to the pandemic. Consequently, the researcher carried out 10 storytelling sessions because there were 5 stories selected to be used in the study.

### **4.3. Research Instruments and Methodology**

We used a qualitative approach and collected data using a questionnaire designed for young age and conducted semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was used to gain insight into the level of general motivation and motivation for storytelling activities and their pedagogical and educational value. Both were measured at two points of time: before the use of stories in classroom and at the end of the intervention. The questionnaire comprised 17 statements divided into two groups; the first group contained 6 statements and examined the learners' general motivation towards learning English and the second group comprised 11 statements and examined motivation for storytelling activities and their pedagogical and educational value. The statements in the questionnaire were based on the motivation questionnaire by Mihaljević Djigunović (1998) (see appendix 1). Smileys were used to adapt the questionnaire to the learners' age and make the reading more comprehensible and a scale from 1 to 5 (1- strongly disagree, 5- strongly agree) was used to assess the learners' answers. The statements were written in the Croatian language.

As mentioned earlier, we conducted interviews and their purpose was to obtain deeper insight into the nature of individual differences among learners. We selected three participants whose motivation for storytelling activities increased and three whose motivation for storytelling activities decreased or stayed the same after storytelling sessions. The interview questions were divided in 4 sections: "Reading Background", "Other Activities", "Evaluation of Storytelling Sessions" and "Pedagogical Dimensions of Stories" (see appendix 3). The first section looked into the learners' individual profiles, what they do in free time, how often they read and whether they are encouraged to read. The second section looked into whether they were engaged in other activities at the same as the storytelling sessions were taking place. The third section addressed their evaluation of the storytelling sessions. They were asked to express what they liked/disliked and what they would change. The purpose of the last section was finding out whether stories transmitted pedagogical dimensions onto the learners; what they learned from the stories, whether they felt empathy for the characters, whether they could express their opinion and whether they could identify certain life values in the stories.



#### **4.4. Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The research questions and hypotheses underlying this study are related to the belief that using stories motivates students to learn English and to engage in storytelling activities and that stories transmit many pedagogical and educational values. The research questions are the following:

Q1: What is the influence of using stories on young learners' English learning motivation?

Q2: What is the influence of using stories on young learners' motivation for English storytelling activities?

Q3: Do stories transmit pedagogical and educational values?

The research hypotheses are the following:

- (1) Those who will take part in storytelling activities in an English language classroom even for a shorter period of time will report increase in general motivation for learning English.
- (2) Those who will take part in storytelling activities in an English language classroom even for a shorter period of time will report increase in motivation for storytelling activities and their pedagogical and educational values.
- (3) Stories transmit pedagogical and educational values.

#### **4.5. Research procedure**

In each class, 5 storytelling sessions were carried out. The stories selected for the storytelling sessions are stories which contain moral lessons and are already familiar to the learners. They were adaptations of the following stories: "The Tortoise and the Hare", "The New Girl", "The Ant and the Grasshopper", "The Rainbow Fish" and "Frogs in the Milk" (see appendix 2). Before listening to the story, the learners got acquainted with new words. In the while-reading stage, it is advisable that teachers focus on "the connection between illustrations and written text, predictions, and questions" (González, 2010:103). This is why we used comprehension questions while telling the story and directed the learners' attention to the illustrations. After reading the story to the students, they were given discussion questions. The questions were formed around the moral of the story, the characters' traits and the relation of story to real life. They mostly revolved around the readiness of learners to identify with the

story characters. The topic of identification with character was the basis for discussion questions because “stories enable children to develop their own feelings and emotions by identifying their own characters and plots” (Godwin and Perkins, 1998:25, as cited in Yang, 2009). Hoffman claims that there is a universal tendency for children to empathize with others. This allows them to validate their morality on the bases of the consequences for other people (Vitz, 1990). If we wish to effectively introduce children to the moral life, we should have them read, hear or watch morally challenging narratives.

The stories were selected carefully making sure they were age-appropriate with clear educational and pedagogical aims. They were linguistically simplified and adapted to the participants’ level of knowledge. The material was slightly a bit above the students’ developmental level which is in line with Vigotsky’s zone of proximal development by which children can achieve knowledge which is slightly above their developmental level with the guidance. Most of the stories that were selected were familiar to our participants from their Croatian class. This is an accordance with the idea that choosing familiar stories makes a foreign language “less foreign” (Hsiu-Chih, 2008). Also, stories were accompanied with the pictures because Porras González (2010) states that illustrations help learners make connections between words and illustrations and help learners understand the story better. Pictures and illustrations serve as a stimulus for predicting, hypothesizing, memory exercising and sequencing (Loukia, 2006). Furthermore, Yang (2009) emphasizes the importance of interesting content that enhances students’ participation and motivation in class so the stories that were selected were those that were known to be popular and interesting among learners that age. When reading, the teacher tried to read loudly and used voice modulation to emphasize important words and to change character roles. She also used body language.

The first story was “The Tortoise and the Hare”, a famous story by Aesop. Learners enjoyed listening to it. They all agreed with the moral of the story. They said that one should never give up and underestimate others, they connected this to their hobbies and school and described their experiences, that is situations in which they behaved either like the hare or like the tortoise. They said that one should always believe in oneself and know one’s own value. The second story selected for the intervention was “The New Girl”. The topic of this story is the acceptance of different people, societies and cultures. Today's society recognizes more and more the importance of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is concerned with well-being and dignity of all human beings. It is aimed at encouraging the prosperity, cultures of different groups, and respecting their identity (Raz, 1998:127). This story came at the right time because

a new student had just come to class so they could relate the story to a real life situation and learn how to behave. The students discussed the times they felt different from others, when they were teased for the things that made them different from others. They were also asked about their contacts with people from different countries and whether they act differently with them, to which they all answered that they behave the same with all people. They all recognized the worthiness of all people.

The next story selected for the session was “The Ant and the Grasshopper“. Learners talked about the importance of accepting advice and they connected the story to their experience with school and hobbies. They compared themselves to either the grasshopper or the ant. They talked about their time for work and time for play and concluded that working too much or playing too much is not good for you. Sometimes it is important to put aside wishes for some time for the greater good, they concluded. The next story was “The Rainbow Fish”. The participants were asked questions about sharing, what makes a person beautiful, whether it is important to have friends. They concluded that having friends is important, sharing makes one happy and a person’s behaviour can make this person more beautiful than his physical appearance. They related the story to their own of willingness to share something. The last story was “Frogs in the Milk”. The participants agreed that the moral of the story is the importance of never giving up and they gave details about the situations in which they gave up and in which they did not and what happened as a consequence. They talked about the importance of thinking positive thoughts. They concluded that is important to believe in oneself and positive outcomes that are result of that belief and persistence.

## 4.6. Results and Discussion

### 4.6.1 Results based on the smiley questionnaire for general motivation

*Tablica 1 General Motivation score for G1*

G1	Average score
Before	3.96
After	3.92

*Tablica 2 General motivation score for G2*

G2	Average score
Before	3.7
After	3.7

For G1, we have an average score of 3.96 for general motivation before the intervention and an average score of 3.92 for general motivation after the intervention (see Table 1). For G2, we have an average score of 3.7 before the intervention and an average score of 3.7 after the intervention (see Table 2). Results related to the first hypothesis stating that those who will take part in storytelling activities in an English language classroom even for a shorter period of time will report increase in general motivation for learning English, suggest no increase in general motivation in neither the intervention group (G1) nor the control group (G2). The hypothesis has not been confirmed.

#### **4.6.2 Results based on the smiley questionnaire for motivation in storytelling activities and their pedagogical values**

*Tablica 3 Motivation for storytelling activities for G1*

G1	Average score
Before	4.3
After	4.4

*Tablica 4 Motivation for storytelling activities for G2*

G2	Average score
Before	3.9
After	3.7

For G1, we have an average score of 4.3 for motivation for storytelling activities and their related pedagogical and educational values before the intervention and an average of 4.4 for storytelling activities and their related pedagogical and educational values after the intervention (see table 3). For G2, we have an average score of 3.9 for motivation for storytelling activities and their related pedagogical and educational values before the intervention and an average of 3.7 for storytelling activities and their related pedagogical and educational values after the intervention (see table 4). Results related to the second hypothesis stating that those who will take part in storytelling activities in an English language classroom even for a shorter period of time will report increase for reading storytelling activities and their pedagogical and educational values suggest that there has been no increase in motivation in either of the two groups (the intervention and the control group). In other words, the second hypothesis has not been confirmed.

### 4.6.3 Results based on the in-depth interview

*Tablica 5 GLM*

GLM	Average score before	Average score after
Learner 1	4.4	3.9
Learner 2	4.5	3.8
Learner 3	4.9	4.9

*Tablica 6 GHM*

GHM	Average score before	Average score after
Learner 1	4.2	4.6
Learner 2	4	4.5
Learner 3	3.7	4.5

The second group of results are based on the interview conducted with three learners whose motivation for storytelling activities and their pedagogical values stayed the same or decreased (GLM, see table 5) and three whose motivation for storytelling activities and their pedagogical values increased (GHM, see table 6). The in-depth interview consisted of 4 parts: “Learner Profile”, “Other activities”, “Evaluation of Storytelling Sessions” and “Pedagogical Dimensions of Stories” (see Appendix 3). From these results, we can see differences between the groups in terms of the amount of reading, perception of their knowledge of English, difference in the reasons why they read, competence in reading, choice of stories, difficulty of comprehension and whether the stories motivated them to read more.

