

## USING PROBLEMATIC SITUATIONS TO ENCOURAGE 5-6-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOLERS TO TELL STORIES BASED ON EXPERIENCES IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN AND DEVELOP THEIR COHERENT SPEECH

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<b>Received:</b> 08/8/2023	Coherent speech is a complex speech activity that holds significant importance for the development of young children. Coherent speech not only serves as a tool for children to communicate with others around them but also aids in the development of their thinking, cognition, and various other psychological functions. Therefore, the development of coherent speech is crucial for the comprehensive development of preschool children. This study aims to provide guidance on using problematic situations to encourage 5-6-year-old preschoolers to tell stories based on their experiences, thus reinforcing and developing coherent speech. The main method used in this article is the theoretical research method. This method is employed to synthesize relevant articles, scientific works related to coherent speech, and the development of coherent speech while also addressing core issues related to using problematic situations in storytelling activities based on experiences in preschools. Based on the analysis of the role of coherent speech in the development of preschool children 5-6 years old and experience-based storytelling activities in the kindergarten, the article has made suggestions on how to use problematic situations to encourage preschool children 5-6 years old to tell stories from experience to reinforce and develop coherent speech. The research findings from this article can become useful suggestions to help early childhood educators improve the overall quality of children's education, as well as enhance the effectiveness of language development, especially coherent speech.
<b>Revised:</b> 19/9/2023	
<b>Published:</b> 19/9/2023	
<b>KEYWORDS</b>	
Coherent speech	
Development of coherent speech	
5-6-year-old preschool children	
Problematic situation	
Experience-based storytelling	

## SỬ DỤNG TÌNH HUỐNG CÓ VẤN ĐỀ KHUYẾN KHÍCH TRẺ MẪU GIÁO 5-6 TUỔI KỂ CHUYỆN THEO KINH NGHIỆM NHẪM Củng CỐ VÀ PHÁT TRIỂN LỜI NÓI MẠCH LẠC

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THÔNG TIN BÀI BÁO	TÓM TẮT
<b>Ngày nhận bài:</b> 08/8/2023	Lời nói mạch lạc là một hoạt động lời nói phức tạp, có ý nghĩa quan trọng đối với sự phát triển của trẻ nhỏ. Lời nói mạch lạc không chỉ đóng vai trò là công cụ để trẻ có thể giao tiếp với mọi người xung quanh mà còn là phương tiện để giúp trẻ phát triển tư duy, nhận thức và nhiều chức năng tâm lý khác. Vì thế, việc phát triển lời nói mạch lạc có ý nghĩa quan trọng đối với sự phát triển toàn diện của trẻ mẫu giáo. Nghiên cứu này được thực hiện với mục đích đưa ra những gợi ý dẫn trong việc sử dụng tình huống có vấn đề nhằm khuyến khích trẻ mẫu giáo 5-6 tuổi kể chuyện theo kinh nghiệm để củng cố và phát triển lời nói mạch lạc. Phương pháp chủ đạo được sử dụng trong bài viết là phương pháp nghiên cứu lý thuyết. Phương pháp này được dùng để tổng hợp các bài báo, công trình khoa học có liên quan đến vấn đề lời nói mạch lạc và phát triển lời nói mạch lạc, đồng thời đưa ra những vấn đề cốt lõi liên quan đến việc sử dụng tình huống có vấn đề trong hoạt động kể chuyện theo kinh nghiệm ở trường mầm non. Trên cơ sở phân tích vai trò của lời nói mạch lạc đối với sự phát triển của trẻ mẫu giáo 5-6 tuổi, hoạt động kể chuyện theo kinh nghiệm của trẻ ở trường mầm non, bài báo đã đưa ra định hướng về cách sử dụng tình huống có vấn đề khuyến khích trẻ mẫu giáo 5-6 tuổi kể chuyện theo kinh nghiệm nhằm củng cố và phát triển lời nói mạch lạc. Các kết quả nghiên cứu của bài báo có thể trở thành những gợi ý hữu ích giúp giáo viên mầm non cải thiện chất lượng giáo dục trẻ nói chung, cũng như nâng cao hiệu quả phát triển ngôn ngữ, lời nói mạch lạc nói riêng.
<b>Ngày hoàn thiện:</b> 19/9/2023	
<b>Ngày đăng:</b> 19/9/2023	
<b>TỪ KHÓA</b>	
Lời nói mạch lạc	
Phát triển lời nói mạch lạc	
Trẻ mẫu giáo 5-6 tuổi	
Tình huống có vấn đề	
Kể chuyện theo kinh nghiệm	

