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The competence-developing effects of storytelling in pedagogical processes

Thesis Booklet

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1. Introduction

Storytelling has played a defining role in human culture and education for thousands of years. Narratives embody complex meaning-making processes that exert a positive influence on the formation of both individual and collective identity, on the development of social relationships, while simultaneously ensuring the preservation and transmission of cultural knowledge. The pedagogical significance of narratives lies in their ability to connect learners' prior experiences and knowledge with curricular content, thereby providing opportunities for the creation of personal and deeper interpretations.

In recent decades, the international scientific discourse has devoted increasing attention to the pedagogical potential of narratives, which has proven to be fundamental from the perspectives of cognitive development, social learning, and competence enhancement. However, using storytelling in education has so far been a relatively underexplored and unsystematised area within Hungarian pedagogical practice and empirical research.

The purpose of this dissertation is to place storytelling as an educational strategy within the Hungarian discourse of educational sciences by incorporating international theoretical approaches and empirical findings. On a theoretical level, the research contributes to making storytelling definable and examinable within a well-delimited framework. Through empirical investigations, it explores the skill-developing effects of storytelling (reading comprehension, text production, understanding, recalling information, and its application) in classroom settings.

The topicality of the subject is further strengthened by the fact that story-centred pedagogy represents a promising tool for promoting competence development, creativity, and learner motivation. Moreover, it can be organically integrated into the challenges of 21st-century education and into the competence-based approach of the National Core Curriculum (2020).

2. Research Objectives and Significance

The primary objective of the dissertation is to examine the role of storytelling in education, with particular emphasis on the ways in which it can contribute to the development of learners' linguistic-communicative skills, as well as their reading comprehension and text production competences.

Further objectives include:

1) incorporating the theoretical and practical results of international literature on pedagogical storytelling into the Hungarian discourse,

2) defining storytelling as an educational strategy and situating it within a theoretical framework,

3) demonstrating that storytelling constitutes a learning organization strategy, which is closely aligned with the fundamental concepts, values, and aims of constructivist pedagogy (conceptual change, problem-solving, autonomy and collective meaning-making),

4) presenting the practical possibilities of applying storytelling in early childhood education, public education and higher education,

5) describing the didactic processes of storytelling through the use of learning models,

6) collecting empirical data on the effects of narrative-based pedagogical practices through action research and pedagogical experimentation.

The significance of the research lies in its ability to build a bridge between international and Hungarian discourses, while contributing to the integration of storytelling into Hungarian pedagogy at both theoretical and practical levels.

3. Theoretical Framework of the Dissertation

The starting point of the dissertation was to present the competence-developing effects of storytelling within pedagogical processes. In order to do so, it was first necessary to clarify the educational-scientific definition of storytelling, since the concept had not yet shown a unified picture in the pedagogical discourse: divergent interpretations had emerged across early childhood education, public education, and higher education, as well as in Hungarian and international literature. The main theoretical part of the dissertation, therefore, focused on establishing a unified conceptualization.

The dissertation presents international literature on the pedagogical concepts of storytelling in a chronological order, and subsequently points out a contradiction within the Hungarian theoretical framework of *Didaktika* (Falus & Szűcs, 2022), in which storytelling appears both as an educational method and as an educational strategy (in digital form). To resolve this paradox, an independent theoretical framework and definition have been developed. I have found that storytelling can be understood simultaneously as an umbrella term, a collective concept, and an educational strategy, as it integrates a variety of methods, tools, and modes of learning organization. Accordingly, storytelling – whether in a digital or a traditional form – can be considered a pedagogical strategy serving specific aims (e.g., fostering motivation, creating meaning), and is based on coherent theoretical foundations (constructivist learning theory, narratology). The implementation of storytelling consists of distinct steps defined by the narrative structure and the mode of learner participation.

Storytelling situates the learning content within an interactive narrative framework, enabling learners to connect their prior experiences and knowledge with the elements of the story, thereby constructing deeper and more personal meanings related to the subject matter. Storytelling can be conducted through traditional oral or written forms, via artistic mediations (e.g. dance, sculpture, film, painting), as well as through technological support such as digital storytelling.

