Stories are one of the greatest ways of stirring up a child's curiosity and the excitement of what is going to happen next whilst a story is being told according to Early Impact Learning and Raising children (2022,2020), who goes on to say that even as a baby hears stories it helps to flourish their imagination and brain development and promotes their language development. Research has shown that the effect of story reading improves children's aspects on oral and written development such as their vocabulary states Baker *et al* and Moore *et al* (2013,2014). Bower (2014) agrees and stresses how essential literacy practices should begin at birth to help with these developments as they have already become attuned to patterns, tones and structure of language even before birth so building on the developments requires an environment where babies are immersed early on in oral language experiences to help a child with their evolving experience of words, however, Grieshaber *et al* (2012) claims through research that children from minority and immigrant/ low income families are literacy deprived. The recent development of digital technology has realized the importance of digital literacy in school as children will be using technology in school and later in their careers says Gordon (2020). The Donaldson report describes how digital competence should have a similar status to that of literacy and numeracy within the curriculum (Donalson, 2015).

Looking back and observing the two videos the narrator uses intonation. Venkatakrishnan (2016) explains how intonations start when mothers use simplified, melodic repetitive tones with a higher pitch when talking with their babies which refers to the term 'motherese'. One of the key points of intonation, according to Nordquist (2019) is a person conveying grammatical information in the use of changing their vocal pitch and is important in expressing questions which the narrator uses to help emphasize key words and exaggerate the differences between questions, statements and commands. For example, as the narrator reads from the story. 'Where are you meeting him?' and 'Here by the rock'. David Crystal, as cited by Nordquist (2019) says intonation is the melody or music of a language, referring to the way the voice falls and rises as we speak. Moreover, intonation is used to draw the listeners attention and is an intrinsic part of the linguistic system of languages according to Hudson *et al* (2022). A study conducted by Wright and Dunmuir (2019) showed that telling stories to 6- and 7-year-olds led to improvements in their oral vocabulary and fluency which in turn aids the child contributing more to

class discussions for example. A child experiencing engagement of language with enjoyment may reduce classroom disruption or behavioral difficulties and intonation through narratives does this.

By the pitch of voice used in storytelling, stress and rhythm produce meaning and accompanies intonation (Britannica, no date). Prosody includes these elements to give meaning and emphasis on words, keeping the child engaged whilst being central to a child's language and social development and helps to teach them new words, providing a base for understanding punctuation and exclamation points too according to Baby sparks (2020). The narrator shows examples of this in the storytelling in both videos. Emphasis is shown on the right words and syllables through the colorful, descriptive language in the book, for example, 'scrambled snake! It's time I hid!' also helping with the business of helping children develop their writing skills. Bruce and Spratt (2011) claim that when vowel sounds are exaggerated through storytelling, it helps with the phonological awareness which is vital in helping children learn to read. Crystal (1998) focused his theories on language play and the fun you can have with it through manipulation, hence, using intonation is vital for communication. As the expressions and thoughts that go with the narrative would not be able to be comprehended (British Council, no date). Research from Nair and Yunus (2021) shows that digital storytelling even, plays an important role in progressing children's speaking skills, improving communication skills and promotes language skills. However, some teachers may think that the lack of technology in their classroom is limited, Kucirkova (2018) explains that digital books can be used on Pc's or an interactive whiteboard rather than expensive touchscreens, who goes on to say that children whose first language is not English and children with language difficulties can access interactive features to help.

Raffill (2018) explains how theorist Bruner believed that the development of language should be focused on the interaction of the child and their caregivers as based on the input parents give to their child, language acquisition is developed. Bower (2014) suggests that babies are attuned to patterns, tones and structures of language before birth and goes on to say that how a child's oracy develops is dependent cultural beginnings and their early communicative experiences are essential in the building of their language and later, literacy development. Research from the baby room 'project' indicated the need for those employed to care for

babies need professional development, as evidence showed maternal attributes are not always shown, though they are 'assumed' to be according to Goouch and Powell (2012) with Bower (2014) suggesting that anyone who engages with babies and young children need to ensure that any literacy encounters, experiences and interactions works with the baby's ability to learn. However, Merka (2014) stresses the importance for parents to encourage and regularly read with their children as it supports key literacy skills, though says that technical advances may influence the child's capacity to concentrate on reading.

