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A Role of English Children's Stories in Primary School English Learners' Language Development

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This paper attempts to examine the effect of children's English stories on the development of Korean EFL primary school learners' listening and speaking competences and their motivation to learn English. This paper also discusses factors of English children's stories that make EFL learners' language learning efficient. Participants were 120 primary school students who attend one of the elementary schools in Chungnam province. They were randomly chosen and divided into two groups: experimental and control groups. In order to collect data, students' listening and speaking proficiency pre- and post-tests and the pre- and post-questionnaires regarding the participants' motivation to learn English were administered. The data were analyzed by ANOVA. The results indicate that the application of English children's stories to EFL learning settings can be an efficient way to improve EFL learners' listening and speaking competences and motivation to learn their target language. The findings of this study suggest that English children's stories provide language learners with interest, meaningful and authentic contexts and enjoyment. The pedagogical suggestion and implications are provided for EFL educators and teachers.

[English children's stories/listening and speaking competences/motivation to learn English]

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, science and technological development has led to modern techniques and equipment that have brought the world closer. As the world gets closer, the need for being able to communicate in other languages has become an important element. It seems that knowing only a single language is no longer sufficient for success in today's world. Proficiency in a second or foreign language is not considered a luxury anymore but is

viewed as a necessity for thriving in our twenty-first century world (Jenkins, 2003; McArthur, 2001).

English is considered a world language. The rise and spread of English as a world language has an enormous influence on the educational systems of many countries. Learning English is considered one of the most important tasks for many students of non-English speaking countries.

In an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) environment where English education takes place within the confines of the classroom setting, it is not easy to foster language acquisition naturally. Students are not provided with ample opportunities of using English in social situations and natural language input is rather limited. Moreover, it is seldom for EFL learners to be motivated to learn their target language, as Willis (1996) asserts. Thus, it is necessary to foster EFL learning environment where EFL learners can explore and experience authentic use of their target language.

The introduction of English children's stories into the children's language learning settings has been supported by a number of researchers and teachers who have been making an effort to produce holistic literacy instructional approaches (Gilles, 1991; Huck, 1989; Hunt, 1991; Im & Kim, 2004; Kim & Im, 2009; Rha, 2002; Smith, 1998). Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (2002) assert that stories in the EFL primary school classroom are enjoyable, can expose children to other cultures and can be used to introduce and recycle language. Wright (1995) mentions, stories help children develop a sense of the target language. Children's literature has the power to give children vicarious experiences and to make them more knowledgeable of the outer world even before they experience it themselves (Rha, 2002). According to Rha (2002), introducing literature into the classroom will enable children to learn about the fundamental nature of language in terms of the importance of imagination and to keep children's natural curiosity and love of learning.

The present study purposes to examine whether the application of English children's stories to EFL learning classrooms has a positive effect on Korean EFL primary school learners' listening and speaking proficiency and their motivation to learn English. The following hypotheses were developed to be examined.

1. Korean 5th grade English learners whose teacher uses English children's stories based on the story-syllabus will exhibit more improvement on their listening and speaking proficiency than whose teacher does not.
2. Korean 5th grade English learners whose teacher uses English children's stories based on the story-based syllabus will exhibit more improvement on their motivation to learn English than whose teacher does not.

II. A ROLE OF CHILDREN'S STORIES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

1. Providing Contextualized Input

Children enjoy listening to stories in their native language. Stories are important in children's lives since they help them understand the world and offer a major and constant source of language experience for them. Krashen (1997) claims that people learn language by understanding messages when people speak and when people comprehend what they read. He formalizes this claim into a theory known as the "Input Hypothesis" and then later calls it the "Comprehensible Hypothesis" (Krashen, 2003). According to Krashen, if the input contains forms and structures just beyond the learner's current level of competence in the language, the learner will easily comprehend the language and then he/she will finally acquire the language. He suggests that comprehensible input is the driving force for inter-language development and change and learners will be able to produce language through such change. Skehan (1989) agrees with his claim, in that learners could deduce the syntactic structure of the language and produce it by merely being exposed to the comprehensible input of a language.

