

**EFFECT OF COMBINED TEACHING METHOD (ROLE PLAYING AND  
STORYTELLING) ON CREATIVE THINKING OF FOURTH-GRADE STUDENTS  
IN THE COURSE OF HEAVEN GIFTS**

T. Delarami Zadeh<sup>\*</sup>, D. Barahoyie, G. H. Delarami, B. Ahmad

Khash Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khash, Iran

Published online: 16 July 2016

---

## ABSTRACT

**Background and Purpose:** Storytelling promotes imagination and satisfies curiosity in children and creates learning opportunities in them. This study aimed to evaluate the effect of combined teaching method (role playing and storytelling) on creative thinking of fourth-grade female students in the course of Heaven Gifts.

**Research Method:** This quasi-experimental study was conducted with pretest-posttest design with control group on 60 fourth-grade female students in primary schools of the city of Khash in the academic year of (2013-2014) who were selected randomly. Students were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups (30 students in each group). Research tools included Torrance creativity questionnaire (1989). The data were analyzed by independent t-test and analysis of covariance at significance level of 0.05.

**Findings:** The results showed that the teaching method of role playing/storytelling has significant impact on the creative thinking in general as well as flexibility, innovation and fluid of fourth-grade female students. But the mean score of creative thinking in the in the development aspect after the intervention in students of control and experimental groups did not differ significantly.

**Conclusion:** Based on these findings, we recommend teachers to use the teaching method of role playing and storytelling in the classroom to develop creative thinking in students.

**Keywords:** creative thinking, combined teaching method, storytelling, role playing.

---

Author Correspondence, e-mail: [girizlimylove@gmail.com](mailto:girizlimylove@gmail.com)

doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jfas.v8i2s.113>



## 1. INTRODUCTION

One method of logical thinking is creative thinking; the idea that despite the unusual solutions, leads to acceptable results (Andrews, 2007). Creative thinking is a process whose product is creativity, and creativity is mostly defined in relation to the concepts of novelty and usefulness. It means that novelty and usefulness of developing a idea or product is accepted as a main feature of creative (Batey et al., 2010). Creative thinking leads to emergence of new insights, new approaches, new perspectives and new ways to understand and grasp objects and positions in the education system. On the other hand, this system needs new teachers and trainers who are not only strong in terms of teaching techniques, but also have an open and critical mind. They must be able to adapt themselves to the changing surrounding environment and internalize the growing information flow, while they think of them both in personal and professional levels. (Rnjdoust and Eivazi, 2013)

Reflecting the country's education system, it can be found that there is far distance between the current conditions and what can provide grounds for growth and development of creativity in children and adolescents. So concerning and investigating the various elements of education and their role in training students' creativity are important, and the creative teaching methods play a key role (Hosseini, 2006). In this field, Ahmadi and Abdulmaleki (2012) showed that modern teaching methods are effective in increasing students' creativity. Storytelling and role playing is one of the teaching methods that provide the ground for students' curiosity and creativity.

Storytelling creates learning opportunities and allows the person to think more of his personal experiences, and create creative solutions to solve problems (Butcher, 2006). Storytelling attracts children's imaginations and emotions and helps learning become more meaningful. That's why storytelling has been used even to teach difficult concepts. (Goral & Gnadinger, 2006)

Rajabpour Farkhani and Jahanshahi (2011) in their study stated that children get familiar with the facts and experiences of life through stories and legends. Influenced by the characters of the story, strengthening understanding and expression, growing creativity, teaching language and increasing children's vocabulary are of the other educational influences of storytelling. In fact, the story is an extensive creativity with which anyone can recover his seemingly irrational beliefs and replace them and pose constructive use of them. That is why story approaches focuses on psychotherapy and the stories play influencing role in the children's behavior and their facts.

On the other hand, role playing is a new educational method which is based on the active participation of learners to help individuals find their meaning within the social world, and to make decisions in resolving dilemmas with the help of social groups (Joyce et al., 2004). This approach is associated with situations of group discussion and creates learning through observation of behavior, and reinforces the assumption that it is more effective than other methods in learning social behaviors; and through discussion, learners can gain insight into their attitudes and perceptions and develop their own problem-solving attitudes and skills. (Abedian et al., 2012)

The method of storytelling and role playing leads us to the modern, effective and appropriate models in education to deal with the increasing complexities and demands of the modern world. But looking at the existing situation, we see that few teachers - in sensitive period of elementary school -use creative teaching methods such as storytelling and role playing to develop the students' creativity. Accordingly, the researcher decided to investigate the effect of combined teaching method (storytelling and role playing) on creative thinking of fourth-grade students in the course of Heaven Gifts.

