

Vol 17, No 1



**INTERNATIONAL
JOURNAL
OF
INTEGRATIVE
HUMANISM**

**(INTEGRATIVE
HUMANITIES
PERSPECTIVE)**



KIERAN EGAN'S STORYTELLING PEDAGOGY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL AND AFFECTIVE REASONING IN CHILDREN

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Abstract

This essay titled Kieran Egan's Storytelling pedagogy and the development of affective and critical reasoning in children explores the role of storytelling in fostering affective, critical, and caring reasoning in children. Egan rebutted the Piagetian and Constructivists position that children's cognitive capacity and thinking processes undergo significant changes around the ages 11 or 12, predisposing them at that stage only to be able to grapple with thinking processes. Egan, instead, suggests that human intellectual development can be better understood by focusing on the role played by the intellectual tools available in the society into which a person grows rather than by relying on Piaget's or others psychological theories of development. These tools which he listed as somatic understanding, mythic understanding, romantic understanding, philosophic understanding, and ironic understanding are rooted in his educational philosophy which emphasized the importance of imagination, storytelling and emotional connection in the learning process. Employing the methods of textual analysis, speculation and hermeneutics, it is the view of the essay that storytelling is veritable in enabling children to be able to navigate the intricacies of human conditions through narratives. In addition, some stories contain moral lessons that can influence our perception of what is right or wrong, stories present us with moral dilemmas and inquiries that can prompt us to reflect on our beliefs and behaviors, shaping our perception and perspectives about others and life generally. Apart from fostering empathic, critical and caring thinking skills, stories enable children to explore different cultural barriers. Notwithstanding the gains of storytelling pedagogy, it has some gabs which include but not limited to intolerance and respect for other cultures, subjectivity where stories are interpreted differently, and intensive requirements in storytelling. Above gabs notwithstanding, storytelling pedagogy seems a novel model in shaping children affective and critical thinking capacities.

Keywords: Storytelling, Affective thinking, Emotions, Binary opposite, Cognitive tools, Children.

Introduction

Children's capacity for critical and caring reasoning is often faced with criticism by Piagetians and Constructivists on the ground that it does not take into adequate perspective the developmental levels of children involved. According to them, children's cognitive capacity and thinking processes undergo significant changes around the ages 11 or 12, enabling them at that



stage to be able to engage in abstract thinking. However, Kieran Egan, firmly rebuts such claims, positing that cognitive tools such as binary opposites (polarity) metaphors, stories, humour, a sense of external reality, a sense of theoretical conceptual structure, etc. develop in an individual in the course of growing up through phases he calls somatic, mythic, romantic, philosophic, and ironic.

Egan avers that children can navigate binary conflicts like love and hate, justice and injustice, peace and war, and cruel and kind if such concepts are framed in a story form. According to Egan, storytelling is an intellectual activity that can hone in children imaginative capacity as well as critical and caring thinking skills.

Arising from the forgoing, the concern of this discourse is to navigate the above postulations of Kieran Egan under the following rubrics. It shall explore Kieran Egan's biography and influence; the aim being to expose how previous thinkers influenced his storytelling pedagogy. Secondly, the work shall examine his storytelling model and its implication for children's capacity for critical and caring reasoning; the aim is to find out how storytelling is amenable to shaping the emotional responses of learners. Anecdotes of children reasoning and thinking processes shall be supplied to buttress their capacity for affective reasoning. Further, the limitations of storytelling as a teaching pedagogy shall be examined and thereafter would be evaluation and conclusion.

1. Kieran Egan's Biography, Influence, and His Notion of Human Nature

Kieran Egan, a contemporary philosopher of education was born in 1942 in Clommel, Ireland. He graduated from the University of London with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1966 and subsequently worked as a research fellow at the institute for comparative studies, and later moved to the United States and began a PhD in Philosophy of Education at the Standford Graduate School of Education in 1972. Kieran Egan was the director of the Imaginative Education Research Group which was founded by the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University. The goal of the group was to improve education on the global scale by developing and proliferating the ideas of imaginative education.

His publications include but not limited to; *Ethics and Education Policy* 1978, *Educational Development*, 1979, *The Erosion of Education: Socialization and the Schools* 1983, *Teaching as Storytelling*, 1989, *Imagination and Education and Primary Understanding of Education: Education in Early Childhood* 1988. Kieran Egan, died at the age of 79 in May 2022.

