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# The importance of using the story as a strategy for training the kindergarten child on social skills

أهمية استخدام القصة في تدريب طفل الروضة على المهارات الاجتماعية

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#### Abstract:

The study aimed to demonstrate the importance of the story and its use as a strategy for learning social skills in a kindergarten child, with clarification of its educational role and its use in several fields of learning, and the most important social skills that the child learns in kindergarten was also indicated by displaying behavioral models through story, as the study aimed to search for the correlation between the story in terms of understanding its content and social skills, and this study focused on three skills: communication with others – empathy – cooperation, as the study applied to a sample of 20 children (08 males and 12 females) in kindergarten

**Key words**:story,strategy,training,social skills,child,kindergarte

#### ملخص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى تبيان أهمية القصة و استخدامها كاستراتيجية تعلم المهارات الاجتماعية لدى طفل الروضة مع توضيح الدور التربوي لها و استعمالها في عدة ميادين من التعلم ، كما تمت الإشارة إلى أهم المهارات الاجتماعية التي يتعلمها الطفل داخل الروضة ، عن طريق عرض نماذج سلوكية من خلال السرد القصصي كما هدفت الدراسة إلى البحث عن العلاقة الارتباطية بين القصة من حيث استيعاب مضمونها و المهارات الاجتماعية ، و قد تم التركيز في هذه الدراسة على ثلاث مهارات هي : التواصل مع الآخرين – التعاطف – التعاون ، كما طبقت الدراسة على عينة مكونة من 20 طفلا ( 08 ذكور و 12 إناث بروضة الأطفال) .

الكلمات المفتاحية: القصة - استرتيجية - مهارات اجتماعية - رياض الأطفال.

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#### 1. **INTRODUCTION**:

The topic of the story directed at kindergarten children is of great importance, especially in the contemporary time, despite the technological advancements in audio and visual media, and the abundance of educational means and means of entertainment, but the child desperately needs to enjoy hearing a meaningful story or reading it, as it forms a perceptual and emotional saturation for him.

And due to its importance, it has occupied the interest of researchers from various disciplines, including scientific and literary ones. In terms of literature, it is considered a color of literature and what has been recently called child literature, and this is what Ali Al-Hadidi referred to in his book (Literature and Human Building), And HadyNuman Al-Hiti in 1986 and the study of Ahmed Samir Abdel-Wahab 2004 As for the scientific aspect, it is a scientific method that depends on the educational process. It is an effective educational tool whose importance appears to be in instilling socially required values, in increasing linguistic wealth, or in satisfying many needs.

The story develops child's cognitive outcome, as he gets to know many people and various things, times and places, and languages that enable him to communicate and interact with them, as his personality grows and the circle of his experiences expands in various aspects. (Sheikh Muhammad Abdul-Raouf 1997, p. 113)

The story also gives the child the ability to convert spoken words into an imaginary analogous mental image, through which he can take a role model or follow a way of life without a preacher or a guide.

And we have chosen kindergarten as a research community, so that this institution receives the smallest groups of children or the so-called early childhood, as it diversifies the child's activity in order to expand his perception and interaction in society and teach him what is desired or acceptable and what is not.

A child from kindergarten acquires a set of skills, especially social skills, which are considered the most important thing that a child acquires, as they are related to aspects of personality such as psychological, social, mental and emotional aspects. One of its most important programs is storytelling that is presented orally and by electronic means in order to train the child in social skills.

## 1- Presenting the literature on story strategy in training kindergarten children on social skills:

By virtue of the subject of the study, it includes two prominent variables, which are the story as a training strategy, and social skills. We have classified research and studies that are related to the study variables.

With regard to studies that dealt with the topic of the story as an effective educational method in providing children, especially kindergarten children, with scientific experiences, the findings of Rima Salem Al-Hurriyat 2014 study, which showed the role of the story through an experimental field study on a sample of 20 children, in teaching a kindergarten child some scientific experiences by presenting some stories related to scientific aspects.