## **2. Research Method**

This quasi-experimental study was conducted with pretest-posttest design with control group on 60 fourth-grade female students in primary schools of the city of Birjand in the academic year of (2014-2015) who were selected by cluster sampling. Among the girl schools of Birjand, one school was selected, and two fourth-grade classes were chosen randomly from the school. Students of one class were placed in experimental group (30 students), and the students of the other class were located in the control group (30 students). Students in both groups completed creativity questionnaire, then, the students of experimental group participated in eight 30-minute sessions of storytelling and role playing classes, and the students in the control group received no education.

Planning was done to design 8 sessions based on the participation in courses and workshops of teacher supply in July 2003 and August 2004 with the presence of the authors of Heaven Gifts. The content of the training sessions were as follows:

First session: justifying students in the field of cooperation in the teaching of some subjects with role playing, stating story of the course always together with the goals of communal prayer, friendship, equality and fraternity, getting familiar with the principles of prayer, correct prayer, performing the play always together, doing the assignment of workbook for

the next session and discussing the book with friends who also participated in the communal prayer.

Second session: reviewing the last session goals, evaluating the provisions of prayer and key concepts of the lesson, telling the stories always together and talking about the show and the benefits of prayer always together, answering the possible questions from students, holding communal prayer with intentionally problems included with previous coordination with the students, retelling the story of the lessons from the image.

Third session: Evaluating the activities of workbook and fixing the problems, justifying and coordinating with students to perform the play of our neighbor "related to the part of morality," telling the story by teacher, judgments of students about the show, selecting the lesson name after the show and comparing it to the previous name, doing the play-related activities of the workbook, reading the lesson text, completing the part of "would you like to tell you ..." by the student.

Fourth session: Separating the correct and incorrect behaviors with neighbors in different pictures, reviewing the activities of workbook, performing a play by own memories, explaining the behavior of the characters, completing the table of activity purpose and anticipating additional activities for those who have not reached the objectives for the lesson.

Fifth Session: telling the story instead of abuse by teacher, role playing by students, identifying and separating the message of lessons based on separated and mixed on alphabets on the board by students, providing information on the life of Imam Musa Kazim "AS" and doing bookwork.

Sixth Session: Evaluating the content of students' workbooks, judging the behavior of Imam Musa Kazim "AS", completing the table of activity purpose, reciting verse 135 of Surah Al 'Imran and expressing the translation and discussing with students, stating the benefits of being friendly with people by students, and expressing the points that they have learned from the lesson story and the play.

Seventh session: preparing students for playing "The brave child" from the part of Imamate and ethics, preparing students for playing, storytelling eloquently by teachers, discussing the behavior of the characters by students in groups of 4 persons and announcement of results by the leader, asking the students about the reason of Imam's behavior, doing workbook for the next session.

Eighth Session: reviewing workbook activities, completing the table of activity purpose by the teacher, expressing some instances of generosity and courage in their lives and identifying some of the positions where generosity is desirable by the student.

After the end of educational sessions, the students in both groups completed the creativity questionnaire again.

Abedi's creativity questionnaire was used for collecting data in this study.

#### Abedi's creativity questionnaire

The test is built in 1363 by Abedi in Tehran based on the Torrance creativity theory. It has 60 three-choice questions and four subscales of fluid (questions 1 to 22), expansion (questions 23 to 33), innovation (questions 34 to 49) and flexibility (questions 50 to 60). Choices reflect low, medium and high creativity with scores of 1, 2 and 3, respectively. Total scores obtained on each subtest indicates the subject score in that section, and total scores of the subject in four subtests shows his total creativity.

Using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the reliability of the questionnaire in this study for the subscales of fluid, expansion, innovation and flexibility, were obtained 0.73, 0.85, 0.71 and 0.70, respectively.

The data were inserted in SPSS software, and were analyzed using independent t-test and covariance analysis at the significant level of 0.05.

### 3. Findings

The study was conducted on 60 students, including 30 students in the experimental group and 30 students in the control group. Results showed that the mean score of creativity and components of innovation and expansion before intervention in the students of experimental group was significantly higher than the control group. But the mean score of components of fluid and flexibility in the two groups did not differ significantly.