Kieran Egan is an educational thinker whose emphasis on imagination, storytelling, and other tools of understanding offer new and provocative insights into what it meant to be educated. Egan's work connects with, and extends the story-telling approach exemplified by Plato in his Allegories and in Rousseau's Emile. In addition, his work supports Bruner's claim that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development," and is compatible with the work of Lipman and Matthews (Reed & Johnson, 2000, p. 260).

Egan's postulation is colored by his conception of human nature. Egan views humans as imaginative and creative beings, with a natural inclination to engage with the world through storytelling, arts, and other forms of expression. He also recognizes that humans are emotionally complex, with wide range of emotions and motivations that influence their thoughts and actions. He sees humans as cognitively adaptive, capable of learning and evolving in response to changing circumstance.

Egan notes that five-year-old children have no trouble understanding and enjoying stories though



such understanding is dependent on the ability to grasp such abstract and conflicting concepts as fear/hope, kindness/cruelty, and good and evil (Reed and Johnson, 2000, p. 261).

Egans draws examples from children's literature to refute the position that abstract concepts in general are difficult for young children. He suggests that seeing the process of education as development from the concrete to the abstract is as a result of focusing on certain logical intellectual activities. For him, the problem is that the education of young children has been reduced to almost total reliance upon what he calls the adhoc or dominant principles, according to which education proceeds from the concrete to the abstract, from the simple to the complex and from the known to the unknown. Egan maintains that the dominant principle or model of curriculum coheres with a view of knowledge as a static entity, thus minimizing imagination's role in the education process.

Egan sees as irrational the acceptance of education grounded in three significant and mutually incompatible educational ideas which require that;

- i. we must shape the young to the current norms and conventions of adult's society,
- ii. we must teach them the knowledge that will ensure their thinking conforms with what is real or is true about the world; and
- iii. we must encourage the development of each student's individual potentials.

The incompatibility of these three ideas is what Egan views as the primary causes of continuing educational crisis (Reed and Johnson, 2000, p. 261).

As an alternative to the above, Egan offers a new theory that discusses education in terms of sequence or kinds of understanding, suggesting that human beings develop multiple tools for understanding their world which he characterizes as Somatic, Mythic, Romantic, Philosophic and Ironic (Reed and Johnson, 2000, 262). Egan's avers that human intellectual development can be better understood by focusing on the role played by the intellectual tools available in the society into which a person grows rather than by relying on Piaget's or other's psychological theories of development.

Davidson (2015) Summarizes his cognitive tools theory thus

- i. **Somatic:** The first kind of understanding or tool is somatic, from birth till about age 2. The main goal is the mastery of mimetic (copying) activities. The main characteristics involve mastery of physical activities and nonverbal appreciation of the world.
- ii. **Mythic:** The second kind of understanding is mythic, from about ages 3-7. The main goal is the mastery of oral language. The main characteristics involve binary opposites in thinking, metaphors and story types, including socialization into culture's myths and taboos, and gaining a shared sense of right and wrong.
- iii. **Romantic:** The third kind of understanding is romantic from ages 8-14. The main goal is mastery of literacy. The main characteristics involves acquisition of conventional skills involving getting along, writing and literacy, and to gain an appreciation of finer graduation in perception and thinking. There is also a concern with the limits and extremes of human potentials.
- iv. **Philosophic:** The fourth kind of understanding is philosophic, from age 15-20. The main goal is the mastery of theoretical abstractions. The main characteristics involves a concern with the theories of the world and one's position in the world, including its theories. All the facts that the individual had been accruing through Romantic



understanding now become sorted and organized into various preferred theories. One develops an ability to both support a theory with the addition of relevant facts as well as to ignore or discuss facts that may appear inconsistent with a preferred theory.

v. **Ironic:** The fifth kind of understanding is ironic, from age 21+. The main goal in the mastery of refined reflexes. The main characteristics involve skepticism about the various theories (typical Romantic understanding), or skepticism about the features and interpretation of facts or stories about human potential.