And there are those who considered the story to be a teaching method or strategy, and this is what was indicated by the Taqwa Study of AfifAtili and Hamdan Ali Nasr 2015 entitled The Impact of Teaching Islamic Education with the Two Oral and Electronic Storytelling Strategies on Improving the Imagination Skills of Primary School Students in Jordan. The two researchers demonstrate the role and impact that the story has, whether verbally or electronically, on the process of teaching Islamic education, and finally they concluded that the story can be relied upon as a teaching strategy, and the results of their study indicated that the story develops the child's perceptions and improves his skill and imaginative abilities, especially if it comes to religious personalities and models.

The story is also effective in developing various skills, such as the listening and speaking skills, or what is called language skills, as the experimental study conducted by Hadeel Muhammad Abdullah Al-Areenan 2015 under the title of The Effectiveness Of Using The Electronic Story In The Development of Language Skills in Kindergarten Children, and The results indicated that the experimental group with which he used the electronic story, its results were statistically significant upon post evaluation of the listening and speaking skills, and thus its conclusion was that the use of the electronic story has an effectiveness in developing language skills.

What we conclude from these studies is that all their conclusions indicate the importance and effectiveness of the story, whether as a teaching strategy, developing skills, or providing scientific experiences to the child, but it has not been systematically or statistically proven that the kindergarten child has a high comprehension capacity through which he can understand and accommodate the stories presented to him as spoken texts, and this is what we focused on

in the current study in measuring the levels of child comprehension. And this is one of the theoretical postulates from which the behavioral cognitive theory was launched.

And as it is known in educational and psychological studies, understanding and comprehension of a cognitive subject requires some conditions, among which are the means of clarification and explanation of instructions on the part of educators or teachers, and this is what Ratilff1986 indicated that the child understands the instructions and explanations related to the story He can reconstruct the story on his own, and this is an evidence or a high indication of the child's understanding of the content of the story. And in support of this, Ikram Muhammad AbdoRashaida 2018 reached in her study entitled The Role of the picture book in enhancing the skill of comprehension among Kindergarten Children, as she confirmed through the results of her study, that the readable text should follow the image and color, especially with a kindergarten child or a first grades student. From primary education, the image and color should also be placed in an accurate scientific manner, taking into account the age that we are dealing with, in order to stimulate the child's motivation and facilitate the process of understanding.

As for social skills, most studies agree that they are acquired, as the child is trained on them through training programs, and they are mainly related to the emotional side and the social aspect, according to Reggio 1986, and Asher, Gresham 1981 and Argyle 1990 agree with him.

And there are many studies that have dealt with the subject of social skills, most of which are experimental studies in which they suggested training programs to discover the extent of the child's acquisition of these skills.

We take, for example but not limited to, Abdul Maqsoud's 2005 study entitled The Impact of Using Musical Activities on Pre-School Child's Acquisition of Some Social Skills, as it was concluded that children who received musical activities did not find it difficult to develop their perceptions about social situations, and were able to acquire social skills.

Hoda Ibrahim Mohamed al-Maghribi's 2016 study also showed that children who received training programs increased their level of social skills, based on the results of her pilot study.

And what we can conclude from our presentation of these studies is that most of them dealt with social skills in general, without going into the components that were referred to by Reggio, Asher, Gresham and Argyle, which can be summarized in: (skill of cooperation – skill of participation – Communication skill – the skill of empathy and concern for others – the skill of self-control – the affirmative skill).

And the question that arises, can the child acquire all components of social skills within the kindergarten through the story?

We also did not find any study that dealt with the relationship between story and social skills, that is, how the story affects social skills, meaning; can the story be considered as a strategy for training kindergarten children on social skills.

#### 2 - Presentation of the problematic and the methodology:

#### 2 – 1 – The Problematic:

Vygotsky indicated in his social constructivist theory of learning that the story is a field of social learning, as the learning process is most effective when it takes place in a social context, as the story is often formulated or narrated in a social context in terms of characters, place and time, as well as The learner learns the meanings, values and information contained in the story through his interaction with the teacher on one side and with his colleagues on the other side (Shaima Muhammad Hassan Salah 2016, p.16)

The goal of telling the story to children is to impart social experiences and sublime values for generations, and this is what Diab mentioned about the story, which works to form many values and social skills for the child, especially in his early stages of development (early childhood), and the story may form a strong motivation for the child to be interested in science, research and innovation.