The first set of questions examined the learner profile to investigate what differs between those students whose motivation for storytelling activities and their pedagogical and educational values (GHM) increased and those whose motivation stayed the same or declined (GLM). It is important to look into the learners’ reading habits because we can assume that those students whose motivation for storytelling activities increased are children who like to read and read often and those whose motivation stayed the same or declined have little affection towards reading. Rodrigo, Greenberg and Segal (2014:75) state that in the field of the second language (L2), “a positive attitude toward reading has been related to having a positive reading experience.” Reading was proved to be pleasurable when the reader felt a sense of accomplishment as a result of comprehension of the reading material and when reading was

done in a non-threatening environment. *Pleasure reading or free voluntary reading* is effective in promoting a positive reading attitude. *Pleasure reading or free voluntary reading* or ER means that the reading material is interesting, reading is done in large amounts, the reading material is at an appropriate linguistic level and the reading is done for personal enjoyment. This means that those students who read more often and choose what they want to read will develop more positive reading attitudes.

The participants in GLM said that they all like to read. Two of them read “sometimes“, while one of them reads “at least one book a week“. In their free time, they read, play video games, play football and play with their mobile phones. Two of them have “a lot of books“, while one of them hasn't got many books: „5-6 books“. They all said that they read on their own and that they read books, while one of them added “doing research on the computer“. They read in their room and read “when they feel like it“, which means that their reading is done for personal enjoyment and we have concluded that reading for personal enjoyment is connected to the enhanced reading attitude. All of them also stated that parents and teachers encourage them to read. As proposed by Iftanti (2012:151), English language home environments and classroom have influence on the learner's motivation to read.

*“Moreover, the environmental influence, parental influence, peer pressure, school curriculum, and teachers (Adetunji and Oladeji, 2007) are the other factors which can either support or militate against better reading habits. In line with this, Nathanson, Pruslow, and Levitt (2008) found the evidence that parents have a powerful effect in creating enthusiastic readers.“*

The participant sin GHM said that they all like to read. One of them reads “2 days a week“, while the other two read more “3-4 days“ and “every day“. In their free time, they spend time outdoors and play. All three of them said how they have a lot of books at home and how they like to read on their own. They also read in their room. For some, parents set aside a special time for reading and play and some learners set aside their time on their own. When asked about whether teachers and parents encourage them to read, they all answered positively. One of them said: “Teacher Petra always tells us that reading is important and other teachers, too.“ We can conclude that concerning the reading habits, there isn't much difference between the two groups.

Next is their perceived competence in English. This factor also plays a role in motivating learners to engage in reading related activities in English. However, the results are not clear-cut. Some research suggests that those with higher levels of English proficiency also have

higher levels of reading motivation, while those with lower levels of English proficiency have lower levels of reading motivation (Butler, 2007 as cited in Gambrell, 2011). However, another author indicates no difference in reading attitudes independent of the learners' level of proficiency in English (Yamashita, 2004, as cited in Gambrell, 2011).

Another thing to consider is the students' self-perception in English and in reading. Learners were asked two questions; how much they think they know English and how good they think they are in reading in English. In the theoretical framework we learned that the learners' perceived competence serves as a motivating factor for English learners to read in English. Some research claims that learners with higher level of English proficiency also have higher level of reading motivation (Butler, 2007 as cited in Protacio, 2012), while another author finds no difference in reading attitude between the more proficient and the less proficient learners (Yamashita, 2004, as cited in Protacio, 2012). In our case, GLM perceives their knowledge of English as high as the grade B and C, while group GHM perceives their knowledge of English as high as the grade B and A-, which is consistent with the theoretical assumptions. We can conclude that the learner's perceived competence in English is proportional with their motivation to read in English. Protacio (2012) agrees and states that good reading habit is influenced by good English language proficiency.

Protacio (2012) supports the statement that research claims that students with higher levels of English proficiency also have higher levels of reading motivation. The author found out in his research that the students' perceived competence in English relates to their motivation for reading in English. Those participants who valued their competence for reading in English highly expressed their likeliness for books as opposed to those who perceive their competence to read in English with lower levels and who said that they didn't like reading in English and that they lacked knowledge of some words. When asked about their perceived competence in reading in English, GLM thinks they are good at reading, while GHM is not sure or they perceive their competence in reading in English as low. This shows that the first GLM's perceived competence of reading in English is higher than the GHM one's which is contradictory to theoretical assumptions. However, both groups expressed their likeliness for books.

Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) propose constructs that are important in the motivational field. The first construct is self-efficacy beliefs. It presupposes that those learners who believe to be competent in reading will more likely engage in reading. In our case, GLM thinks they are good at reading read “two or three times a week, at least one book a week and 6 says a

week“ which means that they read a lot and this is consistent with the theoretical assumption. GHM is not sure or they perceive their competence in reading in English as low and they read “2 days a week, 3 to 4 days a week and every day“, which is less than the first group and is somewhat consistent with the theoretical assumption that those who believe not to be good at reading will read less. We can conclude then that their motivation for storytelling activities enhanced due to the storytelling sessions.

When asked the question: “Do you think reading is important and why and why do you read?“, we can conclude that answers of both groups show that their reasons for reading belong to the instrumental motivation (Gardner and Lambert, 1959). We have said Integrative motivation aims at learning about language groups and meeting different people, while instrumental motivation focuses on the utilitarian value of linguistic achievement (prestige, power, access of information, passing a course, business opportunities). The participants explain that reading enables them to do some things easier in the future, it enables them to do some tasks, they need reading in their life, it is fun, it makes them smart. One learner said: “When reading, a person develops better opinion and his intellect enhances. I read because I am interested in the Universe and Nature.“ We can see that this learner's reason for reading belongs to intrinsic motivation because the learner shows his interest and curiosity in some fields and a number of authors mention interest, curiosity, self-efficacy, challenge and social connections as important for intrinsic motivation (Asselin, 2004, Schiefele, 1999, as cited in Cho, Xu and Rhodes, 2010). We know that the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation posed by Dorney (1994) is that: Extrinsic motivation is aimed at receiving an extrinsic reward (grades, money), while intrinsic motivation aims at gaining the internal rewards (curiosity, joy). Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) say that intrinsic motivation makes one do an activity for its own sake. In our case, GLM names reasons for reading “When I grow up, some things will be easier to do”, “I read because I am interested in the Universe and Nature” and “When we need to do some task and if we can’t read, we won’t be able to do it”. We can conclude that 2 out of 3 reasons are extrinsically motivated. GHM expresses that they read “because it’s fun and so I don’t forget something when the teacher asks me”, “because I want to be smart and I like to read” and “to solve tasks”. We can see that the majority of answers belong to intrinsic motivation. We can also connect this to how often these learners read because it is believed that when students are intrinsically motivated, this facilitates the readers’ engagement. In our case, GLM read “two or three times a week, at least one book a week and 6 says a week“ which means that they read a lot. However, they showed to be more extrinsically



motivated. GHM read “2 days a week, 3 to 4 days a week and every day“, which is less than the first group. However, they are more intrinsically motivated. This shows to be contradictory to the statement that when students are intrinsically motivated, this facilitates the readers’ engagement. To discuss why intrinsic motivation is beneficial, we can think about what Iftanti (2012) found out and that is that the most powerful factor which motivates learners to read books is their L1 and L2 is their intrinsic motivation.

The second group of questions named “Other activities“ examined what was happening at school during the storytelling sessions. It is assumed that other activities such as reading stories, workshops and games could have had influence on the enhanced or declined motivation for storytelling activities. Some of the answers were:

*“We read Train in the Snow. We read stories from our textbook for Croatian class. We had an extracurricular activity in which we learned about the myths and legends. We played some games, such as games on the computer. The teacher would ask, for example, what something is and then we would click something to see if our answer is correct. I remember I liked this game very much.” “We had some workshops and played some games. I liked it when we play games.” “We read stories. We read a lot. It was great. We read every day and learned something new. We read some stories, short stories, we wrote to practise our writing. We read some books for children, fairy tales, some weird fairy tales and some cool fairy tales. Some of them I liked and some not. Some were great, and some, that I like very much, are not as great. I loved one story.” “We had a workshop where we had to write down questions on a piece of paper and then we have two groups. One group sits on the left, and the other one sits on the right. Then we ask questions and we have a red and white piece of paper. If the other group’s answer is wrong, then I pick up the red piece of paper. I really liked this game.”*

All participants agreed on having read stories in their Croatian class and all of them expressed their likeness for them. Some of them said they had workshops, but some claimed that they did not: “We didn’t really have any workshops. I love workshops, but we didn’t have them, unfortunately.” Since they all liked the stories, workshops and games they did with their teacher, it is peculiar that their motivation for storytelling activities stayed the same or declined. This can lead us to the conclusion that the storytelling sessions were the reason why their motivation stayed the same or declined. This is where we need to find out whether they liked storytelling sessions. Also, since they read stories in other subjects, we cannot put enhanced motivation for storytelling activities down to the storytelling sessions. We cannot know for sure whether the motivation enhanced in some participants due to the storytelling sessions or due to

stories, workshops and games they did with their teacher and in other subjects. This disables us to draw any elaborate conclusions.

