

**Abstract No 41****Use of the story element for language teaching****D. Suwandaratna****Visiting Lecturer, Department of Library and Information Science**  
**[dharmapriy.sw.@gmail.com](mailto:dharmapriy.sw.@gmail.com)**

In the past the proponents of different pedagogies were bitterly critical of methods their opponents advocated. Bloomfield's words: "errors should be avoided like sin", and Wilga Rivers' branding of learners coached on Audio lingal lines as "trained parrots" prove this. However the healthy orientation that came in to existence later: eclectic approach (V.J. Cook in West) has enabled language teachers to use combinations of different pedagogies either in original or modified form. Present technique is a modified form of a strategy recorded in Hithopadeshaya. It defines how story telling was used successfully to educate 3 sons of the king Amarashakthi who were found to be very low in intelligence. Despite this weakness the princess were able to grasp the concepts relevant to the complex items taught, because of the story element used to put those across. Thus, in the case of the princess story telling was a strategy used to overcome a weakness inherent in the princess, namely low intelligence. Presenter used the some device to tide over a difficulty specific to English language. For instance, the use of linguistic items such as "had", "would" etc. to refer to concepts of present or future relevance, completely disorientates L2 learners as those are normally associated with acts or states related to pat. However, if these complex grammar patterns are couched in stories or anecdotes the learning task becomes simple as the story enables the learner to understand the principal characteristics of the message. This understanding or in other words this knowledge is used later to justify the deviant features of the complex grammar patterns. Apart from facilitating comprehension the technique offers another advantage. Stevick's assertion that "bringing back one item of an image tends to bring back the other items of the same image" suggests that ability to recall the anecdotes because of their interesting features helps recall the language used to explain those as well. Constant recollections help learners grasp the meaning of the patterns firmly. This technique was tried out successfully at universities of Kelaniya, Colombo, and Moratuwa and in language classes of National Youth Center, Maharagama.

**Key Words:** Story telling, Complex items, Comprehension, Images, Recollection