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FAIRY TALES' EFFECT ON THE ARTICULATION SKILLS OF THREE AND FOUR-YEAR OLDS IN PRIVATE KINDERGARTENS AND DAY CARE CENTERS

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ABSTRACT

Problem Statement: Fairy tales are the first literary works which children get to know in preschool. Fairy tales affect children's language development, improve their vocabulary, increase their grammatical knowledge, teach the correct pronunciation of words and enhance their articulation skills. It is need to be contribute determining to relation between articulation skills and fairy tales.

Purpose of the Study: In this context, this study aims to determine the effect of telling fairy tales on the articulation skills to three and four-year-olds in private kindergartens and day care centers.

Methods: This study used a pretest, training and a posttest with experimental and control groups. The researchers administered the Word Pronunciation Test as the pretest and posttest. This test was created and printed by the Finnish Broadcasting Company and Finland's Ministry of Education and Culture's Counseling and Research Center (1990). The validity and reliability analyses of the test were also done by the same institutions. The study's sample included 72 children (36 females and 36 males) who were selected using random sampling from the day care centers and kindergartens of the Duzce Provincial Directorate's Social Services and Child Protection Agency in the 2013-2014 academic year. The researchers told fairy tales to the children in two 25-minute sessions a week for nine weeks. The tales were told based on learning and teaching methods. After telling the fairy tales to the children, the researchers determined the differences between the experimental and control group.

Findings: This study found no difference between the experimental and control groups' results on the Word Pronunciation Test after telling them fairy tales. However, there was a slight increase in the results of the experimental group on the posttest. The researchers plan to examine the influence of fairy tales on other child development using different variables. The researchers also plan to do this study again with a larger sample.

Conclusion and Recommendations: It is appropriate for all educators and parents to take language activities as well as fairy tale telling as a basis for supporting articulation skills, which is a fundamental precondition for children's linguistic achievements.

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INTRODUCTION

Many parents don't aware of the tales are so beneficial for childrens' development. So their point of view the tales are an enjoying and diverting activities. However it is thought to tales have significant benefits about childrens' cognitive, social, emotional, language development area and still many researches is made about this. The tale of the benefits of language areas are emphasized particularly receptive language skills (Yalcin and Giyasettin 2003).

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But it is thought tales not only benefits on childrens' receptive language skills but also benefits on enunciative language skills in other words; childrens' articulation skills. Tale definitions are so complex and diversed. Fairy tales are a type of folk narrative that has been told by common people for centuries. They include supernatural characters and events and start with clichés such as, "Once upon a time." They were an oral tradition long before they came to be written down (Sakr, Connelly, Wild, 2016; Seyidoglu, 1985). The Turkish Language Association (TLA) (1998) described a fairy tale as, "an interesting story featuring supernatural events and usually told to children" and "stories created by common people, which are transmitted from generation to generation by the

word of mouth and feature supernatural events experienced by gods and humans." fairy tales, one of the most important forms of oral literature, as prose literature about traditional and collective characters who undergo natural and supernatural events. It uses its own concepts and narrative style and is also didactic (Kim, 2016; Guleryuz, 2006; Aslan, 2003; Boratav, 2000). All children are highly interested in fairy tales in preschool. Children are attracted to fairy tales due to their mysterious atmosphere, adventures and fantastic events and since good characters usually defeat bad characters. In other words, fairy tales present a world which is closer to that of children (Diliduzgun, 1996). Fairy tales, the first type of literature children get to know, play a major role in improving children's imagination and creative thinking, finding new solutions to problems, socializing, having positive thoughts, making acquisitions in their native language and enhancing their articulation skills. It particularly supports children in their comprehensive and expressive language skills. It is very important that exclamations, adjectives and adverbs are used correctly. According to Boratav (1992), one of the most important ways fairy tales help children is their contribution to the development of speaking skills. Correct and effective language use is one of the fundamental goals of the Turkish educational systems' preschool programs (N.E.M., 2013). Including activities that support reading, speaking, listening, asking questions and writing skills in home and school activities will help improve children's native language skills. In this context, fairy tales are resources that present fine examples of their native language to children and give them a taste of literary pleasure in their early childhood. Fairy tales are based on narration and have a unique logic. They are accepted as the first and most important source of children's literature around the world. Fairy tales are not true stories but products of imagination. Reality is represented indirectly in fairy tales (Arici, 2009; Propp, 2001; Sanders, 2006). Fairy tales make many important and valuable contributions to children's development. When a fairy tale is being told, there is communication between the narrator and the child and at the same time, all mental skills of the child are activated (Meyer, Ostrosky, Yu, Favazza, Mouzourou, Luling, Park, 2016; Kucukyazici, 2014). Therefore children may seem to passive but they are very active during tale activities.