Stories help children to understand the meaning of a new L2 input since it is provided within a meaningful context (Ellis & Brewster, 1991). Elley (1991) conducts a study on the effects of programs through which young children are exposed to large quantities of high-interest illustrated storybooks. This study comes with the result that rapid improvement occurs in reading and listening comprehension and in attitudes toward reading books. This study provides confirmation for whole language approaches which stress natural acquisition of literacy without systematic instruction in particular linguistic features. It also provides support for Krashen's Input Hypothesis, in that children acquire their grammatical structures better from increased input than they do from deliberate instruction and that expressive language competence emerges naturally after the children's language sources are built up with extensive comprehensible input.

Ahn and Paek (1998) investigate the effects of Korean students' English input and language needs on communicative ability by testing Korean elementary students' English proficiency. The data are collected through both three questionnaires about language input, language needs, and the teachers' use of English in classroom and interviews of elementary school students using familiar and unfamiliar pictures. The results show that the students are able to recognize the amount of English input that is provided for them during the study. In their proficiency tests, they answer just to the memorized patterns, but they do not answer to most of the unprepared patterns. No evidence is shown that language acquisition occurs in

those elementary students in the environment where language input and needs are scarce. Thus, it is essential to provide learners with language input that is contextualized and meaningful through the utilization of English children's stories.

2. Providing Exposure to Meaningful, Authentic Target Language

Connecting learner's real life to classroom learning can be necessary for language learners in an EFL context like Korea since it provides learners with chances to internalize what they have learned. It is, therefore, necessary to generate this kind of atmosphere in the lesson through which learners experience and internalize the language as they do in their real life communication.

Skehan (1989) divides children's real life contexts into two categories: inside and outside the classroom. Inside the classroom children get a lot of information from teachers and interact and play with friends. Outside the classroom they speak with their family members at home, play and talk with friends, buy things at shops and so on. According to him, children's real life context is quite different from that of grown-ups. Therefore, it is necessary that teachers make the classroom situation more meaningful to children by providing chances to use their target language in the same way as they do it in their real life situation.

Nunan (2001) also maintains the necessity of connecting learners' real life to classroom instruction since it provides learners with opportunities of internalizing the form through communication, especially in an EFL context. Therefore, the classroom teachers need to provide activities, tasks and materials that can generate the real life contexts in the classroom where learners are able to submerge themselves. With this sense stories can provide imaginary circumstances which generate meaningful conversation in the classroom.

Using stories can also be a way to increase the exposure of children to English during that early critical period before the age of 12 when they can acquire a foreign language so easily. This argument coincides with Kim's (1999) claim, in that children's stories are a useful tool in linking the imagination with the child's real world. Stories provide a way of enabling children to make sense of their daily life and forge links between home and school.

Willis (1996) proposes a model of the essential conditions for language learning. As seen in Figure 1, she demonstrates that instruction is desirable, but it is not essential. She, thus, proposes a different teaching model that is different from the conventional and instruction-based teaching models. Her model proposes the essential conditions for language learning: that the learner has exposure to accessible language and has opportunity to use language and has the motivation to learn.

FIGURE 1

Conditions for Language Learning

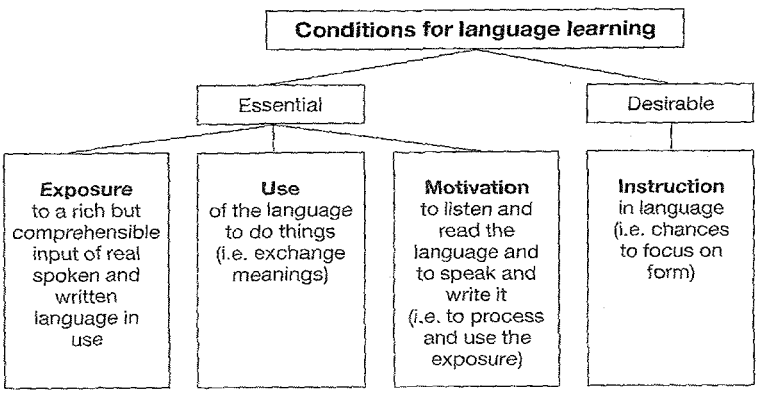

Fig. 1 Conditions for language learning (adapted from Willis, 1996, p. 11)

(Willis, 1996, p. 11)

Wajnryb (2003) claims, the three conditions for learning can be readily fulfilled by the use of stories. In terms of exposure, he explains, the text of the story provides the potential for comprehensible input which can be achieved when it is managed in a variety of ways: for example, by a teacher reading aloud, a student reading alone, a number of learners sharing stories with one another, groups of students focusing on a main text and taking it different directions according to their own imaginations. Whether the story is telling or being told, it offers learners a subtle chance to be exposed to the language and to engage in language interactions (Morgan & Rinvolucri, 1983). The use of literature for the purpose of developing language use is beneficial, thus, literature is ideal for providing more exposure to meaningful and authentic target language.

