

Why is Momotaro passed down for so long?

1. Motivation behind Research Paper

It is thought that the social problem that “young people are leaving books” is accelerating. One of the reasons is that “reading is not fun” (Kakuda, 2022). However, despite the fact that it is impossible to leave the old stories that have been handed down so far in future generations due to the occurrence of young people leaving books, there has never been a case in which the old stories are focused and studied in detail.

I think people have read aloud at least once in their childhood. Of course I am one of them. Do you remember which old story you read at that time? I belonged to the wisdom seminar of my predecessor, and when I thought about the topic, I suddenly thought back to the old stories that they had read. Then I realized that there were only old stories like *Momotaro* that everyone knew. From there, I gradually became interested in old stories, and as I looked into them, I thought, "If things go on like this, I won't be able to tell stories that aren't very famous, and eventually even old stories will be forgotten," and I started researching to stop that from happening.

2. Introduction

In this research, I try to clarify the question, "What should be done to facilitate the passing down of folk tales?" As a result, "by 2030, all people, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, birth, religion, economic status, etc., will be able to improve their abilities and achieve social and economic benefits." 4-7 "By 2030, all educated people will be able to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to build a sustainable society. To that end, we need, for example, education to create a sustainable society, sustainable ways of living, human rights and gender equality, peace and non-violence, awareness of global citizenship, and diversity of cultures. There is a possibility that knowledge that will lead to solutions such as "recommend education that can understand certain things" can be obtained.

In order to clarify the question, we adopted a method of comparing the current appearance of popular folk tales with the original, and investigating how they have changed and become popular. Based on the method used in Mr. Nobuhiro Tateishi's "Transitions of old tales: An example of Momotaro", which I read as research. Momotaro is a story about a boy born from a peach who goes to exterminate demons. It is a story in which everyone works together to fight and successfully exterminate the demons. Therefore, it is easy to collect questionnaires and obtain data. In addition to the possibility of obtaining knowledge that will lead to solutions for creating a sustainable society, it is also possible to support it as data for writing a thesis.

I set up a questionnaire in the classrooms at Nara Kokusai High School and took the method of randomly asking students for their opinions. The questionnaire was conducted twice, but 44 students answered the first and 33 students answered the second. The results of the questionnaire were compared with the original, and converted into data. Also, while there are many stories that are said to be original, when I read the article "Research on the Momotaro story" written by Mr. Togoro Koike, there was an item about Momotaro before the Meiji era, which is why it is said to be the original. Among the various versions, I chose "Kojitsuke Momotaro Monogatari" written in 1788, which is relatively old and still in good condition, and can be read in its entirety online. Few stories of Momotaro that were probably written before then have survived to the present day, and many of them seem to have been destroyed by fire.

3. Results and Analyses

In the first questionnaire, we focused on the respondent's favorite scene of *Momotaro*. As a result of the questionnaire, many people answered "give millet dumplings," "fight demons," "Momotaro defeats demons," "children are born from peaches," "break peaches," and "become friends with animals." When comparing the six scenes with "Kojitsuke Momotaro-banashi," there were, of course, differences between the old and the modern, but there were no major differences in content. Therefore, it was decided to compare not only the contents but also the details such as expressions. Then, it turned out that the original story had fewer adjectives than the current Momotaro. There is always a reason when things change. Based on this, I hypothesized that by using adjectives to give impact to the story, it would be easier

for the story to remain in the impression, and that anyone reading it would find it interesting.

In order for folk tales to be handed down to future generations, they need to remain in the memory of as many people as possible. In particular, it is necessary to explain concretely to future children. So I thought that the folktales that are now well known use many adjectives to make them popular with a wide range of people, from children to adults. An example is the comparison between the following two sentences; "A peach has flowed from the river" and "A big peach has flowed from the river"? Many people would prefer the latter sentence. This is because the word 'peach' alone does not give a sense of what kind of peach it is, and it is difficult to leave an impression. I asked this question at every presentation, and more than half of the people chose the latter, which shows that this idea is correct.

Based on these considerations, even minor old tales can have more adjectives and add dynamism to leave more impact. If my hypothesis is correct, this is one way to keep the story going. In order to judge whether this is correct or not, we will change minor folk tales by adding adjectives so as to leave an impact. We investigated which one felt more impressive and interesting.

