ECEY5004

I acknowledge the use of Gemini on [24 October 2026] to Spellcheck my work.

I used the prompt(s):

1. [Can you check my work for grammar mistakes]

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work.

I confirm that I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide as evidence.

Digital book - ECEY5004 - Digital book.pptx

Digital story - Digital storytelling.mov

Traditional story - Traditional Storytelling.mov

Introduction

Dubiel (2024) believes that storytelling is one of the most important experiences for children to have in early years and the pedagogy. Dubiel (2024) states that by practitioners reading stories children begin to understand the world that is around them and begin to communicate their own ideas, feelings and knowledge. However, Kucirkova (2018) believes that digital books play a vital role in a child's development, it actively involves a child in shaping the environment and the resources they use around them.

The 3 story telling techniques that were used in the video are -

Pausing
Facial expressions
Tone of voice

Each storytelling technique will be evaluated through how they support language development, communication skills and what theorists support and link to these techniques and the difference and benefits of digital and traditional storytelling.

These 3 storytelling techniques were chosen as in the video, there was stopping and pausing allowing the children to answer, facial expressions to demonstrate communication and to support the words and tone of voice to show the different cues that shape the spoken words. Organizations such as the National Literacy Trust (2019) highlights the importance of oracy, language and reading and how storytelling becomes that bridge between early years settings and home.

Pausing

Read *et al.* (2019) states that when storytelling a pause between words and sentences, prompts and encourages children to guess or repeat words during the shared reading, or it allows children to become curious to what the word means. Read *et al.* (2019) believes that pausing between sentences helps children and young people retain new vocabulary. Marinovich (2022) believes that storytelling is a fundamental pedagogical tool that helps children bridge the gap between hearing words and understanding them. She states that pausing builds anticipation and emphasizes the points were trying to make. It is a purposeful strategy that practitioners use to allow children and young people to process what has just been said. However, Speech in a Sec (2018) believes that pausing is a powerful strategy which creates positive communication opportunities for children and young people to allow them space to process the information or new vocabulary. For example, in the videos you see that there are open-ended questions and pausing ready for the child to give answers or opinions. Another example used is ‘O na! Bydd rhaid i ni mynd .....’ after a few times as the book is repetitive, and the child should be able to answer ‘drosto’. Bateman and Kern (2025) believes that storytelling plays a vital role in teaching and preserving the Welsh language. They suggest that traditional storytelling often relies on a technique which is called translanguaging, where practitioners switch back and forth from Welsh to English to help children build an understanding of the different vocabulary. Bateman and Kern (2025) identified that pausing before or after using Welsh words allows the children time to process the

new vocabulary and add it to their existing language skills. They believe that pausing provides a bridge for children to take in that second language. Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory connects to pausing to storytelling. Croneri (2022) examined Vygotsky's work and stated that Vygotsky's Zones of proximal development (ZPD) that pausing can help children's cognitive development as it comes from social interactions that are being guided from adults by doing different activities, reading stories and singing. Vygotksy calls it 'Scaffolding' where the support is given by the adult/practitioner to bridge that gap to make sense of the word or sentence. However, pausing does come with limitations. In an article investigating storytelling and pausing, Redford (2013) found the effectiveness of storytelling is purely based on the storyteller's speaking, energy to keep the children engaged and involved. She found that if the pauses were too often or too long, it breaks down the flow of the story, making the story feel long which could cause the children to lose interest.

In conclusion, pausing is an important tool to use. It gives children time to process, think and join in during story time. It helps children develop new language and vocabulary and supports the children whilst learning a second language, like in this instance, Welsh. Research by Vygotsky has shown that pausing scaffolds to help the children learn from the enabling adults. However, storytellers must ensure not to pause for too long, otherwise children might get bored or lose interest.

Facial Expressions

The BBC (2019) describe facial expressions as something that conveys the emotion and tells us a lot about the character. They believe that facial expressions in storytelling are nonverbal movements of the face, using eyebrows, mouth, eyes and muscles. It captures the attention of the listeners. Salicchi *et al* (2026) identified that facial expressions have a greater impact on the children, they found that children recognise positive facial expressions faster than negative ones. In the videos it is shown that facial expressions were used, it shows eyebrow movements and raises. Planck (2025) writes that eyebrow raises in facial expressions can help the children and young people interpret what has been said faster. For example, a slight eyebrow raise or tilt of the head can help the children understand the non-verbal behaviours. In a study investigated facial expressions in Additional learning needs (ALN) in

