From Narrative to Identity: The Art of Storytelling and the Construction of Children's Cultural Identity

Naima Chalghoum
Lecturer A, Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Laboratory of Historical Studies and Research in Heritage and Civilization, Martyr Abbas Laghrour University, Khenchela, Algeria.
Email: naima.chalghoum@univ-khenchela.dz

Abstract:
The art of storytelling in children's literature is an effective means of building and enriching cultural identity. Stories contribute to the transmission of cultural heritage, the teaching of societal values, and the enhancement of mutual understanding between generations. This article aims to analyze the role of storytelling in the construction of cultural identity among children and to explore the strategies used by stories to enhance cultural understanding and shape cultural values. Additionally, the article raises questions about how literature influences a child's character and cultural awareness, and its ability to strengthen the sense of belonging to cultural roots while interacting with the world around them. In this context, the article also addresses the challenges faced by children's literature in the context of globalization, social, and technological changes, offering insights into how these challenges can be effectively met, thus contributing to a comprehensive analysis of the role of storytelling and its impact on cultural identity.
Keywords: Cultural Identity; Storytelling; Children's Literature; Globalization.

1. INTRODUCTION

In a world where cultural and social change is accelerating, children's stories remain an essential part of the human experience that contributes to shaping the identity of emerging generations. Through the art of storytelling, children are given the opportunity to learn about different values and cultures, thereby enhancing their understanding and cultural identity. The art of storytelling in children's literature is an effective means of building and enriching cultural identity, as stories contribute to the transmission of cultural heritage, the teaching of societal values, and the enhancement of mutual understanding between generations.

This article aims to analyze the role of storytelling in children's literature and its impact on building cultural identity among children. It also seeks to explore the strategies used by stories to enhance cultural understanding and shape cultural values in the emerging generations. Additionally, the article aims to provide insights into how stories can be used to transmit cultural heritage and strengthen belonging and identity.

The main issue lies in understanding how the art of storytelling influences the cultural identity of children and the effectiveness of this influence in facing contemporary cultural challenges.

1.1 Study problem

The problem of this study can be formulated in the following questions:

- How can literary content that combines entertainment and educational values contribute to shaping a child's character and cultural awareness?
- Can this literature, through its stories and symbols, foster in the child a sense of belonging to cultural roots and develop a balanced awareness that helps them interact with the world around them?
- How can this integrated system of enjoyment and education play its role in igniting the child's spirit and guiding their emotions toward building a strong and balanced identity?
- How do stories contribute to reinforcing cultural values and shaping children's cultural identity?
- What are the main challenges faced by children's literature in enhancing cultural identity in the face of globalization, social, and technological changes, and how can these challenges be effectively addressed?

By answering these questions, the article seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the role of storytelling in children's literature and its impact on cultural identity, thereby contributing to enhancing cultural understanding and developing effective strategies for building cultural identity among rising generations.

2. Theoretical Framework of Cultural Identity and Children's Literature

2.1 The Concept of Cultural Identity

The concept of identity has existed since ancient times within societies as a result of diversity in intellectual production, the development of tools, and the enactment of laws and principles that govern the affairs of life. However, the modern understanding of identity began to take shape after the French Revolution, as it became linked to the development of sociology, which focused on the relationship between identity and belonging to a group. A review of various literature on identity reveals that this concept's definition is not fixed due to the intellectual diversity and different schools of thought that have addressed it. Identity is characterized by its inclusiveness and multiplicity, particularly in relation to social changes that directly influence thought.

From a terminological perspective, MalekBennabi defines culture as "a set of moral qualities and social values that influence the individual from birth, forming that emotional relationship that connects behavior to the lifestyle in the environment in which one was born (Al-Suwaidi, 1991, p. 68)." Identity, in its simplest definition, means "uniqueness and distinction from others (Sweilem, 2017)." It represents the uniqueness that differentiates one human group from another through elements such as shared living, belief, language, history, and a common destiny. These elements constitute the essence of collective identity, making it a central element in determining who we are as individuals within a particular group.

On a deeper level, identity and culture are intertwined in an inseparable manner. Cultural identity is defined as "the set of general cultural traits or characteristics that represent the minimum commonality among all individuals who belong to it, and that make them known and distinguished by these traits from other individuals of other nations (Hamed, p. 339)." It is also defined as "the stable, essential, and shared portion of general traits and characteristics that distinguish the civilization of this nation from other civilizations, giving the national or ethnic personality a distinctive character from other national and ethnic personalities (Amara, 1997, p. 33)." Mohamed Ibrahim reinforces this understanding by defining cultural identity as "the symbol or common denominator that distinguishes an individual, a group of individuals, or a nation from other nations (Eid, 2001, p. 109)."

