

Student Number: 2506455
Module Code: ECEY5004/C
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laith a Llythrennedd yn yr Oes Ddigidol/Language and Literacy in the Digital Age

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I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

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Links to Videos

[Digital StoryTelling - Jordan Pope 2506455.mov](#)

[traditonal storytelling - Jordan Pope 2506455.mov](#)

Academic analysis

Introduction

Storytelling in any medium plays a pivotal role in the development of language and literacy skills with children. BookTrust (n.d.) goes on to outline the importance of storytelling to children, that the benefits have a comprehensive approach to the development of children. Storytelling not only helps a child expand their knowledge and understanding of the world, but the concepts of language and the structure of stories and how they ignite imagination. Cekaite and Björk-Willén (2018) highlight in their own study and have collated information that highlights the range of benefits brought by storytelling, with it providing fundamental foundations to further expand a child's literacy skills and understanding of language around them. Furthermore, with the acquirement of language and words over time. Children not only begun to enjoy stories and its links to the world, but how it can expand their own knowledge of words and how they are associated. The professional and in this case early years practitioners in a setting become a source of supporting this development, making use of various mediums to bring a story to life, with skills such as changing their voice to match a character and to bring dramatics to the story they are reading. Capturing the imagination of the children in their care and developing a love of stories (Bakhtin, 1981).

First skill

When reflecting on the storyteller's story sessions, various skills and practices can be seen to be taking place within the videos. One such skill that was noted in the video is the storyteller being engaging with the story and making use of different mediums and tools to bring a story to life and be engaging. Agosto (2016) Goes further into this and its importance to storytelling and supporting the literacy development of children, making notes that engaging with children goes along way to involve the child, the storyteller showing their ability to ask simple follow up questions, these being 'what is next?', also making use of communication switches to involve the children and to build anticipation. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (2020) reinforce the importance of being engaging when reading a book to a child and in the case of the storyteller to a potential group of children with additional learning needs. It is paramount importance to ensure and

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gauge how the children are with the story and adapt to ensure engagement and make relevant changes. Making tiny adjustments, the storyteller took his time, no rushing which then allowed that process time and to see if any changes need to take place. Larson (2014) explores the importance of the practitioner using the opportunity of engagement, to build various skills and development within the children that are engaging in that session. Using these moments to scaffold and model different behaviours and ideas. This is seen with the storyteller, by showing the children the story, giving everyone a chance to feel the story and to enjoy the joint experience with their peers.

The importance of these skills has on oracy, language, reading, and writing is profound. Being able to engage young minds goes along way, to contributing to different areas of learning and development. Society for Storytelling (n.d.) explores the importance of engagement in storytelling as a way to influence the development of an individuals oracy skill within children. Keeping children engaged ensure they are benefitting from the skills being shown by the storyteller, enabling the expansion of their vocabulary and concepts being shared in the story, such as using the switch board to emphasise key words within the story, these being 'ketchup' or 'Barty.' Further along from this, writing is just as key and engagement plays a significant role and a child's engagement, and level of understanding is needed to lay those basic foundational phases where writing is concerned. Bingham, Quinn, and Gerde (2017) explore the importance of writing within children, making the point in saying that different opportunities should be taken. The Storyteller made use of core boards to give emphasis to key words in the story, this could be expanded on further by making links in other sessions of the day. Making use of writing activities and linking to the story told by the storyteller. Storytelling involves groups of children, the storyteller did their story with a group of children and Vygotsky (1978) makes note on his zone of proximal development by giving the children the opportunity to learn with the support and adults, this could also be seen as scaffolding (Bruner, 1983). The Storyteller engaged with the children, given them opportunities to thinking about the story and to branch off towards different activities and play.

While there are clear benefits to the importance of engagement, however there are views that too much engagement or a session that too adult-led could have a noticeable negative impact on children. Crawford (2021) explores the consequences of too much adult engagement; this may cause children to shy away from an activity or lose enthusiasm. Practitioners need to find a balance with this approach and adapt accordingly. When referring back to the storyteller, more pauses could have taken place to allow the children that moment to think or even interact with one another or furthermore explore the idea of joint storytelling if the abilities of the children allow.

Second Skill

The storyteller made use of a wide range of resources and props, which added another dynamic to their storytelling session. Making use of different objects in both the traditional and digital story session such as puppets that represent the characters in the story, the use of a red bottle to symbolise ketchup and using communication aids such as the core boards and switch board was used to emphasise different parts of the story. By providing some kind of tangibility to the story and make it interactive. Kucirkova (2018) explores the use of different learning resources, especially in the digital medium. This can contribute to a child's digital literacy skills; it can bridge the gap for learners with the source material and makes it more accessible to those who may struggle to connect or engage with traditional methods of storytelling. Stronger Practice Hubs (n.d.) makes an importance distinction that storytelling enhances the development of oral language of children and props can be used to help and support this. The storyteller used simple everyday objects found in their educational environment, a practitioner does not need to be buying new and expensive items. It is noted further that a prop such as the sheep, would grab children's shared attention. Then using that moment to respond to the children's responses, the storyteller was asking questions about the two sheep, which could be expanded upon further or could lead to further expansions in further sessions. Khairuddin and Baharuddin (2026) would delve into the importance of props noting it influences on other skills in the storyteller, linking a prop like a sheep toy to the character in the book. Props functioning as a way to communicate information and strengthen the narrative within the storyteller's session.