Reggio believes that social skills are an interactive process between the behavioral aspects and the cognitive aspects in the context of social interaction, and he has indicated that they include two basic aspects of social communication, namely the emotional side and the social aspect; the emotional aspect is concerned with non-verbal communication, while the social aspect is concerned with verbal communication, and that both sides contain three independent skills: the skill of sensitivity, the skill of organization and control. (Riggio 1986 p651)

And in a study by LADD1990, he indicated that children, who receive social skills training in pre-school, are better able to make friends with their peers, exhibit better educational performance, and fewer behavioral problems. (Al-Qatami& Youssef 2010, p. 18)

Emphasizing the importance of social skills training is indicated by a study by Smith & Strain 1992 and agreed with by Leblanc & Matson 1995, whereby a kindergarten child is distinguished from children who have not received such training. (Moroccan, Hoda Ibrahim 2016)

As an addition to the above, we tried through this study to find the relationship between what the child receives through storytelling and social skills in addition to the levels of comprehension of children when they hear the story, as well as studying the differences in the dimensions of social skills, and these objectives have been formulated in the following questions:

Are there a statistically significant correlation between comprehension of the story text and social skills? Are there statistically significant differences in the level of comprehension of the story among the sample members? Are there statistically significant differences between the sexes in the dimensions of social skills? (Empathy, communication with others, cooperation) To answer these questions, the following assumptions have been formulated:

There is a statistically significant correlation between the comprehension of the text of the story and social skills. There are also statistically significant differences in the level of comprehension of the story among the sample members, and there are statistically significant differences between the sexes in the dimensions of social skills (empathy, communication with others, cooperation).

## 2-2 - Methodology:

Since the aim of the study is to search for the relationship between the story strategy variable and the social skills variable, we used the descriptive approach that includes analytical and relational studies, which is suitable for this type of studies. In this study, we targeted a research sample consisting of twenty (20) children (08 males and 12 females) chosen in an intentional manner, represented by a group of children involved in a kindergarten belonging to the private sector in the city of Al-Attaf in the wilaya of AinDefla.

The fact that the sample members were young children before school age, and for fear that they wouldn't be responding to the questionnaire, we used the observation tool.

Observation is every systematic observation that leads to the disclosure of the smallest details of the phenomena studied, and the relationships between their elements, and between them and other phenomena. (Rajaa, Wahid Dwidri 2000, p. 319)

And Guilford 1959 argues that the method of direct observation represents a step forward in the aspect of experimental control. In terms of content, our observation was specific, and this is according to (Rajaa). The specific observation is used if the researcher has a prior perception of the type of information he observes or the behavior he is observing. (Same reference, p. 320)

**Observed behavior**: We have observed children's behavior represented in social skills, which is limited to the following components: (communication with others – cooperation and empathy)

To measure the observed behavior, we designed a questionnaire consisting of 21 items distributed according to the following table:

Table No. (2) Shows the dimensions of social skills

Social	skills	Number of items
dimensions		
Empathy		07
Communicating	with	07
Others		
cooperation		07
total		21

In designing this question, we relied on the social intelligence scale for children that was applied by Kafaifi and others, and the "Social Intelligence Picture of Kindergarten Child" scale prepared by Qatami and Al Youssef, 2010, and to control children's response to the content of the story and from which the child learns or is trained on social skills, we measured comprehension and the child's understanding of the content of the story, and we used the social learning theory of Pandora, which focuses on the cognitive, behavioral and social aspect. Then we used the measurement of operative understanding that was applied by the Ministry of Education through the amended curricula in the Education Directive Law No. 08–04 of January 23, 2008.