The review of narratological theories and approaches has contributed to a deeper understanding of the pedagogical concept of storytelling. Formalist and structuralist traditions, by defining the basic elements of narrative coherence (exposition, complication, climax, resolution), provide an organizing framework that supports both the comparison of different genres and the creation of stories. Poststructuralist and deconstructionist narratology emphasize the perspective of the audience, whereas cognitive narratology focuses on causal relations and character motivations, thereby deepening text comprehension. Hermeneutic and performative approaches highlight learner engagement, emotional involvement and the inclusion of diverse media. Within this framework, narrative processing supports the development of text production, analysis, recall, self-reflection and empathy.

The analysis of the literature revealed that cognitive mechanisms of narrative processing fundamentally justify the pedagogical effectiveness of storytelling. Bruner's (1990, 2004) theories of meaning-making demonstrate that human thinking is inherently organized in narrative forms, and that this cognitive characteristic enables durable memory encoding and deeper comprehension. Narrative structures, thus, facilitate the preservation of experience and the processing of semantic knowledge. Consequently, theoretical insights – namely, how the human brain processes narrative structures – can be directly transferred into pedagogical practice. Furthermore, Green and Brock's (2000) theory of narrative transportation confirms that stories elicit emotional involvement, which strengthens motivation and fosters learner engagement.

The educational role and significance of storytelling reach back to prehistoric cave paintings. The theoretical analysis further demonstrates that storytelling functioned as a key to survival in prehistory and as a pedagogical foundation in antiquity. For millennia, stories have been among the most effective media for transmitting culture, societal and moral values, norms, customs, and traditions across generations. Storytellers of myths, legends, and epics possessed advanced memory, rich linguistic expression and strong auditory comprehension skills. The practice of listening to stories in ancient cultures also fostered

imagination and creativity. All this indicates that knowledge embedded in narrative structures rests on millennia-old pedagogical traditions and competence-developing effects.

Storytelling as an educational strategy can only be understood within a comprehensive framework in which learning is viewed as an active, meaning-making process. From this perspective, constructivist pedagogy provides a particularly relevant theoretical foundation, as knowledge acquisition is not passive reception but the learner's active construction (Glasersfeld, 1995; Nahalka, 1997). Within this framework, storytelling can be understood as one of the organizing principles of learning, making possible emotional engagement, reflective thinking, and deeper comprehension (Egan, 1986; Bruner, 2004; Deniston-Trochta, 2003). Through narrative structures, learners are able to link new knowledge to their prior experiences, thereby creating personal meanings (Deniston-Trochta, 2003). Sharing and creating stories occurs not only individually but also collectively, which is one of the key elements of the constructivist perspective.

The theoretical concept of storytelling also the exploration of its educational methods. The methods and procedures presented in *Didaktika* (Falus & Szűcs, 2022) have been supplemented with findings from international literature, outlining broader possibilities of application as a consequence. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Method/Procedure	Form of Application in Storytelling
Lecture	Storytelling or narration performed orally by the teacher or a student.
Demonstration	Illustration of a story using available tools, either visually or audio-visually.
Student presentations	Students present a personal, read, or self-created story to the class in the form of a presentation.
Debate	During classroom debates, storytelling appears as the narration of brief personal or second-hand experiences, serving to support arguments.
Activity-based method	Students engage with objects, tools, or props in order to participate in the story-creation process (e.g. preparing models or puppets for a story).
Cooperative learning method	Students collaboratively complete storytelling tasks, for example, by creating a story collectively.