3. Providing Support for Gaining Rich Vocabulary

Developing a rich vocabulary is important for children to acquire a new language. It is considered a large, rich vocabulary and the skills to use it in communication are the keys to successful EFL learning. Vocabulary is one of several important components of oral language skills (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Early Child Care Research Network, 2005). A new word is acquired when children are able to identify its meaning in and out of context and use it naturally and appropriately.

Cameron (2001) claims, children recognize words based on meaning and connect words to concepts. She explains that children's early reading tends to begin naturally with

recognizing whole words such as names and shop signs without too much attention to the individual letters that make up the word. Children acquire their L1 vocabulary mostly by reading books attentively. The more books children are exposed to, the better and larger vocabulary they will acquire.

Savage (1994) asserts that stories provide authentic and rich vocabulary. Since stories are designed to entertain, writers choose and use words with special care to keep readers interested. Writers also provide the context created by the story, its predictable patterns of events and language and pictures that can act to support children's understanding of unfamiliar words. Children will pick up words they enjoy and in this way they will build up rich vocabulary. Lee (1987) agrees with Savage's idea, in that the predictable books are efficient for L2 language learners specifically for the beginners to develop their awareness of unfamiliar words.

There exist some studies which prove that children can acquire vocabulary from repeatedly listening to stories. Elley (1989) conducts two studies with 7 and 8 year old L1 users in New Zealand to find out vocabulary gain from listening to stories with and without the teacher's explanations of the new words. He finds that learning vocabulary is significantly correlated with the frequency of the word pictured and the number of occurrences of a word in a story. When story reading is accompanied by the teacher's explanation of new words through pictures, the teacher's acting out the meaning or the teacher's verbal explanation, the vocabulary gain is doubled.

Yi's (2000) study shows that reading literature is more effective for EFL learners' word learning than de-contextualized mechanical memorization. In her study she employs three different types of conditioned reading: reading through interaction, self-reading, vocabulary memorization to examine which treatment is more efficient for vocabulary growth of the beginning elementary learners. The word retention rate is tested twice on the next day of the experiment and one week after. The results indicate that in terms of the word retention rate, there is no significant difference between story reading through interaction and self-reading, but mechanical word learning is not effective on word learning compared to two other treatments. Likewise, Kim's (2003) study also provides a similar finding. Kim (2003) conducts an experimental study in the ESL setting where the two conditions - using stories and workbooks- are compared to see which condition is more effective in word learning at the kindergarten level. The results show that learning words in context through story reading is more effective than learning words using workbooks. In particular, the words and expressions learned in the stories also become the learners' useful resource of oral language. These findings suggest that stories need to be more extensively used as supplementary materials both at school and at home. Children's stories usually have illustrations which can be used as a support for meaning comprehension and learning new vocabulary. When new

vocabulary items are come across, teachers do not have to tell the meaning directly but they can just point to the picture.

4. Enhancing Children's Learning of Language Form

When children are listening to stories full of repetition, they learn language indirectly. This enables learners to acquire language form in a natural way. According to Hillman (1975), reading aloud to children allows the modeling of syntactic and phonemic language patterns. Children can imitate the structure and the sounds they hear. According to Hillman (1975), while reading, the teacher can infuse the syntactic order of the written language with pitch, juncture, stress, and other paralinguistic cues that contribute to the interpretation of the passage. Imitation is a result of hearing stories and poems. Hearing words in context not only adds to the number of meanings in a listener's receptive vocabulary, but also gives the listener alternative ways to express him/herself.

Bandura (1986) supports this view, explaining that reading aloud to children becomes an abstract modeling of language which allows children to extract syntactic rules from the modeled utterances. According to Bandura (1086), those syntactic rules enable learners to generate an almost infinite variety of new sentences that they have never heard of. Listening to stories read aloud is supported by Vivas's (1996) view of learning process. That is, observational learning can provide a means of acquiring different aspects of the language system and this acquired, stored knowledge will act to help in understanding more complicated forms without necessarily translating it into expressive forms. In addition, it could be used when requested, given the appropriate conditions.