Fairy tales include both vocabulary and expressions that are appropriate for children and vocabulary and expressions that are brand-new to them. Children improve their vocabulary when listening to these fairy tales, reading them and retelling them in words or writing (Gurel, Temizyurek and Sahbaz, 2007; Teager and Teager, 1983). Fairy tales determine children's ways of speaking and the vocabulary they will use. They also enhance their vocabulary. Children who listen to fairy tales learn Turkish syntax and grammar (Mert, 2012; Kayiran, 2011 and Er, 2009). Fairy tales also have a positive effect on children's pronunciation and articulation skills. Fairy tales told to children in their early childhood contribute to the four skills used to produce the human voice, which are: 1) expiration, 2) phonation, 3) resonance and 4) articulation. Articulation is an important stage. It is described as physical arranging the speech organs to make understandable speech sounds (Altundag, 2008; Sabar, 2008; Sapir *et al.*, 2002; Stemple, 2000; Helimoglu, 1997; Garretson and Robert, 1993; Starkweather, 1987). The development of articulation skills occurs along with other forms of children's development. Fairy tales play a major role in developing children's articulation skills. Thus, the authors designed this study since telling and

listening to fairy tales involves movements and imitation, the use of the jaw, lips, the tongue and mouth, and listening to sounds, syllables, proverbs and idioms. The research main problem consisted whether tales effect on childrens' articulation skills and if any impact this impacts' dimensions for socio-demographic qualifications.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

This is a quantitative study with a pretest, training and a posttest for its experimental group and only the tests for the control group. Because of detecting the causation among variables, the experimental model was an research area which is product of datas (Buyukozturk, 2000 and Karasar, 2005). The researchers analyzed the study data using arithmetic means, standard deviations and p values for the independent samples. This study's statistical significance threshold was $p < 0.05$.

Research Sample

For the purpose of representing the universe completely the population of the study included the day care centers and kindergartens of the Social Services and Child Protection Agency of the Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Policies in the province of Duzce. The sample of the study included 72 children (36 females and 36 males) who were selected using random sampling in the 2013-2014 academic year. Thirty-six children (18 females and 18 males) were selected from the sample and included in the control group.

Table 1. The distribution of the participant children by age and gender

Gender	Age	Experimental Group	Control Group
Female	3 year-olds	9	9
	4 year-olds	9	9
Male	3 year-olds	9	9
	4 year-olds	9	9
Total		36	36

Research Instrument and Procedure

The researchers scanned relevant literature studies and designed a 'Personal Information Form' to inquire about the demographic information of the participants and their families. The personal information form included information about the children's dates of birth, gender, number of siblings (if any), birth order, family structure and their parents' marital status, educational level, age and economic level. To examine the expressive language development and articulation skills of children from two and a half and eight years old, the researchers administered the 'Word Pronunciation Test', which was created by the Finnish Broadcasting Company and Turkey's Ministry of Education and Culture's Counseling and Research Center General Directorate of Special Education and Counseling Services (1990). The validity and reliability analyses of the test were done by the Finnish Broadcasting Company (1990). This test identifies children mispronunciations and can be used to to identify speech disorders. Test measures the enunciative language skills. The test focus on the sounds of skipping, attachment, relocation, distortions in native language. First, the researchers conducted the pretest for the control and experimental groups. Then the

control group was provided with the training program. The training included two 25-minute sessions a week during nine weeks. Each session included three different fairy tales told using different techniques. In total, the training program included 54 fairy tales. The same test was administered again as the posttest after the training was completed.

Data Analysis

To analyze the study data, the researchers combined the results of the Word Pronunciation Test and those of the pretest and the posttest. The researchers also did the t-test, which is used for in-group and inter-group comparisons, to identify the differences between the control and experimental groups' articulation skills.

Findings

This part consist from; childrens' 'Word Pronunciation Test' results before and after telling tales for experimental and control groups of distributions. Table 2 shows that there was no significant difference between the two groups to the pretest scores ($P>0.05$). This finding showed that experimental and control groups had equal articulation skills.

Table 2. Experimental and Control Groups' Pretest Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and t-test Results Before the Experiment

Gruplar		N	X	SS	Result
Articulation	Experimental	36	10,79	2,754	T= -,253
Pre test	Control	36	10,88	2,989	SD=82

($P>0.05$)

Table 3 shows that there was a slight difference between the pretest mean score (10.79) and the posttest mean score (11.82) of the experimental group, but it was not statistically significant ($P>0.05$). This finding indicates that telling fairy tales does not have a significant effect on the development of children's articulation skills. Yavuz (1999), argued that fairy tales were effective in learning native languages; however, the main themes were told using a dynamic language, actions were dominant in this language and the readers were entranced by the plot of the books.

Table 3. The Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and t-test Results of the Experimental Group on the Pretest and Posttest

Tests	N	X	SS	P
Pre test	36	10,79	2,754	
Post test	36	11,82	3,152	,873

($P>0.05$).

Table 4. Experimental and Control Groups' Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and t-test Results on the Implementation

Tests	Groups	N	X	S	P
Pretest	Experimental	36	10.79	2.754	0.808
	Control	36	10.88	2.989	
Posttest	Experimental	36	11.82	3.152	
	Control	36	10.97	3.165	

($P>0.05$).

Table 4 indicates that the posttest mean score of the experimental group (11.82) was slightly higher than that of the control group (10.97), yet the t-test results revealed no significant difference between these posttest scores ($P>0.05$).