Through the previous definitions, it can be concluded that cultural identity represents the fundamental foundation that distinguishes individuals and groups from others, forming the common basis that connects them to their culture and civilization and gives them a distinctive character that reflects their national and ethnic uniqueness.

Thanaa Al-Dubaa reinforces this concept by defining cultural identity as "all the distinctive traits of a nation or society that imprint it with a special character, based on fundamental components such as language, belief, religion, history, customs, traditions, values, and ways of thinking and behavior, among others, which preserve the nation's deeply rooted personality throughout history and distinguish it from other nations (Al-Daba', 2008, p. 38)."

Moussa Al-Sharqawi adds another essential dimension to the definition of cultural identity, stating that it is "a set of essential and stable traits, whether in things or societies. A place has its own identity, as do societies, each with its unique culture, geographic and historical constants, and cultural heritage. Thus, cultural identity becomes the symbol or common denominator that distinguishes an individual or a nation from others (Al-Sharqawi & Al-Sharqawi, 2004, p. 24)."

Ultimately, the concept of cultural identity in the West aligns closely with its understanding among Arabs. In English, it is referred to as "Cultural Identity," meaning "the distinctive traits of a group living in a specific area, characterized by its traditions, religion, language, ancestry, and social structures (Al-Sharqawi & Al-Sharqawi, 2004, p. 07)."

From the above, we can conclude that cultural identity is a set of cultural traits that distinguish the members of a particular society from those of other societies. It fosters a sense of familiarity, social cohesion, and belonging to this society. It is the cultural uniqueness that sets one people apart from others, and it is capable of development and renewal while maintaining its stable characteristics shaped by history, language, values, and religion.

2.2 The Concept of Children's Literature

Literature, in its broad sense, encompasses both adult literature and children's literature. If we apply the simplest criteria to differentiate between these two, we would say that children's literature is "a new branch of refined literature, possessing characteristics that distinguish it from adult literature, although both represent artistic works where form and content converge (Shihab, 2013, p. 23)."

Children's literature is a vast and complex literary field that includes a diverse range of texts and genres aimed at children as the primary audience. Although literature directed toward children is an important part of global literature, there is no unified definition for it. This is due to the variety of definitions and interpretations influenced by different cultures, time periods, and the psychological and scientific developments in understanding childhood and its growth.

The varying definitions of children's literature reflect the significant diversity in the content of literature aimed at children and the ways in which it addresses different topics. This field intersects with numerous cultural, psychological, and educational dimensions. However, the challenge lies in understanding how these texts can meet the multiple needs of children and contribute to shaping their personalities and cultural identities amidst ongoing temporal changes and social developments.

Ismail Abdel Fattah defines it as that dynamic literary genre that emerged to address the minds of the young, acknowledging an age group with a substantial demographic presence in any society. It is a literature of a gradual stage in the life of a human being, characterized by its uniqueness, rationality, understanding, and methods of education—in light of the concept of integrated education that employs both poetry and prose to provide enjoyment and benefit through this literary form directed at children. Therefore, the term "children's literature" refers to inherited literature, contemporary literature, and future literature, as it is directed toward a long phase in a person's life (Abdel Fattah, 2000, pp. 22-23). This signifies the diversity and variety of texts aimed at children, reflecting the need for various forms of knowledge and sciences that shape this stage of human life.

Building on this definition, children's literature takes on its role as an artistic tool for upbringing, contributing to the development of the individual's character in the present and, through that, the formation of society in the future. This is due to the moral, educational, and social values, among others, that it offers.

In addition to these values, children's literature represents "a linguistic experience in an artistic form, created by the artist specifically for children between the ages of two and twelve or slightly older. They live it and interact with it, gaining enjoyment and entertainment, bringing joy and happiness to their hearts, cultivating in them a sense of beauty and its appreciation, strengthening their appreciation for goodness and love for it, unleashing their imaginations and creative energies, and building the human within them (Al-Hadidi, 1991, p. 100)."

