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## Comparative Analysis towards Therapeutically Story and its Role in Child' Life

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### Abstract

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In this article we will try to realize a comparative study in order to find out if the therapeutically story has a positive or a negative role for healing the child 'problems

**The purpose** of this study is to identify the perception of psychologists and psychotherapists regarding the effects of therapeutically stories in children 'life

The study is based on data obtained from the application of a sample survey which studies the opinion of psychologists and psychotherapists regarding the role of therapeutically story.

The **sample** size was 42 psychologists and 42 psychotherapists from Iasi County

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**Keywords:** Education; therapeutically stories; values; disciplining; solving problems.

## 1. Introduction

A story contains a sequence of events which lead to some conclusions for the child involved in it. Not anyone can write or tell a good story because this must have a personal relevance to the listener. It is extremely important to trick the child by blocking its defence mechanisms in order to be in touch with the unconscious, because there are a multitude of solutions stored in it.

The therapeutically stories can educate children through their roles: to heal, to inform, to teach abilities, to transmit moral values, to enhance the child' experience, and to cure because "stories are medicine, they have such power, they do not require that we do, be, act anything, we need only listen". (Pinkola-Estes, 1992, p. 15)

But the therapists and the educators can create themselves therapeutically stories in which they use the specific elements from the child' life in order to act specifically and to solve the big problem because "By reading about others similar to themselves, troubled children may not feel so alone or different" (Pardeck, 1990, p. 1043).

A therapeutically story can be easily created by starting from the following steps:

1. identify the problem
2. set a therapeutic objective – what do you really want to change;
3. establish some resources from the child' life which are necessary in order to build the story;
3. think of a strategy to achieve the change
4. base the story on a metaphorical conflict which reflect exactly the same problem of the child.
5. the story must have a positive end.

There are many information about the role of the therapeutically, the problems which can be solved using these stories, the necessary skills for creating and telling a story, but, in the same time, situations in which a story is no useful, but a practical approach can help by clarifying better all these aspects.

## 2. Study concerning psychologists and psychotherapists about the therapeutically story

### 2.1. *The main purpose and objectives of the study*

**The purpose** of this study is to identify the perception / opinion of *psychologists and psychotherapists regarding the effects of therapeutically stories in children 'life*

**The objectives** of the study:

1. to identify the specialists 'opinion regarding therapeutically stories;
2. to find out situations in which a story can really heal;
3. to discover if the therapeutically story improves or not the child' life;
4. to find out if a therapeutically story can be used in any conditions.

### 2.2. *The hypothesis of the study*

The hypotheses of the study are:

1. The psychotherapists believe, more than the psychologists, in the role of therapeutically story to help children to solve their problems.

2. Many specialists will take into account the situations in which they can use the therapeutically story, neglecting if there are some situations in which the therapeutically story cannot be used.

### 2.3. Research methodology

#### 2.3.1. The statistical method used in identifying psychologists and psychotherapist' opinion about the therapeutically stories

The study is based on the data yielded following a *sampling survey which investigates the opinion of psychotherapists and psychologists about therapeutically stories.*

The investigative technique used was the auto-questionnaire survey consisting in 6 question administered in group.

#### 2.4. The sample structure

The sampling survey was applied to a non-probability sampling group. The students were selected randomly from a group present to a conference

- *psychologists: 42*
- *psychotherapists: 42*

#### 2.5. Data analysis techniques

The Statistical Package for Social Science Program (SPSS) was used to summarize and run correlation on data obtained from the survey. Frequency distribution used to mention demographics of the specialists. Correlation technique was utilized to discuss relationship between psychologists, psychotherapists and their need of using therapeutically stories

The favoured surveying technique was the individual filling in of the questionnaire in a group. (Rotariu & Iluț, 1997, p. 54). This surveying technique was chosen because it is the easiest and the less expensive.