Simulation, role-play, drama	Enactment of a story through dialogue, narration, or pantomime. Students become active participants in the story world, either following a "script" provided by the teacher, or co-constructing the plot with the teacher acting as facilitator. In these roles, students shape the narrative through their own decisions and interactions.
Game	Linking the storyline to rules of play, such as missions or tasks embedded within the narrative. This may include the design of story-based board games, or classroom/online escape rooms built around a story.
Homework	Independent tasks based on storytelling, such as writing alternative endings, creating characters, collecting thematic knowledge, or producing reflective journals.
Project	Various creative realizations of storytelling carried out within the framework of project work.
Creative writing	Independent narrative creation focusing on imagination, linguistic expression, and emotional involvement. It can be completed individually, in pairs, or in groups.
Storyboard (comic creation)	A visually based pedagogical activity in which students create story outlines through a sequence of images and short texts.
Storyline (frame story)	Acquisition of new knowledge through a teacher-structured narrative framework organized into modules.
Storycrafting	Recommended primarily for young children in preschool or early primary school. The child freely selects a story (fairy tale, narrative, or personal experience), which is recorded verbatim without questioning, explanation, modification, or evaluation.
Storification	Temporal and spatial structuring of stories in virtual or real environments, emphasizing the integration of characters' traits, intentions, actions, and causal relations.

Table 1. Methods of Storytelling

It has been found that different types of storytelling are suited to the development of different learning objectives, each with unique methodological potential and toolkits, adaptable to students' age-specific characteristics, interests, and curricular requirements. This is summarized in Table 2.

Type/Form	Characteristics
Traditional oral storytelling	Monologic, mainly frontal. Can be planned or spontaneous. Includes teacher- or student-created stories, or reading text aloud by other authors. Performance, rhythm, and suprasegmental elements play an important role.
Interactive storytelling	Students make decisions as characters that influence the course of events. The teacher shares a story base, which is then developed collaboratively. Includes the "storyline" approach.
Cooperative storytelling/creation	Students collaboratively create stories in groups. Often linked to curricular content, facilitated by prompts such as objects, images, diagrams, texts, or keywords. Includes the personification of concepts and their embedding in narratives.
Role-play, dramatization	Collective performance of stories through group work. It can include sculpture games, pantomime, silent play, or other nonverbal forms.
Visual storytelling	Illustration of stories through creative use of objects, materials, and tools. Includes storyboard comics, clay modelling, puppetry, painting or drawing on stones, and other crafts.
Digital storytelling	Storytelling supported by digital tools.

Table 2. Forms and Characteristics of Storytelling in Education

The core concepts of constructivist theory (conceptual change, problem-solving), its values (autonomy, social relationships), and aims (social meaning-making, active participation) can be interpreted in close relation to the didactic functions of storytelling. International literature (Moon, 2010; Tobiason, 2022; Dagar & Yadav, 2016) further substantiates that storytelling is well aligned with constructivist learning environments.

As a reflective learning organization strategy, storytelling was analysed through three models of learning. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle demonstrated how students process their own experiences in narrative form. Bloom's (2001) revised taxonomy provided a framework for identifying the cognitive levels of narratives, illustrated with best practices. Finally, McDrury and Alterio's (2003) model exemplified the reflective, interactive learning processes inherent in storytelling.

The practical part of the dissertation examines the pedagogical application of narrative-based methods. It highlights how storytelling can counterbalance the attention and

communication difficulties of digital-native generations (Z and Alpha). Educational practices ranging from early childhood education to higher education confirm the transdisciplinary validity of stories: narrative-based learning organization facilitates active knowledge construction, whereby students integrate their prior experiences and knowledge. The presentation of tasks already tested internationally, as well as those feasible within the Hungarian context, along with their competence-developing aspects, offers direct support for teachers' classroom application.

The *National Core Curriculum* (2020) also provides space for narrative methods, particularly in developing mother tongue communication and social competences. Storytelling further enables cross-curricular integration, as it can be applied effectively in literature, history, the arts, and science education alike.

4. Presentation of Empirical Research

4. 1. Questionnaire Survey among Teacher Candidates

Aim and Theoretical Background

The study focused on exploring how teacher candidates perceive the role of storytelling in educational processes. The starting point was the assumption that storytelling is not only relevant in preschool and primary education but is also becoming increasingly significant in higher education contexts.

