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Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Storytelling as a Language Teaching and Learning Resource

By:

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ABSTRACT

Just as teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning can influence their instructional practices, learners' perceptions of teaching and learning can affect their motivation and achievement. Yet, research on the link between teachers' perceptions and practices, or between learners' perceptions and achievement is not always conclusive. The present study investigated 34 primary four teachers' and 116 primary four students' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource. A teacher questionnaire and a student questionnaire were administered to the teacher and student participants respectively. Interviews were also conducted with a subset of teacher and student participants to triangulate the questionnaire data. The questionnaire responses indicated that 98.3% of the student participants enjoyed listening to or reading stories, but relatively fewer students (81.0%) enjoyed acting out stories. The teacher questionnaire findings affirmed that all the teacher participants had a positive perception of storytelling. However, the positive perceptions did not translate into practice for all the 34 teacher participants. Nine of them did not attempt to infuse storytelling into their English language lessons to teach English language skills. They cited a number of reasons which suggested diffidence and a need for some professional development training and support from their school management (Principal, Vice-principal, or Head of the English department). Analysis of the teacher and student interview responses using content analysis and discourse analysis indicated that the interview data endorsed and elaborated on the teacher and student questionnaire responses. Both groups referred to language benefits as well as socio-emotional value that could be gleaned from storytelling activities. This should argue for storytelling to be considered by educators as a plausible pedagogical resource for primary school children.

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		<u>CONTENT</u>	<u>Page</u>
	List of Tables		11
	List of Figures		12
I	CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION		13
1.1	Background		13
1.1.1	Place of English Language – Global Perspective		13
1.1.2	Place of English Language – Singaporean Perspective		15
1.1.3	Engaging Pedagogies to Enhance Learning – Singapore Ministry of Education’s Perspective and Initiatives		17
1.2	Rationale for the Study		18
1.3	Aims and Research Questions		23
1.4	Scope of the Study		23
II	CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW		27
2.1	Chapter Overview		27
2.2	Clarification of Significant Concepts and Terms		27
2.2.1	Perceptions or Beliefs – Towards a Definition		27
2.2.2	Stories or Storytelling		28
	(a) Sources of Stories		28
	(b) Storytelling		28
	(c) Storytelling in the Context of English Language Teaching		28
2.3	Literature and Research on Beliefs, Perceptions, Attitudes and Practices		29
2.3.1	Teachers’ Perceptions and their Instructional Practices		29
2.3.2	Teachers’ Differing Perceptions and Instructional Practices		30
2.3.3	Learners’ Beliefs, Perceptions, Attitudes and Motivations		33
2.3.4	Learners’ Differing Perceptions and Attitudes		34
2.3.5	Learners’ Differing Perceptions, Beliefs and Practices		36
2.3.6	Teachers’ and Students’ Differing Perceptions of Instructional Practices and Language Teaching Approaches		37
2.3.7	Teachers’ and Students’ Differing Perceptions of the Usefulness of Digital Instructional Tools		39
2.3.8	Teachers’ and Students’ Differing Perceptions of Language-learning Strategies and Classroom Learning Activities		41
2.3.9	Teachers’ and Students’ Differing Perceptions of the Role of Teacher Power		44
2.3.10	Teachers’ and School Management’s Differing Perceptions of Educational Reforms		44
2.4	Literature and Research on the Use of Storytelling for English Language Teaching and Learning		46
2.4.1	Inclusion of Stories – Why the Reluctance		46
2.4.2	Claims by Storytelling Advocates		46
2.4.3	Storytelling Research		49