storytelling, Grossman *et al* (2013) found that facial expressions in storytelling help children with ALN by making those emotional concepts more visible and easier for them to identify. It helps support their language development as the storyteller is using visual and facial cues. General (2022) shows research evidence which states that people can use seven different expressions. These are, contempt, anger, fear, disgust, happiness, surprised and sadness. These can be used in different contexts such as, face-to-face conversations such as storytelling, sign language and digitally. For example, when the storyteller is in a good energetic mood, children and young people can pick up on this through their facial expressions, if the story is good the children will also pick up on this from the storyteller's facial expressions. On the other hand, if the storyteller does not show facial expressions and looks irritated or upset the child is more than likely to disengage and lose interest in the story. Linking to facial expressions, Dr Paul Ekman theory. Sociologylearners (2025) discusses Dr Paul Ekman's theory, his research suggests that he discovered micro-expressions which in storytelling is the ultimate tool for the dramatics. Similarly to General (2022), Ekman's research proved that certain basic emotions are used through storytelling such as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and disgust. However, Serrat *et al* (2020) identified that there could be a few developmental and cognitive limitations to how children and young people use and interpret the different facial expressions during storytelling. For example, some children can have difficulty recognising or understanding different emotions therefore cannot understand the difference between the different facial expressions used. Serrat et al (2020) also found that children with ASD or global development delay (GDD) can find it difficult to sit and listen or sometimes understand a story therefore it is important to ensure that everyone is included and cater to everyone's needs in line with Article 28 of the United Nations rights of the child (UNCRC, 2019) where every child has the right to an education. This is in line with The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales (2021) that even if the child has an Individual Learning Plan (IDP) that practitioners must ensure that every child is included, this could be using facial expressions, electronic stories.

To conclude this paragraph, research has found that facial expressions are a key non-verbal tool that helps grab the attention of the children, makes stories easier to understand and helps them understand emotions. Research suggests that facial

expressions are helpful for children with ALN, by given the children visuals. This has been supported by Ekman's research on basic emotions. However, some children may struggle with this due to different needs, practitioners must ensure that they adapt the methods to ensure that every child is included, supporting their rights under the UNCRC and the ALN Code for Wales (2021).

Tone of voice

When reading a story the Oracy Cambridge (2018) defines tone of voice as the way we speak. It is how we use the way of speaking, for example the volume, rhythm, intonation, speed and pitch. They believe it shapes how the message that is being put across is felt and understood. MyProgression (2023) believes that a Tone of Voice as a form of communication where people can interpret thoughts, feelings or expressions through words and voice. The Great North Early Years (2024) believes that storytelling in the early years is valuable to children's language and literacy development. They believe that a practitioner changing their tone of voice when reading a story, helps children build their vocabulary and exposes them to different sentences and helps them use language effectively. As seen in the videos, tone of voice changes with different sentences for example 'Sblash Sblosh!' as it is repeated three times, it starts off slow and quiet and ends loud. Payne (2022) explains that oracy helps children construct knowledge and make the meaning. Oral language is important to the development of literacy skills. It helps children understand written punctuation such as question mark, exclamation point and helps them begin to read in different tones. Jerome Bruner's psychological theory emphasises the importance on the tone of voice in storytelling. Monteagudo's (2011) paper on Jerome Bruner describes psychological framework as a critical interpretive cue that helps shape how children listen and helps them construct the meaning from a narrative. The role of tone of voice in Bruner's theory is where it bridges the gap between the spoken words and the intention of the storyteller or the characters. Bruner argued that children require a structured environment to help support that language development. Bruner's research suggests that a shift in the tone of voice communicates with the children, it lets them know what the characters feel, think or know (Monteagudo, 2011). However taking all these points into consideration, The University of Reading (2023) has found research that suggests that a practitioner's tone of voice could possibly affect cooperation from children. If a practitioner is using

a lower and stern tone of voice, the children will not listen and start to get bored. They believe that a tone of voice is a powerful way to convey how teachers and practitioners come across.

In conclusion, tone of voice is an essential part of storytelling that helps children understand emotions, build on their vocabulary and sentences (Payne, 2022). Bruner's theory builds on this as it shows the scaffold that bridges that gap between spoken words and their meaning. In the video it is shown the different tone of voice, where the exclamation points are, or the question marks are by acting curious.

Conclusion

In conclusion, storytelling is the early years is important to the children's oracy, language, reading and writing development. It has been shown that storytelling relies on Pausing, Facial expressions and tone of voice. These storytelling techniques have been supported by Vygotsky, Ekman and Bruner's theories to help support and build children's vocabulary, oracy and emotional literacy whilst supporting the Welsh second-language. However, it is important for practitioners to ensure that they use these techniques carefully to ensure that the children do not disengage and lose interest. Practitioners must ensure that the storytelling methods are inclusive by remembering the children's rights under UNCRC (2019), Article 23 that no child is discriminated based on their disability and ALN code for Wales (2021). The Great North Early Years (2024) believes that even though digital stories can be beneficial and helpful, they believe that nothing can replace the interactive experience of an adult reading from a book. Reflecting on the professional practice and the videos that has been done. Time management skills are lacking, it was difficult to find time in school time to do both traditional and digital stories, sometimes felt rushed to try and get them done. Digital skills is another area to work on, to investigate what could have been added to make the digital story more high-quality. By developing these skills, the storytelling experiences will be enhanced and help the children's literacy and communication skills.

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