## 3-Data presentation and analysis:

## 3-1-Presentation and analysis of the results of the first hypothesis:

To test the validity of the first hypothesis, which states: "There is a correlation between children's comprehension of the story text and the social skills of kindergarten children", the researcher used the (ETA) coefficient and the results were as follows:

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**Table No**. (03): The ETA correlation coefficient between the data of the children's comprehension variable of the story text and the social skills variable

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variables	The ETA factor	The ETA square
Social skills	0.47	0.22
The story comprehension		

Through the previous table, it is clear that the ETA correlation coefficient on the story comprehension scale and their performance scores on the social skills scale was 0.47, and the square value of the ETA coefficient, which is an indicator of the impact size, was estimated at 0.22, which indicates that 22% of the common variance between The levels of comprehension of the story and the scores of social skills, which is a low percentage according to the criteria that Cohen (1988) defined to judge the value of the effect size in relation to the square of the Eta coefficient, where we find that the value between 0.20 and 0.50 is a low value and thus we can say that the size of the effect in the first hypothesis Was low.

And to find the correlation between the story comprehension variable and the social skills variable, we used Pearson correlation coefficient, as shown in the table below.

Table No. (04) Computes the Pearson correlation coefficient

		comprehension	Total skills
comprehension	Pearson correlation	1	,320
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,169
	N	20	20
Total skills	Pearson Correlation	,320	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,169	
	N	20	20

According to the data of the table, the first hypothesis was not fulfilled because the value of the correlation coefficient (0.320) is not statistically significant because the probability value reached 0.169, which is greater than 0.05, and therefore there is no statistically significant correlation relationship between comprehension and social skills.

**3– 2– The second hypothesis**: There are statistically significant differences in the level of comprehension of the story among kindergarten children.

To verify this hypothesis, we calculated the Arithmetic average, standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages of the study sample. The results were according to the following table:

Table (05): the iterative distribution to accommodate the story according to levels

Scale	levels	frequencies	Percentage	Arithmetic	Standard
				average	deviation
Story	Low level	4	16,66%	7,8	1,39
comprehension	(0-12)				
	Medium	16	66,66%		
	level				
	(12–18)				
	High level	0	O%		
	(18-24)				

It is evident from the previous table that the highest percentage of story comprehension is at the middle level, at 66.66% of the total sample, followed by 16.66% of the basic sample at the low level.

The previous results indicate that the sample individuals are distinguished by an average level of understanding the story. The arithmetic average value was 7.8 and the standard deviation value was 1.39.

A second step was performed by applying T

-test for the difference between the observed and expected arithmetic averages of the sample **Table** (05): T-test for one sample to compare the two observed arithmetic averages.

	T value	Average	Observed	Degree of	Indication
		expected	arithmetic	Freedom	level
			average		
Story	_	12	7,80	19	0,01
comprehension	13,42				

Through the obtained values, it becomes clear for the variable of understanding the story that the value of the expected arithmetic average is greater than the value of the observed

arithmetic average. The value of one sample t-test was -13.42, and it was a meaningful of 0.01, meaning that we are 99% sure of the existence of fundamental differences between the two averages in favor of the community average, and therefore kindergarten children have a low level of understanding of the story.

**3– 3– The third hypothesis**: There are differences between the sexes in the dimensions of social skills (empathy, communication with others, cooperation).

To verify this hypothesis, the Mann-Whitney test was computed for two independent samples.

• The first dimension: empathy

**Table No.** (06) U-test for two independent samples

variable	group	Sample	Average	Total	U value	Significance
		size	ranks	ranks		level
empathy	Male	8	7,00	56,00	20,00	0,05
	female	12	12,83	154,00		

Through the previous table, we find that the average ranks for males for the dimension of empathy amounted to (7.00) and a total rank of (56.00). We also find that the average ranks for females for the dimension of empathy amounted to (12.83) and a total rank of (154.00).

In addition, the value of U (20.00) was reached with a significance level (0.05), indicating that it is significant, which means that there are differences between the sexes in degrees of the dimension of sympathy for the benefit of females.