#### 2.6. Findings / The results obtained after applying the opinion questionnaire

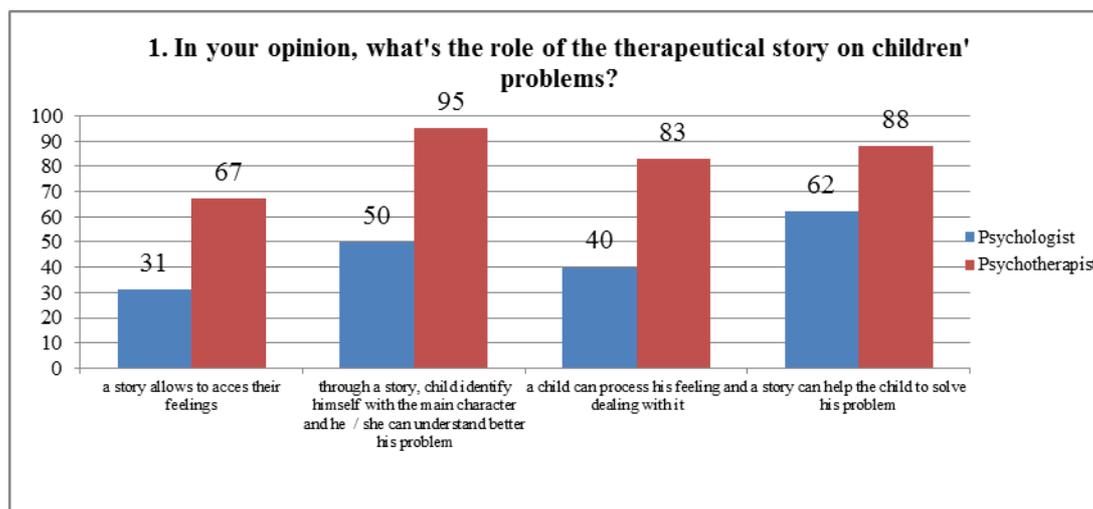


Fig. 1. the structure of answers at question Q1

It is very interesting to discover that over 95% of psychotherapists consider that the main role is the next one: through a story, child identify himself with the main character and he / she can understand better his problem; instead, over 66 % of psychologists consider that the main role of the therapeutically story is to help the child to solve his problem. There are significance differences between psychologists and psychotherapist regarding this issue, which means that psychotherapists and psychologists see differently the therapeutically story' role.

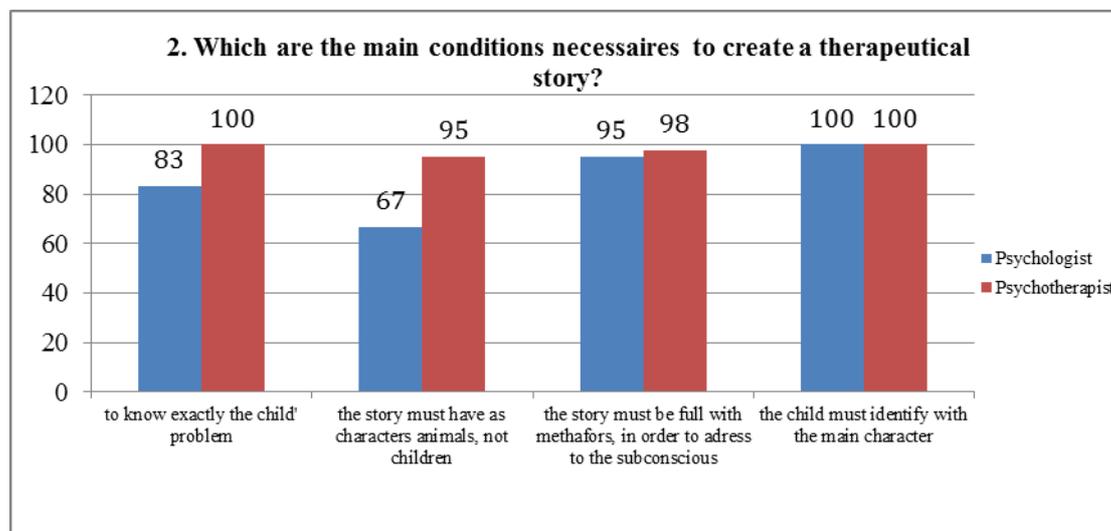


Fig. 2. the structure of answers at question Q2

As we can see, 100 % from psychotherapists considers that the main conditions necessary to create a story are: to know the child' problems and the child must identify with the main character. 100 % of the psychologist chose the last option too, which means that there are no differences between psychologists and psychotherapist regarding this issue.