Vivas (1996) conducts an experimental study to investigate the effects of a systematic story-reading aloud program on language variables in 222 pre-school and first grade children. The program is carried out by the parents at home for the children in the home-based experimental group and by the teacher at school for the school-based experimental children. The study investigates the effects of the program both on language comprehension (the understanding of syntactic structures and story comprehension) and on expressive language (syntactic structures and sentence repetition). The results show that both preschool and first-grade children significantly increase their language comprehension and expression when listening to stories read aloud either at home or at school. This study proposes the systematic introduction of story reading in school curricula, especially for children who have little opportunity of having this type of learning stimulation.

Xu (2003) argues that literature in English can provide language learners with opportunities to master structure through exposure to repeated and predictable linguistic patterns. Lee and Choi's (2007) study also provides ways to teach English grammar to Korean elementary students in meaningful context using storytelling. They believe that

when learners enjoy the story, they subconsciously acquire both spoken and written English. They argue that the focus on form approach which is different from the traditional grammar teaching approach involves drawing students' attention to linguistic forms or grammar in meaningful context while its main focus is still on meaning. They maintain that communication can be effectively applied through storytelling.

5. Promoting Motivation to Learn a Language

Motivation is a critical factor which determines whether a learner embarks on a task at all, how much energy he/she devotes to it, and how long he/she perseveres in language learning, hence it is essential that language learners be motivated (Day & Bamford, 2002; Dornyei, 1994; Elley, 1991). Many language professionals acknowledge that motivation may be one of the key predictors of success in second/foreign language learning. A great deal of research has been carried out in order to investigate what constitutes motivation and how it functions. Motivation influences the effectiveness of learning because it impacts on students' level of attention during the class as well as on their lifelong learning.

Considering one of the children's characteristics, as Cameron (2001) points out, that children's span of concentration is very short and they are easily distracted and diverted, it is supposed that the most effective teaching method is to attract their attention with materials and methods suitable for their interest and levels. Stories have been found to fulfill this requirement because children are naturally drawn to stories (Wainryb, 2003). Stories bring a whole imaginary world created by language into the classroom where children can enjoy learning a language (Cameron, 2001). Children's literature is an excellent source of topics and themes that young learners are particularly interested in and can relate to such as family, friends, and animals. Therefore, stories can increase students' motivation because they allow for the development of interesting activities that can encourage personal involvement (Ghosn, 1998; Szymanski, 1979).

Stories can only be a source of motivation if a warm and caring atmosphere is created during story-reading sessions. When children feel that they do not have to worry about ridicule or rejection, they can take risks (MacLean, 1990). Szymanski (1979) states that if a foreign language learning program of a preschool provides meaningful learning experiences with an enjoyable, almost game-like atmosphere, it is considered effective. Children's literature is an excellent source for meaningful learning experiences because stories integrate both language and content. Therefore, learning environment needs to have a large quantity of concrete materials for manipulation, construction and active involvement and children's literature is a valuable source for creating such learning environment (Coonrod & Hughes, 1994).

III. METHOD

1. Subjects

The subjects in this study were 120 students attending one of the primary schools located in Chungnam province. They were randomly divided into two groups. The two classes with 30 students each were employed in the experimental group, the other two with 30 students each in the control one. Before the treatment the researcher administered the questionnaire regarding the students' English learning experiences including the length of their English study, their ways to study after school, their previous learning experiences with English children's stories and their main purpose for English learning.

2. Instruments

In order to collect data, the following instruments were used in this study:

1) The Listening and Speaking Proficiency Pre- and Post-test

The students' listening and speaking proficiency pre- and post-tests were administered to explore if the difference in teaching methods influences the improvement of students' listening and speaking ability. Each test consisted of 12 questions selected from English proficiency test provided by KICE (Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation) (see APPENDIX A for examples). Each correct item was scored two points for listening tests. In terms of speaking tests, the researcher made reference to the scoring criteria provided by KICE which are to score the tests into three levels: high-, mid- and low-level. Each speaking test item was scored into three levels: 2 points for high-level, 1.3 for mid-level, and 0.7 for low-level. Table 1 below presents the scoring criteria provided by KICE.

TABLE 1

Scoring Criteria for Speaking Pre- and Post-test

Scoring Criteria	High-Level	The student can communicate with confidence and without hesitation or major errors, using expressions appropriate for one's purpose and situation.
	Mid-Level	The student can communicate with slight hesitation and some errors, but is able to use expressions appropriate for one's purpose and situation.
	Low-Level	The student has difficulty communicating; hesitates very much and has major errors and is not able to use expressions appropriate for one's purpose and situation.