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34238/tnu-jst.8508>

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## 1. Introduction

For young children, language plays a uniquely vital role. Language is not only a tool for understanding the world, thinking, and self-regulation, but also the foundation for all social interactions and adaptive learning behaviors [1]. Therefore, developing language in children should be considered the "most important, essential, earliest, and most crucial task" [2]. In practice, the task of language development for preschoolers is carried out with various contents, among which the development of Coherent Speech (CS) is considered one of the particularly important tasks and the ultimate goal in perfecting the speech of preschool children. In preschools, the task of developing CS can be integrated and implemented in various activities, such as outdoor activities, play activities, corner activities, experiential activities, and storytelling activities [3]-[5].... Each activity, with its own advantages, contributes to providing children with opportunities to practice and develop their speech in unique ways. Among them, storytelling based on experiences, with its distinct advantages, not only helps children think and imagine interesting situations and recall past experiences but also creates opportunities for them to use language to share stories with those around them. Therefore, this activity not only enhances children's creativity but also helps them learn, practice, improve, and enhance their coherent speech.

Currently, teaching based on problematic situations is a teaching method with many advantages and is being implemented in various educational levels. Presenting appropriate problem-based situations to learners can help them develop various important skills. Therefore, the issue contained within the situation is considered a crucial factor. In general terms, a problem is a question or difficulty that needs to be solved [6]. According to Rubinstein, a problematic situation is 'a situation in which something is posed but not clarified, not predetermined, but rather its relationship to what is in the situation is established' (X.L. Rubinstein) [7]. Author I. Ia. Lecne believes that a problematic situation is a difficulty that the subject is consciously aware of or unclear about, and to overcome it, one must seek new knowledge and new methods of action [8]. According to author Nguyen Ngoc Bao, "Problem-posing teaching is a form of teaching based on the laws of knowledge acquisition and the creative operation, including the combination of teaching and learning methods with the fundamental characteristics of scientific exploration, developing positive attitude, self-reliance, and creative ability" [9]. Thus, the essence of a problematic situation lies in containing cognitive contradictions, and these contradictions must have an effect on the learner so that they are received not as external contradictions but as internal needs [10]. A problematic situation in the teaching process is one that the teacher sets up, and in these situations, many contradictions appear without answers, requiring learners to find ways to solve them [11]. In preschool education, problematic situations are situations used by teachers in educational activities to help children solve problems based on proactive thinking. For 5-6-year-old preschoolers, the use of problematic situations will create dual objectives, not only fostering their active, proactive, and creative engagement in activities but also contributing to the development of problem-solving abilities - one of the crucial skills for individuals in the era of Industry 4.0.

From the above arguments, it can be seen that if preschool teachers know how to apply problematic situations in storytelling activities, they can contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of CS education for children. However, within the scope of our research, most previous studies on language and CS seem to have only approached it from a general research perspective [12] or from a theoretical standpoint [13], or focused on developing CS for preschool children [4] based on research results on the current state of CS development in certain localities [14], [15],... and there has been no work studying the issue of using situations in storytelling activities to help children develop CS. Therefore, with this article, we will provide guidelines for using problematic situations to encourage children to tell stories based on experiences in order to reinforce and develop coherent speech.