2.4.4	Perceptions of Storytelling	52
2.4.5	Mixed Perceptions of the Value of Storytelling	53
2.4.6	Mixed Perceptions of Reading Aloud Stories	57
2.5	Conceptual Framework of my Research Study	59
III	CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES	63
3.1	Methodological Approaches – An Overview	63
3.1.1	Different Views about Educational Research	63
3.2	Research Design	64
3.2.1	Qualitative vs Quantitative Research Methodology	64
3.2.2	Mixed Research Methods	65
3.3	Research Methodology of this Study	66
3.4	Research Participants	69
3.4.1	Selection of Teacher and Student Participants	69
3.4.2	Sample Size	69
3.4.3	Ethical Issues of this Research Study	71
	(a) Ethical Consent from Teacher and Student Participants	71
	(b) Positionality and Reflexivity	73
3.4.4	Rationale for Adopting Convenience Sample Design	75
3.5	Generation of Data	76
3.5.1	Pre-survey Pilot	76
3.5.2	Reviewing the Pilot Study Questionnaires for the Main Study	77
	(a) Teacher Questionnaire	78
	(b) Student Questionnaire	81
3.5.3	Research Instruments	82
	(a) Questionnaires	82
	(b) Likert Scale for Perceptions Rating	89
	(c) Interviews	90
3.6	Approach to Data Analysis	94
3.6.1	Analysis of Teachers' and Students' Questionnaire Responses	94
3.6.2	Analysis of Teachers' and Students' Interview Responses	95
	(a) Identifying Substantive Statements Using Content Analysis	96
	(b) Combining Content Analysis and Discourse Analysis	97
3.6.3	Comparison of Teachers' and Students' Responses	103
3.7	Enhancing the Credibility and Trustworthiness of Findings	103
3.7.1	Techniques Relevant to my Study	103
	(a) Activities that Increase Credible Findings and Interpretations	103
	(b) Peer Debriefing	106
	(c) Referential Adequacy	106
3.7.2	Techniques Less Relevant to my Study	107
	(a) Negative Case Analysis	107
	(b) Member Checking	107

3.8	Summing Up	108
IV	CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH FINDINGS	109
4.1	Chapter Overview: Data Analysis Procedure	109
4.1.1	Rationale for the Data Analyses	109
4.1.2	Order of the Data Analyses	110
4.1.3	Rationale for the Order of the Data Analyses	110
	(a) Rationale for Step 1 (Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire Responses)	110
	(b) Rationale for Step 2 (Analysis of the Student Questionnaire Responses)	110
	(c) Rationale for Step 3 (Comparative Analysis of the Teacher and Student Questionnaire Responses)	110
	(d) Rationale for Step 4 (Analysis of the Teacher Interview Responses)	111
	(e) Rationale for Step 5 (Comparative Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses)	111
	(f) Rationale for Step 6 (Analysis of the Student Interview Responses)	111
	(g) Rationale for Step 7 (Comparative Analysis of the Student Questionnaire and Interview Responses)	112
4.2	Questionnaire Analyses	112
4.2.1	Teacher Questionnaire Responses	112
	(a) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2	113
	(b) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Questions 3a and 3b	121
	(c) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 4	126
	(d) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 5	127
	(e) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 6	129
4.2.2	Student Questionnaire Responses	132
	(a) Responses to Student Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2	132
	(b) Responses to Student Questionnaire Questions 3 to 6	134
	(c) Responses to Student Questionnaire Question 7	137
	(d) Responses to Student Questionnaire Question 8	139
4.2.3	Comparison of Teachers' and Students' Questionnaire Responses	142
4.3	Teachers' Interview Responses	145
4.3.1	Structure of Teachers' Interviews	145
4.3.2	Teacher Participants' Reasons for Using or Not Using Storytelling	146
4.3.3	How Storytelling was Conducted by the Teachers Interviewed	150
	(a) Frequency of Use	150
	(b) Approaches Adopted	151
	(c) Sources of Stories Used	152
4.3.4	Benefits of Storytelling – Language and Socio-emotional Benefits	152
	(a) Vocabulary	152
	(b) Grammar	153
	(c) Oral/Listening	153