The third group of questions named “Evaluation of Storytelling Sessions“ aimed at finding out how the learners would evaluate the storytelling sessions, whether and how much they liked or disliked them. GLM expressed their likeness for the stories. They said: “I liked the Rainbow Fish story“, “I liked the morals“ and “I liked it when you read and when we did the tasks.“ GHM said “I liked it because stories were good and interesting“, “I liked it when we talked about the moral of the stories“, “I really liked it because we learned something from those stories, there were animals and it was great“. Regarding the story choice, some of the members of GLM expressed how they would choose some other stories, while others claim that they wouldn't. They said: “I would choose some other stories. I would choose Snowwhite or Cinderella. I would like that both the teacher and the students choose the stories,“ I wouldn't choose other stories. I would like it better if the teacher chooses stories because if we choose them, then we will know what they are about,“ and “I wouldn't choose other stories. I would like that both the teacher and I can choose the stories“. Some of them indicated how they want to participate in choosing stories. Maybe the reason their motivation stayed the same or declined can be put down to the reason that they couldn't choose the stories. GHM said that they loved that the teacher chose the stories and they expressed how they love stories and how all stories are good. They said:

*“ The choice of the stories was really good. I know all these stories, we had some in Croatian class and they were really good. I don't know if I would choose other stories. I prefer that the teacher chooses the stories because if we choose them, then we would need a lot of time to decide because everybody would have a different opinion. Boys would want something scary and girls would like some fairy tales.” “I wouldn't choose other stories. I would like that the teacher chooses the stories because I like the teacher's choice. I wouldn't choose other stories. I like it when both the teacher and the students choose the stories. All stories are good”.*

We can conclude that the teacher's choice of the stories was good and that that may be a factor for the enhancement of motivation for storytelling activities. Yang (2009) suggests that what makes a story interesting to the learners is an interesting content, a clear plot, interesting characters and a surprising ending. When choosing stories, the teachers should take into account the content, language used and illustrations. Teachers can choose between various storybooks such as fairy tales and traditional stories, fantasy stories, picture stories and fables. Authentic storybooks are a great choice because they provide students with authentic examples. That is

why stories selected for the storytelling sessions were traditional, authentic stories which convey messages which are important for nurturing our children. As we could read in the theoretical description, Loukia (2006) also lists some criteria for selecting a story. These are: fun and interesting content, attractive visuals, appropriate language level, raising motivation (developing imagination, arousing curiosity, drawing on personal experience), language learning potential (language practice, skills development, prediction, recycling, etc.) and potential of learning other subjects, culture, metacognition.

It is very important the way that the teacher reads. The teacher should take care of pronunciation, rhythm, intonation and repetition. Learners were asked whether their teacher read slowly and loudly enough. As proposed by Cho, Xu and Rhodes (2010), teachers should vary the tone, pace and volume of their voice. Mart (2012) agrees and says that teachers should read clearly and slowly so as to give time to the learners to think about what they hear. The teachers can also disguise their voice to act as different characters. Learners of both GLM and GHM expressed that their teacher did read slowly and loudly enough. This may mean that the teacher could be a factor to determine the level of the learners' motivation. One student said: "The teacher read slowly and loudly enough, very slowly because, that is very good, I really liked how slow the teacher read because then she could explain to us the words for those who didn't know them so it was easier for them." The teacher could be a reason why the GHM's motivation elevated.

To better indulge into this topic, we also need to look into whether the students prefer to read on their own or whether they prefer to listen to the teacher. GLM showed different results regarding this question. They expressed how they prefer that the teacher reads, they prefer both ways or they prefer to read by themselves. One learner said: "I like it more when the teacher reads because, sometimes when I read, I forget what I have read, while when somebody else reads, I remember it". GHM unanimously expressed how they prefer that the teacher reads the stories. They said: "I would like that the teacher reads first and then we try after her. I can't read on my own well so I prefer when the teacher reads." We can take into account that the teacher factor may be the reason why GLM's motivation stayed the same or declined and why GHM's motivation enhanced. Motivation for storytelling activities may have stayed the same or declined in those who prefer to read by themselves and may have enhanced in those who prefer that the teacher reads. However, we also need to take into account the fact that everybody stated how the teacher read well and no one expressed they had issues with the

way the teacher read. Next, what we need to observe is the difficulty or the simplicity with which the learners understood what was being read to them.

When asked about whether the learners understood the stories, we wanted to know whether the stories were at an appropriate language level. There are some criteria for choosing a story:

*“Does the book help meet curriculum objectives or enhance the thematic units being studied? Is the book’s content appropriate to the children’s age and intellectual level? Does the book use language that is at or slightly above the level of the learners? Does the book contain repeated, predictable language patterns? Are there clear illustrations that help the story?”* (Smallwood, 1988:66, as cited in Mart, 2012:102)”

GLM said that it wasn't hard for them to understand stories, while GHM said: “Some words were difficult to understand. Then I learned those words and told them to my mum and then she asked me how I knew them and then I told her.” One learner said: “It was difficult to understand the stories. English and the words were hard to understand.” Since the results are not clear enough, we cannot assume for sure whether the appropriateness of language level had influence on the learners' motivation for storytelling activities.

Yang (2009) states that learners are more attentive to stories which are interesting and contain simple vocabulary. In order for learners to better understand what is being read to them, the teacher picked out some unknown words and we negotiated their meaning together. This is in accordance with Porras González (2010) who says that the teacher's task is to select some new vocabulary items, but not too many. The author further emphasizes that crucial phrases and words should be pre-taught and Mart (2012) encourages teachers to repeat key vocabulary words and phrases during storytelling. Learners were asked whether the vocabulary exercise they did with their teacher before the storytelling helped them better understand the story. GLM said that the exercise did help them better understand the story. GHM also agree. One learner said: “The vocabulary we did before the story helped me better understand it. Exactly those words I didn’t know meaning of were there and then Lea and Luka knew their meaning.” However, one learner disagreed and said: “Not really. I don’t know. I couldn’t learn them right away.” We can conclude that the stories were at the appropriate language level and that almost all learners had no difficulty with comprehension.

Next, what is also important for the comprehension of stories are the illustrations. We have already elaborated on the importance of illustrations for the comprehension of meaning.

Mart (2012) emphasizes the importance of storybooks by saying that in storybooks, a combination of a text and related illustrations is supportive for the interpretation and understanding of the story. Porras González (2010) further points out the effectiveness of illustrations by saying that they help children make connections between pictures and words and thus help children better remember and understand the story. Yang (2009) agrees and claims that stories are better when they contain illustrations, especially for the least motivated learners because all children like pictures. Loukia (2006) further explains that illustrations and pictures act as a stimulus for memory exercising, hypothesizing, predicting and children associate words with pictures better. Pictures make the stories more memorable and serve as great tools for different kinds of activities. This is why it is important to find out whether the illustrations helped the participants better understand the story. GLM said that the pictures did help them understand the story better. GHM also agree that pictures helped them better comprehend the text. One learner said: "I looked at the pictures right away so I knew what the text means." We can conclude that pictures and illustrations are factors for raising motivation for storytelling activities.

Most stories the learners listened to were known to them from their childhood or Croatian class. Familiar stories were selected for storytelling sessions. This is in accordance with Hsiu-Chih (2008) who claims that when narratives are familiar to learners from their first language, this may make the foreign language seem "less foreign". This is why we need to see whether the learners better understood the stories they had already been familiar with. GLM expressed that the familiar stories were easier to understand. However, one learner said: "I don't know. I don't know whether we had those stories". GHM agreed that the familiar stories were easier to understand.

The learners were asked whether they think their teacher was interested in the stories she read. What shouldn't be left out when talking about motivation for storytelling activities is the factor of the teacher's interest in the stories. We have already stated that Feng and Chen (2009) stress the importance of the teacher's personality. The teachers who are considerate and enthusiastic offer satisfaction to the learners and strengthen learners' motivation. The teachers who physically and mentally pour into their teaching and those who are filled with affection help arouse the learners' learning enthusiasm. Learners model the characteristics of a closely related person. For this reason, parents' and teachers' good reading habits serve as a model for developing reading as a pleasurable activity. GLM think that the teacher was interested in the stories she read, while GHM agree. We cannot claim that the teacher's interest in stories was

the reason of the GHM's enhancement in motivation for storytelling activities because GLM also think that the teacher was interested in what she read.

The teacher asked the learners whether they prefer learning English through stories or without stories. This can maybe give us insight into whether those who like learning through stories exhibited enhanced motivation and those who do not prefer to learn English through stories experienced a lack of motivation. GLM expressed that they liked learning English through stories more and GHM agreed. One learner said: "I really like it because my mom always writes something and I find it boring. I prefer learning English through stories." Contrary to our proposition, there is no difference between the groups regarding their preference of learning English. The next question we are interested in is whether it is easier for the participants to understand English through the use of stories. We can again hypothesize that if it is easier for them to learn English through stories, their motivation will enhance and vice versa. Stories provide a meaningful context which encourages deeper understanding. Stories help learners review the vocabulary, trigger the learners' memory of some phrases and words and engage learners to use the existing knowledge and knowledge of the world to remember and understand the meaning of some phrases and words. Stories also enable teachers to explain something in simpler ways. Reading authentic literature benefits children greatly. Literature can contribute to language learning because it presents natural language and can foster vocabulary development in context. Literature can promote thinking skills and academic literacy and prepare children for the English-medium instruction. Literature functions as a change agent: it deals with some aspects of the human condition and can contribute to the emotional development of the child, as well as foster positive interpersonal and intercultural attitudes (Ghosn, 2002, as cited in Mart, 2012)".

GLM said it was easier for them to understand English through stories. One learner emphasized the already stated importance of illustrations: "I understand English better through stories that have pictures because they demonstrate how something happened." GHM agreed. One learner also emphasized the importance of pictures: "It is easier for me because I can see in the pictures what the story is about. I feel better when I see the pictures. They are cool." Another learner said: "I understand English better through stories because stories make me remember these words and there is translation to Croatian language in some books." The fact that stories make her remember the words is consistent with the fact that stories help learners review the vocabulary, trigger the learners' memory of some phrases and words and engage

learners to use the existing knowledge and knowledge of the world to remember and understand the meaning of some phrases and words.

Next, what we are interested in is whether the questions after the stories helped the learners think about the lesson of the story and about their lives. We can hypothesize that GLM don't think that these questions helped them understand and that GHM will say that the questions helped them connect the stories to their own lives. GLM said the questions did help them, however they didn't provide us with elaborate explanations on why it was so. GHM think the questions did help them think about the lesson of the story and their lives. One learner said: "Yes, they did, a lot because the questions were about what we learned and then it was easier for us to say it." One learner expressed how he was not sure whether the questions helped him. We cannot say that there are any differences between these two groups so we cannot conclude whether the discussion questions were a factor for determining motivation.

