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STORY ELEMENTS AND THEIR PROPERTIES IN THE CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS' STORIES

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ABSTRACT

In order to transfer their thoughts in a live manner to the readers, authors need factors that are known as story elements. The story elements can be realized as the uniting factors in all sorts of stories. However, story elements have special characteristics in the children's stories and their negligence makes the author fail in writing a story appropriate for the children. This article has been carried out based on a library research method and tries defining the story elements and investigating the properties of the story elements in the children's stories. The study results indicated that two substantial factors should be taken into account when selecting subjects for children's stories: one is the child's mental structures and the other is the child's experience of life. Moreover, the theme of the children's stories should fall within the area of their experiences and they should be able to discern a clear image of the story's message after reading the story and this image has to exert a positive and considerable effect on them. The events and incidents of the children's stories should be always a function of linear time because flashbacks are not recommended for the children; the cause and effect relationship should be strongly exhibited in the children's stories and it has to be free of any complexity. The story goes on with logical struggle and it reaches a climax and it is concluded with a happy ending. The protagonist of the children's story should not have any weak point and s/he has to always come out as a victor in the end of the story. The stories written for children should have a sincere and simple tone of voice so that they can be adored by the children and make them interested in reading. Children have visual thoughts meaning that they think pictorially; therefore, one of the other elements of the children's stories is illustration.

INTRODUCTION

If story is considered as incorporating all kinds of story literature, including tale and short story, long story and novel, in a general sense, some definitions of the story itself should be presented even with all the confusions that seem to be existent in the definition of all kinds of story

literature. In the world's literary dictionary published by Joseph Shipley, story has been defined as «a general term used to refer to the narration or explanation or description of the events and incidents. In story literature, story generally encompasses the exhibition of effort and struggle between two opposite forces and one single goal» [1].

A. M. Forster, the English novelist and researcher, writes the following statements for defining story: «story is the narrating of the events and incidents in a chronological order like in lunch after breakfast and Tuesday after Monday and new life after death» [2]. Forster has actually introduced the general meaning of story in the above definition and it is existent in all of the stories as an essential element and it is the common feature of the narration, tale, myth, short story, novel and romance and it cannot be accepted as a comprehensive definition in the specific sense of story which differs from the other kinds of story literature.

Jamal Mir Sadeghi, as well, has offered the following definition of story: "in its specific sense, story is synonymous to story literature which implies the prose texts featuring an imaginary nature. Tale, short story, novel and romance and their affiliated works are generally termed story literature. Each of these kinds per se has its own ancillary branches" [1]. Mir Sadeghi, as well, realizes imagination as the factor distinguishing the story literature from other than that like history and asserts that it flows in all the arts, especially story, with its inventive trait prevailing its real and historical aspect. In fact, a writer cannot construct a fascinating and pleasant and, in the meantime, real story without mixing the watercolor of imagination with the realities of life and this is per se the essential difference between history and story. In a definition, he only points to the prose works that can be placed under the title of story literature while poetical works like Nezami's Panj Ganj and others constituted the vast part of our story literature in the past hence not included by the foresaid definition.

The Russian formalists believe that «story is a perfect narration of the incidents' sequence and the storyteller changes the real order of them in narrating the plot. The Russian formalists have used the Latin word « fabula » as an equivalent to story » [1, 3] and such a saying does not differ from Forster's statement about the story literature and it is actually a general definition of the story elements in the whole story literature. A short glance at all these definitions as well as the other definitions presented in the world's literary dictionaries like Abrams, Gooden and so forth, it can be concluded that offering a specific definition and even summing of all of them underneath a comprehensive definition is not an easy task because each of them approaches the story from a different perspective and each of them pays attention to a special goal of story, i.e. setting, content, factors and so forth. The definitions presented by the westerners all fall under such general titles as story and fiction with both of them being translatable to a single word « story » (see also Allote, 1997, p.2).

a. Definition of Story in Children's Literature:

Story has been defined in the theoretical books of the children's literature in the following words : « story is a writing wherein the author offers his own primary thought within the format of a narration to the

readers whether be it of a completely imaginary and unreal aspect or reflective of the life's realities decorated by the paint and color of the author's imagination and processing. In this type of literature, the thing that usually causes the author's fascination and attraction to the study is the incidents and events of the story with the primary concept and message of the author indirectly influencing the readers. In story writing, art of writing is manifested in its original and real form because not only the writing style and method of dealing with the issue is very important in creating a good story but also the selection of a subject and cast wherein the subjected can be poured is per se another art. undoubtedly, coordinated amalgamation of these three results in the creation of a really artistic work » [4].

Apart from all the offered definitions, it has to be noted that story-writing is an art having an undeniable social effect. Whether being real or imaginary, good or bad, a story has its effect on the psyche of the readers and opens a new road before them. The author's opinions are expressed indirectly from the mouth of the story characters and in the setting that the story events take place and they altogether influence the readers. « Story is welcomed and attentions are paid to story for it saturates the children's spirits of novelty-seeking and demanding due to its intact subjects as well as for the unlimited freedom enjoyed by the author in writing down his or her own thoughts » [5].

b. Differences between Tale and Story:

It has been stated in the world's dictionary of literary terms published by Shipley that « tale is a term used to refer to any sort of story narration including prose and poem. In terms of form, it usually features a loose narrative property and it is retold for amusing such as Canterbury tales by Jeffrey Chaser" [1]. Generally, tales are not authored by any special writer and they have traveled orally and chest-chest in the course of time and place and they have been inherited by the future generations and even various lands and different people. In the course of this temporal and spatial trip, they have undergone changes and evolutions and confusions and the differences between several narrations of a story amongst the people of a land and/or various nations of the world are due to the same reason. Moreover, tales do not have a complex plot like the short stories and/or novels; all the events pivot about instantaneously created adventures. Tales feature typical characters that never or rarely change in the course of the story. In the old tales, "there are characters that possess a timeless and placeless comprehensive or they belong to all the times and all the places and this is why none of them undergoes even the smallest transformation whereas the character of the new tales is the second version of an individual in the community. In the new tales, events and incidents cause changes in the characters and drive them towards the creation of pleasant and fascinating events" [6].

Walter Scot defines tale in the following words: "tale is an imaginary narration within the format of prose and poem and its interest is directed towards the wonderful and uncommon events while novel [or new story] is an imaginary narration differing from tale because the events of a novel are embedded and mobilized on the path of the ordinary human events and within the society's statuses and situations" [7]. Clara Rio, as

well, believes that "tale is a heroic narration dealing with mythical and fictious persons and objects; but novel is an image of real life and novels as well as a picture of the time at which novel has been written" [7].

Mir Sadeghi, as well, expresses the essential differences between tale and story in the following words: "almost all of them incorporate differences in plot design, characterization, story event, elements of time and place and so forth. The works wherein the instantaneously created events are underlined more than the human beings and characters' perfection and evolution are called tale. Events usually create tales and, in fact, form the essential and fundamental pillar of them without even having a role in the expansion and reconstruction of the tales' heroes and men. In other words, the characters and heroes of the tales undergo metamorphosis to a lesser degree and they are more subjected to the effects of the various events and adventures. Tales are simple and primitive in form and feature a narrative structure. The language of most of them is close to the general public's discourse and dialogue and they are replete of the colloquial and slang expressions, words and proverbs. Tales usually have a weak plot and their events do not follow a logical and acceptable reasoning" [1].

Timelessness and placelessness are two of the essential differences between the old tales and the new stories. In the today's stories, the time and place of the tales is exactly the very time and place wherein we live and they are occasionally found referring to precise geographical coordinates even if they are imaginary and made in the mind of the author. However, in the old and folk tales, this issue is not so much important. According to Colerich, 'our imagination of time is always mixed with our imagination of place so, if timelessness governs the entire events, placelessness also does so'" (Baraheni, 1999, p.31).

Vladimir Propp is the first person who investigated the folk tales from the structural perspective in a technical manner and his theories are predominantly available in the book "morphology of fairy tales". The general structures of the folk tales, as also reminded by this author, are very much close and similar in terms of form and shape. The number and sequence of the tales' functions are fixed as proposed by Propp (see also morphology of fairy tales). Conversely, the structure of the new stories, whether short stories or long stories, significantly differs from that of the tale. The stories have usually complicated plot and these plots are generally non-repeatable and every story has its own special design and plot that is created only once and another point is that a plot is not even repeated twice even by a single author. It can be stated that there are story-building plots equal to the number of all the good stories worldwide.

It can be stated from teleological viewpoint that tales often have a happy ending and it can be eventually expressed that justice and goodness and truthfulness are shouted in them and the wishes of the people from various times are showcased. "In folk stories, the thieves and the hypocrites and the individuals who see the progress of their tasks in fraud and falsity cannot win and magnanimity, honesty, courage and nobility overcome the deception, guile and magic in all of the cases. This is the feature an equivalent of which cannot be found in any of the exceptional folk tales" [1].

Ulrich Marzolph who has investigated and classified Iranian tales from structural perspectives reminds that one of the lingual characteristics of the Iranian tales, like any of the tales from other nations, is that they have a fixed and unvarying beginning and ending such as their commencement with sentences like "there was a person and there was not another person; there was nobody except the God" and their ending with sentences like "we went up, it was yoghurt; we went down, it was doogh; the story was not real (see also, classification of Iranian tales). This is while the beginning and ending of the new stories has never been similar; they begin with a description of the scene and/or with the direct description of the main character and they occasionally have a good or bad ending and sometimes an open and suspended ending.