To solidify and achieve these noble goals, this type of literature is presented as a set of literary activities tailored for children, taking into account their characteristics and needs, as well as their developmental levels. In its broad sense, it includes everything offered to children during their childhood that embodies meanings, ideas, and emotions, in a manner that aligns with children's understanding, encourages them to think and learn, and fosters their social and cultural awareness (Shihab, 2013, p. 23). In this regard, Mohamed Bregesh points to the conditions and characteristics of writing for children, which require considering their developmental characteristics and respecting the manner in which the content intended to be conveyed is presented through this literary genre in accordance with the simplicity of children's language and style, as well as respecting the spirit of their time. He states: "Children's literature is the literary output that aligns with children according to their levels, ages, and their ability to understand and appreciate, according to the nature of the era, and in a way that aligns with the society in which they live... We cannot seek children's literature in the form known in this era, just as we cannot seek any literary genre or any science in the form we know today. Every era has its characteristics, its nature, its tastes, and its style (Brighash, 1992, p. 29)." Writing for children today, for example, differs significantly from writing for children in past decades or years, necessitating a response to the changes and spirit of the era, as the child is a being who quickly responds to and interacts with their surroundings.

It is worth noting—in conclusion of this discussion—that children's literature derives its definition and importance from its combination of two essential features: The first is its ability to provide an enjoyable and entertaining literary content, offering children a rich imaginative and creative

experience. The second is its role in reinforcing educational and instructional values, going beyond mere entertainment to ignite their spirit and shape their cultural and social identity. Literature aimed at children contributes to identity formation by fostering values of belonging and awareness of heritage, thus connecting the child to their cultural roots and enabling them to interact with the surrounding world with an open and balanced spirit.

2.3 Children's Literature and the Problem of Cultural Identity

The issue of children's literature raises a complex question regarding how to achieve a balance between reinforcing national identity and preserving universal human values. Amidst rapid cultural and social changes, children's literature faces significant challenges in presenting content that reflects local cultural values while also responding to cultural and human diversity on a global scale.

National identity forms the core of cultural and individual belonging, contributing to the enhancement of the sense of belonging and introducing children to their cultural and historical roots. Conversely, human identity seeks to build bridges between different cultures.

The challenge lies in how to present literature for children that reflects national identity through stories that narrate local experiences and practices while maintaining a positive interaction with universal human values. This requires literature to strike a balance between offering content that reinforces national belonging and enhancing the understanding of shared global values, thereby contributing to raising a generation capable of respecting their cultural identity while also understanding human diversity.

One of the primary philosophical conditions that should underpin children's literature is that it must be comprehensive and unified. Comprehensiveness refers to understanding all the elements that constitute children's literature and considering them, while unity refers to the interconnection and harmony of all aspects of truth (Al-Jamali, 1986, p. 99). This can be achieved by maintaining a balance between focusing on spirituality and morals. Idealistic or realistic philosophies each emphasize a certain aspect while neglecting others. The philosophy of children's literature should aim to integrate the truths of these philosophies, ensuring that materialism does not overwhelm spirituality or morals, or vice versa (Alean, 2014, p. 61). In essence, all these aspects should be presented in a manner that aligns with the child's mindset and intellectual level while reinforcing the human values associated with these aspects.

In this regard, modern educational trends are divided over the balance between focusing on the development of children's personalities within their narrow confines and the openness to developing national and human culture. Some educational thinkers believe that children should live their childhood, while others argue that it is essential to focus on the child's culture and personality on both national and global levels by making them aware of the problems and crises facing humanity on this planet, so they do not grow up in an imaginary world and are not caught off guard by challenges (Youssef, 2002, p. 37).

It is crucial to provide a diverse range of children's literature that includes different topics and issues to develop their thinking and expression concepts. This can be achieved by focusing on and reinforcing core human values in children's minds, such as humanity, justice, benevolence, love, and tolerance. This will help develop a generation of children who respect others and interact with them positively and kindly. Additionally, children's literature can address sensitive topics and issues facing humanity on this planet, such as environmental, social, and economic challenges.

"Since the child is the cornerstone of building society, it is natural to begin focusing on this philosophy, which is closely related to the child and their numerous values, including respect, love, cooperation, and work. This philosophy then expands to encompass national and patriotic philosophy, combating exploitation and colonialism, and rejecting discrimination and prejudice in all its forms (Youssef, 2002, p. 61)." Moreover, the development of awareness about human rights and peaceful coexistence among different cultures in children should be encouraged, motivating them to actively participate in building a better future for all of humanity.