The last question in this section was whether the learners believe that the storytelling sessions made them want to read more in their free time. The EFL learners' motivation is a powerful basis for developing good English reading habits (Parker, 2006, as cited in Iftanti, 2012). We can assume GLM do not believe that storytelling sessions enhanced their motivation, while GHM believe that the reason behind this lies in the storytelling sessions. GLM said that the extracurricular activity made them want to read more, while one person said that he doesn't know. GHM said that they think the extracurricular activity made them read more. One learner said: "Well, yes because then I realise how easy it is and that these stories are really cool." The other learner said: "I do think that the extracurricular activity of reading stories made me want to read more myself because I want to learn something new." We can conclude that in the group whose motivation enhanced, all members believe they want to read more by themselves due to the storytelling sessions.

The fourth and the last set of questions examined pedagogical dimensions of stories. Their aim was to find out whether the stories have transmitted pedagogical values onto the learners. Loukia (2006:27) names several benefits of using storybooks and one of the benefits is that stories are fun and motivating and they develop positive attitudes toward learning. To find out whether our learners have fun when stories are used in the classroom, we asked them whether they enjoy listening to or reading stories. GLM said that they enjoy listening to and reading stories. The other group also expressed their likeness for listening to and reading stories. We can see that concerning the fun learners have while stories are being used, there is no difference between these two groups.

After reading the story, learners were asked comprehension questions. The questions were aimed at encouraging learners to connect the stories and the moral to their own lives. We wondered whether this attempt was successful so the learners were asked whether they could connect the stories to their own lives. GLM expressed how they could connect some stories to their lives, but some not. One learner said: “When we were doing the New Girl story about a girl who came from another country, that encouraged others to make friends with each other.” GHM also said that they could connect some stories to their own lives. One learner said: “Well, yes, because stories were fables so we learn from them, for example, that you shouldn't underestimate others and you shouldn't do harm to others.”

Yang (2009) claims that stories enable learners to develop their own emotions and feelings by identifying with story plots and characters. The author states that stories present children with an imaginary world that they can enjoy. They can identify with the characters and as a result they become personally involved in the story. We can conclude that stories enhance reflection and identification. Miller and Pennycuff (2008) add that we can understand each other's stories because we can recognize ourselves in them. This is why it is important to find out whether our participants could involve with the characters in the stories we read, whether they felt like them and which characters they could identify with. GLM said that they could involve with some characters they read about, however some of them stated that they weren't completely sure. One learner said: “I don't know. I felt like the tortoise and the frog which survived because they have almost the same traits like I do, persistence and being good.” GHM said they could identify with the story characters. One learner said: “I could involve with the characters in the stories we read because the stories were very interesting. I imagined that I was the character and I was really happy because it was really weird that it is me and that it is so interesting to me.” Another learner said: “When we had the tortoise and the hare and some other characters who drowned, I felt like them. When I was little and my mum taught me how to swim, I accidentally drowned a little. I could identify with the tortoise. My friend once told me that he would win in running and that I wouldn't be able to catch him up and in the end, I won.” We can see that GHM could identify with the characters and involve themselves more into the stories than GLM. We can also conclude that the stories enabled learners to identify with the story plots and characters.

Stories are the carriers of life's messages and that way occupy an important part in the education of children (Garvie, 1991, as cited in Mart, 2012). To see in what way stories shape children, we find it important to once again state that literature informs and entertains, enriches



lives and widens horizons, helps explore feelings and shape the readers' values (Galda and Cullinan, 2002). What is more, stories foster transformative powers of education because they encourage learners to understand and respect different values and cultures. Stories transmit values, traditions and knowledge and, in that way, they facilitate conceptual development of children (Yang, 2009). Stories convey moral behaviour, respect and responsibility to oneself, others and the environment. The aim was to find out whether the stories have transmitted knowledge and values onto the participants so they were asked what they had learned from the stories and what lessons had stayed with them. GLM expressed how they did remember some morals and lessons, but not all of them. One learner said: "I learned that one should never give up and that there is always something good in the bad. I don't remember any other morals." Another learner said: "I learned that sometimes it is not good to make fun of others because, one day, the one who makes fun of others won't be a good person." Another learner said: "I remembered that we should never give up. I don't remember any other lessons." GHM expressed a bit more elaborate answers. One learner said: "I learned that it is not good to do harm to others and that you shouldn't be evil to someone, that you never lose hope and that you should be good." Another learner said: "I remember that it is not important who is faster and who is slower and that it is important to help others." The third learner said: "I learned the morals. When the stronger one and the weaker one fight, the weaker one can sometimes win". We can conclude that the participants in GHM gave more elaborate answers on what they had learned from the stories.

To better examine whether the stories have indeed transmitted values and knowledge to the learners, a few more questions were asked. Since the aim of the "New Girl" story was to teach the participants that all people are unique and equal and that everybody, no matter how different from us they may be, deserves respect, the learners were asked whether they think that people who are different from us and live in another country should be respected. We are happy to say that members of both groups expressed their agreement with the fact that they should be respected. GLM said: "I do think that people who are different from us should be respected because they are all people and everybody is equal." Another learner answered positively: "Because that is nice and those from another countries will feel as if they have fit into the group and no one will make fun of them and they will not be new, but a part of the group." GHM said: "Yes, I do, very much because if somebody is different from us, you shouldn't exclude them from the games or be rude to them. They are also people and we must behave well to those who are different from us or have some difficulties." Another learner said:

“I think everybody should be respected so they don't feel lonely and sad.“ The third learner said: “Yes, I do because in some way, we are all the same. “ We are very satisfied with the learners' answers because they show that they have really taken in the pedagogical value of stories.

Discussion questions at the end of the storytelling session encouraged the learners to express their opinions, to agree or disagree with each other. Osman Abdel Haliem (2018) concludes that short stories enhance critical thinking and serve as a vehicle for self-expression because they help learners better express their own interpretations and opinion. Short stories thus carry pedagogical and educational values such as cultural tolerance, enhancement of critical thinking skills, personal reflection and acceptance of differences in opinion. Since the participants sometimes had different views on things, we wanted to find out whether they were angry when someone had a different opinion than theirs and whether they think other people's opinions should be respected. GLM said: “I wasn't angry because everyone had different opinions and they should be respected.“ GHM said that one should respect other people's opinions so they aren't sad: “Other people's opinions should be respected because sometimes the other opinion is better than mine.“ One learner said: “I wasn't angry because everybody has a right to their own opinion, but some learners were angry at somebody else's opinion. I think other people's opinions should be respected, but if somebody thinks you shouldn't help someone because they did something bad, then it is not okay to think so.“ All the participants showed that it is important to respect others and other people's opinions.

A story “Two Frogs in Milk“ can teach children about not giving up, fighting for what you want in life. During storytelling sessions, children connected this story to their own lives by saying examples when they gave up and when they fought till the end. This is why they were asked what they think about fighting for what you want in life. GLM said that it is important. One learner said: “Yes, it is important. Sometimes we need to stand up for ourselves, because if we don't, when we grow up, we won't be able to defend ourselves“ Another learner said: “I think you should fight for yourself because life is given as a gift to you.“ GHM expressed agreement. One learner said: “Well, yes, because if you can't go on in life without something and others take it away from you, for example, when mum and dad don't let you do something like a sport, and you really want to do it, you have to stand up for yourself and tell them that you really want to do it and then they will give in and let you do it.“

A story “The Rainbow Fish“ taught us the importance of sharing, making friends and the fact that beauty lies not in our looks, but in good deeds we do to others. We wanted to

examine our participants on what they think about the importance of sharing with others. GLM think sharing is important. One learner said: “I think sharing with others is important because we will have more friends. If we don't share with others, for example, our toys, they will feel sad.” GHM said: “I think it is important to share with others because if you don't share with others and take everything for yourself, then others won't give to you something that you will need.”

In the story “The Tortoise and the Hare“, the hare was bragging about his speed and underestimating the tortoise, but then the tortoise won the race. Learners talked about how it is not good to brag and told their experience when they felt like the tortoise and when they felt like the hare. We wanted to find out whether this message had stayed with them so they were asked whether they think it is nice to brag. GLM said it is not good to brag. One learner said: “It is not nice to brag because no one will be friends with us then.” Another learner said: “When you brag, everybody will believe you and when you won't have anything to talk about, you will start lying.” GHM also agreed with the message that it is not nice to brag. One learner said: “I don't think it's nice to brag because somebody has something that you don't have and then he will tell others how you don't have something and it's not okay because other will feel very bad.” Another learner said: “If you brag, nobody will like you.”

In the story “The New Girl“ we could learn about some Indian traditions. We wanted to find out whether they had remembered something from the story and whether they know something about other cultures. GLM said they had learned something, however, they don't seem to remember a lot. One learner said: “I learned that everybody is different, but if they all come together, they will eventually realise they are all equal.” Another learner said: “Yes, I did. For example, how some people from far countries do something. I think we talked about Africa, I don't remember.” From this answer we can see that the learner doesn't remember anything about India, but at least, he realised we did something about some other country. The third learner said: “I learned about the traditional dance from the story New Girl.” GHM also learned something, but not a lot. One learner said: “I learned that in some other countries, Christmas is celebrated differently and I learned about the Mizo dance.” We have not covered Christmas during our storytelling sessions so we can see that content from some other stories interfered with our extracurricular activity. This can be a sign that the reason for the students' enhanced motivation may not lie just in the storytelling sessions, but in some other stories or activities they did with other teachers. Another learner said: “I learned that we should respect people from other cultures. I think the traditional dance of India is nice.” We can conclude that there is no

difference between the groups and that some knowledge has stayed with them. It is more important that they think everybody is equal than that they have remembered some customs of other people.