Egan's cognitive tools theory has important implications for teaching and learning. Loveless (2023) is of the view that if these tools are not appropriately supported by educational activities, it is unlikely that they will be acquired satisfactorily, and as a result, the kinds of understanding will not develop. It therefore behoves on teachers to develop each of these kinds of understanding and to ensure that they are introduced at the appropriate point, following adequate practice with the cognitive tools, when teaching the lower year group, it is necessary to teach subjects using cognitive tools for mythic understanding. By doing so, we would enhance their ability to exercise their imaginations which could have far reaching positive educational implications.

Suffice it to posit that Keran Egans storytelling pedagogy has precedence as scholars at different epochs have variously described the gains of such model. Plato sees story as a constructed tale with a quest, perhaps, an encounter with a powerful phenomenon, and an experience of change. The encounter could result in a sense of failure causing a different goal to be pursued, or the encounter could occasion a success, a goal reached, a hurdle overcome. There is often a moral to a story, a message about good, a warning or admonition of failure, and all of the above are painted with imaginative indulgences (Trott, 2012).

Plato's dialogues were his narrative tools for planting new ideas in the listeners. The tools of criticism were embedded in storytelling and the reader learned to recognize many myths as modes of social control. This may have informed Trott's submission that "Plato's story created a tsunami of what if's in future minds and triggered naysayers, doubters, followers, correction officers, preachers and social movements that were both violent and peaceful in the centuries that followed (Trott, 2012, p. 2). Plato's storytelling model is rooted in his philosophical ideas about education. He often uses allegory and myth to convey complex philosophical ideas. His allegory of the cave illustrates the process of enlightenment, using a narrative to convey complex philosophical concepts.

Aristotle: Aristotle's notion of storytelling is rooted in his philosophical works, particularly "Rhetorics", "Poetics" and Politics: For Kyle (2023), Aristotle poetic is a fundamental work of dramatic theory that outlines the fundamental principles of effective storytelling and identifies key features and essential elements to evoke emotions within an audience to achieve a cathartic (emotional purging) experience. Storytelling, according to Aristotle, has the capacity to engage the audience emotionally; allowing them to process and release emotions, analyse, and reflect on the stories they hear.

Rousseau presented his works as tragicomedy and explores the role of storytelling in education. As an empiricist, he believes stories hone children capacity to imagine and explore different scenarios. He believes that if educators are able to create engaging narratives that capture the children imagination, storytelling can enable children to develop empathy and self-



awareness.

Maxine Green

For Green, children should be considered as more than raw materials to be shaped by market demand. She believed that arts are central in this endeavor. According to her, stories, poems, dance performances, concerts, and paintings play significant role in enhancing children's cognitive and affective development (Mackness, 2021). She maintains that literature stories can invoke alternative worlds, experiences and perceptions never noted before, and released imagination. She also stresses the importance of story for defamiliarizing new possibilities, to subvert dualism and reductionism and to release imagination which, according to her:

makes empathy possible, enables us cross empathy spaces between ourselves and those we teach called "other" over the years. If those others are willing to give us clue, we look in some mirror through the strangers' eyes and hear through their ears. This is because of all our cognitive capacities imagination is the one that permit us to give credence (Mackess, 2021, p. 3).

From the foregoing, Green sees imagination as a catalyst for learning and storytelling as a means to spark imagination and creativity. She believes that narrative is a veritable tool for meaning making allowing individuals to make sense of their experiences and the world around them.

Matthew Lipman

Matthew Lipman, an American philosopher and educator developed the philosophy for children program which emphasizes teaching children reasoning skill through stories. In the children story novels, he created stories that captures some philosophical themes like justice, equality, morality, and ethics. Lipman believes that, stories can spark children's curiosity and enable them to think critically, caringly, and affectively. According to Reads and Johnson (2000, p. 221), one of the merits of the novel of the philosophy for children program is that stories contain therein, offer mode of dialogue, both of children with one another and adults. They are models that are non-authoritarian, and anti-indoctrinal that respect the value of inquiry and reasoning, and encourage the development of alternative models of thoughts and imaginations.

By reading an episode aloud, raising questions about it, and then discussing the questions, there would be mutual criticism and careful voicing of opinions and judgment, which educators recognize as the framework that could prepare children to become active citizens in a democracy. This is why Birch and Manlissa (1996, P. 41) aver thus

a story is a mental opposable thumb, allowing humans to grasp something in their minds, to turn it around, to view it from many angles, to reshape it, to turn it even into the farthest reaches of the unconscious...turning reflections on experiences around and viewing them from many angles, reshape our significance, their roles as cause or effect in understanding; Doing so enables us to imagine different outcomes and different types of characters, but doing so also enables us to question familiar assumptions as reconstruction of previous tales.