	(d) Writing	154
	(e) Reading	155
	(f) Socio-emotional	156
4.3.5	Professional and Administrative Support the Teachers Advocated	156
	(a) Training	156
	(b) Teaching Resources	157
	(c) Professional Development Support	158
	(d) Administrative Support	159
4.4	Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses	160
4.5	Structure of the Student Interview Responses	167
4.6	Rationale for the Order of the Analysis of the Student Interview Responses	168
4.7	Analysing the Student Interview Responses in Relation to the Student Questionnaire Responses	168
	4.7.1 Student Interview Responses: Listening to Stories	168
	4.7.2 Student Interview Responses: Reading Stories	169
	4.7.3 Student Interview Responses: Acting Out Stories	170
	4.7.4 Student Interview Responses: Continued Use of Storytelling in English Classes	172
4.8	Comparison of Teachers' and Students' Interview Responses	175
4.9	Summing Up	175
V	CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	177
5.1	Key Findings and Discussion of Findings	177
5.2	Key Finding 1 and Implications	177
	5.2.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Storytelling	177
	(a) Teacher Questionnaire Findings about Teachers' Perceptions of Storytelling	177
	(b) Teacher Interview Findings about Teachers' Perceptions of Storytelling	177
	5.2.2 Implications	178
	(a) Develops a Love for Reading	178
	(b) Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills	179
	(c) Stimulates Thinking	180
	(d) Encourages Positive Socio-emotional Habits	180
	(e) Develops Moral Values	181
5.3	Key Finding 2 and Implications	181
	5.3.1 Student Participants' Perceptions of Storytelling	182
	(a) Student Questionnaire Findings about Students' Perceptions of Storytelling	182
	(b) Student Interview Findings about Students' Perceptions of Storytelling	182
	5.3.2 Implications	182
5.4	Key Finding 3 and Implications	183

5.4.1	Comparing Student and Teacher Participants' Perceptions of Storytelling	183
	(a) Student and Teacher Questionnaire Findings about Perceptions of Storytelling	183
	(b) Student and Teacher Interview Findings about Perceptions of Storytelling	184
5.4.2	Implications	184
5.5	Key Finding 4 and Implications	185
5.5.1	Comparing Teacher Participants' Perceptions and Reported Practices	185
	(a) Teacher Questionnaire Findings about Teacher Participants' Reported Practices	185
	(b) Teacher Interview Findings about Teacher Participants' Reported Practices	188
5.5.2	Implications	189
5.6	Key Finding 5 and Implications	190
5.6.1	Teacher Questionnaire Findings on Professional Support for Storytelling	190
5.6.2	Teacher Interview Findings on Professional Support for Storytelling	192
5.6.3	Implications	193
5.7	Contribution to Knowledge in the Field	195
5.7.1	Translating Perception into Practice	197
5.7.2	Evaluating New Methodologies vis-à-vis Student Learning and Desired Learning Outcomes	197
5.8	Limitations and Constraints	198
5.8.1	Positionality Issues	198
5.8.2	Sample Size and Sampling Issues	199
5.8.3	Administrative Issues	199
5.8.4	Self-report Limitations	200
5.9	Recommendations and Directions for Further Research	200
5.10	Concluding Remarks	203
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	205
	APPENDICES	219
Appendix A	Speech for RAdm (NS) Lui Tuck Yew for the 2007 Official Launch of the Speak Good English Movement (SGEM)	219
Appendix B	Entry Requirements for 2-Year Junior College and 3-Year Centralised Institute Pre-University Courses	222
Appendix C	Ethical Approval Letter from Sheffield University	223
Appendix D	Pre-Survey Pilot Study: Perceptions Questionnaire for Teachers	224
Appendix E	Pre-Survey Pilot Study: Perceptions Questionnaire for Students	227
Appendix F	Pre-Survey Pilot Teacher and Student Questionnaires: Ethical Consent Letters to Teachers and Parents	228