Methodology

The research was conducted using a quantitative, questionnaire-based method. The primary aim of the study was to explore the opinions of teacher candidates; therefore, it should be regarded not as a representative survey but as an exploratory investigation. The data were processed using descriptive statistical methods, based on frequency distributions and percentage distributions.

Sample

The sample consisted of teacher candidates from Eszterházy Károly Catholic University in Eger (N=141), representing different levels and fields of study. The heterogeneity of the participants made it possible to include a wide range of perspectives on storytelling. In terms of age, level of studies and previous pedagogical experiences, the group was diverse, which allowed for a nuanced comparison of opinions regarding the method's perceived potential.

Hypotheses

Three main hypotheses were examined:

H1: Teacher candidates perceive storytelling as an effective method in the teaching-learning process.

H2: Teacher candidates prefer the advantages of using storytelling in education to a greater extent than its disadvantages.

H3: Teacher candidates consider storytelling to have positive competence-developing effects in the teaching-learning process.

Results

The data revealed that the majority of respondents perceived storytelling as an effective and motivating method. The first hypothesis was confirmed: participants clearly believed that storytelling was suitable for maintaining attention, fostering interest, and making learning more experiential. The second hypothesis was also supported, as respondents emphasized the advantages – such as increasing learner activity, stimulating creative thinking, and promoting experiential learning – much more strongly than the disadvantages. Reported limitations were mainly of a practical nature, including time demands and insufficient narrative skills of teachers. The third hypothesis was likewise validated: respondents considered storytelling particularly effective in developing reading comprehension, writing skills, and communication competences. In addition, they highlighted its potential for fostering empathy, creativity, and critical thinking.

Conclusions

The findings of the questionnaire survey laid the groundwork for subsequent empirical investigations. The opinions of teacher candidates confirmed that storytelling has considerable methodological potential, and this way also highlighted the need for its more systematic and widespread integration into teacher training. The results may contribute to the methodological renewal of teacher training, especially through the introduction of training elements that support the conscious use of narrative methods. The study was, therefore, not only diagnostic but also pointed towards developmental directions: greater emphasis in teacher education should be placed on mastering storytelling techniques, embedding them into classroom practice and deliberately fostering students' narrative competences.

4. 2. Investigating Storytelling through Action Research

Aim and Theoretical Background

The purpose of the action research was to explore the pedagogical implementation of traditional storytelling and to identify the most effective classroom practices. The central research question addressed how narrative-based learning situations can contribute to the

development of primary school students' reading comprehension and writing skills. In Hungarian educational research, action research as a methodology is still relatively underrepresented. Therefore, an additional aim of this study was to strengthen the methodological prestige of action research within the field of educational sciences in Hungary.

Methodology

The action research was conducted with a small sample, following a cyclic, iterative process. The research consisted of the following main stages:

Diagnostic stage: assessing students' baseline reading comprehension and writing abilities.

Intervention stage: implementing storytelling-based lessons, in which tasks were linked to narratives delivered by the teacher.

Reflection stage: measuring student performance and analysing the impact of the narrative framework.

The first diagnostic reading comprehension test was administered in January 2022, followed by an interim test in June 2022, and a final assessment in November 2022. Entrance examination tests were conducted during the second semester of the 2022/2023 school year: the first in January 2023 and the second in May 2023. All tests were completed in paper-based format during regular classroom sessions. Student absences occurred during some of the assessments, which could not be compensated for; therefore, data cleaning was necessary. As a result, while the class initially had 21 students, the effective sample size was reduced to 18 for the classroom tests and 16 for the entrance exam assessments.

Instruments

For the baseline assessment, students completed the national competence test (OKM) dated May 24, 2017 (Booklet A). The interim assessment used the OKM test from May 26, 2021 (Booklet A), and the final assessment relied on the OKM test from May 25, 2016 (Booklet B). The first entrance examination was the Hungarian language test from the national written entrance exam held on January 20, 2018, prepared by the Educational Authority. The second was also sourced from the national exam, dated January 21, 2023.