Following from the above, Birch and Manlissa explore the use of storytelling in a therapeutic setting, where individuals can share their experiences and work through challenge.



2. Kieran Egan's Storytelling Model

For Kieran Egan, Stories are narrative units. They are distinguishable from other kinds of narratives in that they have particular, clear beginning and end. The most basic story, according to Reeds and Johnson (2000, p.265) begins with “Once upon a time” and concludes with “they lived happily every after”. “Once upon a time” creates an expectation of a particular kind. It signifies that at some particular time something happened. This ‘something’ will involve a conflict or problem of some kinds, which the rest of the story will be devoted to resolving. This phrase also signals to the listener that a story is about to begin, creating a clear narrative frame. The frame generates anticipation and curiosity encouraging the listener to engage with the story, creating a sense of timelessness which allows the listeners to enter the world that is separated from everyday reality.

The phrase “they lived happily every after” creates a sense of resolution, implying that the conflicts and challenges presented in the story have been resolved, creating a sense of satisfaction and completion. According to Egan, a story follows a certain rhythm. He says;

There is then at the simplest kind of rhythm in stories. They set up an expectation at the beginning, this is elaborated or completed in the middle, and is satisfied at the end. Stories are tied beginning to end by satisfying the expectation set up in the beginning. Anything that does not contribute to or fit in with the rhythm is irrelevant to the story and should be excluded (Reed and Johnson, 2000, p. 266).

A story is a constructed tale with a quest, perhaps, an encounter with a powerful phenomenon, an example of change. The encounter could result in a sense of failure causing a different route to be sought out, or a different goal to be pursued, or the encounter could occasion a success, a goal reached, a hurdle overcome. A story does not deal with anything except the problems set up in the beginning once it is underway. Everything in the story is focused on that central task (Egan, 1989, p. 24).

In those stories that children find most engaging, there are only those events and details which further the underlying rhythm. A model for teaching that draws on the power of the story, then, will ensure that conflicts or sense of dramatic tension at the beginning of our lessons and units. Thus, some expectations are created that will satisfy at the end (Egan, 1989, p. 25)

Kieran Egan employs Binary opposites and Affective meaning in making his storytelling model intelligible. He argues that binary opposites are fundamental to human thought and imagination. Binary opposites are pairs of concepts that are opposite in meaning, such as good vs evil, light vs dark, or order vs chaos, and so on. The world consists of the struggle and unity of opposites. The appearance of words with opposite meaning is related to human knowledge of the world. The world surrounding a person consists of things, phenomena, properties and relationships. In this way, the surrounding world is closely related to each other, interdependent and formed due to living in the same period. In the process of getting to know the world and life, a person compares them with each other and notices their mutual similarities (Iskakbekovna & Rezhepovich 2023, p. 162). Binary opposite is a universal tool for understanding the world. There, two opposite concepts are considered at the same time. One of the pair of binary opposition clarifies and admits the existence of property, while the other negates it. Like life-death, far-near, light-dark, earth-sky, right-wrong, good-bad, past, future etc. (2023, 163)



One of the most obvious structural devices we can see in Egan's stories is the use of binary opposites. Embodied in the story are conflict between good and bad, courage and cowardice, fear and security, and so on. using a story to explain, Egan says

If we set up a story with a wicked step-mother and a good girl like Cinderella, we begin with a conflict between these embodiments of good and bad. The selection of incident and characters, then will be determine by the need to show the goodness of the one and the badness of the other. The incident in which the step-mother is cruel to Cinderella and favours her own unkind and vain daughters all elaborate the one binary pole. The story is the embodiment of conflict of the good and bad (1986, p.27).

Binary opposite is seen here as a system of language and/or thought by which two theoretical oppositions are strictly defined and set off against one another. These binary opposites, connectedly, provide the main structural lines along which the story moves forward. Having gathered the conflict at the beginning, the development of the story is monitored through the incident showing the badness of the step-mother. The expectation is to see contrasting developments of Cinderella's goodness. Egan's children stories are replete with binary conflict, the aim not being for psychological explanation but to observe their functions and powers in making clear and engaging structures.