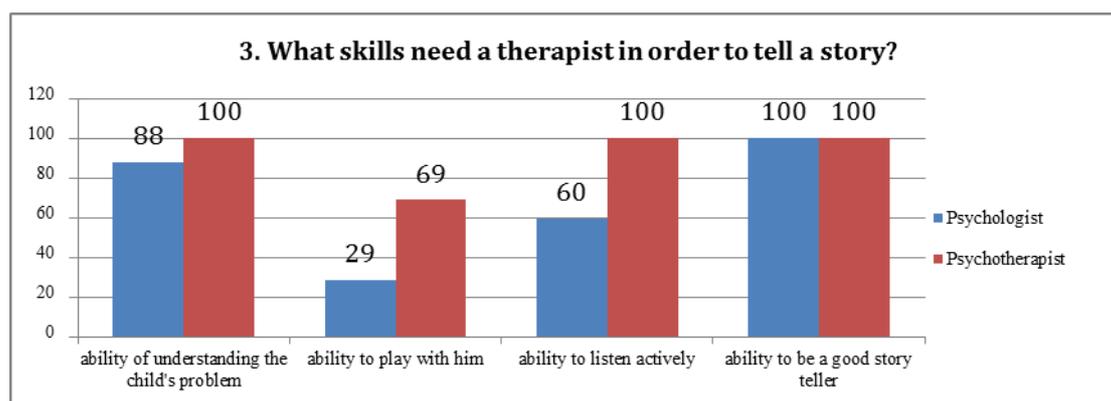


Fig. 3. the structure of answers at question Q3

The most important skill for a therapist, according to the psychologists is to be a good story teller (100 % chose this answer), the psychotherapist have chosen the same skill, but another one too: ability of understanding the child' problem (100 % chose both answers).

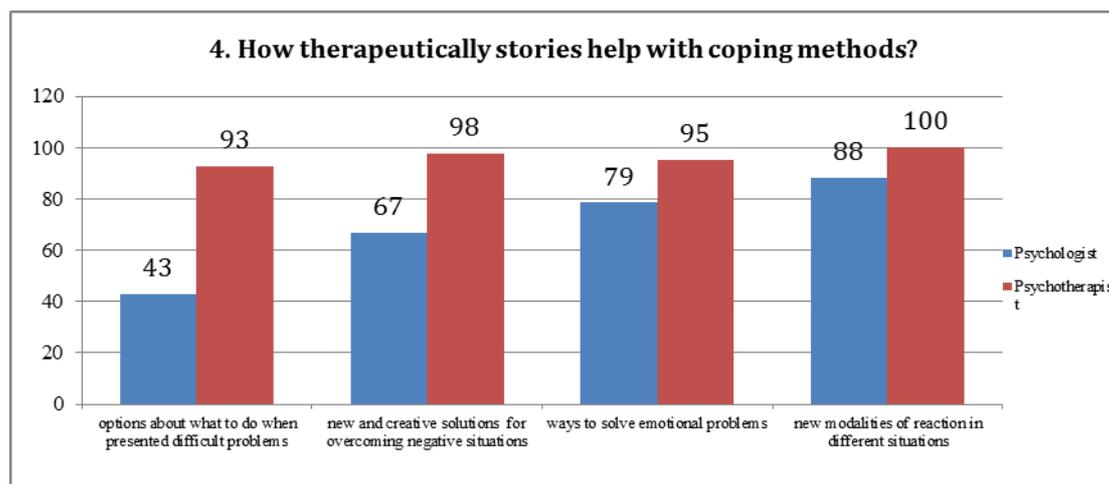


Fig. 4. the structure of answers at question Q4

As we can see, 100% of psychotherapists and 88 % of psychologists considers that a story offers new modalities of reaction in different situations, which means that a story can really help with coping methods. A very close result (98 % of psychotherapists) is related with the fact that a story involves new and creative solutions for overcoming negative situation, but, we can see that only 67 % of psychologist are agree with it, so, there are some differences related with the role of the story on coping.