We can once again Osman Abdel Haliem (2018:34): “Literature plays a critical role in our life, often without our notice. It helps us to explore both ourselves and others, to define and redefine who we are, who we might become, and how the world might be”. We can see how literature not only transmits knowledge, but leads to growth and nurtures the ones who read it. Ajibade and Ndububa (2008) point out that stories do not merely convey information, but lead to transformation. They contribute to the learner’s personal growth and change. Miller and Pennycuff (2008) claim that using storytelling as a pedagogical strategy enhances self-awareness. What is more, Osman Abdel Haliem (2018) says that the integration of literature in classrooms leads to personal involvement.

We have already asked our learners whether they could involve with the characters and whether they could connect the stories to their own lives. Now we are interested in whether they think the stories have changed them, whether the stories made them treat their family, friends and responsibilities differently and whether they have learned something about themselves through the stories. This enables us to directly see what influence stories have had on our learners and whether they have transmitted the pedagogical values onto them. GLM said that the stories had changed them in some ways. One learner said: “Yes, they have. I used to make fun of others before. When I heard those stories, I realized that it is not good to make fun of others.” However, when asked whether they learned something about themselves, this learner said that he hasn't. Maybe metacognitive awareness is what lacks in order for young learners to realise something new about themselves. Another learner said that stories had not changed him: “I don't think they have. Well, no, they haven't. I feel the same as in year 2019.” However, when asked about what he had learned about himself, he said: “I learned about who I am. For example, in some situations in a bad sense and in other situations in a good sense as some characters.” The third learner said: “The stories have changed me. I started helping others more.” When asked about whether he had learned anything about himself, he answered negatively. GHM said that stories have also changed them in some ways. One learner said: “I started doing school work more. I have never wanted to do harm to someone, but I have started helping others more. I don't want to be lazy any more so I have started helping others.” When asked whether she had learned anything about herself, the learner said: “Yes, for example, the things I did and didn't know that they were not good. Then I learned and now I don't do them.” Another learner said:

“I started reading interesting stories and I started behaving better towards my family and friends. I learned that I shouldn't brag.” Here we can see that not only have the stories transmitted pedagogical values, but the learner also says that because of the storytelling sessions, she has started reading more often. We can conclude that the storytelling sessions may be the reason of her enhancement in reading. The third student believes that the stories have not changed him and that he has not learned anything about himself.

Since books awaken sensitivity to others' needs and empathy for those in need, the learners were asked whether they felt empathy or compassion for some characters. Hoffman claims that there is a universal tendency for children to empathize with others. This allows them to validate their morality on the basis of the consequences for other people (Vitz, 1990). Knowing they might not know what empathy or compassion mean, they were given an example. GLM said they did feel empathy for some characters: “When a character felt sad, then I felt sad too.” Another learner said: “I felt empathy for the frog who drowned in the milk.” GHM said they also felt empathy for some characters: “If some character feels bad, then I feel sorry for him. But if the character does something wrong and is then sad, I feel sorry for him, too. Whatever one does, I can forgive.” From this example, not only does the learner express her empathy, but she also teaches us about forgiveness.

When listing several benefits of using storybooks, Loukia (2006:27) says that: “Stories exercise the imagination and are a useful tool in linking fantasy and the imagination with the child's real world.” Yang (2009) agrees and says that stories offer learners with an imaginary world, which created by language and that children can enter and enjoy. Miller and Pennycuff (2008) claim that using storytelling as a pedagogical strategy encourages visual imagery. This is why we were interested in finding out whether the participants could imagine the stories while the teacher was reading to them to see how much the stories have stimulated their imagination. GLM said they could imagine the stories while the teacher was reading. GHM said they could imagine some characters. Besides imagination stimulation, what can be fostered by children's books is critical thinking. I believe the learners were enabled to express their opinions and take critical positions towards what was being read. They spent most of the time expressing their thoughts and opinions on various themes. The last question they were asked was whether they think the stories have helped them express their opinion. GLM expressed that the stories did help them express their opinion. GHM also agreed. We can conclude that the stories have fostered critical thinking among the participants and that there is no difference between the two groups.

## 5. Conclusion

It is important to investigate motivation in second language because it helps us recognize the important aspects which determine the differences between the learners' motivation. Since today's society has neglected books and reading in general, this research was aimed at finding the place literature takes in motivating young learners to learn English and to engage in storytelling activities in English and recognizing once again the importance of reading and the importance of pedagogical dimensions stories carry. In this research, 3 hypotheses were set regarding the use of stories in an English language classroom. The first hypothesis is that those who will take part in storytelling activities in an English language classroom even for a shorter period of time will report increase in general motivation for learning English. By analysing the first 6 statements in a questionnaire, they showed that there was no enhancement in general motivation for learning English and no difference between the experimental and the control group. Taking into account that motivation is a complex factor, it is presumed that it will take more time for stories to influence general motivation for learning English than just 5 storytelling sessions. I propose this topic for further research.

Concerning the second hypothesis, which is that those who will take part in storytelling activities in an English language classroom even for a shorter period of time will report increase in motivation for storytelling activities and their pedagogical and educational values, the results also show no enhancement. To discuss further these results, the in-depth interview was carried out with three learners whose motivation for storytelling activities stayed the same or declined and three learners whose motivation enhanced to see what are the differences between these two groups. We can conclude that the group who was more motivated for storytelling activities exhibited higher perception of English competence, named more intrinsically-motivated reasons for reading, liked the choice of the stories, had some difficulty with comprehension and believe that the storytelling sessions enhanced their motivation for reading. We can also conclude that there was interference of other stories, workshops and games happening at the school during the storytelling sessions.

The third hypothesis, that stories transmit pedagogical and educational values can be confirmed. The participants enjoyed listening to stories and they could connect them to their own lives. We can conclude that stories transmit values such as respect, love, unity, tolerance. They entertain the listeners, help with issues in cross-cultural communication, awaken children's sensitivity to other people's needs and empathy. They enable children develop

feelings by identifying with story characters and plots. They develop creativity, critical thinking skills, self-awareness moral behaviour, identification and reflection in classroom. They deepen children's knowledge and lead to transformation.

I believe a minor setback of this research is the number of participants. In the future research, more participants should be selected and more schools should participate in this research. The number of stories was also not sufficient enough. This is supported with the fact that results show no enhancement in general motivation for learning English. For future research I propose that the storytelling sessions last at least a year so we can see their influences on the learners. What enables us to draw any elaborate conclusions is the fact that during the storytelling sessions, the students read stories and had workshops and games with other teachers so we cannot know for sure whether their enhancement in reading was due to the storytelling sessions. I firmly believe that future research with more participants and longer period of storytelling sessions would give us more insight into the differences between these learners and eventually help us develop nurturing environments supportive of reading and learning.

“Children delight in imagination and fantasy. It is more than simply a matter of enjoyment, however, in the language classroom this capacity for fantasy and imagination has a very constructive part to play” (Halliwell, 1993:7 as cited in Mart, 2012:104).

Schools are not merely institutions with the role of education, but also nurture. I believe if great focus is put on nurturing our students, they will be much more motivated to learn and this in turn will affect their achievement. Then great achievement will be a consequence of our support for the students, and their motivation to learn will be a consequence of our nurture. Motivation to learn and to read do not have to be a mere goal, but the consequence of our nurture for the students. As teacher Liz Lumpkins put it, "A successful thematic unit plants the seeds for continued investigation and further inquiry in students' minds that will grow into a lifelong yearning for knowledge" (Sorensen and Lehman, 1995:135).

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## 7. Sažetak

Ovaj diplomski rad se usredotočuje na utjecaj priča na motivaciju za učenjem engleskog jezika kod mladih učenika, motivaciju za sudjelovanjem u aktivnostima vezanim uz priče te pedagoškim dimenzijama. Rad započinje izlaganjem teorijskog okvira koji se bavi istraživanjima tema motivacije za učenjem engleskog jezika, motivacije za sudjelovanjem u aktivnostima vezanih uz priču te pedagoškim i obrazovnim aspektima priča. Pozornost se također daje nekim praktičnim savjetima o tome kako implementirati priče u učionicu engleskog jezika. Istraživanje provedeno među polaznicima trećih razreda osnovne škole „Hrvatski Leskovac“ ispitalo je jesu li intervencije pripovijedanja priča (tijekom razdoblja od 10 tjedana) poboljšale opću motivaciju učenika za učenjem engleskog jezika, motivaciju za aktivnostima vezanih uz priče i jesu li priče prenijele pedagoške i obrazovne vrijednosti na učenike. Metodologiju ovog istraživanja prate rezultati i rasprava koja dodatno problematizira čimbenike koji utječu na već spomenute teme. Zaključak sumira nalaze koji pokazuju da se opća motivacija za učenjem engleskog jezika nije promijenila nakon intervencija pripovijedanja tijekom deset tjedana. Istraživanje je isto tako pokazalo kako nije došlo do poboljšanja motivacije za sudjelovanjem u aktivnostima vezanih za priče. Rezultate prati dubinski intervju koji ispituje razlike između trojice učenika čija se motivacija za aktivnost povećala te trojice čija se motivacija smanjila ili ostala ista. Istraživanje isto tako zaključuje kako priče prenose pedagoške vrijednosti. Detaljan opis mogućih razloga takvih rezultata predstavljen je u odjeljku za raspravu.