Since the mean score of creativity and its components before intervention can have effects on the mean score of creativity and its components after intervention, ( $p < 0.001$ ), covariance analysis test was used to remove the confounding effect of score before intervention. The results of the above test showed that, after adjustment, based on the score before the intervention, the mean score of creativity and its components (except expansion) after the intervention in the control and experimental groups was significantly different ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table 1.** Comparison of creativity score and its components before intervention in the students of control and experimental group

Variable	Source of changes	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance level
Fluid capability	Before intervention	3955.23	1	3955.23	233.76	<0.001
	Group	303.80	1	303.80	17.96	<0.001
Innovation	Before intervention	3186.32	1	3186.32	969.41	<0.001
	Group	53.59	1	53.59	16.30	<0.001
Flexibility	Before intervention	3376.41	1	3376.41	322.85	<0.001
	Group	141.99	1	141.99	13.58	<0.001
Expansion	Before intervention	3461.19	1	3461.19	544.93	<0.001
	Group	1.38	1	1.38	0.22	<0.64
Creativity	Before intervention	57154.14	1	57154.14	642.20	<0.001
	Group	1280.99	1	1280.99	14.39	<0.001

**Table 2.** Results of covariance analysis of the role of combined teaching method (role-playing and storytelling) on creativity and its components in fourth-grade students

Variable	Control	Experimental	p-value
	mean±SD	mean±SD	
Fluid capability	28.53±10.35	30.23±10.44	0.53
Innovation	25.17±7.84	33.87±9.21	0.001
Flexibility	28.13±10.10	32.00±10.93	0.16
Expansion	28.53±9.63	34.93±8.34	0.008
Creativity	110.37±37.78	131.03±38.34	0.04

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the present study showed that the mean score of creativity and its components (except expansion) after the intervention in the control and experimental groups was significantly different ( $p < 0.001$ ). In other words, combined teaching method (role-playing and storytelling) has a significant impact on creativity and its components (except expansion) of fourth-grade students in the book of Heaven Gifts.

The results of this study are consistent with the results of Zare Heidarabadi (2009), Kazemi & Saeidi (2004), Hazave'ei et al. (2006), Rasouli et al. (2012), Aziz & Hossain (2010), Kaptan & Korkmaz (2005), Tekmen & Guneyusu (2010), Cropley (2001).

Based on the results of this study and other studies, storytelling promotes imagination and satisfies curiosity in children and creates learning opportunities in them. It creates learning opportunities and allows the person to think more of his personal experiences, and create creative solutions to solve problems. (Butcher, 2006)

In other words, the language of the story is one of the most convenient methods of teaching religious concepts, especially in the course of Heaven Gifts. Because students love to hear and read stories and this makes up a major part of their religious education. Using more convenient stories makes the impact of this training and achieving the desired goals easier and faster. To indicate the importance of this method, it is enough to say that in the Holy Quran and teachings of the divine prophets and the scriptures, the language of story is the effective method for training, guiding, and inducing the religious concepts and messages.

On the other hand, role-playing teaching method is effective in the development of creative thinking of students. Role-playing is a method that can be used for the visualization of subjects and courses that are suitable for play. In other words, the teacher uses role-playing method according to the situation, purpose and the topic (Shabani, 2003) to develop the personal and social characters of learners (Fazlikhani, 2003).

Finally, it can be concluded that the use of role-playing and storytelling is one of the factors of increasing creativity. A combination of these two methods will lead to better learning. Constructive disputes and conflicts which are created in the combination of these two methods in the mind of the learners make the students have different information, perceptions, ideas, arguments, and conclusions; they are forced to agree. When an issue comes up for each group, each member of the group takes a role. Then, the members perform the following activities: they find the best solution for the situation, present an acceptable explanation for their idea, express their views in an open debate and defend their opinion and answer the criticisms, put away the prejudice and look at the issue from all angles, all parties

reach an overall agreement based on a reasoned judgment which lead to the development of the students' creative thinking. (Johnson et al., 2007)

Based on what was said, it can be argued that use of a combination of role-playing and storytelling allows students to present many answers and ideas in connection with the new issue that probably may not have dealt with. It can prepare the ground for exhibition of students' creative ideas which is one of the goals of the current education system in the world. Moreover, using this model could promote students to change their thinking direction and be aligned with the problem while dealing with problems that have changed their shape or are posed with a different aspect. This is contrary to the theory and practice of many trainers, because most of the teachers always encourage students to answer the question exactly like the book and pay attention to the predicted patterns. (Momeni Mahmoudi and Ojinejad, 2010)

According to the results, it is recommended that education system try more for applying this method by considering various aspects of creativity growth. It should more cover the role of storytelling and role-playing, which develops the children's creative thinking, in the curriculum.