Affective meaning are a range of occurrent mental states or experiences which philosophy and psychology classify as effective. Included in this category are pains, pleasures, mood and emotions (Mitchell, 2019)

Philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, and Kant explored affection as a key element shaping ethics and human nature. Sus (2025) defines it as "the regard or sentiment one holds for another person or thing. For Plato, true knowledge and beauty exist in the higher realm and our affections are reflections of our soul yearning for these perfect idea. On his part, Aristotle believes both emotions and actions come under the umbrella of affection. He split affection into two things: pathos (emotions) and praxis (actions). Pathos is all about how we feel, whether we are happy, furious, or something else entirely. Praxis is what we do with those feelings. For Aristotle, affection plays a big part in both virtue formation and *endaimona* (often translated) as "flourishing" or "the god life". He suggests that if we manage our emotions correctly, they can actually be helpful guide for morally right action (Sus, 2025). Spinoza's understanding of affection is central to his metaphysical frame work, which views everything as part of one substance, often equated with Nature or God. Within this holistic perspective, affection denotes both state of being and transitions between them that occur in body and mind through their interactions with external forces.

Analogous to the above frame of thoughts, Egan is of the view that the importance of human emotions and interactions in making things meaningful cannot be overemphasized. He says:

Stories are largely about affective matters; they are about how people feel. The feelings can either promote the motive for actions or they can provide the point and results of actions ...to present knowledge cut off from human emotions and intentions is to reduce its affective meaning (Egan, 1989, p. 29-30)

Egan emphasis on affective domain highlights the importance of engaging learners emotionally and cognitively. Egan believes that the way in which stories engage learners follow from the fact that they end; they do not just stop rather they satisfy some conflict set up at the beginning. It is this wrapping up of the story that gives it also part of its affective power. From the foregoing, therefore, stories need to set up some binary conflict or problem and the end need to resolve it in some way, if advantage of stories “power” is to be effectively engaging. Chugh (2024) in an allied frame of thought with Egan maintain that stories let kids see things from different characters point of view. They feel their happiness, sadness, and struggles. This help kids learn to care about others’ feelings.

3. Stories and the development of philosophical reasoning and emotions in children

Stories can teach by imparting truths. But storytelling can also teach by inviting people to think for themselves and create their own truths. Cunliffe (2022, p. 143) agrees with Macintyre who sees human beings as essentially storytelling animals such that, they learn their place in the world through stories and also learn to navigate and challenge the world around them. When people come up with interpretations and support them with reasons, they are doing what is called critical thinking. and when different people work together to create response to stories, they develop something more like problem solving and respect for diversity, and the habit of cooperation (Tempel, 2021). Through stories we endeavor to comprehend the intricacies of life, provoke critical and creative thinking in both children and adults, communicate principles and acquire a deeper understanding of human condition through narratives. Harris (2024) sees stories as an existential instrument that alters our perception of the world and our behaviours. For him,

Stories can be viewed as mirrors that revealed the truths and fictions of our existence. They provide us with the means of comprehending the world, providing a perspective on disorder and disarray. The objective of reflection is not merely to demonstrate reality; it is also to establish a frame work that enables us to query, critique and comprehend it.

What Harris is implying here is that, stories can promote critical evaluation of information, encouraging assessment of evidence, biases and dominant narratives. It also offers diverse viewpoints, encouraging consideration of multiple perspectives.

Numerous stories contain moral lessons that can influence children’s perception of what is right and wrong. They present them with moral dilemmas and inquiries that can prompt them to reflect on their beliefs and behaviours, shaping their perception of what is right and wrong, moral and immoral. This assertion is collaborated by Vasiliki et al (2015) with the anecdotes below that show the role of stories in children’s affective and critical thinking. Children answers often have the form of structured justification. Moreover, children often resort to the introductory use of justification words such as “because”, “for the reason that”, in their cross talk to justify their thought. In what follows, we shall show some anecdotes to corroborate children’s capacity for reasoning and affective thinking



Anecdote 1: Children's Capacity to Think Affectively

The Story

While walking in the garden a king saw a little girl sleeping on the lawn. He was impressed and sat next to her, staring without waking her. The next day he anxiously waited for his daily walk in the garden, hoping to see her again. He found her sleeping under a tree. The king sat next to her and when it was time for him to leave, he put a top next to her. The next day, the king had to decide on starting a war, which his consultants believed had to be carried out. When he saw his generals planning the war, he interrupted them and said, "we are not having this war! No child will be ever happy if we go to war". And saying this, he turned around and left.