*Ključne riječi: opća motivacija, pedagoške dimenzije, pripovijedanje, čitanje priča*

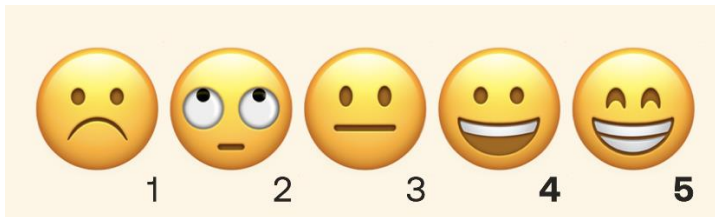
## 8. Appendix

### 1) Smiley questionnaire

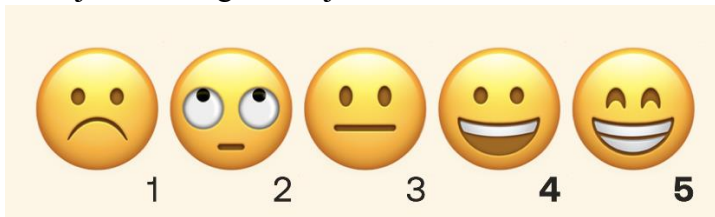
Ime i prezime: \_\_\_\_\_

Zaokruži broj ispod smajlića koji najbolje opisuje u kojoj mjeri se rečenica iznad odnosi na tebe.

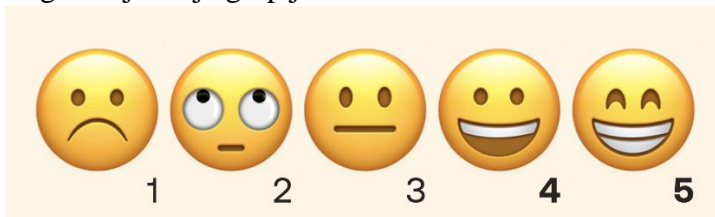
1. Engleski jezik je vrlo lijep jezik.



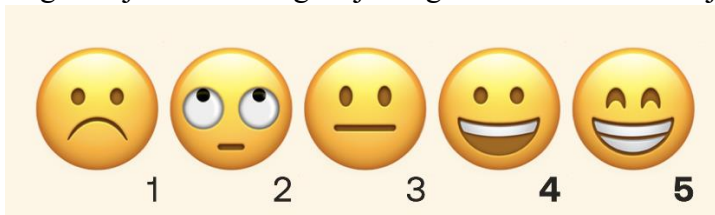
2. Sviđaju mi se engleske riječi.



3. Engleski jezik je glup jezik.



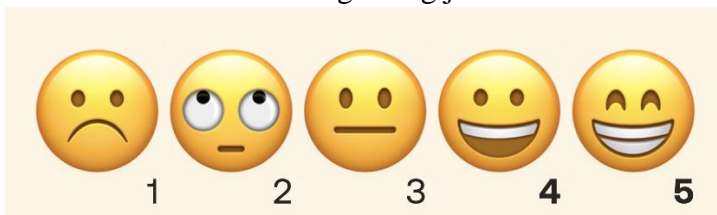
4. Engleski jezik mi omogućuje razgovor sa strancima koje susrećem.



5. Engleski će mi pomoći u budućem poslu.

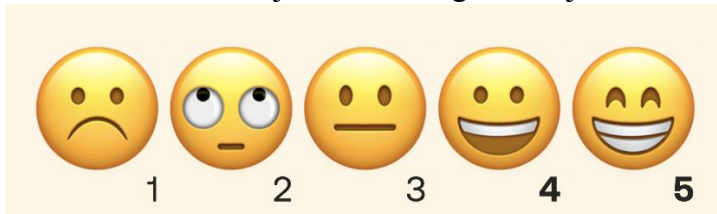


6. Volim biti na satovima engleskog jezika.

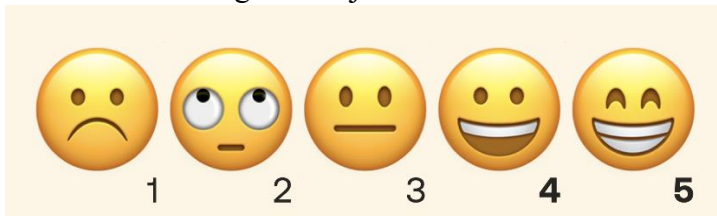


Zaokruži broj ispod smajlića koji najbolje opisuje u kojoj mjeri se rečenica iznad odnosi na tebe.

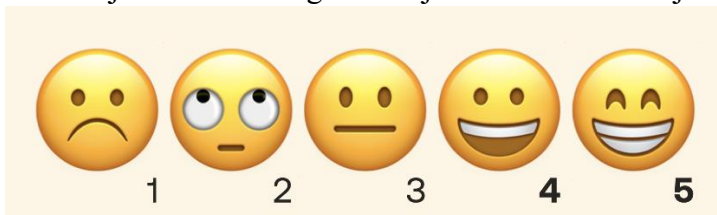
1. Volim kada mi učiteljica čita na engleskom jeziku.



2. Volim čitati na engleskom jeziku.



3. Priče koje slušam na engleskom jeziku su mi zanimljive.



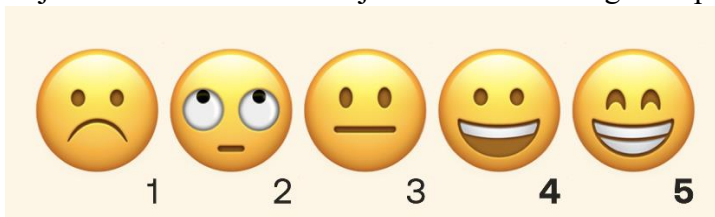
4. Veselim se kada slušam engleske priče.



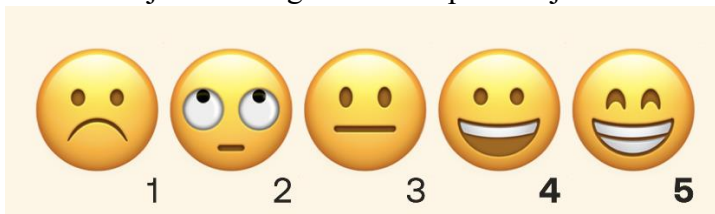
5. Volim kada priče koje slušam na engleskom jeziku imaju pouku.



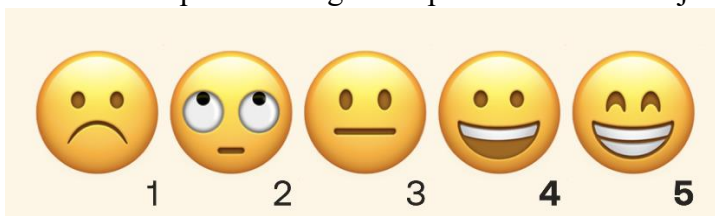
6. Osjećam se dobro i zadovoljno kada slušam engleske priče.



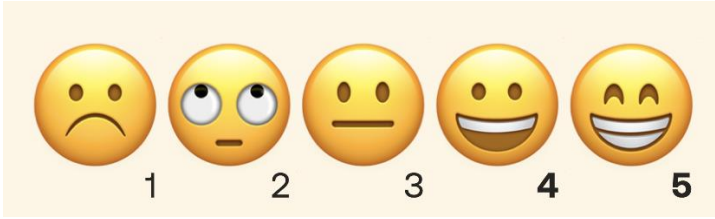
7. Često se osjećam kao glavni lik iz priče koju slušam na engleskom jeziku.



8. Mislim da su pouke iz engleskih priča korisne za moj život.



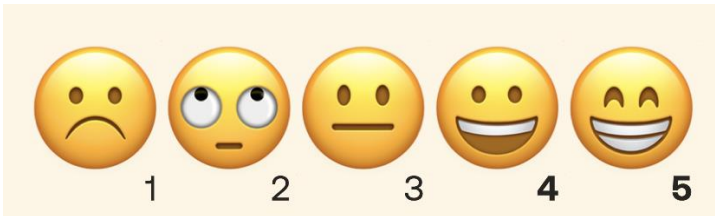
9. Volim kada iz priče koju slušam naučim nešto o životu drugih ljudi, njihovim vrlinama manama i običajima.



10. Slušanje engleskih priča mi je zabavno.

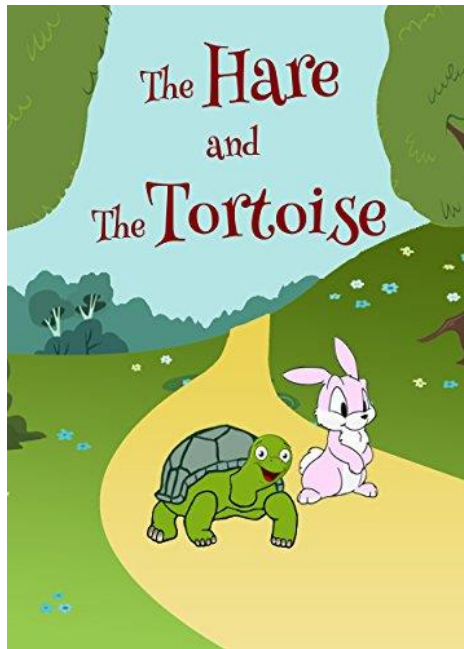


11. Slušanje priča mi potiče znatizeljju da i sam više čitam.



## 2) Stories

### The Tortoise and the Hare



1. Are you familiar with the story? Have some of you already read it?
2. Match the words to their meanings.

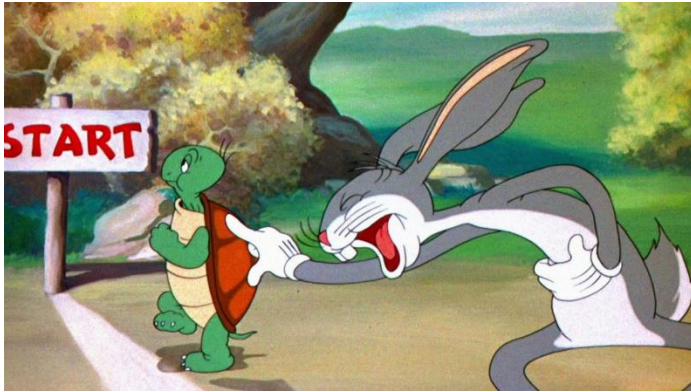
- |                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| a) a tortoise  | 1) selo               |
| b) a hare      | 2) miran/tih          |
| c) a village   | 3) hvalisti se        |
| d) quiet       | 4) utrka              |
| e) hardworking | 5) odustati           |
| f) to boast    | 6) postojano          |
| g) to brag     | 7) kornjača           |
| h) to give up  | 8) spavanje na kratko |
| i) a race      | 9) hvalisati se       |
| j) steadily    | 10) zec               |
| k) a nap       | 11) vrijedan/marljiv  |



**Now listen to the story:**

Once upon a time, a hare and a tortoise lived in the same village. The hare was known for being loud and lazy. The tortoise was known to be quiet and hardworking.