Accordingly, the philosophy of children's literature must be humanitarian, as its aim is to develop the child's personality, enrich their imagination, and enhance their linguistic and creative abilities, regardless of their origin, nationality, or religious or cultural affiliation. Additionally, it is essential to address positive and motivational topics for children. Generally, the primary goal of children's literature should be the development of their personalities and the growth of their intellectual and creative skills and abilities.

It is also important in this context to ensure that children are not frightened or made anxious. This can be achieved by presenting these topics in a manner that is appropriate and suitable for their ages, emphasizing positive ideas and possible solutions to these issues. Among the problems that children's literature can address are:

- Issues of violence and bullying and how to deal with them
- Issues of justice, equality, and human rights
- Social challenges faced by children, such as belonging, cooperation, and tolerance
- Building self-confidence and enhancing children's mental health
- Promoting values of social and familial interaction and effective communication with others

These issues are among many that children's literature can address to develop children and empower them to deal with the challenges they face in life.

In conclusion, it can be said that there is an interaction between human values and national values in children's literature. Literature is concerned with imparting national values to children while simultaneously reinforcing human values such as love, cooperation, friendship, honesty, and integrity."

3. The Art of Storytelling in Children's Literature

3.1 The Concept of Storytelling

The art of storytelling is one of the fundamental pillars that enhances the diversity and richness of literary content aimed at children. The definition of stories directed at children does not differ significantly from those intended for adults. It is defined as: "A literary and linguistic art form that depicts a narrative expressing a specific idea through events occurring in a particular time or times, with characters moving within a specific place or places, representing different values... It is one of the most beloved forms of literature for children and one of the closest to their hearts (Alean, 2014, p. 123)."

SamerRouhi Al-Faisal defines it as: "A narrative literary genre, prose-based, directed at the child, suitable for their world, containing an engaging tale with no specific theme or fixed length, with clear characters and actions, language derived from the child's vocabulary, presenting an implicit value, and expressing a moral drawn from child psychology (Al-Faisal, 1989, p. 56)."

Based on the previous definitions, it can be said that stories directed at children are a narrative literary genre or a reading art form with multiple themes, written by adults for children. These stories include the elements of story construction used in adult literature, such as the plot, characters, the temporal and spatial setting, narrative structure, artistic climax, and resolution. However, the writer of children's stories simplifies these elements to suit different age groups.

Stories are used in everyday life for various purposes. They may serve to entertain, convey educational messages, raise awareness about a particular issue and encourage change, or even highlight a specific culture or heritage. Stories vary widely, encompassing genres such as fantasy, historical, scientific, educational, and social stories. They differ in style, content, and target audience, but all aim to reach the reader or listener and deliver a specific message.

Stories aimed at children are a primary means of capturing their interest and developing their imagination. However, their role goes beyond mere entertainment to have a deeper impact on shaping children's cultural identity. Through stories, children are introduced to elements of their local cultures while simultaneously being exposed to global concepts and cultures.

3.2 Types of Stories in Children's Literature

Scholars have varied in their classifications of story types in children's literature, and we can adopt the following classification:

3.2.1 Adventure Stories

Adventure stories are among the most popular and widespread types of children's stories. These stories are characterized by their excitement and thrill, filled with events that are full of surprises and challenges faced by the main characters. Adventure stories typically involve characters who encounter various dangers and challenges on their way to achieving their goals. These stories usually conclude with the characters succeeding and overcoming the difficulties they faced, leaving behind a valuable lesson for children about perseverance, determination, and facing challenges.

The themes of adventure stories are diverse, ranging from adventures in the wilderness, in space, or underwater. An important subgenre within adventure stories is the detective story. These stories

revolve around a crime committed by one or more individuals, with child protagonists who often assist police officers. The protagonists strive to uncover the culprits through a series of events that resolve the story's conflict, usually by the end (Alean, 2014, p. 138).

All these stories help to develop children's imagination and encourage them to explore and discover. They also work to build self-confidence and teach how to deal with risks. Additionally, adventure stories help children learn moral values, such as courage, patience, cooperation, and justice, among others. These stories can also contribute to developing language skills, creativity, and memory, as well as fostering an interest in reading and writing.

Overall, it can be said that adventure stories are a great way to inspire children to explore and learn, as they help develop their skills and personalities, providing them with an exciting and enjoyable experience in the world of imagination and adventure.