Besides the abovementioned cases, the lingual dimension should be added and it has not been flexible in the old tales. Language indicates the personality and identity of every individual in the society. Every class of people speaks in a language specific to the same class in the society. "In the past, the language of tales was not determined based on the lifestyle and discretion of every individual person existent in the story. King and beggar, Amir and servant, lover and beloved and lion and cow spoke in their own specific languages or the languages of the types they metaphorically represented while, after the authors' gaining of insight over the realities of the daily life, the languages of tales were turned into forms immediately associated with the tale's character(s) and actions they did because the language of every person is part of his or her personality and identity and the first determinant of every man of the story's characters" [6].

Another difference between the old tales and today's stories lies in the struggle between the characters. According to Reza Baraheni, the struggles of the old tales and narrations are all physical not emotional and mental and, generally, most of the characters and individuals of the tale do not have an inside [6]. This is while the today's writer tries advancing the story plot towards a final result via exhibiting internal struggles and entering the character into the thoughts and actions. Some conjecture that tale is the very short story but tales have been usually recounted for sleeping and calming the children while the short story serves awakening and arousing the people's mind. Essentially, short story has modern story-writing elements and properties of most of which tale is deprived.

1. Story Elements:

In case of considering story in its general sense as including all kinds of story literature, such as tale, short story, long story and novel, story elements can be realized as the uniting factor of all the story types that interweaves the warps and wefts of the beautiful carpet of story and creates a single coherent and pretty unit. In addition to the appropriate subject and format, the author needs factors known as story elements so as to be able to transfer his or her thoughts to the readers in a live manner. Each of these factors and elements can be alone investigated and studied. Authors and researchers have dealt with several of the story constituents so, amongst all those titles and through blending their definitions, we intend to offer succinct definitions of the ones assisting us in writing this research.

"An author creates a story and, in other words, builds a world and asks the reader to imaginatively and fancifully enter it. You hear a voice that retells the story for you like that of the old narrators. Such a way of story-narrating is carried out in various methods which constitute the so-called "point of view". It is through these same methods of narration that the author establishes a communication with the story and you and it is via the same communication that you are informed of the events that happen to the characters in the story's setting. The order and sequence of these events is up to the plot through which "theme and subject" are manifested. Along with some other factors, these are known as the story elements" [8].

2. Story Elements and Their Properties in Children and Adolescents' Stories:

a. Subject:

Subject includes phenomena and events that create the story and visualize the theme. In other words, subject is the realms wherein creativity can display its theme. Better said, the subject of every story is a concept about which the story is written [9]. Subject is the initial seed sown in the farm of the author's mind and encompasses the whole setting of the story and the author writes about that subject or that special story issue without any thought orientation; however, theme is the primary mindset dominating every subject and expressed through the author's intellectual orientation.

Thus, subject is a thing other than theme. "Subject is the initial capital of the writer for a literary work. Subject is the main foundation of tale; it is the very thing about which the story revolves. In fact, subject is envisioned as the center and focal point of the story and every story's perfection and formation is initialized with the subject" [10]. The subject of the stories can be fascinating and amusing or, conversely, an author might have intended to portray the truths of life. In this regard, stories' subjects can be divided into several sets: "subject includes phenomena and events creating the story and illustrating the theme; put differently, subject is the realm wherein creativity can exhibit its theme. The subject of the stories can be divided into five sets: 1) action stories; 2) real stories; 3) horrible stories; 4) fantastic and imaginary stories and 5) realistic magical stories" [8].

i. Appropriate Subjects for Children's Stories:

Choosing subjects for the children's stories is a very sensitive task. Muhammad Gudarzi writes in this regard that "subject of the children and adolescents' stories is an essential element; paying attention to the selection of a subject type, contents of the subject and literary organization of it in the story are three important principles related to subject. The subject domain of the children and adolescents' stories is very limited and the author firstly chooses a subject which is in proportion to the mental capacity, taste, interest and experience of the audience and s/he secondly promulgates his or her thought and philosophical mindset through the subject in such a way that it can have a valuable load and thirdly tries preserving the literary and aesthetical structure of the work" [11].

Not all the subjects fit the children and adolescents' stories. Two substantial factors should be taken into account when selecting a subject:

one is the child's mental structures and the other is the child's experiences of life. The younger the child, the more the restrictions stemming from these two factors and the older the child, the vaster the circle limiting the subject. For example, two common subjects in literature that are not appropriate for children are theosophical love and sexual love. The subjects that are chosen for the children and adolescents' stories are directly associated with their minds. Quoting Muhammad Reza Sarshar about the properties of the subjects for the children and adolescents' stories in a book named "basics of the children and adolescents' literature specific to religious literature", Mahmoud Hakimi and Mahdi Kamus write that "in the children's stories, two kinds of subjects can and should be posited for the children: the first includes the things related to the childhood life such as recognition of the self and the life environment and the second includes the things the knowing of which might not be apparently of use in their childhood but awareness of them is useful for the adulthood and their future life such as familiarity with the life of the other tribes and nations, acquaintance with religion and so forth" [12].

b. Theme or Main Idea:

The thought and meaning governing a story and/or any other artwork and causing the creation of coordination and unity in a story is called theme and/or the very main idea of the story. "Theme is the main idea of the story. It is the message of the story which is not explicitly stated in the author's sayings but it is heard by the readers; it is not directly written down by the author but the readers can discern it. Theme is the purport of a story; it is a signification granted to or comprehended from the story by the author who embodies it in every single part of the story form's warps and wefts. A story can be said to have accomplished its mission when the readers can perceive the meaning and message thereof" [13].

In the world's dictionary of literary terms by Joseph Shipley, theme has been defined in the following words: "theme is the quintessence of the expression, action or a radical movement or it is a main idea portrayed on the body of the story" [3].

In other words, "theme is the primary and dominant thought of every story; it is a watermark or a thread drawn in the course of the work and interlacing the story's statuses and situations. In other words, theme has been defined as a governing thought and mindset exerted by the author onto the story and this is why it is stated that the theme of every artwork shows the intellectual and perceptional orientation of the author thereof" [3].

Mustafa Mastur has an interesting interpretation in this regard. In his mind, "subject actually implies what there is and theme implies what there should be. Using theme, an author wants his audience to look at the story subject from his or her perspective" [9]. Theme somehow coordinates the story subject with the other factors and elements of the story. Theme should not be mistaken with subject and they cannot be interchangeably used for referring to one another. "Theme is what understood from the subject" [3].

i. Properties of the Theme in Children's Stories:

It has to be stated about children's stories that the theme should fall in the area of the children's experiences and children should be able to reach a clear-cut image of the story's message after reading the story and they should be positively and significantly influenced thereby. "the theme of the literary works for children is usually simpler than that of the works for adults and it contains the meaning of the experiences that children can perceive. Furthermore, there is just one theme in every literary work specific to children whereas several themes might be evident in the literary works for adults. Those children's stories that are rejected in terms of cohesion might be the ones having themes inappropriate for the world of reality or the children's imagination" [14].

Themes are presented in the children and adolescents' stories in two ways: a) through the conversations between the characters or the author's utterances and b) via the general trend of the events [11].

1)   Theme should be spread all over the story's warps and wefts and it should not be directly and explicitly mentioned in a preaching manner;

2)   The number of a story's themes is determined like the study subjects in proportion to the age of the readers;

3)   Theme should promulgate the human values' originality and excellence. Love, honesty, truthfulness, devotion and others of this kind of theme are messages adored all around the globe;

4)   The story's theme should be in proportion to the experiences, needs and interests of the children and adolescents;

5)   Theme should provoke curiosity in the children; and,

6)   Theme should be universal [11]

c.   **Plot or Main Story:**

"Payrang" is a Persian equivalent for plot and it is consisted of two words: "Pay" meaning foundation, base and substructure and "Rang" meaning design and plan. Thus, "Payrang" means "foundation of design" and "base of the plan" and it is closely and exactly synonymous to plot" [3]. Plot or the main story includes arrangement of the story events based on cause and effect relationships. In other words, it is the intellectual and logical chain of the story events. The logicalness of the plan is very important because the principle "intellectual causality" is missing from many of the stories, including fantasies. Plot is the most outstanding structural and key element of the story [15] because it grants order and artistic unity to the theme, events, characterization, time, place and story's setting. Ahmad Okhovvat writes the following statements about plot's importance: "the primary goal of the plot is relating the characters to one another, especially placing the protagonist and antagonist in opposite sides. Plot is dynamic for the reason that it serves the expansion and advancing of the story and it is indeed the internal gravity center of the tales" [16].

Plot of a story can be considered as its skeleton without which the other constituents undergo chaos and cannot at all come to existence; in other words, "in stories' terminology, plot refers to the quality of the configuration endowed by the author to the stories' events in line with the achievement of his or her desired result. Every plot is a chain of connected events that peak and reach a result in the course of struggles between the

opposite forces. Plot can enjoy coherence when all its components are in a mutual relationship and interwoven with one another and supplement each other. If the struggle between the existent opposite forces fails to peak and end in a result, it can be stated that the plot is not complete and it has not reached a termination point" [13].