The hare often boasted: “I am the fastest animal in town.” When he heard the tortoise bragging, the tortoise thought: “You are fast, it's true. But I work hard and won't give up”.



One day, the town had a race. Only the tortoise was brave enough to race against the hare.

The fox was the referee. “Get! Set! Go!” he said.

The hare raced away, sprinting ahead as fast as he could.

The tortoise followed, slowly and steadily.

After running at full speed for several minutes, the hare got tired. He looked down the road.

“That tortoise is slow and I am fast,” he said. He laid down for a nap.



While the hare napped, the tortoise kept walking. The tortoise walked slowly until he reached the finish line, passing the hare resting on the side of the road.



The hare was fast, but the tortoise was right: **slow and steady wins the race!**

1. What is the story about?
2. What do you think is the moral of this story?
3. Why do you think it was the tortoise who won in the end?
4. In what areas of your life are you as hardworking as the tortoise?
5. Do you ever brag like the hare and what about?

### The New Girl

#### 3. Match the words to their meanings.

- |                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| l) To stare       | 1) ismijavati |
| m) To make fun of | 2) buljiti    |
| n) a foreigner    | 3) uznemiren  |
| o) upset          | 4) stranac    |
| p) excitement     | 5) preskočiti |
| q) to skip        | 6) uzbuđenje  |

#### Now listen to the story:

There is a new girl at Mira's bus-stop today. Everyone stares at her. No one talks to her. On the school bus, everybody sits with their friends. The new girl sits alone.



At school, the teacher has a surprise for Mira and her classmates. "We have a new friend in our classroom!" It is the new girl! Everyone stares at the new girl. "She looks different!" they say. The teacher says they must be kind and helpful to Zenie – that's the name of the new girl.



Mira remembers being the new girl once. Nobody spoke to her. Nobody played with her. She smiles at Zenie. Zenie smiles back. She shares her lunch with her. They sit together on the bus-ride home and even play in the evening. They are BEST FRIENDS!



Some children make fun of Zenie. They call her names that mean 'foreigner'. "She is INDIAN!" Mira tells them angrily. But they simply laugh. Zenie is upset. "It's okay to be different!" Mira tells her. Mira has often heard her mother say that to her brother who gets teased about his glasses.

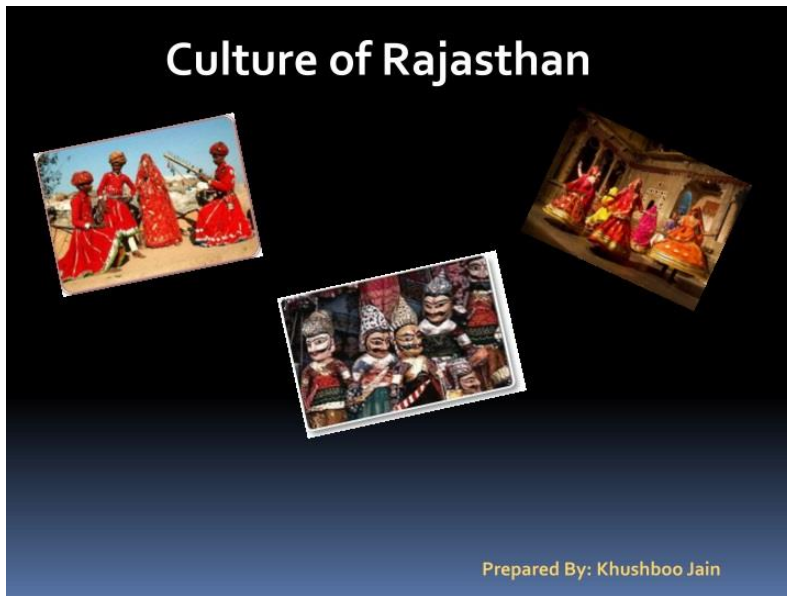


One day, the teacher gives them a new project. Everyone is excited. Everyone, except Zenie. "What should I do, Mira?" she asks. "Don't worry, Zenie! You can talk about your family, festivals, or your home." Mira tells her. "But they will laugh at me, Mira!" she says. "When you speak, just look at the people who are nice to you," Mira tells her, remembering her mother's words.

When the big day arrives, there is plenty of excitement in the classroom. The teacher takes pictures of them in their costumes. Zenie is not to be seen. She was not at the bus-stop either. Mira hopes she is not skipping school on this special day. Soon it is time to begin.



Other children talk about festivals and traditions, food and famous people of India. When it is Mira's turn, she proudly presents a slideshow about the state of Rajasthan, where she was born. Then, someone with tall hat walks in.



It is... Zenie! They can hardly recognize her with her costume and make-up! Mira can tell that she is nervous. "I come from Mizoram, one of India's twenty-nine states," Zenie begins. Everyone listens intently. They've never heard her speak much. "My dress is called a puanchei. Now I will show you a Mizo dance called Chheihlam."





The teacher turns on the music. Zenie begins to move gracefully, enjoying herself. Some children giggle, but she ignores them. She is enjoying herself so much that nothing can stop her. Soon the teacher joins Zenie. A few children dance along too. Others, like Mira, clap to the rhythm of the music. Everyone is having fun!



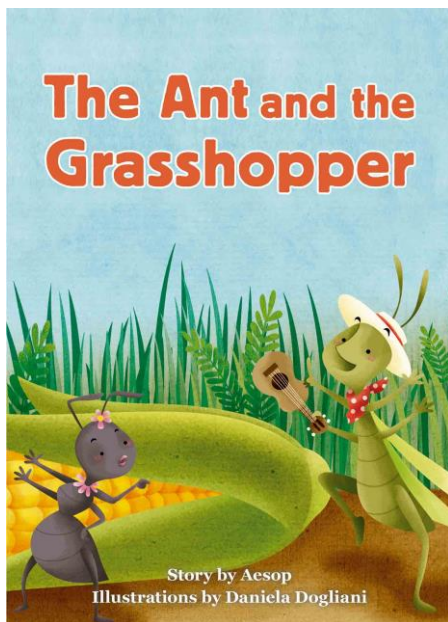
When the music stops, so does Zenie. There is a sudden silence in the classroom. The teacher claps her hands. The entire class joins in. On the bus-ride home, Zenie is very happy. "You were right, Mira! It is okay to be different." No one teases Zenie anymore. She is now 'one of them'!



1. What is the story about?
2. What is the moral of the story?

3. Have you ever felt different from others?
4. Were you teased for that?
5. How did that make you feel?
6. Do you think some people or cultures are better than the other ones?

### The Ant and the Grasshopper



4. Are you familiar with the story? Have some of you already read it?
5. Match the words to their meanings.

a nest

to gather

to suggest

plenty

to worry

freezing

jako hladno

predložiti

mnogo

brinuti se

gnijezdo

drhtati

to shiver

skupiti

**Now read the story:**

On a warm summer day, a grasshopper jumped from one place to another in a field, happily singing. Nearby, an ant worked very hard under the hot sun. One by one, he carried corn onto his shoulders and carried them back to his nest.

“Come join me,” said the grasshopper. “We’ll sing and dance and make beautiful music“

“I have no time to make music,” said the ant. “I’m gathering food for the long winter ahead. I suggest you do the same, if you know what’s good for you.“



The grasshopper merely laughed. “I have plenty to eat today. Winter is not coming soon. Why worry on such a lovely day?“

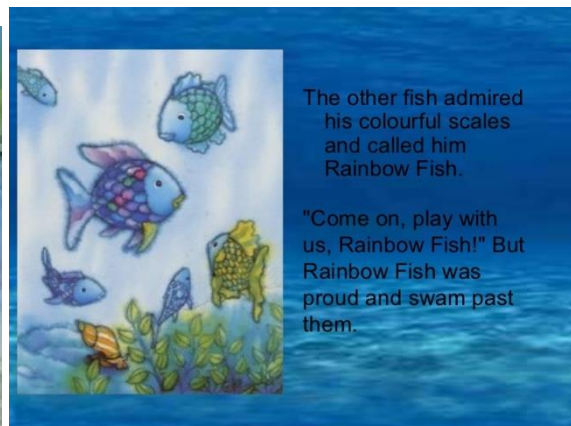
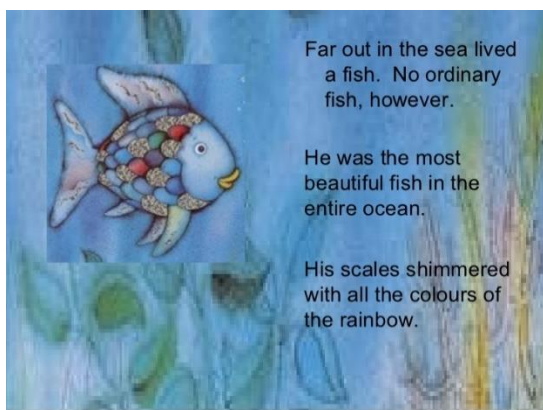
Summer turned to autumn, autumn to winter. Now the field was covered in snow. The ant was burrowed deep in his nest, warm and happy. He had enough food to last the whole winter. But the grasshopper was no longer singing a happy song. “It’s freezing,” he shivered. “I’m starving. If only I had listened to the ant’s advice!“