In the cross talk between the teacher and pupils, we can glean elements of children capacity for reasoning.

Cross talk 1. Structured justification examples

Teacher: why do you think the king decided not to go ahead with this war?

Students: Because children do not like war.

Teacher: Okay.

Student: Or with all the noise made by war, she might wake up.

Student: Because if there was war, the little girl might be killed and if she was killed the king might be sad.

Teacher: Is war a good thing?

Students: No!

Teacher: Why?

Students: Because people get killed

Student: A bullet might hit the little girl

Student: Maybe a grenade

Student: The little girl may not be wakened nor killed because the war will be outside the kingdom

Teacher: Outside the kingdom. And what will happen to the little girl?

Student: She is inside, she is protected. They will be fighting outside the garden and the little girl will be inside.

Student: Or she might lock the garden gate so that they cannot come in

Teacher: The enemies are not able to come in?

Student: They may have locked the garden and the kingdom door so that they cannot come in. In the above crosstalk, there are dialogue showing the children's ability to formulate justified reasoning about possible reasons for calling off the war. Children formulate their argument giving reasons for their belief that war is not a good idea. Also an alternative scenario was given for the cause of war postponement (Visiliki et al, 2015: 89-103).

Anecdote II: Modus Tolens Reason and Inductive Reasoning

The story

Once upon a time, three astronauts went to explore Mars. When they finished exploring the planet, they decided to go come to the earth. They collected all their things and left. But they forgot to take their shovel. When the astronauts left, the aliens on Mars, called the Marsians, walked around the strange object they had never seen before and kept asking one another "what is this thing" after long talks and hard thought they decided that it was a lamp post.

Crosstalk 2: Modus tolens reason and inductive reasoning: In the cross talk children used

modulstolens reasoning of inductive reasoning justifying why the object could be a lamp post.

Teacher: if this was a lamp post (shows the shovel) to them will it have something special?

Student: Light

Teacher: Light, but is this (shows the shovel) a lamp post?

Students: No

Teacher: Why?

Students: Because it has no light. And it does not look like that.

Teacher: How so? Can you explain?

Student: it has no light; it has nothing to switch on or off

Teacher: if this (shows the shovel) was a lion, would it have something special?

Student: it would have a tail

Student: It would have a mane and sharp teeth and it would eat them up

Student: It would have eyes and sharp nails and a tongue

Teacher: Good! So has this (shows the shovel) got sharp teeth to chew?

Students: No!

Teacher: Why?

Student: Because it is not a lion. It is a shovel (Vasiliki et al, 2015: 89-103)

Following from the above, one can see that stories are veritable tools for promoting critical and affective thinking and developing essential skills for success in various aspects of life. By engaging student in narratives, educators can encourage them to think critically, explore complex ideas. The pedagogy also emphasize the importance of questioning and discussion in response to stories. This helps children to develop their thought and opinion, explore multiple perceptives and be able to consider situational perspectives. Stories can also provide vehicle for exploring abstract concept, such as justice, freedom, and goodness which are central to philosophy.

6. The limitations of Storytelling Pedagogy and Emotional Development in Children:

Storytelling is distinctive in the way that it enhances imagination and havean empathic skills, thereby producing morally and epistemologically significant upshoots. The basic thought is that it can help people to identify moral norms by pushing them to consider the suffering of others thereby recognizing the damaging and unjust nature of such sufferings. However, there seems to be a nexus between tolerance and respect of other cultures and empathy. This is sequel to the fact that such moral harms as humiliation, assault, disrespect, or breaches of human right and dignity may not evoke empathy, where one suspends his own set of values to further appreciate other persons. For example, without tolerance, respect, and appreciation of the Islamic culture of women on covering their bodies "hijab" which actually is in line with their religion and culture, it may be difficult to empathize with such a woman in a situation she is harassed or assaulted for covering her body. In such circumstance, empathy will be elusive if attention is not paid to situational cultural specific perspectives of another and respect for their peculiarities.