Jamal Mir Sadeghi defines plot in the following words: "plot arranges the dependency existent between the story events in an intellectual manner. Plot is not just the order and sequence of the events rather it is an organized collection of the events. This collection of events and occurrences have been interlaced in a cause-and-effect relationship and organized in a specific pattern and plan" [8]. He also believes that design, plan and also framework are not true translations of plot because plan might be mistaken with design which is equivalent to sketch and plan has been interchangeably used with design; plan and conspiracy have negative aspects and they may make a reader think that plot of the story is accompanied by conspiracy and intrigue while plot of a story plays a fundamental and positive role. Framework, as well, conveys the geometrical shape of the story to the mind whereas plot is also completely associated with the contents of the work [8].

i.   Plot and Story's Differences:

In the first glance, plot may be mistaken with story in its general sense which was defined above and one may think that story is identical to plot and that these two terms can be interchangeably used for one another. This is while plot bestows artistic unity to the story's events and it is not originally the story itself rather it binds the other components of the story in a cause-and-effect manner.

A.M. Forster reminds the difference between the plot and the story in the following words: "story is defined as the narration of a series of events that have been organized in a sequential order. Plot, as well, is the narration of events with an emphasis on the causality and cause-and-effect relationships. 'The sultan died first and the queen died after him' is a story but 'the sultan died and the queen also died after a while out of the sorrowfulness for him" is a plot. Assuming "the death of the queen" as a story, we may say "well, what then?" and, assuming it as a plot, we can ask "why?" and this is the primary and essential difference between these two dimensions of novels [2].

ii.   Constituents of Plot in a Story (Plot Components):

Plot or the main story plan needs factors and elements so as to be able to create a good and coherent story. The old folk tales lacked such elements and the events happened to the heroes of the story in a haphazard manner and no bottleneck and peak point and struggle came about in the tale. But, in the modern stories, it is the constituents of the plot that along with the author's imagination faculty cause the creation of excitement and anxiety in the readers and encourage them to keep on reading; without them, stories cannot have much of a structural and content value.

Conflict: "it is a difficult situation and status that sometimes appears abruptly and changes the existent plans, ways and methods and attitudes. In story, conflict includes the characteristics of the characters and

the details of the statuses and situations metamorphosing the primary line of the plot and results in struggle" [1, 8]. Conflict in a story should also have a scheme and a plan; "author can bring about conflict in a story when the events and the characters' interests are in conflict with one another. Conflict of interests creates troublesome bottlenecks and instigates the characters to look for a solution to unravel this knot" [17].

Struggle or Strife in a Story: one of the primary functions of the story characters is the creation of internal and/or external struggles which substantially assist the plot and play a considerable role in the creation of the events. It can be stated that struggle is "the fight between two forces or two characters that are deployed in opposite fronts to create the story events. In the stories, a character is most often placed at the center and s/he engages in strife with the forces that have risen up and are exercising opposition against him or her and this results in the creation of excitement and anxiety or suspension and the story is dragged to a crisis and a bottleneck or climax following which resolution phase comes. Struggle might be physical, mental, emotional and/or ethical" [1]. In the old tales, struggle has been generally physical and the characters did not have an inside and the emotional and mental struggles are rarely seen due to the same reason. Conversely, in the new stories, most of the struggles are internal and emotional and make the character approach the final result of the story.

Suspension or Excitement and Anxiety: "the reader's curiosity is increased with the expansion of the plot and his or her zeal and desire for following the story's adventures become more increased. Interest in one of the story characters keeps the reader in a hesitant and anxious state and such a quality is commonly termed suspension and anxiety" [8].

Crisis: "it is the time at which the mutual forces stand against one another for one last time and the story action reaches its peak and bottleneck and a decisive shift is brought about in the story's main line" [8].

Peak or Climax: it is the moment of life in a story and/or "the time at which the story comes to a resolution following the peaking of the crisis to an utmost confrontation and conflict. The story's peak is the logical result of the previous events. A story may have several peaks one of which might look stronger. This stronger peak usually precedes the other peaks" [1].

Resolution: it is an instant of the story that the author reveals the story's results and unveils its secrets and puts an end to the readers' worries and anxieties and ends the story with a final conclusion. In other words, resolution is "the final result of the thread of events and the product of the secrets and puzzles' solution and clarification of the misunderstandings and end of expectations. In resolution, the fate of the story characters become clear and they become aware of their statuses and situations whether for or against them" [1].

iii.   Kinds of Plot:

Plots are divided into two categories based on their internal structure.

A) **Closed Plot:** as it is clear from the name, it is a type of plot enjoying a complex and nested quality and strong technical properties; in

other words, it is a plot wherein the constructed order of the events prevails the natural order of them. This type of plot is often used in mysterious stories" [1]. Stories written with this type of plot are technically a lot stronger and more artistic than the open-plot stories and they possess strong and artistic excitements and peaks and resolutions. The stories by Edgar Allan Poe enjoy such a plot [1].

B) **Open Plot:** open plot and the plan and map thereof are more vivid hence the readers can more readily perceive them in contrast to the stories with closed plot because in open plot, unlike in closed plot, the natural order of the events prevails the artificial and conventional order of them and there is often no resolution in this kind of stories or, if there is, it is not much evident. In other words, the decisive conclusion that exists in closed plot is missing from the open plot and, if there is, it is not decisive" [1]. In this type of plots, the traces of the author's presence in the narration and the story's plot are usually invisible and the reader feels the life before his or her eyes the way it is actually flowing as if real life has been poured into the cast of the story. Jamal Mir Sadeghi believes that the stories by the Russian Anton Chekhov have such a type of plot.

iv.   Story Action:

In analyzing the fairy myths, Vladimir Propp underlines action as the most axial axiom of the story and calls it function. "Function means a character's action that is most important to the course of tale's operation. This way, the functions of the tale characters are fundamental constructs thereof" [18].

Jamal Mir Sadeghi, as well, believes that the story action is "the thread of events and statuses and situations shaping the subject of literature, whether prose or poem, and this thread of events gives rise to the preparations for the emergence of the plot. Story action is not involved in the coordination of the events and not even in the presenting a reasonable and substantiated manifestation of them" [1]. Therefore, plot is different from the story action and the story's logical and connected actions create the plot. Story action can be subjective, objective, real, historical, fictious and fake.

Without a good story action or, better said, without the presence of the logical and interconnected story actions that results in chaos and confusion in the characters' actions, the story would not have a good plot or plan and the author's efforts for writing the story would be all in vain.

v.   Properties of Plot in Children's Stories:

Plot is also of a great importance in the children's stories and when chaos and confusion appear in the cause-and-effect relations and the primary map of the narration in a part of the story, children would refrain from continuing the story's reading because "from the perspective of the book-reading children, all the other factors are the functions of the plot's events; the book that fails to retell a good tale cannot have much fascination for the children. Without a fascinating narration of the events, even the finest descriptions are lost because the child would practically lose his or her attention towards the narration" [14].

Citing Muhammad Reza Sarshar about the properties of the plots of the children's stories, Mahdi Hajvani writes that "the plot of the children-specific tales is a lot more important than that of the adult-specific tales. One of the properties of the children is their extreme inherent interest in playing and dynamism. Based thereon, almost most of the children are attracted more than anything else to the trend of the events and characters' motions in the story and attention is paid to the other aspects of the story in the next stages. Children are more external and active creatures than internal and passive. Thus, the children-specific tales cannot have such a feature (fast tempo)" [19].

Plot is of a particular sensitivity in children's literature; it is the plot that determines the relationship between children and adolescents and children's literature. The author of the children's literature should always pay attention in laying the foundation of his or story's plot to the fact that s/he is writing for what age group so that s/he can write a story with a plot corresponding to the interests and limitations thereof [11].

Properties of Plot in the Adolescents and Children's Stories:

1) Events are functions of linear time and feature a historical order meaning that the story is a forward movement featuring the serial occurrence of an event following another in time. Flashbacks are not recommended for children below 13 years of age but the intellectual growth of the adolescents allows the use of returns to the past;

2) The cause-and-effect relationship of the story is strong and every action is the outcome of completely vivid and logical factors;

3) The main story is commenced without introductions and the story events are retold in a fast pace and tempo;

4) The story characters are exciting and attractive in terms of their physique, type, performance, expression and so forth;

5) The plot is simple and devoid of any complexities in terms of the characters, number of events, number of places and so on. Of course, these complexities are increased with the increase in the audience's age;

6) There is a large deal of suspension; in the children and adolescents' stories, suspension is the story's internal element and it has to be existent and flowing in the story's name, the initiation of the story's events and in the engagements of the story. Suspension renders the story amusing and amusement is the primary goal of the children and adolescents' stories;

7) The story goes on with a logical struggle; it reaches a peak point and is finished with a happy ending;

8) In most of the times, plot of the story is closed and the author does not leave a question unanswered and s/he even presents a conclusion in some of the stories, particularly in those written for children [11].

3. Character and Characterization:

"Character is a term referring to the created (constructed) individuals appearing in the story, drama and so forth. An author's creature may not be always human beings and animals and objects and other things are also created by the authors; the creation of such characters that look

nearly like the real persons to the readers in the story area is called characterization" [8].

It can be stated that two elements play a key and essential role in the area of story and story writing and those two are the characters and their actions in the story. These two are so important that the stories have been divided sometimes based on the importance given to each of them into the novel of action and novel of character. The followings are examples of character's definition for elucidating the perspectives of the various researchers.