3.2.2 Fantasy Stories

Fantasy stories are an essential part of children's childhood. They are a type of story that dates back to earlier times and revolves around animals, birds, strange creatures, or the world of spirits, magic, or myths (Alean, 2014, p. 138). The different branches of this genre can be detailed as follows:

3.2.3 Animal Stories

Animal stories are one of the most important types of stories in children's literature. They rely on using animals as the main characters in the story to teach children important values and concepts in an enjoyable and engaging way. The roots of animal stories go back to ancient civilizations, where tales were told by farmers, hunters, and families in rural areas. These tales often revolved around the adventures of animals in the forest, desert, or sea and how they interact with one another.

Animal stories are highly popular among children, as they aim to teach children moral values in life, such as friendship, loyalty, tolerance, and cooperation. In addition to providing enjoyment and entertainment through the use of animals as main characters, these stories allow children to enjoy the tales, get to know the characters, and follow their adventures and interactions. Moreover, animal stories enhance children's creativity and critical thinking, as imagination and visualization are used to depict animal characters and the events of the stories.

3.2.4 Fairy and Wizard Tales

Stories about wizards and spirits are derived from ancient myths that talk about supernatural powers, dreams, and wishes that magically come true. These are among the most common types of stories in children's literature. These stories rely on fantastical and mythical concepts, teaching children moral values, ethics, humility, friendship, and self-belief. They include stories where miraculous and strange things happen, such as the presence of fairies, giants, dwarfs, or talking animals. They also include stories that contain the extraordinary or unnatural, such as the foolishness or stupidity of characters (Al-Hadidi, 1991, p. 125).

Wizard and spirit tales feature many intriguing characters, such as wizards, spirits, princesses, princes, peasants, workers, and animals, each often playing an important role in the story. These stories are filled with exciting and engaging events that captivate children's attention, such as magic, transformation, adventure, challenge, and triumph.

Over many years, fairy tales were passed down through oral tradition, but their aesthetic allure gave them the ability to penetrate the literature of some countries, eventually being recorded in literary books, epics, and chronicles (Salim, 2001, p. 175). Famous examples of wizard and spirit tales in children's literature include "Aladdin," "One Thousand and One Nights," "Mythical Tales," "Legendary Tales," "Juha," and "Wonders of the World," among many others.

In children's literature, wizard and spirit tales serve as an effective educational tool. They help children develop reading, listening, and critical thinking skills, enhance their creativity and imagination, and improve their Arabic language skills. These stories also inspire children to achieve their dreams and wishes through faith and self-confidence.

3.2.5 Myths

Myths are fictional stories that originally mean "a tale by which humans explain the first natural phenomenon or a story that deals with gods, their actions, and adventures, at a time when humans were not concerned with gods for their own sake but as unseen forces controlling and organizing cosmic phenomena (Salim, 2001, p. 179)." Accordingly, myths recount events and characters that are mythical, with heroes who are gods, monsters, and legendary creatures. Myths are frequently used in

children's literature as they offer children an opportunity to explore a fantasy world and learn about different cultures and traditions.

In children's literature, myths rely on many moral values, such as courage, faith, justice, sacrifice, and tolerance. Myths also enhance critical thinking, imagination, and creativity. Additionally, myths help in enhancing reading and listening skills, developing linguistic abilities, and promoting critical thinking.

Generally, it can be said that fictional stories play an effective role in achieving the objectives of children's literature. However, parents and educators should choose fictional stories that are appropriate for children's age and stages of mental and psychological development. Moreover, these stories should contain messages and values that contribute to the positive development of the child's personality, encouraging them to learn, think creatively and critically, and strengthening their character and moral values, as well as helping them to understand the world and people around them.

3.2.6 Scientific Stories

Scientific stories are a type of narrative "that revolves around a scientific event, discovery, or invention that occurred in a particular era, often highlighting the environment in which the inventor grew up, their personal traits, and their ability to overcome obstacles, eventually leading to their invention or scientific discovery (Alean, 2014, p. 139)."

Scientific stories are an effective tool for teaching children scientific concepts and encouraging them to explore the world around them. They help children understand scientific phenomena in an enjoyable and engaging way, enhancing their linguistic, cognitive, and social skills. Scientific stories can also help children think critically and creatively, encouraging them to solve scientific problems and challenges in various ways, thereby helping them build their scientific, intellectual, and social skills.