American Montessori Society (2025) explores the theories of Montessori and how it links and influences the practices of practitioners when implementing and supporting storytelling in their environments for the children in the care. Language development in children, that further links to their imagination. Introduction of unfamiliar words from the storyteller contributes to this, when the storyteller says, 'what next?' that gives the children an opportunity to think and imagine what could be on the next page. Hjetland *et al.* (2019) explore their own theories in the use of props alongside any kind of story medium, be they traditional or digital support the early foundational development of children oral skills, which will have influences on the child's comprehension and understanding skills when developing their reading skills. This is explored further by Lindley (n.d.) that not only is the use of props key, as shown by the storyteller in the videos, but the importance of repeating and showing the story multiple times and ensuring that settings and practitioners make time to make use of stories in their day to day activities introducing those key words and making links

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with the props at hand to emphasise the story. The storyteller made use of a puppet and soft toy sheep, as way to engage with the children and to keep them interested in what you have to say.

There are views in which could counter the benefits of the use of props, in the storyteller videos, there seemed to be too many props or items at hand. This could prove overwhelming, distracting and could lead to a lack of attention in the story. Stadler and Ward (2010) who explore the effect of props during a reading or storytelling session with a group or classroom of children, they explore what effect it had on the structure and the reaction to the storyteller. They delved further that props helped children to develop their language and oral skills when it comes to describing and processing what they were seeing using props. However, they noted that there were no further effects on having too many props or adding unneeded complexities to the story. They also noted that a well ground and holistic reading sessions for children with or without props will still benefits the children's reading skills regardless.

Third skill

A final skills that could be seen during the storyteller's session is the use of questioning language and asking open ended questions to the children, this could be seen as a way to make the story more inclusive, create involvement from the children, support critical thinking and for the children to be able to imagine the story they are hearing. When observing the storyteller, they would ask, 'what is next?' make a change in their tone of voice in a questioning manner, which gives an open-ended meaning to their reading. Ghosh (2024) in their own work, explores the importance of questioning in storytelling, it can provide an insight on where the children are developmentally, their engagement and if their remembering the story and absorbing information. Furthermore, taking moments to allow questions to be shared, the storyteller in the videos asked who the Sheep is or 'what's in this bottle?' This gives a push and confidence for children engage and participate. Ghosh (2024) makes additional points on the number of questions that may be asked in any storytelling session, they give note that a storytelling session should not have more than 2-3 question if the story is on the short side.

All this is of paramount importance as it influences further cognitive development and understanding in the areas of language, oracy, writing and reading. Salmon and Barrera (2021) explore the dangers of not valuing question from children and young people, practitioners need to provide an environment and moments for questioning. There are several benefits that link to children's development, for children are to build on their own learning, share, and work with their peers, making use of language and oracy to communicate their curiosity, wants and needs. Costa and Kallick (2015) emphasise the importance of questioning and for children to get in the habit of

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questioning different situations in life, it is not simply just about storytelling, but the need for children to be thinking and engage in critical thinking throughout their lives. Bower (2014) points out that regardless of the medium or type of communication, be that through signalong, written or oral communication. These all link to giving children and young people a voice and with that voice feel empowered to use it to ask questions, to be curious, to developing relationships and friendships with peers and family.

Grace (2026) explores the theories of Piaget, and it links to importance of questioning in supporting the language development of children. Making links to the preoperational stage, which looks at children ages two to seven years of age. Who develops confidence and understanding in using language. With questioning in mind, children would still need support and scaffolding in being able to develop sufficient understanding and confidence to use them. Repetition and patience are needed to support children in their language development.

Conclusion

Undertaking research on the nature and importance of not just using storytelling as a tool, but the wider impact it has on children language development in that moment and later in life. Researchers and theorist all have a different angle when looking at this subject matter and shows the complexities of language development and how practitioners can be supporting this in the setting. numerous points were being made and raised on how to support pupils, how storytelling benefits children and storytelling is only but one tool to support language aquations. Looking at the videos of the storyteller, less props could have been beneficial, allow more instances of pauses and leading question and ensuring sufficient time to allow the process of information.

Storytelling play a fundamental place in any child or educational setting, enabling young minds to unleash the imagination freely with their peers and beyond.

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