## 2. Methodology

To address the issue given, this article employs the theoretical research method. Specifically, the methods of analysis, synthesis, systematization, and generalization are utilized to collect, analyze, and study scientific works, theoretical frameworks related to CS, CS development, teaching based on problematic situations, and storytelling activities based on experiences. Based on this foundation, the research highlights the role of CS development for preschoolers, the advantages of storytelling activities based on experiences in CS development, and provides guidelines for using problematic situations to encourage 5-6-year-old preschoolers to tell stories based on experiences in order to reinforce and develop coherent speech.

## 3. Contents of the study

### 3.1. Coherent speech and the role of coherent speech in the development of 5-6-year-old preschoolers

Speech is a distinct aspect of human beings and plays a significant role in the development of human society. According to Mai Ngoc Chu, 'speech is the linguistic product created by individuals in specific communication contexts' [16]. Coherent speech is a particular form of language, and its coherence is considered the tight connection of ideas within each segment, enabling the reader/listener to understand clearly and accurately the ideas the speaker/writer wants to present. According to Alekseeva and Yashina [17], CS is a detailed statement of semantics (a series of logically combined sentences), which brings about communication and mutual understanding. According to Lvov [18], CS (monologue) is a type of speech that is organized according to the laws of logic, grammar and layout, being a single whole, having a theme; performing a certain function, being independent and relatively complete, being divided into structural components and more or less meaningful. Based on the above viewpoints, it can be seen that CS includes characteristics such as having a complete theme, clear structure and sequence, formal coherence, clarity, fluency, appropriate length in accordance with content, and demonstrating the speaker's independent expression when speaking/telling. Many researchers acknowledge that CS is a form of speech that is challenging to achieve through natural means. To attain a high level of proficiency in this form of speech, special education is necessary.

For 5-6-year-old preschoolers, the formation and development of CS are of significant importance as it provides them with a foundation for comprehensive development. Fundamentally, the development of CS for children holds several important meanings, including: *Firstly*, CS improves the quality of children's social relationships. In essence, both monologue and dialogue speech are different types of speech in the structure of human language. Therefore, there exists a CS dialogue in CS monologue, and vice versa. Therefore, fundamentally, CS helps children have more opportunities for communication and high-quality interactions. Thanks to CS, children can better understand the content of others' speech, and based on that, they can direct their own behavior appropriately. Especially, when entering a new learning environment, the development of CS plays a significant role in helping children create, maintain, and expand their social relationships. *Secondly*, CS contributes to the development of children's thinking and cognition. As language is related to all psychological processes and is the most important factor in terms of content and structure of the mind, especially the cognitive processes, CS plays a role in the development of children's thinking and cognition. One of the tasks of developing CS is to expand the vocabulary and sentence patterns. Words and sentences, in turn, play a role in forming judgments and inferences. Therefore, the development of CS stimulates the activity of thinking. This is entirely in line with the viewpoint that 'coherent speech is inseparable from the world of thinking' [19] and 'not only does thinking determine language, but thinking is also limited by language' [20]. *Thirdly*, CS contributes to establishing and regulating social behavioral standards. In young children, three different forms of speech coexist, and each stage exhibits different

expressions. These forms are external speech, egocentric speech, and inner speech. Through the process of internalization, speech is transformed from a means of communication between individuals into a tool for regulating and guiding a child's own behavior. This helps minimize problematic behaviors and provides opportunities for children to engage in adaptive learning behaviors. *Fourthly*, CS establishes a solid foundation to prepare children for higher levels of education. The age of 5-6 is considered a pivotal stage and is crucial for preschool children. If before the age of 6, playing is the predominant activity, then upon entering primary school, learning becomes the primary activity for children. CS at this stage is not only a means for children to connect with the world around them but also a tool for learning and development. Therefore, the level of CS development is regarded as a fundamental indicator to assess a child's readiness to participate in higher levels of education. *Thus*, CS holds a particularly crucial significance for the development of 5-6-year-old preschoolers. Therefore, the education of CS for children needs to be given attention and regularly implemented with effectiveness in educational activities at preschools.