One of the most important benefits of scientific stories for children is the development of their scientific curiosity and encouragement to explore and discover. This is achieved by introducing them to various scientific concepts and principles, such as physics, chemistry, biology, and space, in a simplified manner suitable for their age. However, parents and educators should choose scientific stories that match the children's age and stages of mental and psychological development. The stories should be filled with accurate and reliable ideas and information and contain interactive questions and challenges that help children understand scientific concepts and apply them to reality.

3.2.7 Historical Stories

Historical stories aimed at children "are narratives that draw their material from history, with all its events, heroes, locations, and victories (Abrous, 2003)." They are an effective way to encourage children to explore and understand history, culture, and other cultural heritages. When children are introduced to true historical stories, they can learn many valuable and useful lessons that can be applied to their daily lives.

Children's historical stories encompass a wide range of topics, including ancient civilizations, significant historical events, famous figures, and other cultural traditions and customs. These stories help children understand the world around them and become familiar with different cultures, which aids in their ability to interact effectively with others in the future. Additionally, historical stories assist children in developing their reading, writing, and comprehension skills, while also fostering their imagination, sparking their curiosity, and motivating them to continue learning and exploring. Moreover, historical stories are a valuable means of enhancing cultural and social interaction, as well as stimulating children's learning, growth, and personal development.

3.2.8 Social Stories

Social stories written for children are an important tool for teaching them various social values and concepts, which help them understand the society they live in and develop their social and intellectual skills. "This type of story addresses the developments within society and its emotional and human relationships, elevating them to the highest ideals or rejecting and eliminating them due to their negative impact on the social environment (Abrous, 2003, p. 43)." Among the most significant benefits of social stories for children are the enhancement of critical thinking and social interaction skills, teaching them values such as cooperation, respect, tolerance, empathy, and positivity, and encouraging them to help others and appreciate differences.

Social stories help children understand different social, cultural, and religious relationships and encourage them to care about issues of justice, equality, and human rights. However, parents and

educators must select social stories that are appropriate for the children's age and stages of mental and psychological development, ensuring that the story's source and content are trustworthy and contain positive and beneficial messages.

Thus, it can be said that social stories written for children play an essential role in developing their social values and concepts, encouraging them to engage in positive social interaction, and teaching them how to live and interact properly and beneficially with the society in which they live.

In conclusion, after reviewing the different types of stories in children's literature, it is clear that the diversity of these types plays a crucial role in their ability to meet various needs of children and provide rich and diverse experiences that enhance their personal and cultural growth. By offering diverse content reflected in adventure, fantasy, scientific, historical, and social stories, children's literature contributes to shaping a well-rounded and sustainable cultural identity and serves as a fundamental tool for developing an informed and creative generation.

4. The Role of Local and Global Stories in Building Children's Cultural Identity

Children's stories can be divided geographically into local and global stories, both of which form an essential part of childhood experiences, offering children a broad window into multiple worlds of knowledge and imagination.

- Local stories are those that emerge from specific cultures, expressing their history, traditions, and myths. They are characterized by reflecting the cultural values and common beliefs of a particular society, often relying on oral traditions and popular proverbs. Through narrating the adventures of local characters and imparting life lessons, local stories provide children with a deep understanding of their cultural roots and their surrounding environment.

- global stories come from various cultures around the world, offering children the opportunity to explore diverse experiences and learn about multiple ways of life. These stories provide new insights into different traditions and lifestyles, thereby enhancing children's awareness of the external world and encouraging them to think in diverse ways. Through these stories, children gain broad knowledge about cultural diversity and explore new worlds beyond their geographical boundaries.

To understand how stories contribute to building children's cultural identity, it is important to explore the different roles that local and global stories play in this context:

4.1 The Role of Local Stories in Connecting Emerging Generations to Their Cultural Roots

Stories play a pivotal role in transmitting culture and heritage from one generation to the next. In a world characterized by rapid social and technological changes, stories remain a bridge between generations, contributing to the cultural understanding of emerging generations in several ways:

4.1.1 Reviving Traditions and Customs

Stories offer children a rich narrative filled with the traditions and customs that shape their culture. Folk tales, proverbs, traditional stories, and images of traditional celebrations, rituals, or ancient crafts, among others, help children deepen their knowledge of their cultural roots. They contribute to the preservation of cultural traditions and customs and facilitate their transmission across generations by presenting them in an engaging and appealing manner.

