

Introduction

There is a vast number of benefits to storytelling for young children 0-7 years such as, igniting curiosity, vocabulary, imagination, and brain development (Early Impact Learning, 2021). There are many researchers who advocate that storytelling can significantly contribute to early literacy development as suggested by Phillips, L. (1998). Literacy trust (2017) explain how the use of digital technology is on the rise within young children and suggest that when technology devices are used correctly, they can play a role in supporting early communication, language, and literacy.

Main Body

Phillips (2019) argues that storytelling is not just about entertaining children, storytelling plays a vital part of children's development in literacy. Storytellers often use their voice and bodies to create the setting of a story while involving and captivating their audience. Similarly, Buchwald (2020) describes storytelling to be significant for a child's language acquisition for the child's first, second or any foreign language, when children are exposed to regular storytelling sessions the learning will come naturally as storytelling tends to be the playful, dramatic, and captivating to young children and when young children are immersed into the session it can often be described as a movie playing in the child's brain. McGrath (2020) suggests that children who regularly participate in storytelling are often more advanced in their oral language and greater vocabulary as they learn about syntax and sentence formation. Hayes (2016, p175) explains how storytelling provides a rich source of holistic development for young children by providing the opportunity to focus on their listening skills, engage in social and emotional literacy. Through storytelling children are able to construct and interpret the language of the storyteller within their current understanding and experiences. The New Curriculum for Wales (cited in Welsh Government, no date) expresses the fundamental aspects of languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience. The Welsh Government (no date) addressed that this area of learning should be approached holistically meaning that different languages must be explored to develop the learning of listening, speaking,

reading, and writing. The Welsh Government (no date) emphasised that learners who listen and read effectively are prepared to learn throughout their life. The Digital Competence Framework (DFC) (Cited in Welsh Government, 2018) was brought into the Curriculum for Wales in 2016, the framework suggests that children must develop a set of skills and knowledge to become confident in the use of technology and systems as we enter an increasingly digital world. The framework is a cross-curricular theme which must be included within lessons, the aim for the DFC is to ensure our young people grow to be digitally competent, evolve into enterprising, creative, and critical thinkers. The DFC framework is heavily linked to the Foundation Phase and similarly structured to the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework. According to Chomsky (cited in My Tutor, 2021) the innateness theory, Chomsky argues that children do not imitate language that they hear around them by their peers, he believed that children are born with a language acquisition device (LAD) embedded in their brain which allows children to learn any language and that children are born with an innate understanding of how language works and the capacity to develop language is related to genetics of which he called 'Universal Grammar'. However, B.F Skinner (cited in My Tutor, 2021) The Imitation theory disagrees and argues that children learn language through listening and copying those around them, Skinner believed that once children have learnt to use their mouth muscles and voice boxes, they then begin to model their peer's language while also offering reinforcements such as rewards or punishments which he called 'operant conditioning' to which he believed would influence the children's behaviour to learning.

Upon observing the traditional and digital video's it appears that the practitioner uses very similar reading styles and behaviours throughout both sessions. However it is noticeable that the practitioner appears to be more engaged with her audience on the digital story telling with greater eye contact and questioning with her audience. During the traditional and digital storytelling video the practitioner makes effective use of characterisation. The practitioner can be seen using her voice in different tones and pitches for each character of the story while remaining at a steady pace, the use of facial expressions to express the characters emotion can be seen throughout the video as well as the use of body movement to tell the story through the use of actions to keep the children's attention while they enjoy the story.

Characterisation is said to be beneficial for foundation phase children because characterisation is considered to be a process where the author brings a character to life and to captivate the audience (National Day Nursery Association, 2019).

According to O'Neill and Smith (2016), dramatic storytelling is a useful teaching strategy that can optimise the language proficiency and have a powerful influence on learning language and literacy. Storytelling provides opportunities for children to learn and develop their understanding of culture, community, and language, by making use of characterisation for the characters in the story means children will have a clear understanding which will link to their later language and literacy success and provide the opportunity for the children to use their own imaginations to create their own stories in oral, visual, or written form (Victoria State Government, 2019).

Further, Hall (cited in Australian Storytelling, 2021) suggests that storytelling is a social and cultural experience which provides a comfortable link between oracy and literacy, this has been evidenced by Dyson (cited in Australian Storytelling, 2021) in her study of William who developed into a story writer with the sense of writing interactive play which is said to be clearly influenced by his sociocultural traditions. Vygotsky (cited in Very Well Mind, 2019) sociocultural theory believed that human learning is largely a social process. The theory focus's on how cultural belief and attitudes affect how learning takes place as well as how adults and peers influence the individuals learning. Characterisation and role play are considered a crucial skill for practitioners when telling a story for young children as by doing this is said to ignite imagination and creativity, develop social and emotional development, improve language skills and communication while also aiding problem solving (Newby Leisure Limited, 2020). Role play is said to drastically improve communication skills as children learn new words and expressions as they become confident individuals which is inline with the Welsh Government four purposes for Wales (Welsh Government, 2015). According to National Literacy Trust (2017), technology and digital devices can be a great tool for supporting early communication, language, and literacy if used correctly as it can offer new learning opportunities by using eBooks and applications, the National Literacy Trust (2017) strongly advice that digital devices are only to be used as a tool to play and learn and not replace adult interaction. Furthermore, Marsh and Edwards (cited in First Discoverers, 2021) developed a concept of a play continuum argue that there is little to no distinction between digital and non-digital worlds, during a child playing.