## • The second dimension: communicating with others

**Table No.** (07) U-test for two independent samples

variable	group	Sample	Average	Total	U value	Significance
		size	ranks	ranks		level
Communica	Male	8	8,75	70,00	34,00	0,23
t-ing with	femal	12	11,67	140,00		
others	e					

Through the previous table, we find that the average ranks for males for the dimension of communicating with others was of (8.75)) and a total of (70.00) ranks, and we find that the

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average ranks for females for the distance of communication with others was (11.67) and a total rank of (140.00).

Besides, the value of U was (34.00) with a significance level (0.23), which indicates that it is not significant, which means that there are no differences between the sexes in scores after communicating with others.

#### • The first dimension: cooperation

Table No. (08) U-test for two independent samples

variable	group	Sample	Average	Total	U value	Significance
		size	ranks	ranks		level
Cooperatio	Male	8	13,44	107,50	24,50	0,05
n	female	12	8,54	102,50		

Through the previous table, we find that the average ranks for males for the dimension of cooperation amounted to (13.44) and a total rank of (107.50). We also find that the average ranks for females for the dimension of cooperation amounted to (8.54) and a total of (102.50) ranks.

Besides, the value of U was (24.50) with a significance level (0.05), which indicates that it is significant, meaning that there are differences between the sexes in degrees after cooperation in favor of males.

#### 4- General conclusion:

## 4-1 -The first hypothesis:

The results indicated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the comprehension of the content of the story and the social skills of the kindergarten child, and this explains that children implement social skills when asked to do so, and it does not require the child to understand the story well in order to develop the skill of cooperation or empathy or Communicating with others, and many studies have shown that the child's level of understanding and thinking is pointy, meaning that he takes a certain part of the story, whether spoken or that he watches through (static / moving) images, that is, the child focuses his attention on certain points in the knowledge he receives and Which is at the heart of his interest and that arouse his conscience.

This is in contrast to the findings of Sanaa Muhammad Suleiman's study (2016), Hadeel Muhammad Allah al-Areenan's study (2015), LADD1990 study, and Ratilf's 1986 study that

the story is included in the activities that are used in the process of social skills training, as it plays an important role in children's lives, and make them benefit from it in situations they face.

And Ladd 1990 notes that children who receive social skills training in pre-school have better ability to make friends with their peers (the skill of communicating with others), and show better educational performance and fewer behavioral problems.

These social skills are acquired by the child based on what he learns from his cultural environment and the social group to which he belongs.

As for the study of Ratilf 1986, it indicates that the child understands and absorbs the content of the story through the instructions he receives from the teacher, which include the structure of the story. If the child is able to synthesize the story and be able to play the role in the story, this is a good indication of his understanding of the content of the story, and this understanding and comprehension occurs only if the instructions for this process are clear, so that the child can follow it easily.

Accordingly, we can draw the following conclusion: that social skills are acquired by the child through continuous training, and that training uses several methods including the story, and the story is an instruction intended to guide the child's behavior, and the child's understanding and comprehension of the content of the story is required here. This does not happen unless the process is repeated and continued.

## 4-2- The second hypothesis:

The results indicated that there are statistically significant differences in the level of comprehension of the story among kindergarten children, and when we determined the level of children's comprehension, we found that the majority of the sample individuals (66.66%) have a medium level of understanding and that the percentage (16.66%) has a low level of understanding. And (0%) of a high level, meaning that kindergarten children (members of the sample) did not achieve a high level of understanding and comprehension of the content of the story, and this is due to the lack of means of explanation in kindergarten institutions.

The story does not matter if the child cannot understand and comprehend it, and in order for him to achieve that, the kindergarten teacher must use explanatory methods that bring the content of the story to the child's mind and this is confirmed by the study of Ikram Muhammad AbdoRashaidah (2018), and experience showed that the existence of The illustrations helped improve learning from the content of the text accompanied by the

illustrations, and not the text alone without graphics, and the comprehension scores improved through the presence of the illustrations for children with high capacity.

The results indicated that learning supported by text, image and color achieves better results, as children only examine existing illustrations.

## 4-3 The third hypothesis:

- There are differences between sexes in the dimensions of social skills (empathy - communication with others - cooperation). To ensure the existence of gender differences in the dimensions of social skills, we calculated each dimension separately.