2) The Pre- and Post- Questionnaires regarding Participants' Motivation to Learn English

The pre- and post- questionnaires were developed to investigate if the difference in teaching methods influences the participants' motivation to learn English (see APPENDIX B for examples).

3. Procedures

This study was conducted for about 12 weeks. The teacher for the experimental classes was an experimenter and the other for the control classes was a volunteer teacher who has also majored in English education. The experimenter met the volunteer teacher before and after the classes to have mini-workshops about classes.

The experimental group was given one hour of their regular English lesson using the English course book and one hour of the experimental English lesson based on the research design. The control group was given the two hours of their regular lesson based on their course book each week.

English stories were used for the purpose of in-class reading and out-of-the class listening and reading activity. English stories used for this study were *The Very Hungry Caterpilla,* and *The Turnip*. The researcher chose those stories since they include the appropriate level of language in terms of vocabulary, structures and language features including interesting rhyme, intonation, visual support and repetition. They also come with the cassette recording.

Each selected story was used for about five weeks for both in-class reading and out-of-class listening and reading activity. In order to provide students with more opportunity to experiment with the stories, the researcher asked the experimental group to have the out-of-class listening and reading activity. It was done once a day during either the morning self study session before their regular classes started or twenty minutes of their regular break time which was scheduled after the first two classes have finished. The researcher asked the homeroom teacher to administer the out-of-class listening and reading activity, since the researcher assisted them only for the lectures. During the out-of-class listening and reading activity, the homeroom teacher played the cassette tape twice. The control group was also invited to have this our-of-class listening and reading activity in the same way as the experimental group did.

Once a story has chosen, the researcher designed the lessons for the experimental group based on the Wright's (1995) suggestion which is to implement stories in three stages: activities before the story, during the story and after the story. One story was used for five weeks and the five week lessons were conducted based on the following procedures: the first week was mainly used for activities before the story, the second and third weeks for

activities during the story and the fourth and fifth weeks for activities after the story. Table 2 illustrates the lesson procedures including main activities used for the experimental classes for each five week lessons.

TABLE 2

Lesson Procedures and Activities for Each Five Week

Week	Steps	Main Activities
1st	Activities before the Story	1.Activating students' prior knowledge (1) Showing the cover (2) Brainstorming (3) Meaning mapping (4) Simulation games (5) Muddled pictures (6) Children's pictures (7) Gapped story (8) Making a mini-book
		2. Introducing and learning vocabulary in meaningful settings (1) What's missing (2) A word wall (3) Using objects, illustrations and pictures (4) Chinese whispers (5) Word stars
2nd and 3rd	Activities during the Story	1. Story reading activities (1) Storytelling (2) Using the cassette recording (3) Shared reading
		2. Comprehension monitoring and language practicing activities (1) Stopping and asking (2) Chorusing (3) Learning logs (4) Directed-Reading –Thinking Activity(DR-TA) (5) Response Journals (6) Speech bubbles
4th and 5th	Activities after the Story	1.Story Retellings /Re-creations (1) Making masks (2) Creating a story and making a book (3) Acting roles
		2.Consolidating language items (1) Picture dictionaries (2) Collages (3) Making a fruit basket for a special person (4) Tennis game

IV. RESULTS

1. Results of Questionnaire regarding Participants' Previous English Learning Experiences

As mentioned previously, the researcher administered the questionnaire the particiants' previous English learning experiences including the length of their English study, their ways to study after school, their previous learning experiences with English children's stories and their main purpose for English learning. The results can be summarized as

follows. First, although about half of the participants (53%) have studied English for only one year, they recognize the fact that these days English has become a world language and the importance of studying and knowing English and being able to communicate in English. Second, about eighty percent of the participants have participated in English learning activities after school. Third, about a little more than half of the participants (53.6%) have been exposed to learning experiences with English children's stories and they responded that their learning experiences using stories seemed to be fun for them since only about seven percent of the students answered that they had no fun with stories. Fourth, the participants expect that using English children's stories for learning English might help improve more their reading, speaking and listening skills than writing skill. The summary of the results is also demonstrated in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Summary of Questionnaire regarding Students' Previous Learning Experiences