Reza Baraheni defines character in this way: "it is a pseudo-character copied from the community with the author's universal discretions granting individuality and personality thereto" [6]. So, character is a real creature to which the author's imagination hence his or her experiences have bestowed individuality. "Martin Ternel believes that every character is a discourse structure having no existence outside the realm of a book. It is a place wherein the novelist's states and emotions are manifested and its credibility and value lie in the relations it establishes with the other discourse constructs of the author. Every novel is essentially a discourse image wherein the various characters become the interwoven yarns with the author's experience being the very effect left by all of the images in the position of a whole on his or her power of perception and feeling" [20].

Based on the definitions related to character, the theoreticians can be classified into two groups: a set believes that character is just one of the story individuals and it is a human being who enters the story by the author's want and reveals his or her characteristics to the readers and eventually exists the scene again by the author's want. Edward Morgan Forster offers a definition of the same type in the book "aspects of a novel". The other set realizes character as a phenological phenomenon with character not being a static, passive and non-creative phenomenon in this set's mind but a dynamic creature whose existence emerges in the story actions; s/he occasionally performs actions autonomously. It is stated by the well-known Gustave Falubert that he has written a letter to one of his friends during the authoring of Madame Bovary that "my damned Bovary is harassing me and making me mad" and it becomes clear that he has been a member of the second set and individuals like Leo Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky and Mikhail Bakhtin shared the same idea with him [12].

Aristotle is the first person who has dealt with the concept of story character. He realizes the histrionic personalities as individuals imitating the actions of the real heroes so as to cause fancy in the onlookers. He divides drama based on its characters. The life of a given people is portrayed more superior to the real people in tragedy and epic and some individuals are shown more inferior than real people in comedy [21].

In general, "story-writer picks up the masonry s/he requires for creating his or her characters from three sources of his or her own creative imagination and his or her personal experiences and the universal treasure of literature and art. The author sometimes depicts his or her own self and occasionally the individuals in his or her periphery" [22]. In order to be able to offer live and acceptable characters, an author should consider three important factors: the first is that the characters should be robust and steady in their behaviors and dispositions; thee second is that the characters should

have a reasonable motivation for what they do especially when a change is created in their behaviors and deeds; and, the third is that the characters should appear plausible and real [8].

Robert Scholes realizes character as the output of two impulses: the individuation impulse and the typical example impulse, to wit typification. He adds that "we remember the individuation, certain catchphrases, behaviors and/or special appearances, and we recall how a character presents a thing more magnified than itself. These delicacies of the individuation constitute a part of the storyteller's art" [3]. Virginia Wolf believes that all the novelists have to deal with character and she adds that it is only for the designing and delineation of the characters that novel has been introduced and fostered as a mold not for advertising and promoting the teachings and notions of others [7].

The importance of character and characterization in stories becomes clear based on the abovementioned statements so the authors should pay a special attention to them if they want their stories to remain in the readers' minds for a long period of time and many years. It is sometimes seen that the delicacies and happenings of a story are cleaned from a reader's mind but the characters remain persistent therein and this is the result of strong and successful characterization of a story. Amongst the Iranian researchers, as well, Reza Baraheni believes that character is an axis about with tale revolves in its entirety. All the other factors borrow their objectivity, perfection, meaning and concept and even their existential reason from character [6].

a. Investigation of Character from Psychological Perspectives:

The differences between the characters or the very story antagonists and protagonists and the personalities in psychology can be revealed in a short glance at the theories on personality from the perspectives of the prominent psychologists. In common terms, personality includes outstanding attributes and habits like faculty of volition, headship, leadership, moral courage and deliverance in such a way that when it is said that a person is a prestigious man or s/he is a noble man, the very remarkable characteristics of him or her are intended disregarding the other properties and characteristics. However, personality in psychology includes the physical and biological traits and features and talents that the human beings bring along to the world in the form of pure faculties that can be gradually actualized and put into effect. In the course of life, they become more complex little by little as a result of getting in touch with the environment outside as well as various factors and leave effects on the mankind in the form of tendencies and habits and memories and beliefs and so on; these all are not accumulated together or juxtaposed alongside each other rather they are intermixed and form a single existence, i.e. the personality of every person, and are reflected in his or her behaviors (Siasi, 1970, pp.21 and 26). It has also been stated in a definition of personality that "it includes the collection of instincts and tendencies and personal characteristics and individual habits, to wit the collection of the material and spiritual and ethical qualities in a common process of the human nature and inherited specificities and acquired nature, and they are manifested in

the deeds and behaviors and discourse and thoughts of the individuals and distinguish them from others" [20].

The resources of an evolved person are threefold: 1) inheritance; 2) education and upbringing; and 3) environment [20]. Freud, the well-known psychologist, is amongst the first persons who offered theories about personality. He compared a vast part of the human personality with an iceberg most of which is beneath water and this is the very subconscious part of the human mind. He divides personality into three systems or three levels, namely id, ego and superego. ID operates in pursuit of pleasure; ego is governed by the principle of reality and exits the world of mind and pays attention to the outside world and tries achieving an optimum through taking certain measures and superego is the internal diagram of the ancient values and perfection of the social optima [23].

Karl Gustav Jung, a disciple and colleague of Freud, realizes personality as being consisted of several psychological apparatuses that are separate from one another but they all influence one another: 1) the ego or conscious part which is the very apparent wisdom; 2) individual subconscious and complexes or the very qualities that have been once conscious but have been repelled for a reason or another and 3) collective subconscious (archetype) or the very ancient patterns; the experiences of a person's forefathers that are inherited in the themes of the myths and archetypes or the very way of perception or the universality idea that includes a substantial part of the emotions and affections; 4) persona that stems from the archetypes; as viewed by Jung, persona means the look with which a person appears in the community; 5) male and female (anima and animus) aspects of every person, i.e. the female part of a male's psyche and the male part of a female's psyche; 6) shadow which is the animal aspect of the human nature and it is somewhat equivalent to Freud's ID; and, 7) ego which is the unified system of the personality characteristics [23].

b. Kinds of Character Based on Evolution and Change:

The characters of the stories and tales can be categorized from various perspectives. Amongst these categorizations is the classification based on the character's evolution and change. In this respect, characters can be divided into static and dynamic.

i. Static Character:

"It is a character of a story that does not change or changes a little. In other words, the character is the very person s/he has been in the beginning thereof and s/he is not influenced by the story events or, if s/he is influenced, it is trivial" [8]. In short stories as well as in children's stories that are often short, there is no chance for a character to change and the author presents the readers with evolved and perfect characters in most of the cases and no essential change is observed in their behaviors in the end of the story and the character of a story in the end is the very person in the beginning.

ii. Dynamic Character:

"It is a character that continuously and constantly undergoes changes and evolutions in the story and an aspect of his or her personality,

beliefs and ideology or personality characteristics is variegated. Of course, a character's changes and evolutions of his or her personality should be to the extent of his or her facilities that give rise to these changes and they should be adequately the effect of the statuses and moods wherein the character takes place and there should be also sufficient time for those changes to happen credibly in proportion to their importance" [8]. Due to the existence of enough time in the novels and for the fact that the events happen one after the other, dynamic characters find a chance to emerge; of course, the behavioral and mental changes of these characters occur based on certain criteria and conditions appropriately prepared by a successful author in the story's setting.

It seems that these changes and evolutions do not come about so much in the short stories as well as the children's stories that are also short for there is not enough chance and respite for them. "This is why it is stated that the character has previously evolved and become persistent in the short stories and that s/he is in the middle of a task that has reached its peak and sensitive moment before the waiting reader's eyes or s/he is performing a task that has been previously begun but is yet to come to a final result" [1].

A.M. Forster divides the characters into two general sets according to their actions and psychological characteristics: flat characters and round characters or the very plain and complex characters [2].

"Ambivalence, i.e. simplicity, of the story's character or the three-dimensionality, i.e. comprehensiveness and complexness, of the character depends on the stress placed by the author on the story's plot or theme or character. If the reader wants to go deep inside the character, s/he is incumbently obliged to construct him or her with three dimensions and, if s/he wants to express a single thought, s/he might prefer to create a plain character that cannot cause confusion in the story's theme. The simple character of the story includes all the individuals whose reactions to the emerged situation can be guessed by the readers and their actions are accordingly in such a way that they do not amaze and surprise the readers whereas the readers cannot make much of a guess in confrontation with the complex characters of the story and such characters drown the readers in amazement by their actions and by exhibiting parts of their internal personality" [20].

Furthermore, "the simple story characters enter and exit the story's setting in the same way; of course, they should be self-reliant and they should possess stability and continuance but they are not needed to grow and be fostered" [7].