Limitations of this study included lack of standardization of physical and mental conditions during meetings, limitation of samples to the female students, converting students' textbooks materials to the form of story and show to be played by the students.

## 5. REFERENCES

- Hosseini, Afzal al-Sadat (2006). The nature of creativity and its cultivation methods. Mashhad: Astan Quds Razavi Publication.
- Ahmadi, Gholam A, Abdulmaleki S. The effect of experimental science education based on exploratory approach on creativity and motivation of students. Journal of initiative and creativity in the humanities, 2012, 2 (2): 95-123.
- Shabani, Hassan (2003). Advanced teaching method (teaching skills and thinking strategies). Tehran: Samt Publication.
- Rajabpour F, Somayeh and Jahanshahi F. Effectiveness of narrative therapy in reducing behavioral disorders of primary school students. Thinking and children, Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, 2011, 2 (2): 19-35.



- 
- Ranjdoust S and Eivazi P. Relationship between emotional intelligence of teachers and high school students' creative thinking. *Journal of Research in curriculum development*, 2013, 10 (2): 113-125.
  - Rasouli, R; Zandevanian, A; Ardian, F; and Dehqan, S. Comparing the effects of cooperative learning on creative thinking and academic achievement in the course of vocational guidance of female students in the city of Yazd. *Journal of Educational New Ideas*, 2012, 8 (4): 29-52.
  - Zare Heidarabadi, Mehdi (2009). The Effect of Storytelling with animation on learning multiplication skills in the fourth grade students. Master thesis, Birjand University, Faculty of Education and Psychology.
  - Abedian, Z; Navaei, M; Jafari Thani, H; Arani, A; and Ebrahimzadeh, S. Comparing the effect of two teaching methods of role-playing and lectures on knowledge, attitude and practice of pregnant women about the type of delivery. *Journal of Obstetrics Gynecology and Infertility*, 2012, 15 (1): 25-35.
  - Fazli Khani, Manouchehr (2003). A Practical Guide to participatory and active method in teaching process, Tehran, Azmon Novin Publication.
  - Kazemi, Y; and Saeedi, M. Effect of teaching methods of lecture, group discussion and role-playing on the changes of students towards valuable goals of the course of religion. *Journal of Psychology*, 2004, 1: 31-50.
  - Momeni M and Ojinejad, A R. The effect of using innovative teaching on the students' creativity in composition classes. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Islamic Azad University of Tonekabon, 2010, 1 (2): 95-107.
  - Hazavehei, M Mahdi; T, Mohamamd H; Mohadeth H, Hamid R and Hassanzadeh, A . The effect of three methods of lecture, game and role-playing on knowledge and performance of secondary students in terms of nutrition during adolescence. *Strides in Development of Medical Education*, Journal of Medical Education Development Center, 2006, 3 (2): 126-133.
  - Andrews, E. (2007). How to develop creative thinking, available at <http://www.articlecube.com>.
  - Aziz, Z & Hossain, A. A comparison of cooperative learning and conventional teaching on students' achievement in secondary mathematics. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2010, 9, 53 – 62.
  - Butcher, S. E. Narrative as a Teaching Strategy. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 2006, 57: 195-208.

- Batey, M., Furnham, A., & Safiullina, X. Intelligence, general knowledge and personality as predictors of creativity. *Learning and Individual Differences*, Article in Press, 2010.
- Cropley, J., Arthur. (2001). *Creativity in education and learning. A guide for teachers and educators*. Kogan page, London.
- Goral, M. B., & Gnadinger, C. M. Using storytelling to teach mathematics concepts. *Australian Primary Mathematics Classroom*, 2006, 11:4-8.
- Joyce BR, Weil M, Calhoun E. *models of teaching*. 7 th ed. translated by: Behrangi, Mohammad Reza. tehran: kamale tarbiat Publications. 2004. [Text in Persian]
- Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T & Smith, K. The State of Cooperative Learning in postsecondary settings. *Education Psycho Rev*, 2007, 19, 15-29.
- Kaptan, F & Korkmaz, H. The effects of cooperative problem solving approach on Creativity in Science Course. *Division of Science Education*, 2005.
- Tekmen, B. & Guneyisu, S. Implementing an alternative cooperative learning method. *Procedia social and Behavioral Science*, 2010, 2, 5670-5674.

**How to cite this article:**

Delarami Zadeh T, Barahoyie D, Delarami H G, Ahmad B. Effect of combined teaching method (role playing and storytelling) on creative thinking of fourth-grade students in the course of heaven gifts. *J. Fundam. Appl. Sci.*, 2016, 8(2S), 1737-1746.