### ***3.2. Experience-based storytelling contributes to the development of coherent speech for 5-6-year-old preschoolers***

According to M.M. Alekseeva and V.I. Yashina, there are five common forms of storytelling in preschools, including retelling literary works, with toys, storytelling based on pictures, storytelling from experiences, and creative storytelling [17]. Among them, experience-based storytelling is a relatively challenging form of storytelling for 5-6-year-old preschoolers, but it offers excellent opportunities for the development of coherent speech.

Experience-based storytelling is an activity in which children narrate events they have witnessed or participated in. This form of storytelling is quite complex as children have to express their observations, impressions, and experiences in a complete story without the support of visual aids. The ability to talk/narrate about experiences is largely developed through the practice of communication and daily activities of the child. Therefore, in experience-based storytelling, children are clear about what they are talking about. However, difficulties arise during the storytelling process, as new associations and images may emerge, leading to tangential thoughts. As a result, even though the stories of the children's experiences are vivid, sincere, and emotionally rich, they may not be fully coherent and tightly structured.

Many studies have shown that experience-based storytelling is an effective pedagogical tool for developing language skills, especially coherent speech [21]. Therefore, experience-based storytelling activities also have a positive impact on the development of coherent speech for children. This is evident in the following aspects:

*Firstly*, experience-based storytelling contributes to increasing vocabulary and expanding sentence patterns. During the storytelling process, under the guidance of the teacher, children listen to the stories and exchanges of the teacher and their peers on various topics. This provides an opportunity for children to acquire new vocabulary and sentence patterns. Additionally, each participation in experience-based storytelling activities allows children to use and practice the learned vocabulary and sentence patterns purposefully in different contexts. As a result, children's vocabulary and sentence patterns become more diverse, rich, and flexible.

*Secondly*, experience-based storytelling contributes to improving expressive abilities. The essence of this activity is for children to narrate based on their own experiences, thus mobilizing their expressive abilities. Once engaged in experience-based storytelling, children are motivated to convey their stories so that the teacher and peers can understand them clearly. Thanks to this motivation, children make efforts to express themselves coherently, smoothly, and with expression. Although they may encounter difficulties at the initial stage, with the teacher's support, their expressive abilities can be improved, developed, and perfected over time.

*Thirdly*, experience-based storytelling contributes to the formation and development of logical thinking in speech/narration. Every story needs to adhere to a specific theme. Therefore,

experience-based storytelling helps children develop the ability to recognize and understand themes, enabling them to develop stories around the theme while linking events into a logical and complete narrative. Additionally, storytelling provides a conceptual framework for thinking, allowing children to shape and organize events and incidents into a coherent whole that can be understood by themselves and others. This will enable children to have the ability to speak/narrate or develop a story or issue that is complete, clear, and coherent.

*Fourthly*, experience-based storytelling contributes to refining the standards of pronunciation and speech articulation, improving fluency and independent expression. First of all, in experience-based storytelling activities, children listen to the teacher's model narration. If the model narration is clear, adheres to pronunciation standards, and is rich in expression, it helps children perceive the characteristics of rhythm and intonation in speech, as well as natural ways of expressing sounds. Moreover, in this activity, each time a child answers questions, provides personal opinions, or participates in storytelling, they are practicing their expressive skills.

In summary, experience-based storytelling is one of the engaging activities that provide many opportunities for children to practice and develop their CS. However, the effectiveness of this activity depends on various factors. Therefore, it is important to identify the characteristics and level of development of children's CS, as well as the pedagogical abilities of the teacher, in order to set appropriate goals, methods, and forms of organizing the activity to maximize the children's potential.

### ***3.3. Utilizing problematic situations for 5-6-year-old preschool children to tell stories based on experiences in order to reinforce and develop coherent speech***

#### ***3.3.1. The significance of using problematic situations for 5-6-year-old preschool children to tell stories based on experience is to reinforce and develop coherent speech***

For 5-6-year-old preschool children, creating situations for them to narrate stories based on experience contributes to triggering recollection, reinforcing and enriching their stock of symbols, helping them recall the sequence of events witnessed or experienced. Additionally, creating situations for 5-6-year-old preschool children to tell stories based on experience also contributes to developing in them skills of coherent speech, with connections, order, and structure; strengthening the ability to express thoughts sequentially and seamlessly; aiding them in speaking/telling actively, independently, fluently, and coherently. This is because, when narrating, children have to detach completely from the situation. To achieve this, they must think, select words, construct sentences, and articulate past experiences into a flowing story with content and form logic, complete with a clear and well-organized structure.