Appendix G	Main Study Teacher and Student Questionnaires: Ethical Consent Letters to Teachers and Parents	229
Appendix H	Main Study Perceptions Questionnaire for Primary Four Teachers	231
Appendix I	Main Study Perceptions Questionnaire for Primary Four Students	237
Appendix J	Collated Reasons Given by the Student Participants for Student Questionnaire Questions 6 to 8	239
Appendix K	Interview Responses of Teachers	248
Appendix L	Interview Responses of Students	285
Appendix M	Access to Thesis	316

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table Number</u>	<u>Table Heading</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Details of Student and Teacher Participants	70
2	Pilot Study Teacher Questionnaire Questions and Objectives	76
3	Pilot Study Student Questionnaire Questions and Objectives	77
4	Modifications to the Pilot Study Teacher Questionnaire – Questions 1 and 2	79
5	Modifications to the Pilot Study Teacher Questionnaire – Questions 3a and 3b	80
6	Modifications to the Pilot Study Teacher Questionnaire – Questions 4 and 5	81
7	Pilot Study Student Questionnaire – Responses to Open-ended Sections	82
8	Main Study Teacher Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2	84
9	Main Study Teacher Questionnaire Questions 3a, 3b and 4	86
10	Main Study Teacher Questionnaire Questions 5 and 6	87
11	Main Study Student Questionnaire Questions 1 – 8	88
12	Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2	113
13	Develops a Love for Reading	114
14	Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills	116
15	Stimulates Thinking	117
16	Promotes Positive Socio-emotional Habits	118
17	Builds Character	119
18	Offers General Teaching Points	119
19	Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 3a	121
20	Storytelling Activities Used by the 25 Teachers	123
21	Reasons Selected by the 9 Teachers for Not Using Storytelling	124
22	Reasons Selected by the 9 Teachers for Trying out Storytelling in Future	125
23	Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 4	126
24	Reasons for Using Storytelling to Teach English	126
25	Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 5	127
26	Reasons for Professional Training	128
27	Before-Activities	130
28	During-Activities	131
29	After-Activities	132
30	Storytelling Experience of Students	132
31	Number of Storytelling Lessons Attended	133
32	Venue of the Storytelling Lessons	133
33	Who Conducted the English Storytelling Lessons	133
34	When the English Storytelling Lessons were Conducted	134
35	Responses to Student Questionnaire Questions 3 to 6	135
36	Responses to Student Questionnaire Question 7	138

37	Responses to Student Questionnaire Question 8	140
38	Comparison of the Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Storytelling	143
39	Teachers' and Students' Broad Reasons for Storytelling	145
40	Teacher Participants' Reasons for Using or Not Using Storytelling as a Teaching and Learning Resource	149
41	Professional Support: Pre- and In-service Training	157
42	Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses – Vocabulary	161
43	Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses – Grammar	162
44	Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses – Oral/Listening	163
45	Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses – Writing	164
46	Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses – Reading	165
47	Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses –Socio-emotional Habits	166
48	Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses – Develops a Love for Reading, Develops Moral Values, and Stimulates Thinking	167
49	Language Benefits from Listening to Stories	169
50	Language Benefits from Reading Stories	170
51	Language Benefits from Acting out Stories	171
52	Benefits from Continued Use of Storytelling in English Classes	174
53	Reasons for Arguing for Storytelling for Teaching and Learning English Language Skills	175
54	How my Research Questions were Addressed	176
55	Comparison of Teacher Interview Responses with Responses to Some Statements in Teacher Questionnaire Question 3b	188

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure Number</u>	<u>Figure Heading</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Perception, Attitude, Belief and Motivation in Relation to English Language Teaching and Learning	19
2	Motivation Level and the Use of Storytelling as an English Language Teaching and Learning Resource	20
3	Framework for the Analysis of Teachers' Beliefs, Perceptions and Practices	60
4	Sequential Procedures Design	67
5	Relationship between Professional Competence, Related Beliefs, Perceptions and Teachers' Classroom Practices	113
6	Professional Development, School Support and Teacher Efficacy	128
7	Professional Development Activities and School Support to Enhance Teacher Efficacy	194