N	Questions	Options of Students' Response	Frequency	%
1	What is your main purpose of studying English?	1) To be able to communicate with the native speaker's of English	27	19.4
		2) To be able to read books in English	12	8.6
		3) Since English is now an international language	53	38.1
		4) English will be one of the important subjects in my future school work.	26	18.7
		5) Being competent in English will be the most important factor for my future job.	21	15.1
2	Other than learning English at school, in which way do you learn English?	1) I learn English only at school.	28	20.4
		2) I go to a private English institute after school.	64	56.7
		3) I learn English through the private one-on-one tutoring or group lessons.	18	13.1
		4) I learn using self study learning materials.	27	19.7
3	How long have you been learning English so far?	1) for about 1 year	61	53.0
		2) for about 2 years	24	20.9
		3) for about 3 years	11	9.6
		4) for more than 3 years	19	16.5
4	I have an English learning	1) Yes	74	53.6

	experience using English children's stories.	2) No	64	46.4
4-1	If you answered Yes to # 4, please answer this question.	1) It was fun.	54	72
		2) So, so	16	21.3
		3) It was not fun.	5	6.7
5	With which skill do you think that studying English using English children's stories can help?	1) Listening skill	32	23.5
		2) Reading skill	50	36.8
		3) Speaking skill	42	30.9
		4) Writing skill	12	8.8

2. Results of Listening Proficiency Pre- and Post-tests

In order to collect the data, the listening proficiency pre- and post-tests were administered and the mean differences of each test between the two groups were compared based on ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). Before the treatment the participants were administered the listening proficiency pre-test during the first class session. According to the results presented in Table 4, the mean of the experimental group was 16.30, and the mean of the control group was 15.60. ANOVA revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean scores between the two groups (F=.48, p=.492). Therefore, before the treatment the two groups were at the same level in terms of listening proficiency.

After the treatment the participants were administered the listening proficiency post-test during the last class session. According to the results presented in Table 4, the mean of the experimental group was 21.30, and the mean of the control group was 18.47. ANOVA revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores between the two groups (F=13.41 p=.000). Therefore, after the treatment the experimental groups' listening proficiency was improved more than the control groups' and this means that the treatment has a positive effect on the improvement of the students' listening competence.

TABLE 4

ANOVA Results of Listening Proficiency Pre- and Post-test

Test	Group	N	M	SD	F	P
	Control	60	15.60	5.30		
Pre-test					.48	.492
	Experimental	60	16.30	5.82		
	Control	60	18.47	5.53		
Post-test					13.41	.000
	Experimental	60	21.30	5.19		

2. Results of Speaking Proficiency Pre- and Post-tests

In order to collect the data, the speaking proficiency pre- and post-tests were administered and the mean differences of each test between the two groups were compared based on ANOVA. Before the treatment the participants were administered the speaking proficiency pre-test during the first class session. According to the results presented in Table 5, the mean of the experimental group was 10.77, and the mean of the control group was 8.30. ANOVA revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean scores between the two groups (F=2.76, p=.099). Therefore, before the treatment the two groups were at the same level in terms of their speaking proficiency.

After the treatment the participants were administered the speaking proficiency post-test during the last class session. According to the results presented in Table 5, the mean of the experimental group was 16.33, and the mean of the control group was 9.63. ANOVA revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores between the two groups (F=37.76 p=.000). Therefore, after the treatment, the experimental groups' speaking proficiency was improved more than the control group's and this means that the treatment has a positive effect on the improvement of the students' speaking proficiency.

TABLE 5

ANOVA Results of Speaking Proficiency Pre- and Post-test

Test	Group	N	M	SD	F	P
	Control	60	8.30	7.15		
Pre-test					2.76	0.99
	Experimental	60	10.77	9.00		
	Control	60	9.63	7.61		
Post-test					37.76	.000
	Experimental	60	16.33	7.84		

3. Results of Students' Motivation to Learn English

As seen in Table 6, the mean of the experimental group was 3.73 and the mean of the control group was 3.69. ANOVA revealed that there was no significant difference in mean scores between two groups (F=.07, p=.799). Therefore, before the treatment the two groups were at the same level in terms of their motivation to learn English.

After the treatment the mean of the experimental group was 4.19 and the mean of the control group was 3.71. ANOVA revealed that there was significant difference in mean scores between two groups (F=24.03, p=.000). Therefore, after the treatment the experimental groups' motivation to learn English was improved higher than the control one. This means that the treatment has a positive effect on the improvement of the students' motivation to learn English.