Rhythm is a prominent feature in the narrator's chosen book. Written in rhyming couplets, the rhythm is sustained whilst reading. Rhymes in storybooks strengthen children's vocabulary, helping them to remember exact words of the text and in language and comprehension learning, it gives them an 'edge' says Read *et al* (2014). Lockwood (2011) suggest that pupils with English as an additional language should be encouraged to learn English nursery rhymes to become more attuned to rhythm. Emphatic rhythm starts when a child is 6-18 months old when games are played with carers. For example, when clapping, repetition song and nursery rhymes are introduced reinforced by touch and body movement (Crystal, 2017). Engagement with rhyme and the rhythm of language is experienced when a baby is read books too, providing rich language opportunities vital for language acquisition and development according to Neaum (2012). Raffill (2013) describes how Chompsky believes that children have an innate ability to acquire language development. Oral language can be developed and supported with stories using repetition, rhyme and rhythm stresses Bower (2014) who goes on to say how rhythm in stories supports reading as well as improving memory and enabling children to predict words before they are read (Read *et al,*2014).

Repetition used in stories helps children to extend their vocabulary skills which they can then apply in their own written and oral communications states Bower (2014). The narrator is observed using repetition of phrases in the storytelling activity and is used every time the mouse comes across another animal. Hearing the same lines repeated allows children to be actively engaged, whilst helping in developing the innate process of the language used (Prosic-Santova,2015). Kaldahl *et al* (2019) states that parents, teachers and inspectors class written work as the only 'real' work whilst oracy is looked at just to support these skills, giving oracy a low status, who

goes on to say if a child has poor vocabulary by the age of 5 then the expected level of standard for English and Welsh at the age of 11 will not be achieved, meanwhile Alexander (2012) renews the plea for oracy, stating that communication skills are in decline according to employers, university admission tutors and others adding the importance of oracy and how it should have a vital role in the curriculum. Whilst Bower (2014) states that many children age 4/5 have been supported at home with their language development and come to school with a rich vocabulary, however, Wolf (2010) suggests that is not the case for all children as some come from an impoverished language environment and have 'word poverty', and by the age of 5 have heard 32 million fewer words spoken to them. We are addressing this issue by using storytelling in schools and settings. Estyn (2017) did a report and linking to oracy they found that adults talked regularly to children in most schools which helps extend their learning but found there are not enough opportunities for children to talk to adults about topics that interest them.

Whilst using props in storytelling makes reading more fun, it also leads children to discover the joy of literature and learning as well as giving the children a deeper meaning of the language and story which supports the development of literacy and English suggests Learning and teaching (2010). With the use of props in the storytelling activity, it gives the narrator an opportunity to emphasize the alliteration used to describe the Gruffalo. For example, by emphasizing 'terrible teeth', 'purple prickles', and 'knobbly knees', allows the description to stick into the child's mind. Alliteration is linked to rhythm and can have an impact on phonological awareness skills as well as assisting the child in developing sensitivity towards repetition of initial sounds and enhances listening skills.

To conclude, the importance of storytelling in a digital or book format is essential in a child's development in oracy, reading and writing. The rise of digital technologies has increased the amount of screentime which children are exposed to which may affect communication and literacy skills as literacy has its beginnings in social relationships and too many children get given a device to look at rather than having one to one time with their parents or caregivers. Though an advantage in school settings is that children whose first language is not English have access to a range of interactive features to help them. David Crystals theory on reading stories in a fun and interactive way is how stories should be told for engagement and good

communication as we, as practitioners' have the responsibility to model to children in a positive and influential way. By observation of the two stories told, reading from a book is much preferred as I am not as digitally competent as I should be and more confident in traditional storytelling. Suggestions for future practice could be that practitioners would benefit from more training in digital learning and in future practice further questions will be incorporated in storytelling and tone of voice could be improved.

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