#### ***3.3.2. Utilizing problematic situations to encourage children to narrate stories based on experience for the purpose of developing coherent speech***

For preschool children aged 5-6, using situations to encourage storytelling can be carried out through various methods and forms. However, the process for an activity aimed at motivating children to tell stories for the purpose of developing coherent speech can be undertaken following these fundamental steps.

##### ***Step 1: Prompting/Creating Problematic Situations***

An educational situation is a real or fictional story or event that teachers use to help children find solutions to specific tasks. In the process of developing coherent speech for 5-6-year-old preschool children through instructional activities, teachers can construct or select appropriate situations that arise from reality. The act of prompting/creating situations aims to stimulate children to share, exchange, and recall experiences, aiding in the development of coherent, clear, and concise coherent speech. After choosing a suitable situation, the teacher introduces it to the children while encouraging them to actively think and find solutions based on their own abilities. For example: The baby rabbit went to pick mushrooms and got lost in the forest. A ferocious fox appeared and wanted to eat the baby rabbit. However, this wolf loves to listen to stories. He

thought for a moment and then told the little bunny that, if the rabbit could tell him an interesting story about a birthday party, he would spare the rabbit. But the rabbit never attended the birthday party. The rabbit asked us to tell the wolf a story to save the baby rabbit, can you help the rabbit?

With the goal of developing coherent speech through instructional activities, the presented situations need to meet the following criteria: should serve the purpose of developing communication skills for 5-6-year-old preschool children through instructional activities; should be relatable and suitable for the children's level of perception and life experience; must genuinely present a problem to stimulate children's thinking and judgment, igniting their motivation to use language to tell/share with the teacher and peers; needs to be presented in a natural manner; the teacher should thoroughly study it and anticipate a set of scientifically guided questions that align with the intended objectives.

### *Step 2: Sharing, Exchanging, and Guiding Children in Problematic Situations*

The teacher poses open-ended questions and guides children to evaluate and solve situations to help them recall past experiences. The teacher acts as a mediator, refraining from commenting or expressing personal opinions when children share their thoughts. The teacher's questions should trigger the children's memories of experiences to solve the problem. After presenting the open-ended questions, the teacher should give children time to apply their knowledge, skills, and thinking to find solutions.

The teacher can use the 5W + 1H model to guide children in solving problems in a detailed, comprehensive, scientific, and coherent manner:

+ Who: Who is involved in the event? Who is the main character of the event? Who participated/appeared in the event or story?

+ What: What is the topic/title/content of the story about? What does the story talk about? What will be told in the story?

+ When: When did the event take place? When did the event occur? How long did the event last? When did the event end?

+ Where: Where did the event/story happen?

+ Why: Why did the event/story happen?

+ How: How did the event happen? How did you feel when participating in the event?

For example, to develop a storytelling activity based on the theme 'Memorable Birthday Party,' teachers can ask general questions that all children can apply to recall and remember their own birthday experiences, addressing issues such as:

+ Who: *Whose birthday party was it? Who attended the birthday party?*

+ What: *What story will you tell? What will your story be about?*

+ When: *When did your birthday take place?*

+ Where: *Where did your birthday party happen?*

+ Why: *Why was your birthday celebrated?*

+ How: *How did you and your parents prepare for the birthday party? How did you feel?*

Teachers should create a natural, comfortable, and enjoyable atmosphere for children and encourage them to use language to exchange and share information. Alongside encouraging quick-witted and confident children, teachers should also pay attention to encouraging and providing opportunities for shy children to express their opinions through appropriate prompts.