And the results indicated, according to what is shown in the tables that females differ from males in the dimension of empathy, as we have noticed that females excel males in the skill of empathy.

According to Rovinger's study, children learn the skill of empathy by repeatedly presenting stories that develop empathy (Hassouneh 2008).

The child can distinguish positive and negative emotional expressions, identify them in the stories he hears and recognize the nature of the emotion of the hero of the story, and this expresses the child's development and his transition from the stage of self-centeredness to the stage of attention to others. (Cavafyet al.2008)

- There are no differences between sexes in the dimension of communicating with others, so learning this skill is a challenge for educators and workers in the field of childhood, especially in early childhood, since this stage is characterized by a state of transition from self-concentration to a state of communication with others, so the child needs the support and training to acquire the skill of communicating with others in an enjoyable and easy way, by providing activities and a supportive environment for that (Blatchford and Clark 2005)

And this is what Bandura pointed out that the effect of models on the concepts and behaviors of the child learns, and perhaps these matters are found in kindergarten as part of educational and entertainment programs such as games, stories and pictures.

Accordingly, it can be said that there are no differences between males and females in the transition from self-concentration to the stage of communicating with others, so that the child begins to develop this skill through what he receives from educational programs prepared for this purpose in the kindergarten institution.

The results of this study are consistent with the study of Qatami and Al-Youssef (2007) and Qasim's study (2009) and the study of Jokha Muhammad Salim Al-Sawafiya (2015), which

indicates the development of the skill of communicating with others through a training program that includes stories and games.

- There are differences between sexes in the cooperation dimension in favor of males, and this indicates that males have a higher skill in the cooperation dimension than females. We have noticed that males easily integrate into the cooperation activity.

The child's acquisition of the skill of cooperation explains the available opportunities that he finds within the kindergarten, where he participates in practical activities within groups, and this is after presenting positions and stories about cooperation to present a mental picture of cooperation, and the educator works to implement the pedagogical program that focuses on group work and group play, adherence to instructions, initiative in helping others, commitment to the role assigned to him in group activities.

Our study is consistent with the study of Qasim (2009) and the study of Jokha Muhammad Salim al-Sawafiya (2015) on training the child and developing his social skills, especially the skill of cooperation, by setting up a training pedagogical program that helps the child to have positive social interaction and properly rehabilitate him to the later stages.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

The results of the study concluded that there is no statistically significant correlation between the comprehension of the content of the story and social skills. The results also showed that the majority of the sample individuals have a low level of comprehension, and this is evidence or an indication of the absence of a relationship. This is due to multiple reasons, including the means of explanation, or weakness in the assimilation process, and in this regard we calculated the level of assimilation among the sample members, and our assumption was that there are differences between the sample members in the level of assimilation, and we discovered through the statistical tables that The assimilation of the sample members is not high and that the majority have a medium level, and the minority have a low level.

Therefore, we conclude that children need to be supported by means of clarification in the learning process that they receive in the kindergarten so that they can understand and comprehend what is presented to them, and they need more training in social skills.

As for the third hypothesis, we found through the data of statistical tables, that there are differences in some dimensions of social skills, for example, in the dimension of empathy, the results showed that females are distinguished from males, while in the dimension of

communicating with others; we found that there are no differences. In the cooperation dimension, the results indicated that males are distinguished from females in this skill.

In conclusion, we point out that, through this study, we wanted to present our research contribution as an addition to educational and psychological studies, as well as to point out the role that kindergarten institutions play towards a fragile and sensitive age group.

We also hope that this study will open scientific dimensions for researchers in this type of studies, and some points can be presented that we put before researchers to choose them as subjects of study.

- Activating the story strategy as a pedagogical method directed at training children in social skills and other skills in educational institutions.
- Directing the attention of researchers to increase and diversify studies on the social skills of kindergarten children
- Establishing training programs for kindergarten teachers to familiarize them with modern pedagogical techniques, especially those related to skills training.
- Building educational advisory and training programs that work to develop the child's perceptions, taking into account the characteristics and nature of the age group.

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