The story characters can be divided into stereotype, conventional, typical, allegorical, symbolic and omniscient characters from another perspective. The followings are brief explanations of each of them.

iii.   Stereotype Characters:

"These are characters representing the cliché or second version of other characters and they do not have a freestanding personality such as the persons who mimic gangsters or reproduce the voices of famous artists. They often feature a familiar appearance and their talks are predictable. Shortage of artistic talent results in the use of the stereotypical characters" [8].

iv.   Conventional Characters:

"These are well-known persons who repeatedly appear in the dramas and stories and they possess traditional and well-established characteristics. They are very close to stereotypical characters and it is occasionally difficult to distinguish them from one another. Such a type of characters has been borrowed from the traditional and old dramatic figures like monsters, ogres, fairies and witches" [8].

v.   Typical Characters:

"The typical characters showcase the characteristics of a group or a class of people and make them appear differently from others. Typical characters are specimens of one's self manifestations. To create such characters, the truth should be taken from several live and real specimens and artistically mixed so that the intended typical character can be made like the typical characteristics of the confused and distracted professors and cunning and deceitful lawyers" [8].

vi.   Allegorical Characters:

"Allegory is offering a character, a thought or an event in such a way that it can showcase both itself and another thing. Allegorical characters are substitutable characters meaning that certain character(s) are replaced for thoughts, dispositions, characteristics and attributes such as Mr. Malevolent and Miss. Benevolent" [8].

vii.   Symbolic Characters:

"Symbolism is the emotional embodiment of the beings and essences that have not been previously perceived and cannot be perceived except in certain symbolic forms. Symbolic characters enable the author to put into effect the ethical concepts or psychological and enlightening qualities. In the end, a symbolic person is he whose sum of behaviors and deeds guides the reader to a thing more than it; for instance, s/he is seen as a manifestation of brutality or the freeing forces and/or an embodiment of hope" [8].

viii.   Omniscient Characters:

"This type of characters draws more attention to themselves and they are explained and depicted with more details … the temporal vastness of the story allows the writer to foster his or her characters and even explore the minds of his or her characters and explicate their internal feelings. In real life, we can only reckon these internal thoughts based on the individuals' external behaviors" [8].

c.   Kinds of Character Based on Amount of Importance:

The story characters can be divided into four sets in terms of their fruitful presence and their importance:

i.   Primary Character(s) (Hero or Protagonist):

The main character is the center of events and the other characters and possibly elements of tales all and all enter the story to determine his or her destination. S/he expresses the most important message of the story

and/or plays an essential role in expressing it. In the meanwhile, the main character has a more perfect ID in comparison to the other characters. This that which main character is more important in the drama and which one shoulders the burden of the story events and which one is more involved in the story events guides the author towards the selection of the main character [17]. Efforts are made in the children's stories in line with the use of children as the main characters. This is done for creating sympathy in the child addressees with the story character and it does not differ if the main character is a human being or not.

ii. Secondary Characters:

In comparison to the main character, the secondary ones are less important. Of course, classification and distinction between these two cannot be made in certain terms. In a given adventure and/or in a part of tale, the main character is likely to shoulder a secondary role and vice versa. Even the importance of the secondary characters in advancing the tale is not negligible. They are the main assistors of the main character in his or her accomplishment of a goal. They can have an effective role through creating conflicts with the main character and via creating barriers through their thoughts and talks to the advancing of the story's narrative structure. "The progressing of the story's narrative structure represents the behavioral and intellectual dimensions of the main character and inducing of the theme by the secondary characters' functions in the story" [24].

iii. Accidental Characters:

As it is understood from the name, they accidentally appear in the story. "The accidental characters may appear in the scene only one time with their roles being so trivial that they are not even worth mentioning their names because the introducing of the names of the paltry characters may confuse the readers" [17].

iv. Walk-Ons and Placeholders:

As it is seen in the movies, these kinds of characters attend to fill the story narration's scene and they do not play much of a role in the creation of the story events and action. Thus, "the characters who attend the story to create certain moods and states or indicate reality of the events and scenes are called placeholders or walk-ons. These characters are similar to one another and they are often introduced with general names and/or special names in a very limited and few cases. These characters more help describing the scenes and places and offering a sense and mood" [24].

d. Methods of Characterization:

Characters are created from amongst the author's experiences and imagination and from amongst the mass of the author's life masonry. However, introducing and constructing a character, to wit characterization, in a story necessitates another process which is created based on the perception of the proper relationship between the character and the events and creation of balance between them; there are numerous methods of characterization in a story and, using them, the author introduces the story characters to the listener and reader. In the art of story-writing, the course of

getting the reader familiarized with the story persons is termed description. The characters' description or the very characterization can be done in three ways.

i.   Direct Description or Explanation:

Explicit presentation of the characters by the assistance of direct explanation and explication of them; this kind of characterization mostly falls in the area of speech [12] with the narrator (generally, the omniscient) expressing the characters' internal and external characteristics explicitly and straightforwardly through explanation and/or analysis and telling what kind of a creature his or her character is. In this method, the narrator, usually the all-knower, adopts an interpretational and intervening approach. Lawrence Perrin has the following words about this method: "the direct introducing is a method with such a benefit as explicitness and briefness but it can never be used alone. If we want to create art and write stories, characters should perform actions and accomplish tasks. In addition, if indirect introducing does not accompany direct introducing, it cannot arouse a feeling in us because the reader would say this that you have introduced to me is not a character but an explanation about it" [25].

In this method, the author tells the readers about the characteristics of the story persons through his or her own or one of the story person's mouth. Success in explicit offering of the characters depends on the properties of the narrating person or the characteristics of the omniscient author. This method can have such advantages as explicitness and conciseness in the characterization of the story persons but it can never be used alone without presenting the individuals' actions in the story otherwise the story takes a form like that of an article and report. In fact, the readers can indirectly recognize the characters through the exhibition of the actions and the mental struggles and internal emotions of them. This method led to the creation of the novels "mind's stream of consciousness" in which the story action happens inside the characters and the readers are indirectly informed about the story characters' conscious and unconscious wisdom.

Leonardo Bishop, the American writer and researcher, expresses four techniques for introducing the character or the very characterization: "1) introducing through physical actions; 2) introducing through catchphrases; 3) using personality characteristics; and, 4) using physical semblances" [26].

ii.   Indirect Method:

In this method, the author makes the story persons move and gets the readers acquainted with their characteristics by the assistance of their actions and behaviors. This method of offering the characters is the inseparable component of the dramatic method for it is via the characters' dialogues, actions and behaviors that we recognize them and figure out things about their psyches; as an example, if a story character is jealous, his or her actions and words should exhibit it. The conversations between the characters is per se another element frequently used in this method. The author is generally meticulous in this method and tries recording every instant of the characters' actions and behaviors like a camera and displaying them to the readers.

iii.   Combined Method:

This method is a combination of direct introducing by the narrator and exhibition of the story characters' actions. In this method, the author borrows explicitness and brevity from the direct method and illustration and sense arousal from the indirect method [12].

e.   Characters' Plausibility or Real-Looking:

Looking real is the special quality of every creative work making it appear believable by the readers. In the dictionary of the literary terms authored by Carbackson, plausibility or real-looking has been defined as follows: "it is a quality in the story action or characters and it gives rise to an acceptable construct of reality in the eyes of the readers" [27]. "The real but untold goal of the story is granting pleasure through satisfying the human beings' love for an uncommon element of the human experience and this goal can be best accomplished when the novelist tries persuading the readers that his or her heroes are real" [7]. It only suffices the characters of a story work to be believable within the format of the same story. In other words, the author sets grounds in proportion to the creation of the characters in a story. "Characters obey the rules of nature in realistic stories and they necessarily act within the same framework set by the author in fictious stories" [14].

Put differently, any change and evolution in the behavior of characters should have been brought about for a convincing reason and they should not appear in a different color and shape at any moment and also "characters should not be the statues of piety, manifestations of inferiority and mischievousness and/or monsters of filth rather they should behave in such a way that the reader feels that the author's experience has sourced the story characters hence they can be embedded in the ordinary life's events" [14]. "The heroes who are reasonable and natural mixtures of goodness and badness can be more likely useful models of the proper behavior for the people than the heroes that are extraordinarily bad and/or good; however, exercising extremism of any sort can mislead the readers and make them give up to ordinary life" [7].

It has to be stated that this plausibility should be also existent in the fantasy stories and the characters should be believable within the format of the very written story; their behaviors and action should take a logical form. If a character possesses a special power, only the same character can use that magical power and that through offering decisive and persuading reasons and not in a haphazard and unjustified manner.

f.   Creation of a Sense of Empathy with the Story Characters:

Empathy includes the readers' feeling of sympathy and sameness with the protagonist or one of the other characters of a story. Empathy is the prerequisite of all the story forms and it is the origin of a pleasure we take in reading or hearing a story. "The thing that makes the story characters look exactly like us is that they are not the symbols of absolute goodness or rightfulness and/or the absolute symbols of badness and evilness rather they are mixtures of good and bad characters. If the characters are viewed as superior examples of us, ordinary human beings, in epic, tragedy and

romance or as inferior examples of us in comedy, the quality of such an element as character and plot join forces to wholly restrict their empathic capacity" [22].

One of the other conditions that make the readers empathize with the story characters is the coordination with their behaviors and actions in a given story situation and event. Put it another way, "if the reader is supposed to feel empathy with the characters, they should show severe reactions to the disasters and mild reactions to the trivial accidents. The superficiality and subtleness of the exhibition and its realistic nature depends on the proportion of the character's reaction to an accident" [17].

A story is a mirror wherein we can see ourselves; it is the self existing inside us or the self we wish to have and, occasionally, the self we do not like much and/or hate. The creation of the story characters should be in such a way that the readers can identify themselves with them and/or adopt a position accordingly otherwise the story is said to have a weak characterization.

g. Characters' Illustration and Portrayal:

Describing the appearance of the story persons is one of the other aspects of characterization. Describing the appearances means paying attention to the apparent characteristics and specifications of an individual in line with the narration of the story and this is important in the realistic stories as well as in fantasy stories.