I decided to change the old tale *Tamamizu Monogatari*. As a method, I summarized the modern Japanese translation of *Tamamizu Monogatari*, created a sentence by adding adjectives to the summary sentence, conducted a questionnaire in the same way as the first questionnaire, and read these two sentences. I asked respondents to answer two questions about which one they found more interesting

and which one left an impression on them. It was aggregated and converted into data.

The synopsis of *Tamamizu Monogatari* is as follows. One day, a fox falls in love with a human princess and wants to stay by her side no matter what. It is a pure love story that can be used by the princess. Until the end, the fox and the princess are not tied together, and the fox suddenly disappears and the curtain closes. It can be read as a bad ending in which he was unable to connect with his beloved, but it can also be read as a happy ending in which he can continue to live in each place while thinking of the other person. It is believed that the author did so, but the author is unknown.

Original sentence: "When the princess turned 14 or 15 years old, and when she was playing with flowers, a fox saw her and fell in love." Modified sentence: "When I was playing with flowers and playing happily, I saw a fox that had become beautiful like a shining light, and I fell in love at once."

Some may feel that this sentence alone has changed the reader's impression strongly. The results of the second questionnaire are as follows. More than 70% of the respondents chose the story that added an adjective to both questions. From the results of this questionnaire, I came to the conclusion that the hypothesis that using adjectives to give impact to a story makes it easier to leave an impression and make it interesting to anyone who reads it, is correct. Therefore, it turned out that as one of the methods for handing down minor old tales, increasing the number of adjectives

and adding dynamism to leave a greater impact on the story, was also found to be correct.

4. Conclusion and Future Problems

The conclusion of these two years of research is, "By adding adjectives to old stories, it will attract the interest of modern people and make it easier to tell stories." Based on these factors, I would like to recommend research on two things such as applying the results of this conclusion, long old stories will be more interesting than ever before, and applying this research to other stories. If these things are realized, we can take another step closer to a sustainable society.

The stories that should be handed down to future generations are not all short stories that make up picture books. This time, I have focused on old stories, but if these things can be applied to long stories such as novels, I think I will be able to tell many kinds of stories. Stories are popular among people, but I think they are a little different. Stories continue to change to remain the same thing. This change is probably the first step toward a sustainable society.

It's hard to realize whether it's good or bad because it's not visible to be able to see. Therefore, SDGs 10-2 "Enhance everyone's abilities and not be left behind socially, economically and politically" and 4-7 "Enhance education that allows everyone to understand various cultures." Old stories are filled with the lessons of old people, and they were created to convey them to future generations for a long time, so to speak, "the wisdom of our predecessors." Learning it can lead to achieving the SDG of "promoting education to understand that there are various

cultures." Learning, knowing, and telling stories leads to a sustainable society, even if you don't feel much of a visible change. Every story has the author's intentions and reasons for its creation. Also, if the story becomes more interesting than ever before, the number of people who read books, especially young people who stopped reading books saying, "It's not fun," will increase little by little.

If research can be promoted and applied to stories other than old stories, it will lead to a sustainable society, and it will also serve as a clue to solving the social problem of young people's separation from books. However, since the two things we have listed as future prospects are still hypothetical, the task for the future is to verify and gather data to support the results.

5. Reflection

In this research, as a seminar representative, I was able to attend and present at the international conference for high school students hosted by Kokusai High School. This research was not focused on the facts that can be seen, and it was difficult to get results right away, so it was difficult to understand what the current situation was. Being selected as a representative of such research topics is certainly an important issue for society. In addition, not only students at their own school, but also teachers at other schools and people living overseas saw this announcement, and received many opinions on "points of interest" and so on. Originally, I had no confidence in myself, and I often wondered about this research, "Can we really contribute to a sustainable society?" However, as I have shared my research with many people and received their opinions, I have gained a lot of confidence.

Over the past two years, I have spent a lot of time and effort on this research because it sometimes takes more time to do things than others. I learned a lot not only in my daily life but also in my study tour, and I used it as a reference for my research. Also, I have been working with a research member on this research for a year. The first questionnaire and the results of the questionnaire were converted into data and compared with the original were carried out in cooperation. I couldn't recommend this study by myself. I was able to gain a lot of strength in this study. In addition to exploration, superpower, and information gathering, I was able to acquire the power that I could not acquire without experiencing group work such as communication and cooperation. I am thinking that I would like to be involved in medical care in the future. These abilities are essential to healthcare professionals. I would like to make use of these powers to lead to future career paths. In addition, I hope to continue to explore not only for my career but also for my daily life, and someday I will make a significant contribution to solving social problems such as SDGs but also young people's books.

6. Work Cited

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