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Place of English Language – Global Perspective

Development, be it political, economic or social, is, more often than not, sustained by technological and scientific advancement. In this regard, English, in more ways than one, has a role in the development of countries around the world. It is a language that is used internationally and Seidlhofer (2003, p. 8) maintains that it should aptly be referred to as “English as an international language” (EIL), as it highlights the international use of English. Indeed, English is very extensively used by both native and non-native speakers. It is used in the arenas of science, technology and economics worldwide: many scientific publications are in English, and English is one of the major languages used for banking and telecommunications. It is also the prevalent language used in the mass media; many countries besides the English-speaking countries have English newspapers and journals, and international television channels such as CNN and Eurosport are in English as well. Even in the domains of medicine and aviation, English is a dominant language. English has a role to play in the political arena too. English is “indisputably the language of international communication. It has official status in 60 countries” (Chew, 1999, p. 43). It is one of the official languages of the UN and is used in international platforms (e.g. conferences and negotiations). At international political arenas, English is one of the international languages used for crafting and explicating international laws and terms of collaboration and cooperation.

As mobility increases in our globalised world, the need for a lingua franca to facilitate inter-racial communication is perceivable, especially to post-colonial countries struggling to build their economies and establish political stability. With the end of colonial power around the world, most countries that attained self-rule subsequently were faced with the choice of an official language. These newly-independent countries often chose English, or some other former colonial language, as the most realistic option for a national or official language (Chew, 1999). However, according to Chew, this official language choice “apparently favoured no particular indigenous group and was the language best suited and most immediately available for national development, both educationally and economically” (Chew, 1999, p. 38). According to Chew, most former colonies ended up selecting English as one of their official languages. The choice was really a pragmatic one which was not without strong reaction from some linguists and education professionals who attributed its

continued use to the determination of ex-colonial masters to extend their economic, cultural and political dominance beyond the post-colonial era (p. 38).

This sentiment is echoed by Phillipson (2009) who asserts that English as a lingua franca is not a culturally neutral medium that puts everyone on an equal footing (Phillipson, 2009, p. 148). In fact, Phillipson feels that while English opens doors for many, it also “closes them for others” (p. 148). He feels that English “tends to be marketed as though it serves exclusively laudable purposes (a language of international understanding, human rights, development, progress)” (p. 149). Hence, he cautions that we need to consider “which agents promote or constrain English and for what purposes” (p. 149).

Chew (1999) endorses Phillipson’s reservation about the ubiquitous use of English worldwide. However, Chew feels that the pervasive use of English language may not be the result of linguistic imperialism, but rather the “relentless march of globalism” (Chew, 1999, p. 46) may be the prime determinant. Phillipson (2009) refutes this globalisation reasoning. He thinks it is not a neutral force such as globalization that results in English being used worldwide. Instead, he thinks the ‘globalisation’ of the English language is a deliberate effort by superpowers for their own interests (political and economic). For instance, in their effort to establish English as a common national language among its own immigrant population, the United States inadvertently transforms “a diverse immigrant and indigenous population into monolingual English users” (Phillipson, 2009, p. 155).

Whether it is globalization or political manoeuvre, linguists and educational personnel are concerned about the negative impact of using English or any of the former colonial official languages. While the debate rages, English is still deemed by many post-colonial countries as an effective lingua franca that facilitates communication amongst different cultures in a country and around the world. It is often a common language amongst migrant workers, too (Despagne, 2010). Whatever the motive of using English is, in the case of Singapore, the English Singaporeans inherited from their colonial masters has evolved over the decades into a unique lingua franca that serves the multi-lingual, multi-cultural Singaporean population. It is unique in that the Singaporean practices have been “relocalised in English” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 74). Truly, Singaporean English is the result of Singaporeans negotiating “what possible language forms they want to use for what purpose” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 129).