TABLE 6

ANOVA Results of Students' Motivation to Learn English Pre- and Post-Questionnaire

Questionnaire	Group	N	M	SD	F	P
Pre-	Control	60	3.69	.74	.07	.799
	Experimental	60	3.73	.87		
Post-	Control	60	3.71	.83	24.03	.000
	Experimental	60	4.19	.58		

V. CONCLUSION

This study was designed to examine the effect of using English children's stories on the improvement of Korean primary school EFL learners' listening and speaking proficiency and their motivation to learn English and offered the following major findings:

First, there was a significant difference in the degree of participants' listening and speaking proficiency improvement between the experimental and control one. The students who received the lessons through English children's stories performed better on their listening and speaking proficiency post-tests than those who learned through only the English course book.

Second, there was a significant difference in the degree of the increase in motivation

between the two groups. The students who received the experimental treatment showed more significant increase in their motivation than those who did not.

The findings of the study indicate that when students have opportunities to explore and experience authentic language use through the application of English children's stories to EFL learning settings, they can improve their listening and speaking competences and motivation to learn their target language. Thus, it can be said that the results of this study conform to the educational values of using English children's stories for Korean primary school EFL learners. Then, an issue that what EFL teachers and educators can do to meet such requirements would be the next thing to consider. The researcher can make the following suggestions as pedagogical implications for EFL educators and teachers.

First, teachers need to use English children's stories as an alternative to the course book as much as they can. To do so, there are certain agendas that must be resolved for teachers to easily utilize English children's stories in their instruction. For instance, teachers face limited information and time restraints in preparing their lectures. To precede a list of stories so that teachers can use when instructing students would be an answer to this agenda. Since the 7th English curriculum adapts only one published version of the course book, making a list of stories for each chapter or for each grade from which teachers can pick and use in their lectures can be a great help. Along with a list of stories, a teacher's guidebook that provides detailed guidance for teaching students in the story-based method must be made. Additionally, to provide pictures and illustrations for students is necessary since most youngsters prefer classes with visual materials. Finally, it is essential to encourage teachers to meet and exchange any helpful information about books, class materials and lesson plans, or receive feedback from one another.

Second, it is crucial to give teachers a freehand through which they can teach by selecting or developing their curriculum, syllabus and teaching materials on their own that are most suitable for the students' language level, their needs and interest.

Third, as Brewster et al. (1991) claim that having a book corner or a classroom library where students can read books of their own choice and at their own pace promote a positive attitude towards reading and create enthusiasm among children for books. Thus, it is essential to create a classroom library or a school library with books purchased with money from school budgets or other grants.

Several positive findings from the previous studies mentioned so far have been encouraging teachers to employ English children's stories for teaching English. The findings of this study also comply with the necessity of using English children's stories for Korean primary school EFL learners. However, interpretations of the results of this study are limited by the following. First, in terms of the participants in the present study were limited to 5th graders in a primary school located in a mid-sized city. Studying with other students learning EFL from different levels and from different area of the country might get

different results. Second, in terms of English children's story selection, the elements that make up a story need to be taken into consideration depending on the target students.

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APPENDIX A

Sample Pre-test Items of Listening and Speaking Proficiency

<듣기>

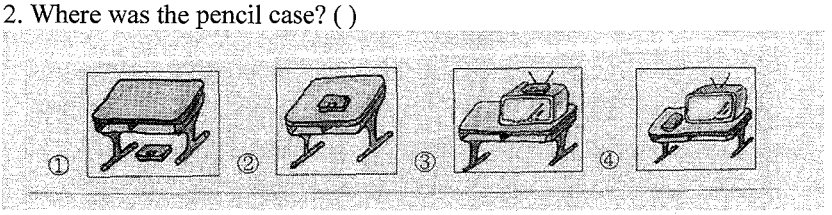
다음 대화문을 잘 듣고 질문에 맞는 번호를 ( )에 써 넣으세요.