In various literary schools, the apparent look is differently approached and they are described from various perspectives; as a specimen, "romanticism looked at the individuals' appearances a little exaggeratedly and explained the beauty of the characters in greater details. Naturalism, as well, used more distasteful colors to show the heinousness and uncleanliness of the lower social classes and describe the appearances of the characters that were usually from lower social classes. In realism, the individuals and their characteristics were displayed more realistically" (Abdollahian, 2004, p.80).

h. Characters' Appellation:

One of the other cases taken into account by the authors in their characterizations is the use of proper names for their story characters. "Every character should compulsorily have a name and the author can readily use appellation for inducing his nor her goal in characterization. The appellations have been occasionally performed intentionally so that the names can be in line with the individuals' properties. The importance of naming had been even discerned by the authors from the romance and myth eras. In the ancient literature, there are stories with the names of their protagonists and antagonists being called good and evil each of which acted in proportion to his or her name" [28].

"Paying attention to the associations made with the names of characters was commenced in the beginning of 20th century. The symbolist authors as well as poets notices the relationship between the apparent shapes of the words, their emotional loads and their tones of voice and their concomitant associations. The use of meanings' associations enabled the

authors to simultaneously induce several special points and concepts with one word" (Abdollahian, 2003, p.78).

An author occasionally happens not to mention the names of the characters. This can be done for many reasons, including that "the author is not interested in the character or it is not important for him or her to introduce his or her name; it is only the character's action that matters and/or the author does not know his or her name and/or that several individuals have been merged with one another in the mind of the story narrator and it is difficult for him or her to separate them and an author may prefer not to choose a name for a character for such a reason as de-familiarization and forcing the readers to think" [28].

i.   Properties of Character in Children's Stories:

It is clear untold that one of the important factors in the children's literature, especially the children's stories, is characterization. All the events of the children's stories revolve about the pivot of the character and the addressee child pays more attention to the characters than their actions. Children like to empathize with one of the story characters and become happy and/or sad with the characters' sweet victory and/or bitter defeat and this causes creation of pleasure in and amusing of the addressee children. "A believable and pleasing story needs axial characters who are alive and evolve in the course of the story. Characterization is one of the most effective literary factors of a story whether its events and adventures happen in the present time at which the characters are faced with real events or they have been drawn on the classical literature. The characters that we proudly recall from our childhood readings are always multidimensional; they are not absolutely good or absolutely bad exactly like the real human beings and they change upon encountering difficulties and overcoming them. The characters remain in the memories for a long time even when the details of these stories are forgotten [29].

The characters of the children's stories are human creatures or a series of artificial faces and/or animals like frog, fox and other animals. Children, particularly youngsters, are specially interested in animals and plants and all the objects in their peripheral environment and even their toys; granting personality to them in the stories causes pleasure and amusement in the children. They are even interested in taking the role of the story's main character and this makes them happy.

As for the characters that play roles in children's stories, it is believed that "the protagonist of the children's stories should not have any weakness and s/he has to come out as a victor in the end of the story. It is not acceptable for the children to imagine the protagonist's failure and defeat and this makes them frustrated and disappointed. Additionally, the story's antagonist should not play a major part or s/he should not be fostered so as to become the axis of the story" [30].

Even if children, the readers of the fantasy stories, as well, sometimes more or less identify themselves and the others around them with the animals, objects and dolls and inanimate beings which have been given a human spirit and are mobilized and exhibit human behaviors in the story otherwise they cannot enjoy reading them. Essentially, "children get interested in the literature via empathizing with the story's main character

and, having sunken in the story, they are transformed into a character with which they have identified themselves. To do so, the characters should have properties by which the children can establish relationship with them. These characters can even appear in the form of a squirrel, a butterfly, a bear and a wooden doll examples of which can be seen in the human community" [14]. In fantasy stories, the face and the look of the characters, whether human or non-human, are constructed and processed in a natural and real manner so that they can be plausible in the same story. Even if odd and strange and supernatural characters are presented, their looks and appearances are realistically viewed since the characters of these stories take their signs from the real life.

Description of the appearances and even the clothing and way of walking and speaking and so forth in a story is another method that should be taken into consideration in characterization. In the adults' stories, the characters can be introduced to the readers through the description of their characteristics but, in children stories, besides the description of the characters' appearances, the book should not be deprived of a versatile illustrator who is capable of decorating the appearances of the characters, whether human or non-human, with the ornaments of images and pictures in accordance to the writer's descriptions. That is because, as it was mentioned before, children, especially youngsters, can gain access to the mental concepts through the book's images and they show special interests in the pictures of the individuals existent and playing roles in the story and subsequently give their imaginations wings and feathers to fly. In most of the children's stories, the authors do not choose a name for the story persons due to the existence of animal and plant-like characters and/or adult characters whose names are not so much important to the children and it occasionally happens that the authors refrain from mentioning the name of the story's main character and only suffice to the description of one of the apparent signs like the color of eyes so as to render the story setting mysterious.

The child characters of a story should think like children and the adult characters should also speak like adults. Children should speak like children in the children's stories.

Characters of the children's story literature can be divided into six branches:

1) Human characters:

A) Characters that have external counterparts like historical and social characters who can be dynamic or static and unidimensional or comprehensive.

B) Characters that have no external counterparts and are the products of the author's mind and these characters can be also investigated in terms of dynamicity, comprehensiveness, conventionality and cliché nature.

2) Animal characters:

The second group of the characters in the children and adolescents' stories includes animals. In domestic forms, animals have always drawn the attentions of the children and the authors have used them for fascinating

their stories such as the story "the fairy of the palm-grove" by Hussein Fattahi who introduces birds specific to the ecology in the southern Iran "and/or pig which has been accepted in Islamic communities as a filthy animal whose meat cannot be eaten is not consciously either given a role or generally omitted from the stories" [15].

3) Plant-Like Characters:

Plant-like characters include all the characters of plant type and personalized by some human behaviors and traits [15]. Mohammad Hadi Mohammadi believes that, unlike animal characters, plant-like characters have passive rather than active personalities but we will show a plant-like character in this dissertation in the section on the stories' analysis that is active and enters the domain of other characters which will be discussed in the forthcoming sections. Like animal characters, attentions should be also paid to the ecology of the plant-like characters.

4) Natural and Inanimate Phenomena as Story Characters:

This kind of characters can be divided into two kinds: a) flowing like wind and rain and b) fixed inanimate and natural phenomena like mountain, soil and stone. The important point in the application of these phenomena is their playing of roles based on their inherent characteristics like breeze in the role of a messenger and storm in the role of a destroyer.

5) Hand-Made Characters:

All the characters fabricated by the human beings and given a role in the story literature belong to the group of handmade characters. Giving human properties to these phenomena, the story writers use them amongst their stories' characters.

6) Mind-Made Characters:

This kind of characters can be divided into various branches: a) mind-made characters that are magnifications of the natural human dimensions like heroes and heroines with mythical powers; b) mind-made characters that are the downsized equivalents of the human beings' natural dimensions like pisiform, snip and Thumbelina; c) the combined human-animal characters like mermaid; d) the combined human-plant characters like the six thousand-year-old green man; e) mind-made space characters; f) animal mind-made characters like dragon, unicorn and phoenix; and, g) pictorial (shaped) artificial characters or, in more simple terms, personification of the geometrical shapes like Leo Lionni's little piece.

4. Setting and Scene Setting:

"Setting is the time and the place at and in which the story action takes place. A story should definitely take place in a place and at a time. In this regard, the proper use of the scene and setting adds to the credibility and acceptability of the story" [8]. In order to become complete, characters need environment and, in order to leave its preliminary stages behind and introduce the story persons and begin its main action following the setting of the required grounds, a story needs a place in which the story events occur.

Scene setting in today's story-writing is of a great importance and it is sometimes associated with the characters' psychological moods and influences them. For example, "a cloudy and dark day" saddens the character and "the sunny day" increases the character's happiness and joy. It also occasionally happens that the story setting exerts a reverse effect on the character. For instance, the tranquility and stagnation of the nature seemingly ridiculed his or her confusion and distress. Anyway, such scene settings assist the writer in express the political and cultural and social properties of the story to the readers in an explicit and/or symbolic way.

The duties of the scene can be summarized in the following cases: 1) providing a place for the characters to live and the story events to occur; 2) creation of a space and color or the status and state of the story; and, 3) creation of an environment that, if possibly having no effect on the behavior of the characters and the occurrence of the events, at least influences the results of them.

a.   Characteristics of the Characters in Children's Stories:

In children's stories, as well, characterization is amongst the essential principles of story writing. In such stories, the introducing of the characters to the children is a function of the author's style and intention. An author can introduce characters via their habits and special characteristics so as to inform the children about the course of their actions and create a positive effect in them. All the characters should be clearly introduced to the children because the children's power of mental perception and transferring is not to the extent that it can analyze the characters via the offering of complex actions. Of course, action-free characterization cannot at all attract the children's attentions. "The author who gets involved in explaining all the characters' perfections can never write a story, particularly because action-free characterization does not fascinate the children. There is at least one character who is perfectly explicated and draws the attentions of the children who subsequently empathize with him or her" [14].