Entry to tertiary education institutions in many countries often requires some basic level of proficiency in English. Students who apply to universities in the UK and the US, for instance,

have to sit TOEFL, TESOL, or SAT tests and attain a score that represents the minimal requirement set by the universities. Hence, for many countries where English is either a second or foreign language, the motivation to learn English is understandable as it is often perceived as the passport to higher learning. The general sentiment in these countries is that proficiency in English would enable students to pursue higher academic learning in universities in English-speaking countries such as Canada, the UK, the US and Australia.

This pragmatic reasoning tends to attach undue emphasis to English, ignoring the ill effects it brings. Inadvertently, it provides the impetus for the US and the UK to mount English Language teaching (ELT) programmes for the ESL and EFL countries. The ELT programmes are a very lucrative revenue earner for the providers of these programmes, who ignore the negative impact of linguistic imperialism on the value of languages native to the ESL or EFL countries (Phillipson, 1992).

1.1.2 Place of English Language – Singaporean Perspective

1963 saw the end of colonial rule in Singapore, but English, the language of the colonial government, remained a major language in this multi-cultural nation. Today, English language serves as the lingua franca for the three major ethnic groups – Chinese, Malays and Indians – in Singapore. Along with the Chinese, Malay and Tamil languages, English language is also an official language in Singapore. The choice of English as a lingua franca in post-colonial self-rule was really one of pragmatism. In the early self-rule years, Singapore was a struggling economy. The exigent need for economic survival prompted the Singaporean government to adopt English as the dominant language in the schools and in businesses. Today, English is used extensively in different domains of life in Singapore. It is primarily the language of science and technology, medicine, education, banking and commerce, social interactions and tele-communications, and in parliament and all legal proceedings (even though most of the transactions and documents are also translated into the other official languages).

It is also the medium of instruction for all grade levels – from primary, secondary to tertiary. As such, it is deemed very necessary to attain a creditable level of proficiency in the language – a sentiment reinforced by Rear Admiral (National Service) Lui Tuck Yew at the 2007 Official Launch of the Speak Good English Movement (SGEM) on 31 July 2007 (See full text at Appendix A).

“SGEM was conceived because it was deemed significant and necessary that Singaporeans speak good English to access international networks and markets. It was considered important for our children and youth to possess the ability to speak and write good English as this is an advantage for them in a global setting. Because of these reasons, some may view the ability to speak good English primarily as a pragmatic skill that will confer us an advantage in transactions and dealings, prized for its functional or utilitarian value.”

Radm (NS) Lui Tuck Yew,
2007 Official Launch of the Speak Good English Movement (SGEM)

While Singaporeans in general tend to subscribe to the view that English-medium education will level up the language proficiency of Singaporean children, research on the impact of ELT in post-colonial countries raises concerns about the detracting value of mother tongues and local cultural values (Phillipson, 1992). The Singaporean government under the then Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, in the 1970s, realised the erosion of the local mother tongue languages and introduced a bilingual policy to ensure that all Singaporean children learned their mother tongues in schools as well. The importance accrued to English language was substantial, and it still is today. However, increasingly language professionals in Singapore have been questioning the spread of English in the country. Chew (1999), in her paper, makes reference to the concept of “linguicism” introduced by Phillipson (1992), which defines how the spread of English is “equated to the imposition of the cultural, social, emotional, and linguistic norms of the dominating society onto the dominated society, thus maintaining an unequal allocation of power and resources” (Chew, 1999, p. 39)