Again, some authors have ascribed cognitive value to fiction on the ground that reading fictional works affect cognitive desirable changes in the emotional or perceptual disposition of the reader (Davies, 2001, p. 271). However, if we take narrative or story to be fictional, we generally will not believe what we are reading, listening to or viewing a representation of actual event that have occurred to actual people. In such situation, Davies wonders how we can be moved by the narrated event to feel pity, fear, or other emotions for the protagonist. It is assumed that there is an essential cognitive component to emotions so much that one can respond to the



death or torture or abuse of a character in a story if one believes that he or she is an actual person who is undergoing the torture described in the story. However, Davies submission seems arguable going by what Green (2024) called narrative transportation, a state of total absorption in which listeners experience feeling “lost” in a story, momentarily disconnected from their surroundings and imaginatively transport themselves into the narrative world. During this time, listeners become emotionally involved, visualize the event of the story and identify with the characters. This can lead to increase empathy even if the story is fictional.

Another impediment of storytelling pedagogy is non availability of story materials. Tran & Bui (2023) are of the view that challenges may stem from unavailability of materials which are to be used to teach students. The stories teachers are required to teach at each institution may be too diverse regarding the content or unauthentic to real life language. The shortages of appropriate and intriguing stories in current text books may reduce the opportunities of not only becoming good readers, but also exposing them to native speaker’s cultures.

Further, education seeks to develop the learners’ three domain cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains. Storytelling is not a veritable pedagogy for the development of the learner’s psychomotor domain. Stories may not also be a good model for physical science subjects like; physics, additional mathematics and chemistry which demands understanding of concepts and facts.

Other gabs about storytelling include subjectivity where stories can be interpreted in various ways, leading to misunderstanding. Personal biases may colour how a story is perceived. In addition to the above, complex issues can be oversimplified in a story, potentially leading to a lack of depth or nuance. Important details may be omitted in favour of a more engaging narrative.

Khandelwal, renowned for her dexterity in crafting narratives that provoke thoughts, challenge perceptions and ignite conversations, also expresses some reservations for storytelling pedagogy. Some limitations of storytelling method of teaching, according to her, include the following

- i. **Misaligned objectives:** Sometimes the focus on crafting a compelling story can stray from the intended goals. For example, a story aimed at raising awareness about a social issue might end up focusing more on the storytellers personal journey, rather than the issue itself.
- ii. **Misunderstanding Risks:** Stories can be misunderstood, leading to confusion. When the audience interprets the story differently than intended, the main message can get lost. This risk arises because everyone brings his own experiences and perspectives into a story which can alter how he understands it.
- iii. **Cultural sensitive issues:** Stories might not always fit well with different cultures or contexts. What works in one setting might not work in another, due to varying cultural norms or expectations. This can lead to misunderstanding or even offence, if a story does not align with the audience background.
- iv. **Intensive requirement in storytelling:** The intensive requirements in storytelling can be a major drawback, particularly regarding the resources it demand. Crafting and delivering a compelling story often requires a significant amount of time. From planning and writing to refining and presenting, the process can be lengthy and demanding, which might not always fit with tight academic schedule (Khandelwal, 2024, p.1-2).



EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

Egan's storytelling pedagogy is informed by narrative theory, which emphasizes the role of stories in shaping childrens' understanding and experiences. In this essay, we examined Kearen Egan's storytelling pedagogy and its implications for affective reasoning in children. Egan digressed from Piaget, positing that children are capable of degree of some affective and critical reasoning through the storytelling pedagogy. He argues that human beings develop multiple cognitive tools for understanding their world, arguing that storytelling pedagogy suffices to hone children's imagination capacity which could prompt them to think critically and affectively. We also examined the concept of binary opposite as they serve as criteria for the selection and organization of content of the story, and also as the main structuring lines along which the story moves forward. Binary opposite do carry emotional resonance influencing how we feel about and respond to different experience.

We looked at Egan's concept of affective meaning which involves creating an emotional connection between the learner and the learning material. The concept of binary opposite can be used to create affective meaning by tapping into the student's emotional responses to the dichotomies. We examined student's development of affective response through listening to stories, supporting same with some anecdotes which revealed that children can think critically and caringly, depending on the type of story they are told or listen to, which could prompt their emotional responses.

We highlighted the role of story in shaping the emotions of the child. However, stories also have limitations which we also highlighted. Concerning how story can be integrated in the school curriculum, it is left for curriculum expert, the authors of the paper not being savvy in the field of curriculum development.

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