4.1.2 Introducing Children to Their Cultural History

Historical stories play a role in educating children about the events and significant figures that have influenced the shaping of their cultural history. By detailing historical events, these stories help children understand the evolution of their culture and how historical events have impacted the current context. This understanding deepens children's sense of belonging to their cultural heritage and strengthens their pride in their history.

4.1.3 Teaching Cultural Values

Stories contribute to teaching cultural values indirectly by offering narratives that contain lessons and morals derived from the experiences of characters. By following the development of characters and their decisions in various contexts, children are exposed to situations that reflect core cultural values such as honesty, courage, and cooperation. They come to understand the impact of these values on their daily lives and how they guide their behavior within social interactions and family relationships. This helps them solidify cultural concepts and teaches them how to apply them in their practical lives in alignment with their cultural heritage and social ethics.

4.1.4 Preserving and Promoting Local Languages Through Stories

Stories play a crucial role in preserving and promoting local languages. By writing and publishing stories in these languages, children are encouraged to use them, which supports their continuity. Additionally, stories contribute to the revitalization and development of the language by introducing new terms and expressions that reflect contemporary life, making the local language more suitable and effective in expressing the experiences of modern children.

4.2 The Role of Global Children's Stories in Opening Up to Different Identities

In a world characterized by deep interconnectedness and increasing interaction between different cultures, global children's stories are powerful cultural tools that play a pivotal role in shaping children's identities. By exploring stories from various cultures, children become acquainted with the diversity of the world around them, enhancing their understanding and supporting the growth of their personal identity through the following:

4.2.1 Promoting Appreciation and Respect for Other Cultures

When children are exposed to global stories, they learn that each culture has unique value and history. Stories that highlight the diversity of cultural identities help children recognize that every culture offers something special. By learning about different values and customs, children can develop a deeper respect for cultural diversity and feel a sense of belonging to a larger global community.

4.2.2 Developing Understanding and Communication Skills

Global stories not only teach children about different cultures but also contribute to developing their understanding and communication skills. By following the adventures of diverse characters, children learn how people from different backgrounds can collaborate and address challenges in various ways. These stories enhance critical thinking skills and make children more prepared to engage positively with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.

4.2.3 Exploring Diverse Experiences

Global stories serve as an important window into diverse human experiences that go beyond their geographical and cultural boundaries. By presenting characters and events from different cultural backgrounds, these stories reflect multiple aspects of life across different cultures and varied experiences. This allows children to understand life experiences from a different cultural perspective that can complement their original cultural backgrounds. This deeper understanding enhances their ability to empathize with others' experiences and appreciate cultural diversity, enriching their personal experiences and contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of different cultures.

4.2.4 Teaching Common Human Values

Global stories often impart lessons about shared human values such as compassion, justice, and tolerance. These values bridge the gap between different cultures and help individuals recognize the common bonds that unite people around the world. Through stories that address themes like cooperation and understanding, individuals can foster a sense of belonging to a shared humanity and engage positively with others.

4.2.5 Encouraging Cultural Dialogue

Global stories provide a platform for cultural dialogue by presenting topics that can be the focal point for constructive discussions among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. By discussing stories and exchanging ideas about them, individuals can share perspectives, broaden their cultural horizons, and enhance mutual understanding.

4.2.6 Stimulating Appreciation for Global Arts and Literature

Global stories help stimulate an appreciation for the arts and literature from diverse cultures. By exploring world literature, such as *The Brothers Karamazov* by Dostoevsky and *The Storyteller* by Mahmoud Darwish, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of literary arts and enhance their appreciation for the creativity of other cultures.

4.2.7 Raising Awareness of Global Issues

Stories that tackle global topics help raise awareness of issues such as climate change, poverty, and conflicts. Stories like *Animal Farm* by George Orwell provide insights into social and political issues, enhancing individuals' awareness of global challenges and encouraging them to think about possible solutions.

4.2.8 Deepening the Sense of Global Belonging

Global stories contribute to fostering a sense of belonging to the global community by presenting shared human experiences. By exploring stories that highlight common human experiences, such as

Love in the Time of Cholera by Gabriel GarcíaMárquez, individuals can feel part of a global human community, strengthening the bonds and understanding between people.