During characterization, an author should observe certain cases so as to be able to succeed in characterization of his or her stories. These cases are making the characters look plausible, creating a sense of empathy with the story character in the audience, artistic illustration of the character, especially in the children's stories and giving characters proper names.

The thing that is of a great importance in scene setting for children and adolescents' stories is that the children and adolescents like to visualize the story's setting and its properties before the main actions and events of the story can occur therein. The appropriate application of two elements of time and place plays a significant role in rendering the story actions believable [31].

Even in fantasy and imaginary stories, as well, the scene of the story should be properly constructed and worked so that the story actions and events can be plausible. In such stories, the story setting is often laid in real and present time on the foundation of a real ground and the real world wherein we live and it is from the real world's ground that we enter in the course of story to the fantastic and imaginary world. Essentially, fantasies should acquire their materials and masonry from the world of realities

because they are otherwise difficult to be believed, especially by a child who does not have so much experience in some of the cases of his or her periphery and the goal of writing such a type of stories cannot be consequently accomplished.

"For many of the writers, fantasy part or all of which can form in the world of imagination is a favorable way for writing stories for children; but, it has to be remembered that imaginary scene setting should be both believable and attractive whether through creating horror at and in an anonymous time and place or through creating tranquility by introducing an escape way from the uniformity and dullness of the environment to a more desired world. That is because even if a world is found meaningless and irrelevant, its specifications should still enjoy a coherent pattern otherwise the readers would not take it serious" [32].

5. Conversation:

The story characters' talks are called conversation. It can be in the form of a person's talks with another person (dialogue) or with him or herself (monologue). Characters form the spirit of the stories and these characters need to talk. Conversation is one of the indirect methods of characterization from the mouth of the story persons and it is, in this regard, an important element in the story literature. Without a suitable conversation between the story characters in the story setting, the story is stripped of its spirit. "People usually talk about the things they have done or are doing. They are willing to speak about their important matters or the interesting events. Therefore, when some events happen to the story characters, the author should garnish them with suitable conversations. One of the advantages in the use of conversation in advancing the story's action is that the story's action keeps pace with the practical description and/or at least the direct use of description" [20].

"One should have a reason for writing conversations. When a character talks, the goal should not be the mere conversation rather some information should be given and received using conversation" [17]. Bakhtin believes that "an author creates a character by copying from an ordinary person in his or her daily life but this character cannot remain silent and should talk according to the tradition of his or her time and this is his or her first role: an author creates a character to talk. Thus, a story character is a speaking person in the first place" [16].

a. Properties of Conversation in the Children's Stories:

The most important factor that presents a real manifestation of the story characters is the consistency of their talks with their physical, dispositional, psychological and social properties. Miss. Manorama Jafa has the following words about conversation and its importance in the children's stories: "it is through conversation that the characters make plans, speak and bring excitement and adventure into the story. Conversation helps young readers enter the world of events and grants a sense of participation in these events. Uniformity of the narration can be easily removed by conversation. It is by means of conversation that a story can be rendered amusing. The thing that is of importance in conversation for the children and adolescents' stories is that a conversation should be natural and in

proportion to the physical, psychological, social and native characteristics of the speakers" [33]. If the words spoken by the children are not in proportion to their ages, the conversation would look abnormal and this reflects the author's lack of recognition of the methods of presenting conversation for children and the important point is that none of the story characters speak like others and none of their words are identical.

The element of conversation is of a great importance in the children's stories and only direct description of the characters' statuses and moods cannot convince the addressee child because s/he is waiting to see what reactions story characters exhibit in various situations and/or what responses they have in them. Of course, in children's stories, "the use of heinous words, expressions, catchphrases and dialogues as well as unpleasant titles" [30] because, as it is clear, children are influenced by the tales and stories more than anything else in their dispositions and behaviors and speaking style.

It is through conversation that one can: 1) arouse sense of waiting in the children and adolescents; 2) hasten the speed and rhythm of the story's events; 3) transfer the required information to the children; 4) perform characterization and demonstrate the characters' properties and feelings; 5) show the story's scene and setting inside the layers of the characters' talks; 6) insert hallucination and imagination into the story; and, 7) transfer a sense of naturalness and realness to the readers without the offered thing being actually natural and real.

6. Point of View:

A story's point of view or outlook is a narrative method by which the author narrates the story from his or her perspective and it can take different forms; in other words, "point of view or the view angle of the narration shows the method by which the author offers his or her story's masonry and materials to the readers and, in fact, it portrays the author's relationship with the story. The point of view chosen by an author influences the other story elements and components, i.e. characterization and expansion and perfection of the plot, style, scene setting and so forth. In this regard, the selection of the viewpoint is also of a great importance" [8].

The methods by which the authors deal with the narration of their stories might be "internal or external. In the internal point of view, the narrator is one of the primary or secondary characters of the story and the story narrated from his or her viewpoint. In the external point of view, the thoughts and actions and properties of the characters are explained from outside the story and the author is actually the story's narrator; the story is narrated from the perspective of a third person" [8].

In short stories, use is usually made of a single point of view for narrating the story but, in long stories, a different viewpoint might be applied for narrating the events in every part of the story. The story might be narrated through first person or the very self of the narrator and/or through third person who is the all-knower and a story may be entirely dramatic and wholly conversation with author making no intervention in the psychological analysis of the characters which is termed histrionic point of view. Stories are occasionally narrated through internal monologues and/or

soliloquy. Each of the points of view has its own limitations and benefits and disadvantages.

a. Most Frequently Applied Point of View:

A) **First person (I) viewpoint**: in this method, the authors put themselves in the shoes of a story character and narrate the story from his or her mouth. Such a viewpoint does not allow the author enter the characters' minds and thoughts but s/he can guess what is going on in their minds. This method is most frequently applied in the children's stories. This type of narration makes stories appear fascinating because narrating from the mouth of a character who is involved in the story's event assists the tempo of the story and makes the story look more real and more sincere. Hussein Fattahi, as well, believes that the first-person viewpoint features more cordiality in contrast to the other points of view [34].

B) **The Omniscient or Third-Person point of View:** in this method, the narrator, the all-knower, limits him or herself to one of the story characters in lieu of moving amongst the characters and narrates the story from his or her perspective. This method is in such a way that the narrator cannot anymore inform the readers of the mind and psyche of the other characters in the story rather s/he is obliged to describe the other characters as they are seen by the focal character of the narrator [9].

C) **Apparent Viewpoint (Drama):** it is the omniscient person's point of view with the difference being that the writer narrates everything s/he sees and hears from a mobile perspective without dealing with the analysis and interpretation of the events and/or informing about the characters' intentions. In this method of narration, writing and viewing are identical.

b. Properties of the Point of View in Children's Stories:

Points of view in the children's stories are the same as the ones mentioned above and use is usually made of one method for narrating the events and rarely several viewpoints are used for narrating the story. In selecting the point of view for children and adolescents' stories, two points should be taken into account: firstly, the narrator of the children's stories, unlike the adults' stories, might be animal, plant or a manmade animal and instrument; secondly, the author should not engage in ethical criticism of the characters or stating his or her approval of one of them. The narration method of the modern stories is in such a way that the narrator's free presence in the story has been reduced to the extent that the author-narrator's presence has been limited to the actions and signs and not interpretations and approval of certain forces in the story's structure [15].

7. Tone and Tone-Processing:

The story's expression should be consistent with the story's characters and time and place. Every character of the story should have the special tone specific to a social class and community wherein s/he lives. "Tone is the author's tempo of expression and it can take various forms; for instance, it can be funny, sad, serious and ironical or any other tone a writer might create for writing his or her story" [1]. Selection of the proper tone of voice for the various individuals in various situations, places and times in

the story's world is of a great importance for story-writing. A saddening and sorrowful situation cannot be described in a funny and preposterous tone of voice. Similarly, the story's serious character cannot speak in a funny tone of voice and vice versa. Even the children should speak in the same tone of voice specific to children and articulation of lofty and literary words by child characters is a flaw that cannot be ignored even if the story is processed very well otherwise the story would look like a comedy that might have not been intended by the author and the reader has happened to mistakenly perceive it as being so.

Regarding the proportion of the tone with the characters and the other elements of the story, Mustafa Mastur writes that "an author often selects his or her tone in coordination with the tone of the story characters' voice, theme and the dominant setting. In the funny and comic stories, the story context cannot be introduced in a sad tone in the same way that the historical stories cannot be introduced in a sad tone" [9].

a.　Properties of Tone in Children's Stories:

Stories that are written for children should have a sincere and simple tone of voice so that they can be adored by the children and make them interested in reading. Of course, writing for children needs special skills that have been institutionalized as habits inside a child story writer and they cannot be taught. "Internalization of the children's world in the author's mind can happen inherently or by rehearsal and exercise. The adults' writers can bridge the gap between themselves and the children's world through exercising and practicing and immediate communication with children in such a way that their artistic creations would be suitable for children without thinking about the children and without intention and decision" [35].