The teacher's guidance isn't just about activating the children's memory techniques; it also helps them see the future sequence and structure of the story. This aids children in organizing their thoughts sequentially, coherently, and comprehensively, in a simple and impressive manner for the listener. It also directs children's attention to the essence of the events being conveyed. Therefore, the questions should be organized logically to guide children in constructing a focused, well-structured narrative with three complete parts. This fosters connections in form, allowing children to create and tell a complete, flowing, and coherent narrative.

### *Step 3: Conclusion and Finding Appropriate Solutions*

After the teacher and children have presented various different storytelling options, they collaboratively choose the most suitable option and guide the children towards the storytelling task. Because experience-based storytelling is a complex form of communication for preschool children, to encourage their confidence and boldness, at the initial stage, the teacher can organize group storytelling activities. Later, the teacher can invite a few children to narrate the entire story. This approach is employed in cases where the story is about experiences that all children in the class have witnessed or participated in, such as recounting a community service event or a classmate's birthday party. The result is that children can tell a complete story with an introduction, middle, and ending.

During the children's narration, the teacher listens, encourages, and corrects when necessary. The teacher can provide additional sentence models, especially compound sentences. However, overusing questions should be avoided as it may disrupt the flow of the child's story. Gradually, the teacher should help children develop the ability to present independently and fluently, enabling them to express their thoughts clearly with appropriate intensity. The teacher should pay extra attention to shy and reluctant children.

#### *Step 4: Evaluation and Comments*

After the child finishes narrating, the teacher can allow them to self-assess their own story. The child themselves will perceive and identify any missing elements in their story.

Furthermore, the teacher creates an opportunity for multiple children to offer comments on the story they heard or add their thoughts if desired. However, the teacher should guide the children's comments in a positive direction, avoiding affecting the emotions of those being commented on.

Finally, the teacher provides feedback and evaluation on the child's story based on a comparison with the problem-solving task of the situation and the set goals for developing communication skills. The teacher's evaluation should be objective, friendly, specific, and avoid using vague terms.

The evaluation criteria for the child's story in line with the goal of developing communication skills could include: the completeness of the story's content; the independence in creating the story; the completeness of the story's structure; the coherence of the theme; the logical form; the length of the story."

#### *3.3.3. Requirements for using situations with 5-6-year-old preschool children to tell experience-based stories for strengthening and developing coherent speech*

To effectively create situations for 5-6-year-old preschool children to tell experience-based stories for the purpose of reinforcing and developing coherent speech, attention should be given to the following requirements: *Firstly*, the teacher needs to have an understanding of the characteristics and physiological and psychological development of 5-6-year-old preschool children, as well as the characteristics and level of development of their coherent speech, in order to plan in a suitable and effective manner. *Secondly*, the teacher should possess the skills to select and construct problematic situations that are appropriate for 5-6-year-old preschool children, aligning with the activity's objectives. *Thirdly*, the teacher needs to be flexible in choosing suitable forms and methods to guide children in recounting what they have witnessed and experienced, in order to shape and develop their coherent speech. *Fourthly*, the teacher should possess the skill to choose appropriate topics for the children and organize experiential activities that help them accumulate experiences for instructional activities.

## **4. Conclusion**

CS plays a crucial role in the development of children. The formation of CS skills provides children with a solid foundation for comprehensive development. As CS is a specific form of language, it develops and evolves within the context of communication and through practice. Therefore, to effectively develop children's CS, teachers need to stimulate their motivation to use

speech. In this regard, using interesting and appropriate problematic situations that match children's cognitive abilities can arouse their interest and encourage them to speak or narrate about their experiences effectively, enabling those around them to understand their expressions. Using problematic situations in experience-based storytelling not only makes children more active and enthusiastic in the activity but also helps them achieve multiple objectives. This, in turn, enhances the effectiveness of childcare and educational activities and contributes to sustainable and effective development of children's CS. However, to achieve the expected results in using problematic situations during experience-based storytelling, teachers need to develop a plan that aligns with children's cognitive abilities and language proficiency.

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