Global stories play a vital role in shaping multiple identities and fostering intercultural understanding by presenting diverse experiences, teaching shared human values, reducing cultural biases, and encouraging cultural dialogue. Additionally, they stimulate appreciation for global arts and literature, raise awareness of global issues, offer positive models for cultural coexistence, and enhance the sense of global belonging. Through engagement with these stories, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and promote mutual respect among different cultures.

5. Challenges of Embodying Cultural Identity in Children's Literature

The Impact of Globalization on the Art of Storytelling: The art of storytelling in children's literature faces a range of challenges in the age of globalization that affect its role in shaping children's cultural identity. Globalization, with its rapid and comprehensive influences, presents specific challenges in how stories are presented to reinforce cultural identity while responding to a changing reality. Some of the most prominent challenges include:

- Balancing Local and Global Cultures: In a world characterized by global interconnectedness, children's literature may struggle to maintain a balance between presenting stories that reflect local cultural identity and promoting an understanding of global cultures. Writers must find ways to integrate local cultural values within contexts that reflect global cultural diversity without compromising the details of the local culture.
- Global Influences on Local Stories: Globalization brings with it cultures and narrative styles from around the world, which can impact local stories. This may lead to changes in the cultural content of local stories, potentially weakening authentic cultural aspects and altering how children perceive concepts of their cultural identity.
- Preserving Cultural Identity Amid Global Influences: With the increasing influence of global cultures, it may be challenging to maintain cultural authenticity in stories aimed at children. Therefore, writers must ensure that stories continue to convey authentic cultural values and practices, even while introducing information about other cultures.
- Integrating Global Values Positively: Presenting global issues in children's stories requires integrating them in a way that enhances understanding and tolerance without neglecting local cultural identity. Achieving this requires writers to be cautious in how they present global issues to avoid negative impacts on local cultural values.
- Overcoming Cultural Biases: As stories from different cultures spread, children's literature may face challenges in avoiding the reinforcement of cultural stereotypes or biases. Global stories should be sensitive and diverse, offering balanced and fair perspectives on different cultures.
- Impact of Digital Media: Digital media plays a significant role in spreading stories and exchanging cultures, which can lead to the widespread dissemination of global stories, potentially affecting the status of local stories and how children interact with them. This necessitates the development of new methods to attract children to traditional cultural literature.
- Raising Awareness of Cultural Diversity: With exposure to global cultures, stories should aim to teach children how to interact effectively with cultural diversity. By presenting stories that reinforce shared human values and highlight cultural differences, children can understand and respect cultural diversity in a positive way.
- Encouraging Critical Thinking: In the age of globalization, it becomes essential to promote critical thinking in children through stories, enabling them to analyze and reflect on different cultural information and make informed decisions about it.

The challenges associated with using stories to build cultural identity are complex issues that require careful consideration and flexibility in writing and interacting with them. To address these challenges, children's literature writers must employ creative strategies to ensure that stories not only provide entertainment but also contribute to reinforcing children's cultural identity in a way that suits the digital age and globalization. This allows children to have a rich and comprehensive experience that enhances their understanding of their cultures and the world around them.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the following findings can be drawn from this article:

- The challenge lies in directing children's literature in a way that strengthens cultural identity, which requires the development of literary content that clearly and deeply reflects cultural values.
- The research shows that the art of storytelling transcends being merely an entertainment tool to become an educational medium that influences the shaping of children's cultural identity.
- Stories are a powerful means of intergenerational communication, contributing to the transmission of cultural knowledge and human experiences from one generation to the next, thereby helping to solidify cultural identity in children.
- The diversity in types of stories—both in form and content—enhances children's ability to understand and absorb various aspects of their cultural identity while also fostering their capacity to interact with other cultures.
- Local stories play a fundamental role in instilling cultural values, while global stories contribute to broadening children's awareness of other cultures.
- Despite the significant importance of children's literature, particularly the art of storytelling, in building children's cultural identity, there are substantial challenges, such as globalization and social changes, that require continuous efforts to address.
- The research indicates that the impact of globalization on children's literature necessitates rethinking how stories are presented to children in a way that preserves their cultural uniqueness while opening them up to the world.
- The article concludes with the need to develop strategies aimed at enhancing children's literature in alignment with the goals of cultural education to ensure the sustainable building of children's cultural identity.
- There is a need for ongoing research to evaluate the effectiveness of children's literature in building cultural identity, with a focus on how to update and adapt this literature to keep pace with rapid social and cultural changes.

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