Whilst a digital device seems a relatively passive option it would nevertheless offer children mutual enjoyment in a shared social context. Edwards (cited in First Discoverers, 2013) extended the research through mapping the content of play events digitally and non-digitally and was able to identify major play and learning attributes in both play opportunities such as outdoor play whether this was in the outdoors or virtually outdoors, construction play, fine motor skills and pretend play. Edwards (cited in First Discoverers, 2013) argues that children of today in the 21st century need a blended balance between digital and non-digital play and to develop digital literacy to fully prepare them for life as a 21st century citizen. The practitioner in the digital story telling video uses an application such as 'YouTube' to tell an animated story on a digital screen which is said to be by Ed Tech Review (2021) the modern way of learning in the 21st century classroom. The story has moving images, sound and text which are the expressive medium to make the classroom learning more practical (Ed Tech Review, 2021).

In both traditional and digital video's the practitioner has chosen a story with pictures, animations, and words. Early Education (no date) explain how by doing this is highly beneficial towards the children's learning and development as it provides better understanding of the book in literacy development, reading skills and how by using picture books and e-books can promote children's speaking and listening skills and can also foster children's comprehension. Early Years Careers (2015) agree and state that children have the most enjoyment out of read aloud picture books as by doing this captures their imaginations. Children of young age are naturally more attracted to illustrations on the pages of books which tends to capture their concentration and listening during the story. However, Takacs et al (cited in Strouse and Ganea, 2015) meta-analysis uncovered that by using a digital device which features animations often distracts children from their learning due to the advertisement pop ups which can frequently occur on screen during the story telling session. During the research it was found that children who are read traditional stories using picture books communicate much greater with the storyteller about the story whereas children who were read the same story digitally using animations lacked in communication about the story but communicated widely about the device itself. Takacs et al (2015) explains how another common factor found within the research was that by using animated stories on a digital device was that young children become to fixated on the screen's animation or narration to concentrate on

the adult's engagement. Furthermore, Moody et al (cited in Strouse and Ganea, 2010) found similar findings within their research and argues that traditional picture books offer a wider communication based on the content of the book between the child and storyteller rather than a digital device where communication was based more on the device itself than the story being read. Neaum (2012, p.106-111) suggests that traditional books with pictures offers a rich source of imagination and creativity for children which undoubtedly develops and enhances knowledge and skills, however Neaum argues that it is equally important for story time to be seen for just a time to listen, enjoy and engage children in an enriching experience. Gooch and Lambirth (cited in Neaum, 2011, p.106) argue passionately for the importance of traditional story books to be seen and read to young children. Neaum (2012, p.112) states that by using picture books demonstrates different stages of development from looking at each page for pleasure to exploring each page's content of art and story which develops higher cognitive thinking. Using picture books has the potential to enhance the children's engagement and language acquisition and interaction, picture books is said to be the earliest stage of which children start to name objects and people through to articulation of the most complex abstract ideas which are embedded in the image of each page. According to Bus (2014) electronic stories which include motion pictures are valuable additions to the classroom in support of children's vocabulary, during a study carried out by Bus (2014) the findings included that the children learnt the most vocabulary after reading interactive animated e-books on a device where the children were able to work independently with the device rather than children who read non-interactive animation e-books. Sarah Balcazar (2019) describes how traditional story books with pictures develop children's literacy skills, illustrations next to text inside a book offer invaluable skills to guide children in building and understanding fluency, vocabulary, identity sequencing, comprehension, boost social-emotional learning and potentially sparking a love of reading. As children begin to speak and form sentences, they will learn to recognise pattern and sounds, this is known as phonological awareness which serves as the foundation for learning how to read. At a more basic level of learning picture books will help children to understand that the words convey meaning.

Conclusion

Finally, to conclude this research it appears that both traditional and digital story telling have their advantages and disadvantages but both practises are beneficial to children's language and literacy development. Traditional story books tend to be more practical and effective in terms of being able to conduct the session in any setting or environment, whereas digital story sessions come with the disadvantage of having to be in a Wi-Fi zone to conduct the session via applications such as 'YouTube'. However, as children grow, learn, and develop within a 21st century where digital device use is on the rise, it will be beneficial to provide effective digital sessions within the classroom setting inline with the Digital Competence Framework.

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