8.　Atmosphere and Color:

Atmosphere is a word borrowed from meteorology. In geography, atmosphere is the gas sphere surrounding the earth. In stories, atmosphere also has the same characteristics meaning that it is the sense and mood surrounding the whole story and influencing the reader. Writers and researchers from the story literature domain have not presented a correct definition of the atmosphere and color and they have vague concepts of them in their minds as understood from their speeches. In Sylvan Barnet's dictionary of technical terms, it has been stated that "atmosphere and color is the air (calm, ominous, arduous and so on) inhaled by the reader as soon as entering the created world of the literary work" [8]. "Color and atmosphere are ambiguous terms and they have always caused the arousal of ambiguity in the minds. They are perceptions we cannot easily gain access to them" [8]. An author can induce the readers' minds with emotional and spiritual characteristics through tone of the story and this is perhaps why the color and atmosphere look vague and they cannot be properly defined.

Hussein Fattahi realizes arousal as the most important feature of the prose stories. He writes that "an author's art is construction of an atmosphere and use of words and creation of a setting the sense of which can be transferred to the readers" [34]. A story's atmosphere can be warm

and cheerful, cold and spiritless, quiet and suffocating, sad, stormy, dreamy, horrible, real, illusive and peaceful. Surely, the stronger and the more effective the story's atmosphere, the more is added to the freshness and attractiveness of the story and creation of a sense of suspension therein.

9. Style:

The special language used by every author in writing stories and other works is called style. The style of some writers is occasionally so individual and unique that it can be even easily recognized from amongst a hundred writings. As an example, Jalal Al-e-Ahmad's writing style is of the same kind. Mir Sadeghi states that "the method selected by a writer for writing story is called style. Every writer has his or her own method of discourse and individual dialect. In this regard, it is not possible to offer a comprehensive and universal definition that can incorporate all these methods. The element that does not look so much highlighted in the first glance but all the story characters, namely plot, character, setting and so forth, are actualized through it is termed style" [8].

It can be stated that style is a factor by which a story writer avoids the language's neutral and impartial state and moves towards an action and a motion. It means that the standard language of a text is transformed into a story's specific language and the language's style is saved from its addicted mode and it is given a dynamism and motility that keeps the reader in utmost excitement [6].

a. Properties of Style in Children's Stories:

Having a proper style in the children's story books is amongst the factors drawing a lot of attentions hence it has to be perfectly observed because the addressee children do not enjoy the ordinary and standard language so much and when the story language gets closer to the children's language, they become so much interested in reading and/or hearing the story.

Thus, "in analyzing the children's books, the forms and the elements of the story as used by the story's creator should be taken into account in addition to the method of selecting and using the story language. Since the children's domain of objective recognition is limited, the author is incumbently forced in illustrations for children to utilize words tangibly experienced by them. Having a special style in the children's books is per se a habited skill that is acquired via the wakefulness of the childly sense as well as continuous studies in the area of the children's literature" [14].

So, it can be stated in a simple and a little scientific language that "there is no writing without style and no style can be recognized except through comparison of the norms and the writings' deviation of the norms and, in one word, style means deviation from the norm" (Shafi'ei Kadkani, 1987, p.38).

Miss. Thorayya Qezel Iyaq states the following words for explicating the concept of style: "the truth is that all the Iranian authors write with all the thirty two letters of Persian alphabet but every author has his or her own method in choosing the words and applying them and, in fact, putting his or her thoughts and imaginations into words that can be unique if it is not imitated". Styles can be excellent and literary or funny or

a writer may employ the slang and colloquial language. In the use of a language that is applied for children and adolescents' stories, the followings should be taken into consideration: 1) the first principle is that the author should have reached this subtle agreement with the readers and pays attention to the limitations of their perceptions; authors should choose words that can be understood by the readers without making so much effort; 2) correct use of the words and removal of the grammatical mistakes; 3) avoidance of long conversations; 4) avoidance of using words specific to certain dialects or at least explaining them in the footnote in case of using them; and, 5) metaphor and simile should be used cautiously; of course, the frequencies of their uses depends on the age of the readers and their conception of the life.

10. Illustration:

One of the other elements of the children's stories is illustration. In the adults' stories, images and pictures are of less use and the author creates proper scenes and settings to narrate the story's state from an appropriate point of view in a suitable tone of voice and presents the readers with the story's events and accidents. However, to the children and, particularly, the youngsters who cannot read and write, images are used as supplements of the story's concepts and, besides playing a decorative and aesthetical role, they also play a considerable part as the transmitters of the subjective concepts in an objective manner to the child's mind. "Various artistic and educational studies have well-indicated the inductive and educational roles of the images in the children's books" [4].

"Maxim Gorky states that "the children's thoughts are visual meaning that they think visually; since the first years of their lives, children are painters. In fact, not only the textbooks but also the other books should be interestingly written and artistically illustrated especially for the children in younger ages" [36]. Pictorial books having no texts as well as the stories that have been artistically illustrated boost the children's power of learning from and comprehending their peripheral environment and stimulate their imaginations and, besides amusing them, they exert a considerable deal of effect on their intellectual growth. "In other words, children read images like words and construct concepts for themselves. On the other hand, images influence the readers, especially in the younger ages, more than words. Words are read and images are memorized. The human brain is more at the service of images than words. Images not only make books very interesting and attractive but also grant a fascinating spirit to the words and expressions" [37].

"Images should be in proportion to the children's perceptions. Children's comprehensions differ in various ages and at different times based on their psychological needs. As a specimen, a young child is realistic and enjoys an image depicting the nature or whatever the other familiar things. The older the child gets and the higher his or her perception of his or her peripheral environment is increased, the easier s/he can read the book and establish imaginary and subjective communication with it hence the more his or her need for the existence of image in the book is decreased for s/he can him or herself visualize the concepts by the assistance of his or her constructive imagination" [38].

These were all the statements by the individuals agreeing to the existence of images and that in an artistic form in the children's books. There are individuals like Bruno Bettelheim (the psychologist) who believe that the illustrated books and the images existent in the story books should deviate instead of solidifying the children's education trend because they do not allow them to perform personal analysis. He believed that a vast part of the children's probable personal concepts and imaginations are destroyed following their presentation with the illustrated myths because, instead of making them share the story through perception of the concepts, we are just stimulating their sense of vision via chasing the images [39]. Of course, it can be reasoned in rejecting Bettelheim's statements that children, particularly youngsters, cannot perceive many of the objects, animals and creatures that do not exist in their periphery. Thus, the story writer and the illustrator can provide the children's imaginations with feather and wing through offering images and nurture their imagination thereby to assist them in the best comprehension of the stories.

11. Symbol:

Speaking little and eclectically is an art that also holds true for story-processing and this is why it can be investigated as one of the story elements. A skillful and sophisticated writer avoids writing extra words/ s/he utilizes symbolic words and signs and expressions to add to the effect of his or her speech. "Symbol is defined as a thing placed in the position of another thing; in other words, it is a thing substituted for another thing but denoting its own meaning or inducing another thing like red rose which is a symbol of youth and zeal and happiness" [8]. Besides being a literary term, symbol is also considered as a cultural element, as well. For example, putting on black clothes by the mourners and putting on white cloth for wedding are amongst the cultural symbols of our society. The symbol of a story assists the writer to avoid extra explanations about the characters; for instance, the names and appellations used for the characters and provide the readers with information about nationality, ethnicity and so on. Perception and discernment of meaning and the role of the symbol is of a great importance in the stories. In fantasy stories, symbols shoulder the whole burden of meanings' conveyance and, conversely, the symbol of the real stories add things to the meanings.

CONCLUSION:

Children's literature is a very important and effective media for transferring the history, experiences, culture and national and religious values from a generation to another and/or from a nation to the other. Amongst the branches of children's literature, story is of a greater importance. Story has been more welcomed and more attended due to the fact that it saturates the children's novelty-seeking and novelty-demanding spirits as the most robust of their spirits by its intact subjects as well as by the unlimited freedom a writer enjoys in writing his or her thoughts. In every story, especially children's stories, there are uniting factors that are interpreted as the story elements. Story elements of the children's stories possess special and particular properties that differ from the story elements' characteristics in the adults' literature. The selection of the subject is more

sensitive in the children's stories with the subject domain being very limited in the children and adolescents' story literature. The author seminally chooses a subject which is in proportion to the mental capacity, interest, taste and experience of the audience and, secondly, promulgates his or her philosophical thought and mindset through the subject so that it can have a valuable load and, thirdly, tries preserving the literary and aesthetical structure of the work. In the children's literary works, theme is usually simpler than in the adults' literary works and it contains the purports of the experiences that children can easily perceive. Moreover, there is only one theme in every literary work specific to children whereas several themes might be evident in the adults' literary works. The plot of the children-specific tales is far more important than that of the adults' tales. One of the children's attributes is their very high inherent interest in playing and movement. Accordingly, almost all the children are attracted more than anything else to the stories' adventures and characters and the attentions to the other story aspects fall in the next stages. Children are more extroversive and active than introversive and passive creatures. Therefore, the children-specific tales cannot lack such a property (fast tempo). All the events of the children's stories pivot about the character and the addressee children pay more attention to the characters than the story actions. The characters of the children's stories are human creatures with a series of artificial appearances and/or other animals like frogs, foxes and other animals. All the characters should be clearly introduced to the children because their power of perception and mental transferring is not in such a way that they can analyze the characters through being presented with their complex actions. For children and, particularly, the youngsters who cannot read and write, images are applied as supplements of the story's concepts and, besides playing decorative and aesthetical roles, they also play parts as the transferrers of the mental concepts to the children's minds in an objective manner.

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