Sample and Rationale

The small sample size enabled close monitoring of individual learning processes. Participants were primary school students whose age made them particularly receptive to narrative-based learning situations, while their performance in the baseline assessment reflected heterogeneity. The sample was chosen to provide a controlled yet flexible research environment in which the effects of storytelling could be examined. The class size at the

beginning of the research (January 2022) was 21 students, which decreased to 20 in the following academic year. The action research spanned the period from January 2022 to June 2023. At both mid-year and end-of-year evaluations, the average student grades in the relevant subjects were above 4.3 on the Hungarian grading scale.

Hypotheses

The study was guided by two hypotheses:

H1: Storytelling contributes to the development of reading comprehension skills; students' performance in this domain will improve positively compared to the baseline measurement as a result of narrative-based methods.

H2: Storytelling contributes to the development of writing skills; students' performance in this domain will improve positively compared to the baseline measurement as a result of narrative-based methods.

Examination of Hypotheses

At the outset of the empirical school-based action research, two hypotheses were formulated. Given that the final sample size was small (18 and 16 students after data cleaning) and the research was conducted with a single class, it was not considered relevant to examine the statistical significance of the data associated with the hypotheses or to explore deeper correlations. From such a limited sample, no far-reaching conclusions can be drawn regarding the overall effectiveness of narrative methods. To establish statistically significant relationships, larger-scale and more comprehensive studies would be required. Nevertheless, this one-and-a-half-year study can be regarded as significant in several respects: it investigated the impact of storytelling through quantitative data and by employing nationally standardized assessment tools. This provides a foundation for subsequent research with larger samples. The following section presents the results descriptively, in light of the hypotheses stated above.

H1. Storytelling contributes to the development of reading comprehension skills: as a result of narrative-based methods, students' performance in reading comprehension improves positively compared to baseline measurements.

Between the baseline and final assessments, notable progress and positive trends were observed in reading comprehension. Both the mean and median scores increased in every case relative to the baseline. Weak and average performers demonstrated nearly 40% developmental potential in the national competence tests. At the entrance examination, students consistently achieved around the 60% threshold, reflecting a 7% increase from the baseline to the final measurement.

The interim assessment indicated that the effect was detectable in the short term, but the most substantial growth occurred in the final test, suggesting that narrative-based learning may be effective over the long term as well. Student performance increased steadily across the three competence tests, pointing to the potential efficacy of storytelling. Moreover, the minimal differences between mean and median values revealed that this development affected the majority of students, rather than being confined to a select few.

H2. Storytelling contributes to the development of writing skills: as a result of narrative-based methods, students' performance in writing improves positively compared to baseline measurements.

The increase in mean scores in the writing tasks of the central entrance examinations suggests that students' writing skills improved over time. The smaller increase in median scores, however, implies that while the overall progress was consistent, a few students demonstrated outstanding improvement, which resulted in a more substantial increase in the average results.

The standard deviation for both sets of total scores was 3, indicating no widening gap among students' performance. This suggests that progress was relatively uniform across the group, making it likely that not only the high achievers but also the weaker students exhibited measurable improvement.

Conclusions

The action research confirmed that storytelling does more than simply enhance the experiential dimension of learning: it produces measurable gains in both reading comprehension and writing. The study also enriched the domestic practice of action research in Hungary. Based on the findings, storytelling in the classroom simultaneously supports the development of cognitive abilities and fosters affective engagement among learners.

4. 3. Examination of Storytelling through a Pedagogical Experiment

Research Aim and Theoretical Background

The third empirical investigation aimed to explore the cognitive effects of traditional, oral storytelling among primary school students. The central research question was how teacher-delivered narratives – supplemented by role-plays based on stories – contribute to the long-term retention of knowledge in memory.

Methodology

The study was conducted in a controlled experimental design with multiple measurement points.

