

Primary Education Teachers' Mythic and Romantic Understanding Activities in First Reading and Writing Teaching

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Summary

INTRODUCTION

Education cannot be maintained disregarding the culture and the society where it takes place. This state has been suggested, defined and supported with creative learning model by Kieran Egan (1977). According to the model, cognitive tools that are available from the beginning of the pre-childhood can be applied for learning integrating in related culture. Hereby, the child can perceive the world in different manners and connect with it. These cognitive tools are categorized following certain developmental process. These categories are namely Somatic, Mythic, Romantic, Philosophic, and Ironic understanding. In overall, somatic understanding appears in infancy period learning as a physical learning tool; mythic understanding appears in learning as a oral language culture tool; romantic understanding appears in learning as a written language culture tool; philosophic understanding appears in learning as a connective advanced learning skill tool; and ironic understanding appears in learning as a complex thinking tool. This study aims to reveal whether primary education teachers include mythic and romantic understanding features in first reading and writing activities.

METHOD

Qualitative research method was applied for the study. The design of the study was determined as phenomenology technique. The phenomenology technique reveals how people explain their experiences and focuses on how these experiences turn into consciousness (Patton, 2014). The participants were selected following purposive sampling method since the study concentrated on primary education teachers. The study was conducted with purposively selected 9 primary education teachers. Semi structured interview questions were developed by the researchers and voice records were collected through interviews. After decipher, the transcript were examined via a rubric developed by the researchers to categorize the responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the analysis, it was found that primary education teachers integrate mythic understanding features in first reading activities. They apply visual items, fantasy World, similarity, cultural anecdotes, symbols, rhythm and narration, stories, and dramatic activities during first reading process. However, they do not apply romantic understanding features in first reading activities. Rather, they apply drawings, and interesting questions features of romantic understanding into first writing activities. In evaluation sessions, teachers prefer traditional methods such as dictation. Although it is possible to find mythic and romantic features in teachers' guidance books of Minister of National Education (MONE), teachers mostly do not follow these guidance books. They benefit from introductory activities time to time, but they do not adapt the book for instructional activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First reading and writing process is essential for children for their future educational development and stages. Regarding cultural effects of the language displays integration and

advances certain skills of children as creative thinking. What Egan suggests with mythic and romantic understanding have parallels with objectives of MONE for first reading and writing. Considering these objectives, teachers can benefit from mythic and romantic understanding features to enhance children's cultural integration with language, connection with real world situations and children's imagination, to raise curiosity for knowledge. It is also supportive to use mythic and romantic understanding in evaluation processes rather than traditional methods since it should not be forgotten that the students are still children living a playful fantasy world.