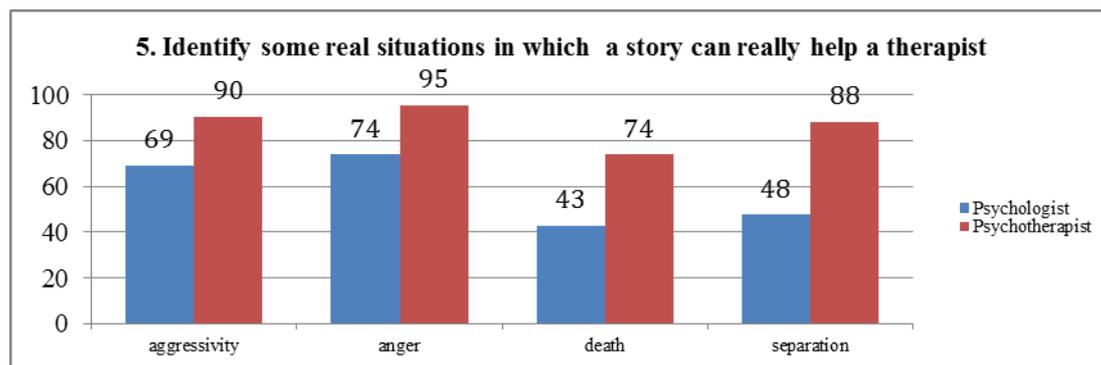


Fig. 5. the structure of answers at question Q5

It is quite surprising to see that 95 % of psychotherapists and 74 % of psychologists consider that a story can really help in anger situation. A very close percent -90 % of psychotherapists and 69 % of psychologists decided that a story can help in aggressiveness issue too.

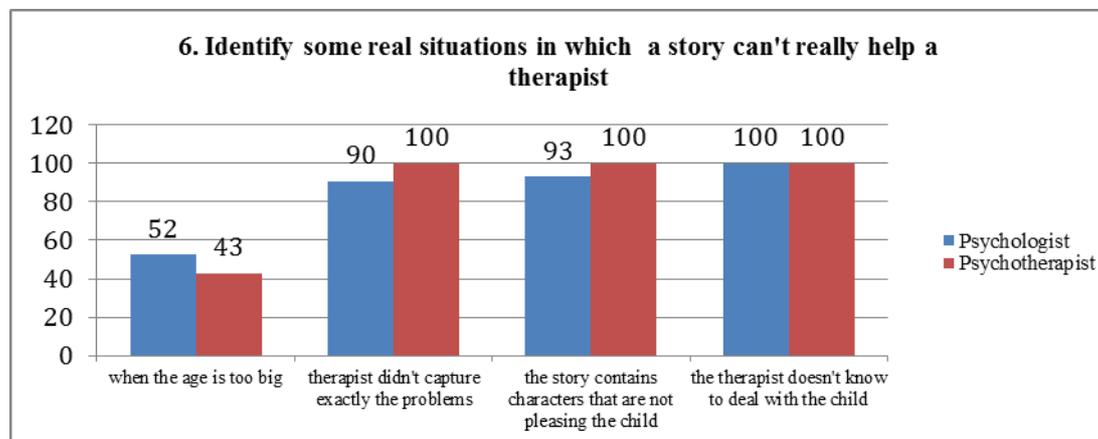


Fig. 6. the structure of answers at question Q6

## 2.7. Validation of the hypothesis

The first hypothesis „**The psychotherapists believe, more than the psychologists, in the role of therapeutically story to help children to solve their problems.**” was **validated** by the answers offered by psychotherapists to the item 1 (more than 88 % consider that a story can solve the child’ problem comparing with only 62 % of psychologists which believe the same thing).

The psychotherapists really believe in the role of the therapeutically story because through a story, child identify himself with the main character and he / she can understand better his problem.

The second hypothesis “**Many specialists will take into account the situations in which they can use the therapeutically story, neglecting if there are some situations in which the therapeutically story cannot be used**” was **invalidated** by the answers offered by psychologists and psychotherapists , both taking into consideration real situations in which they cannot really help. These situations are: when the age of the child is too big, when the therapist didn’t capture exactly the problem, the story contains characters that are not pleasing the child, the therapist doesn't know to deal with the child.

## 2.8. The main limits of the study

1. sample consists only of psychologists and psychotherapists from Iasi County , so these results cannot be extended to the entire population of Romanian psychologists and psychotherapists.
2. there will be no pre-testing the subjects, which means that we cannot obtain the accuracy of the results;
3. there is no control group.

## 4. Conclusions and suggestions

As we can see, there are some differences between psychotherapists and psychologists about the role of therapeutically story in solving child’ problems. The entire sample emphasise the positive role the story for children. Many of them are aware of the main limits in using the therapeutically story, but, in the same time, they are aware of the situations or problems which can be solved using it.

In this context, we will try to make some suggestions:

- the specialists should follow some courses about writing or telling a therapeutically story;
- many of them should use the story more and more in their practice;
- the psychologists must know exactly the advantages and disadvantages of using the therapeutically story;

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