Phase One: Part of the students processed the curriculum content (specifically, postpositions) through a traditional classroom lecture without narratives (control group). In contrast, the experimental group was introduced to the same content through oral storytelling combined with role-play activities.

Phase Two: Knowledge retention was tested at two intervals: immediately after the lesson (immediate test) and one week later (delayed test). This design enabled a comparison between short-term and long-term memory.

Data collection was carried out using subject-specific knowledge tests.

Target Group and Sampling Criteria

The experiment involved primary school students. The heterogeneous composition of the groups allowed for examining the effects of storytelling across varying levels of ability. A particular research focus was to determine whether students with lower average grades in Hungarian language would show greater improvement in performance as a result of the narrative method.

One of the primary sampling criteria was that the classes included in the study had to be working on the same curriculum content at the time of the intervention, while also differing in their average grades in Hungarian. The experiment was conducted in one state-maintained district school in a county seat and one teacher training school. The participating students were all in the sixth grade. In the teacher training school, two experimental groups were included: the first comprised 15 students, the second 18 students. The control group consisted of 17 students during the first two measurements. In the state school, the experimental group included 10 students, while the control group consisted of 14 students. Overall group sizes were slightly higher in the teacher training school, with 3–4 student differences observed between institutions. The students' ages corresponded to the grade level, ranging from 11 to 12 years.

The teacher training school classes had average grades in Hungarian above 4.00 (on a 5-point scale): the first experimental group 4.35, the second 4.7, and the control group 4.42. By contrast, the state school did not exceed the 4.00 threshold: the experimental group achieved an average of 3.81, while the control group's average was 3.53.

The majority of students with special educational needs (SEN), learning and behavioural difficulties (LBD), or disadvantaged (D) and multiply disadvantaged (MD) backgrounds attended the state school. In this school's experimental group there were three LBD students, two SEN students, and two disadvantaged students; in the control group, there was one LBD, two disadvantaged, and three multiply disadvantaged students. In contrast,

the teacher training school's first experimental group and the control group included one SEN student each, while the second experimental group had one LBD student.

The lessons, as well as the pre-tests and the first post-tests, were administered between June 10 and June 13, 2025, in both schools. In the experimental groups, a repeated delayed post-test was conducted one week later.

Hypotheses

The research was built upon the following hypotheses:

H1. Students in the experimental group exposed to storytelling would achieve higher scores on the subject knowledge test compared to the control group, which learned without narrative frameworks.

H2. In groups with lower average grades in Hungarian, greater performance improvement would be measurable from the pre–test to the post-test as a result of storytelling, compared to groups with higher averages.

H3. Knowledge acquired through storytelling would be retained effectively over a one-week delay: the delayed test averages of the experimental groups would show only a moderate decrease (maximum 10%) compared to the immediate post–test.

Evaluation of Results and Analysis of Hypotheses

H1. Students in the experimental group exposed to storytelling would achieve higher scores on the subject knowledge test compared to the control group, which learned without narrative frameworks.

The results clearly supported this hypothesis. Both the state school and the teacher training school experimental groups achieved higher post-test scores than their respective control groups. In the state school, the experimental group achieved a post-test average of 78%, compared to the control group's 65%. In the teacher training school, the two experimental groups achieved 83% and 90% respectively, both significantly surpassing the control group's 70% average. These findings indicate that storytelling facilitates deeper processing of knowledge and leads to stronger performance outcomes than teaching without narrative frameworks.

H2. In groups with lower average grades in Hungarian, greater performance improvement would be measurable from the pre-test to the post-test as a result of storytelling, compared to groups with higher averages.

The data did not confirm this hypothesis. In the state school (where the Hungarian language average was below 4.00), the experimental group showed a 25 percentage-point improvement (from 53% to 78%). By contrast, in the teacher training school (where the

average was above 4.00), the first experimental group improved by 36 percentage points (from 47% to 83%), while the second improved by 37 percentage points (from 53% to 90%). These findings suggest that the effect of storytelling is not dependent on the initial academic average: significant – and in this case even greater – improvements were observed among higher-achieving groups compared to those with lower starting averages.