However, the experimental group had a higher mean score than the control group. The children in the control group improved their articulation skills, although they were not provided with any kind of training. This may have resulted from the fact that young children develop continuously and rapidly.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study is a turning point because of being very rare research made in area about relationship with telling tales and articulation skills of children. One of the most important elements in building communication with children is narrative style. For this reason, one must pay attention to stress and intonation as well as the correct pronunciation of words when telling a fairy tale. This study the analyzed the effect of telling fairy tales, a form of children's literature, on children's articulation skills in the process of native language learning. The study found that there was no significant difference between the articulation skills of the children in the experimental group, who received training in telling fairy tales based on story-telling techniques and the children in the control group. However, there was a slight increase in the posttest results of the control group. The children in the control group also improved their articulation skills to some extent, but not as much as the experimental group. The datas show that if the study repeat with diverse formats positive conspicuous results will be obtain. In early childhood, fairy tales help children improve their imagination, language, creativity, intuition and self-expression skills. They also impart leadership qualities, teach a sense of responsibility, give children confident, easy-going and helpful personalities and enhance their friendships.

According to the cognitive development theory by Piaget (2005) and the mechanistic perspective of Pavlov (1927), Watson (1913), Skinner (1976) and Bandura (1978), study's results are consistent and parallel with the principle of the continuity of development. Researchers have monitored and analyzed preschool children's development in word choice and sentence comprehension and found that their rates of understanding sentences and using them correctly increased in direct proportion to their age (Yildirim, 2008; Aydogan and Kocak, 2006; Baykoc and Ari, 1992; Lempert, 1985). Yavuz (1999), also said that fairy tales would make a greater contribution to the children's skills in constructing plots and understanding cause and effect relationships rather than linguistic skills. Bilkan (2001), said that different elements of language such as symbolic expressions, inverted sentences, proverbs and idioms were conveyed to readers in the comfort of informal language and that fairy tales helped children learn the structure of the language, rather than improving word pronunciation. Gorgu (2007), says that young children should be told fairy tales to support their language development. The relevant studies also report that fairy tales are the literary products which reflect a specific culture and convey different elements of language such as symbolic expressions, inverted sentences, syntax, proverbs and idioms in a unique plot, rather than supporting children's pronunciation and articulation skills (Mert and Lule, 2012; Akdeniz, 2007; Sever, 2003; Feyzioglu, 2007; Bilkan, 2001; Goksen, 1975). Many studies have been determine that the all literature activities about phonetics awareness skills develop the childrens' skills of forming sentences, phrases and separating the words rather than the pronunciation (Baillet, Repper, Piasta, Murphy, 2009; Byrne

and Fielding, Barnsley, 1991; Phelps, 2003; Wright ve Jacobs, 2003; Laing and Espeland , 2004). Yavuz (1999) and Alkan (2002) examined the language and narrative characteristics of fairy tales and focused on their importance for language learning. Okur (2003), claimed that fables, in particular, were rich in language use and included many reduplications, mimetic words, similes, loanwords, idioms, proverbs and oppositions. Okur (2003), also mentioned the place and importance of fables in native language teaching and argued that this type of story contributes to language development, native language learning and articulation skills.

Researchers have asserted that fairy tales' function in language acquisition is about the morphology of the language, syntax and the perception of inverted sentences, rather than the pronunciation of words and articulation (Mert, 2012; McLaughlin, 2003; Karatay, 2007; Cevirme, 2004; Dogan, 1993). But excepted many studies like these, in the relevant literature, there are studies also supporting the argument that children with a normal development improve their language skills as they grow old. Children's language comprehension skills develop as they age (Donmez and Guler, 2007). As children grow, their mental processes also speed up, which helps them understand more complex sentence structures and improves their language comprehension skills (Cohrsen, Niklas, Tayler, 2016; Paul, 2006; Musolino, 2002; Yuksel, 2003). But these findings were used considering and the study designed with the experimental group. This study's results indicate that telling fairy tales did not significantly affect children's articulation skills.

But it should be noted that the articulation skills of hearing impaired people is very weak compared the children with normal development (Wiggin, *et al.*, 2013; Spencer and Guo, 2013; Taylor *et al.*, 2010; Yoshinaga, Itano, 1999; Flexer, 1999). In early childhood, fairy tales concretize and enliven story telling techniques, improving children's language acquisition and making up plots, rather than their articulation skills. As a result of the research, this study's data indicates that advices; it is appropriate for all educators and parents to take language activities as well as fairy tale telling as a basis for supporting articulation skills, which is a fundamental precondition for children's linguistic achievements. The parents must know the tales benefits on child development and must tell the stories with conscious and use telling techniques. The parents and educators attach importance to word pronunciation when telling the tales and the children shouldn't be passive during the telling tales by parents. Excepted classical methods, using tales in education for the three-six aged of children language development problems of articulation, word pronunciation, stuttering should be supported by education institutes and parents. Families and educators should exercise about syllable and sound production like a therapist during the telling tales.

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