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FANTASY AS A TYPE OF LYING AND ITS POSITIVE EFFECT ON  
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# FANTASY AS A TYPE OF LYING AND ITS POSITIVE EFFECT ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS

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## ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to one of the positive types of lying – Fantasy and its usage at English lessons. Using Fantasy at English lessons is essential, especially at creative writing and storytelling lessons. Fantasy helps secondary school pupils to activate creative parts of the brain, develop imagination, create an optimistic worldview, escape from daily struggles and forget the reality. The article aims at sharing the teaching methods that are used by English teachers at creative writing and storytelling lessons.

The observation of classes revealed that pupils are in favor of creating unreal stories, their imagination is well-developed and they can create fantasy plots, fantasy characters and scenarios easily and present their stories in front of the class as it is real.

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## KEYWORDS

Lying, Fantasy, Storytelling, Creative Writing, Imagination

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## Introduction.

In many scientific papers Fantasy is considered as a type of lie, but there is a difference between them, Lies are anti-truth, fantasy is simply an absence of reality. Lies hurt, Fantasy soothes. Like the truth, lies and even fantasy can be either pleasant or bitter. The impact of a lie is determinative, but fantasy is less influential.

Lying in class, especially in the process of teaching and learning is forbidden, but using fantasy at the lessons is quite reasonable. Language teachers purposely try to develop the fantasy of some students who lack imagination and are bad at creative writing or storytelling.

Children get to know the elements of fantasy from the very early childhood. They are read fairytales by their parents. At nursery schools and at primary schools, school children learn more about fantasy characters from different sources such as: teachers, parents and friends. At this stage, fantasy seems harmless. Some schoolchildren love creating fantasy scenarios or fantasy characters so much, that they become great liars.

Teachers have different opinion about using fantasy in the process of teaching and learning. Some teachers see the benefits of fantasy. According to Gwen Dewar, Ph.D. “Engaging with fantasy can stimulate creativity and boost vocabulary. It may help some children develop better self-regulation skills. It might even enhance their working memory performance, and under some conditions - help them discover creative solutions to problems.” There are teachers who believe that using fantasy in the process of learning is a waste of time and provoke the wish of telling lies. Many teachers prefer to avoid fantasy at creative writing classes because fantasy is too unreal.

### **Theoretical Background**

Scientists have studied positive impact of fantasy on primary school pupils. According to D. Weisberg (Associate Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Villanova University) and K. Hirsh-Pasek (Professor of Psychology at Temple University): “Fantasy is an important tool in education, teachers help all children to create paths from the world as it is to the world as they would like to be.”

V. Gussin Paley, author of the book “A Child’s Work” believes that fantasy plays help child’s cognitive and narrative skills to flourish. Author of “Northern Lights,” Phillip Pullman, said fantasy loosens the chains of children’s imaginations, it gives them new images to think with, allows them to see things from different perspectives, but more importantly, it shows them new concepts that they can take away and incorporate into their own lives.

Jean Piaget, a Swiss clinical psychologist renowned for his work in child development, asserted that a child’s mind is not simply a younger version of an adult’s mind but is something much more raw and animalistic. It develops as a child grows and interacts with the environments around them. Piaget was a strong believer that the best way for this to flourish is by encouraging a child to stoke their own curiosity through exploration, experimentation and fantasy play.

### **Discussion**

As a school teacher, I often use elements of fantasy at English language lessons. I use different activities that inspire young language learners to develop their imagination and have fun during the lessons. I will present the activities that I use with my primary school pupils.

I often do creative writing activities at the lessons. I write on the board the names of some fantasy characters and the words that I want my students to use in the story. The task is such: pupils have to write a short story using the names of fantasy characters, use some magic words, even nonce words, tropes and themes that are peculiar to a fantasy narrative. This writing activity will guide pupils through questions and prompts that help them to create the most engaging fantasy story possible.

The second activity that I often utilize at English lessons is altering famous fairy tales. Pupils use their imagination to transform world famous fairy tales or fables. This activity is a real fun as pupils imagination goes beyond the limits and finally we get the most strange and provoking tales with unexpected endings. Pupils transform the tales so much that it becomes difficult to guess which fairy tale was twisted by them. They even invent unique characters, use their own themes, symbols and create their own vocabulary. This activity encourages creativity and keeps the tale fresh by subverting common fantasy conventions.

Role play is a helpful activity at English lessons. Pupils are asked to work in pairs and write a dialogue between fantasy characters and then perform the dialogues before their classmates. Pupils choose two famous characters from their favorite fantasy books and write a scene where they have a conversation. At the end of the activity pupils perform the dialogue aloud. This activity brings the characters to life and helps pupils see how their unique traits influence their conversations and relationships.

At some lessons I ask my students to create a magical creature of their own. Pupils think about their appearance, their abilities, their character and special magical powers. It is also interesting how these magic creatures interact with other creatures.

Pupils mostly enjoy the activity that aims at creating magic / fantasy words. It is a great fun and creative exercise at the same time. This activity helps pupils develop their imagination, expand their vocabulary and practice language skills. As usual, pupils describe fantasy creatures or objects by their own descriptive words. Besides they invent some fantasy places and call them the names created by them. Words are created from root words, by combining existing words or making words from sounds. More than that, pupils are asked to create their own rules of grammar for their fantasy words. Once they have created a set of fantasy words, pupils can use them into short stories or poems. This helps them better understand the words they have created and how to use them in context.

Pupils share their stories with the class. This step encourages peer feedback and collaboration. Pupils learn from each other’s creativity and offer suggestions to improve their fantasy worlds and characters.

### **Research Results**

In order to see the results of teaching pupils with fantasy stories, I observed 20 pupils’ (10-12 year olds) 60 short stories /fairy tales. Observation revealed that writing fantasy stories improved their vocabulary and sentence structure. They developed narrative techniques, started to write long dialogues; Pupils started to think outside the box, develop new worlds, characters, scenarios, etc. Pupils became more interested in reading,

especially in Fantasy genre. It should be noted that completing a fantasy story gave pupils self-confidence in their creative writing and storytelling. They became much more communicative and emotional. Creative writing helped pupils to express their thoughts clearly. Sharing and presenting their stories in class improved their public speaking and communication skills.

I noticed that pupils loved creating fantasy stories and fairy tales and enquired the reasons of it. 11 pupils answered that they liked to escape from reality; 6 pupils answered that they liked the freedom they were given in inventing fantasy creatures, plot, scenario and even words. 3 pupils' answer was that they had fun with Fantasy tropes. Writing with this genre allowed them to play with these elements.

The combination of imagination, adventure, control and personal expression makes creating fantasy stories a highly enjoyable and fulfilling activity for pupils.

### **Conclusions**

Observation revealed that fantasy is a type of lie that gives liars immense power. It is not dangerous at all but is an effective tool to narrate about something unreal. Incorporating fantasy into a classroom is effective teaching tool. Fantasy captures pupils' attention and sparks their interest in learning. Writing and discussing fantasy allows pupils to explore their creativity. Pupils develop critical thinking skills and expand their vocabulary, improve understanding of figurative language. Using fantasy in the classroom can make learning fun and dynamic while also promoting valuable academic and personal growth skills.

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