H3. Knowledge acquired through storytelling would be retained effectively over a one-week delay: the delayed test averages of the experimental groups would show only a moderate decrease (maximum 10%) compared to the immediate post-test.

The results partially confirmed this hypothesis. In two of the three experimental groups, the knowledge loss remained within 10% (state school: –6%; teacher training school, first experimental group: –1%), while in one case it slightly exceeded the threshold (teacher training school, second experimental group: –11%). The most favourable retention rate was observed in the first experimental group of the teacher training school, where the knowledge level remained nearly unchanged (–1%), whereas the largest decline was found in the second group (–11%). Nevertheless, this decrease can still be considered moderate, as the vast majority of students were able to recall the learned material at a high level even after one week. The data thus indicate that storytelling contributes to the consolidation and longer-term retention of curricular knowledge.

5. Future Research Directions

The findings of the dissertation outline several potential directions for future research aimed at deepening the pedagogical application of storytelling, extending empirical investigations, and strengthening its methodological foundations. The studies conducted thus far have demonstrated that storytelling effectively supports the development of reading comprehension and text production skills, while also contributing to the maintenance of student motivation. At the same time, further research is required to fully uncover the complex mechanisms underlying this method, which may enrich the field with new dimensions.

First, it is necessary to investigate a broader range of learner competencies. Storytelling is expected to contribute not only to linguistic skills but also to the development of creativity, vocabulary growth, concentration, and presentation abilities. However, such outcomes require reliable and validated instruments of measurement. Consequently, a key future task is the development of tests capable of systematically tracking the cognitive, linguistic, and social impacts of storytelling. This includes the application of motivational

questionnaires that can reveal the extent to which narrative learning situations influence students' attitudes toward a subject and their willingness to engage in learning.

Another promising line of inquiry concerns teachers' experiences regarding the effectiveness of storytelling. Surveys and interviews may shed light on the specific techniques which educators employ in their own practice, to what extent they find them efficient and how they integrate them into subject-specific contexts. This research direction is particularly relevant since practising teachers' "good practices" can facilitate the adaptation and wider dissemination of the method.

The use of narrative-based methods in higher education also represents an important area for future research. Based on recent experiences, storytelling can appear in teacher training, even as a stand-alone course, offering students opportunities to experiment with narrative techniques and engage in reflective evaluation. The combined use of qualitative methods (e.g. interviews, student reports) and quantitative measurements (pre- and post-tests) may enrich the knowledge base. In the longer term, the development of a higher education textbook and methodological handbook is recommended, systematizing the theoretical foundations, best practices, and classroom applications of storytelling.

Future research should also focus on subject-specific adaptations of storytelling. Beyond Hungarian language and literature, it is worth examining how story-based learning may enhance conceptual understanding, problem-solving, and scientific thinking in mathematics and the natural sciences. This would require the creation of subject-specific lesson plans, curricula, and teaching materials aligned with national curricular requirements.

The effectiveness of storytelling should also be tested on larger samples, across different grade levels and school types. Such research could clarify to what extent narrative learning situations support disadvantaged, underachieving, or Special Educational Needs students. From the perspective of inclusive pedagogy, it is particularly important to determine how storytelling contributes to enhancing educational equity.

In order to further explore the mechanisms of storytelling, new measurement tools need to be developed that can reliably assess nonverbal communication skills, narrative competence, and processes of meaning-making. The use of such instruments would add new dimensions to storytelling research.

In conclusion, storytelling research offers a wide range of opportunities for expansion. Empirical findings increasingly indicate that narrative-based learning is not merely a motivational tool but a comprehensive pedagogical strategy capable of fostering diverse student competencies, supporting durable knowledge retention, and shaping learner

attitudes. Future investigations, both theoretical and methodological as well as practical, will contribute to establishing storytelling as a firmly embedded approach within both the Hungarian and the international educational discourse.

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