(1- 3)

1. What was Nami looking for? ( )

1) 자 2) 필통 3) 책 4) 책가방

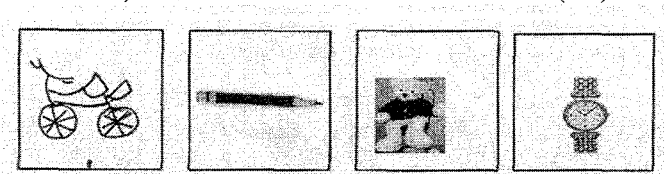
2. Where was the pencil case? ( )



3. Who found the Nami's pencil case? ( )

1) 나미 2) 나미동생 3) 아버지 4) 어머니

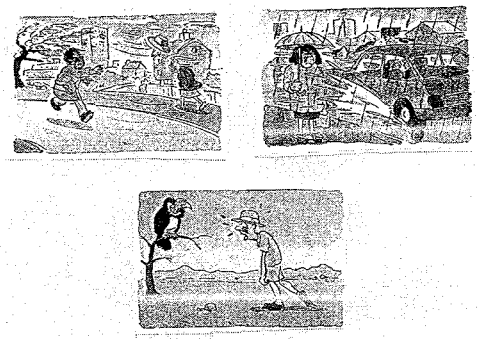
잘 듣고, 다음 장난감의 가격을 써 보세요. (4-7)



(문항 8-12 까지 생략 되었음)

<말하기>
다음과 같은 상황에서 어떤 말을 해야 하는지 말해보세요.(1-2)
상황 1: 꽃을 꺾으려고 하는 아이를 보았을 때
상황 2: 벌이 쏘려고 달려들 때, 이를 피하기 위하여 도망갈 때

다음 그림을 보고 날씨를 표현해 보세요. (3-5)

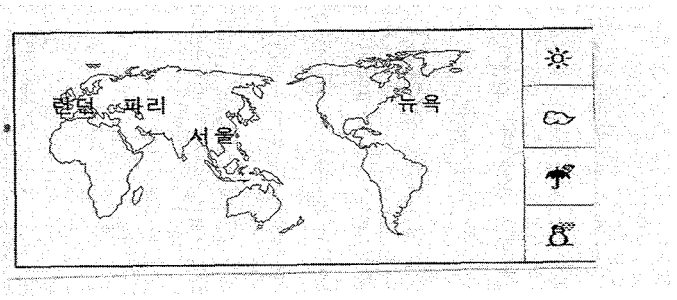


(문항 6-12 까지 생략 되었음)

<Sample Post-test Items of Listening and Speaking Proficiency>

<듣기>
준이 반 친구들과 대화를 하고 있어요. 잘 듣고 질문에 알맞은 번호를 골라 ( )안에 쓰세요.(1-3)
1. What time did Joon get up? ( )
1) 06:00 2) 06:30 3) 07:00 4) 08:00
2. What time did Joon study English? ( )
1) 07:00 2) 07:30 3) 08:20 4) 03:10
3. Where were they talking to each other? ( )
1) 슈퍼마켓 2) 교실 3) 백화점 4) 세탁소

잘 듣고 여러 도시들의 날씨 상황에 맞게 그림을 그려보세요. (4-7)



(문항 8-12 까지 생략 되었음)

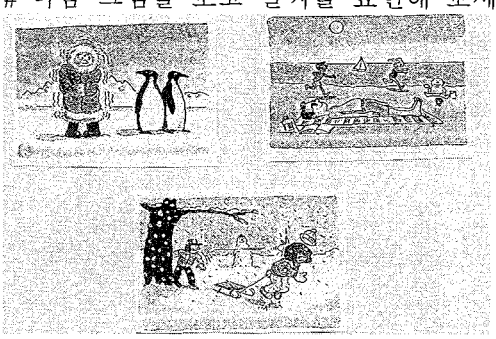
<말하기>

다음과 같은 상황에서 어떤 말을 해야 하는지 말해보세요. (1-2)

상황 1: 교실에서 뛰어다니고 있는 아이를 보았을 때

상황 2: 걸어가는 길옆에 웅덩이가 있는 것을 모르고 태연히 걸어가고 있는 아이의 모습을 보았을 때

다음 그림을 보고 날씨를 표현해 보세요. (3-5)



(문항 6-12 까지 생략 되었음)

APPENDIX B

Sample Question Items in Questionnaires

Direction: The following questions are to know about your opinion in terms of interest, and confidence in learning English and motivation to learn English. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements by placing √ below the appropriate category.

	Content	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I want to be good at English.					

2	I am interested in English.					
3	I do my best to learn English.					
4	I think I can improve English language skills if I study hard.					
5	I want to practice English with my friends or family.					

(문항6-10까지 생략되었음)

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Primary

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