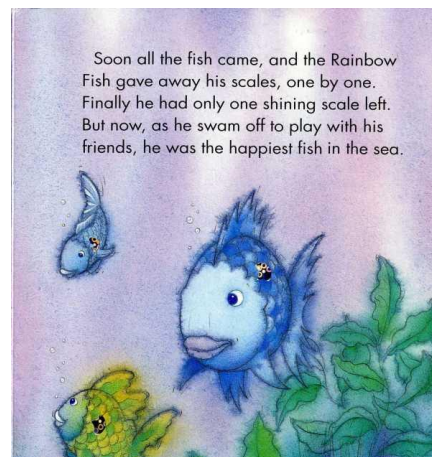
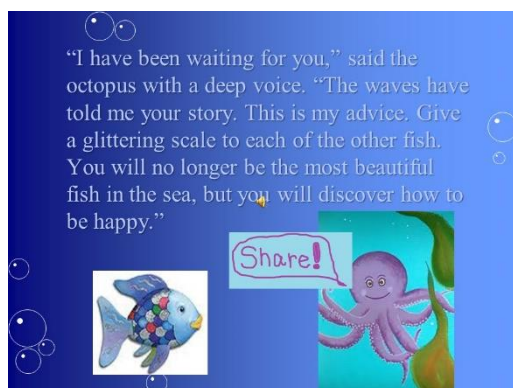
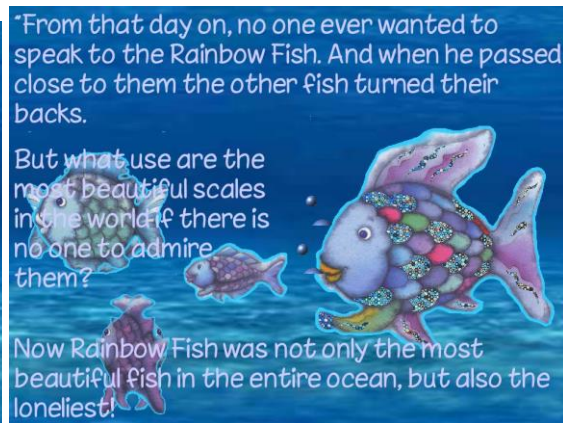
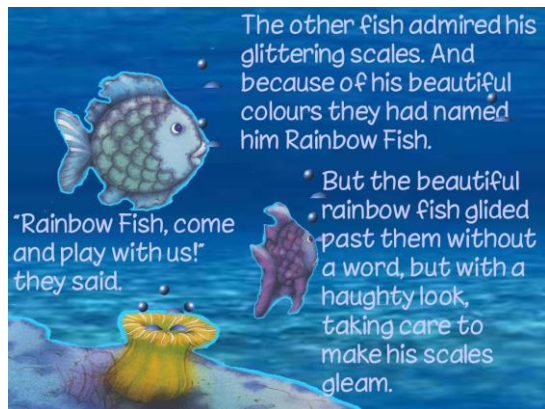




1. What do you think is the moral of the story?
2. Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you needed to work, but wanted to play? How did you feel?
3. Do you have certain time for work and special time for play?
4. Do you think working too much or playing too much is good and if not, why not?
5. Describe one situation where you ended up like the grasshopper and one in which you acted like the ant.

### **The Rainbow Fish**





Have you ever had something that you didn't want to share? What was it? Why didn't you want to share it?

Did it make you happier or sadder to share the item?

Are there some things which are okay not to share?

Would it be a good thing if Rainow gave away all his scales?

Do you share everything with your friends?

What makes a person beautiful?

What is more beautiful: the way a person looks or behaves? Which lasts longer? Which leads to greater happiness?

Does sharing make a person happier?

Is having friends more important than being beautiful?

Does being admired make you happy?

## Frogs in the Milk

Match the words to their meanings.

a bucket	sklisko
slippery	kanta
to drown	veslati
to give up	utopiti se
to paddle	odustati
to be exhausted	besmislica
nonsense	bučkati
to churn	biti iscrpljen

Now listen to the story:

This is the story of two frogs. One of them was fat and the other one was skinny. One fine day, when they were looking for food, they jumped into a bucket of milk.



Now, as the sides were too slippery they were unable to get out. The fat frog spoke to the skinny frog, “Brother, swimming is of no use anymore. We’re going to drown, so we should



give up.” The skinny frog looked in surprise and said, “Hold on my friend, keep swimming. Someone will get us out.” And they continued paddling for some time.



After a while, the fat frog said, “Brother, there’s no use. I’m really exhausted now. I’m just going to stop paddling. We’re doomed. There’s no way out of here.” But the skinny frog said, “Keep trying. Keep swimming. Keep paddling.” Another couple of hours passed.

The fat frog said, ” This is nonsense, I can’t go on any longer. We’re going to drown anyway. What’s the use?” And then he gave up, he drowned in the milk. But the skinny frog kept on paddling.

Ten minutes later, the skinny frog felt something solid beneath his feet. He had churned the milk into butter and he jumped out of the bucket.

What is the moral of the story?

In what situations in life did you give up? What happened?

In what situations were you brave and persistent? What happened?

How do you think we should think in hard situations: positive thoughts or negative ones?

Do you think we should give up when we think can't hold on any longer?

Do you think it is important to believe in yourself and in the happy ending?

### 3) Motivation interview questions

#### Reading Background

1. Što radiš u slobodno vrijeme?
2. Voliš li čitati?
3. Čitaš li u slobodno vrijeme?
4. Koliko često čitaš u jednom tjednu?
5. Čitaš li samostalno ili ti roditelji čitaju?
6. Koliko knjiga imaš doma?
7. Imaš li posebno mjesto za čitanje?
8. Čitaš li knjige ili čitaš na ipadu/tabletu/kompjuteru?
9. Govore li ti roditelji da je važno čitati?
10. Jesu li ti roditelji odredili posebno vrijeme za čitanje?
11. Govore li ti učitelji o važnosti čitanja?
12. Potiču li te učitelji da čitaš?
13. Koliko smatraš da znaš engleski jezik?
14. Misliš li da je važno čitati? Ako da, zašto? Zašto ti čitaš?
15. Misliš li da si dobar u čitanju na engleskom jeziku?

#### Other Activities

1. Što ste radili u školi u prvom polugodištu? Jeste li čitali neke priče ili knjige?
2. Koje ste priče ili knjige čitali? Jesu li ti se svidjele?
3. Jeste li imali neke radionice, igrali neke igre? Što pamtiš da ti se jako svidjelo što ste radili u školi?
4. Koji jezik učiš?
5. Jeste li na tom predmetu čitali neke priče? Jesu li ti se svidjele? Jeste li imali neke radionice, igrali neke igre? Što pamtiš da ti se jako svidjelo što ste radili na tom predmetu?

#### Evaluation of Storytelling Sessions

1. Je li ti se svidjela izvannastavna aktivnost čitanja priča? Što ti se svidjelo?
2. Je li ti se svidio izbor priča? Bi li ti izabrao/la neke druge priče? Bi li radije da učiteljica bira priče ili da sam/a možeš izabrati?

3. Ima li nešto što ti se nije svidjelo? Što bi promijenio/la?
4. Možeš li zamisliti neku aktivnost vezanu uz čitanje u kojoj bi rado htio/htjela sudjelovati?
5. Sviđa li ti se više da učiteljica čita priče ili više voliš sam/a čitati?
6. Je li ti teško bilo razumjeti priče?
7. Je li učiteljica dovoljno sporo i glasno čitala?
8. Misliš li da je učiteljica bila zainteresirana za priče koje je čitala?
9. Jesu li ti slike uz priče pomogle razumjeti priče?
10. Jesi li lakše razumio/la priče koje su ti poznate sa satova hrvatskog jezika?
11. Jesu li ti riječi koje smo radili prije priča pomogle da razumiješ priču?
12. Voliš li učiti kroz priče? Voliš li više učiti engleski kroz priče?
13. Je li ti lakše razumjeti engleski kroz priče?
14. Jesu li ti pitanja nakon priča pomogla razmišljati o pouci priče i o svom životu ?
15. Misliš li da nakon izvannastavne aktivnosti čitanja priča želiš i sam/a više čitati?

### **Pedagogical Dimensions**

1. Uživaš li u čitanju/slušanju priča?
2. Jesi li mogao/la povezati priče sa svojim životom?
3. Jesi li se mogao/la uživjeti u likove priča koje smo čitali?
4. Jesi li se osjećao/la kao likovi iz priča koje smo čitali?
5. S kojim likovima si se mogao/la poistovjetiti? Kako si se osjećao/la?
6. Što si naučio/la iz priča?
7. Koje pouke si zapamtio/la?
8. Jesu li te priče promijenile? Jesi li se zbog priča počeo/la drugačije odnositi prema obitelji, prijateljima, školi, svojim obavezama?
9. Jesi li naučio/la nešto o sebi kroz slušanje priča?
10. Jesi li osjećao/la empatiju/suosjećanje prema nekim likovima?
11. Jesi li si mogao/la zamisliti priče dok je učiteljica čitala?
12. Jesu li ti priče pomogle da izraziš svoje mišljenje?
13. Misliš li da treba poštivati ljude koji su drugačiji od nas, žive u drugoj zemlji?
14. Jesi li se ljutio/la kada je netko imao drugačije mišljenje od tvojeg?
15. Misliš li da treba poštivati tuđa mišljenja?
16. Misliš li da je važno dijeliti s drugima?
17. Što misliš o tome da je važno boriti se za ono što želiš u životu?

18. Misliš li da je lijepo hvalisati se?

19. Jesi li naučio/la nešto o drugim kulturama i što?