Despite the reservation about the use of English language as the medium of instruction in Singaporean schools, the status of English was and still is very high in the country. The pragmatic value attached to the English language in schools is reflected by the emphasis on good English grades at critical grade level examinations. For instance, amongst other requirements, a student must score at least a minimum credit pass of C6 grade for English Language at the General Certificate of Education ‘Ordinary’ Level Examination in order to secure a place in a two-year pre-University course (Junior College), at the end of which they sit the General Certificate of Education ‘Advanced’ Level Examination. The language proficiency focus is again reiterated at the General Certificate of Education ‘Advanced’ Level Examination – a minimum grade of D7 for General Paper¹ is compulsory if a student wants to apply for entry into one of the local universities. In addition, students who enter the universities with an English language grade that is worse than B4 will need to take the Qualifying English Test besides the tertiary courses that they sign up for. Details of the entry requirements for the two- and three-year pre-university courses are at Appendix B. These

¹ General Paper is the English language equivalent paper taken by grades 11-12 students (In Singapore, these grades 11-12 students are either in a 2-year junior college or 3-year pre-university institution).

requirements underscore the Singapore Ministry of Education's acknowledgement of the importance of the English language and the critical role it plays in the political, social and economic realms in the country.

1.1.3 Engaging Pedagogies to Enhance Learning – Singapore Ministry of Education's Perspective and Initiatives

The Singapore Ministry of Education recognises the positive effect of engaging teaching methodologies on student learning, be it in English language or other subjects. Through its annual Work Plan Seminars, the Ministry has been encouraging schools to explore innovative approaches in their teaching. The *T.L.L.M. (Teach Less, Learn More)* and *P.E.T.A.L.S. (use of Pedagogy, learning Experiences, Tone of environment, Assessment for learning, Learning content)* frameworks, introduced in 2005 and 2006 respectively, are some of the initiatives that advocate student engagement in lessons. In response to these exhortations, English language teachers have, in recent years, attempted to explore different exciting approaches to engage their students. The Singapore Ministry of Education has also been encouraging and supporting schools in their innovative approaches. The upshot is that the effectiveness of the innovative efforts by schools varies from school to school. Schools realise that it is a journey that they have embarked on and it may take some years for them to see the fruit of their labour.

All such engaging pedagogical practices aim at encouraging and improving our learners' acquisition of the English language. However, such a pragmatic view about the English language is very much contingent upon a learner's extrinsic motivation for learning the language. What will be most heartening to see will be a case of learners being driven by an intrinsic motivation to learn the language, i.e., learners learn English because "they like the language, the culture or because they like learning a new language" (Despagne, 2010, p. 60).

Cognizant of the effect of reading on language development, the Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD) of the Ministry of Education (Singapore) designs their English Language curriculum based on the principle that a love for reading can contribute to the development of a strong foundation in the English Language. To achieve this vision, a pedagogic model, STELLAR (Strategies for the Teaching of English Language and Reading) has been developed. This pedagogic model comprises three major teaching strategies: Shared Book Approach (SBA); Modified Language Experience Approach (MLEA); and Learning Centres (LC). Of the three approaches, SBA has the most evident bearing on the focus of this research study.

The STELLAR programme started with primary one classes in 2006 and was later introduced in stages to the other primary levels. The focus on reading through the narrative genre is quite explicit; pupils are exposed to some 29 fictional stories through the SBA programme. This emphasis on the narrative genre familiar to primary one pupils underpins the objective delineated in the Singapore English Language Syllabus for primary schools: “The writing and representation of narratives allow pupils to narrate situations and express feelings and points of view about the world or fictional worlds through imaginative accounts” (CPDD English Language Syllabus 2010, p. 65). This programme, being introduced on an extensive scale at the national level, is generally accepted by schools in the country, and may be perceived as general acceptance by teachers in the primary schools. However, the perceived acceptance does raise a question: Do practitioners in the schools adopt the programme because it is recommended by the Ministry of Education or because they believe in the value of stories and storytelling in the learning of English language?

The exhortation to English language teachers to use storytelling as a teaching and learning tool is also recommended by storytelling advocates such as Hamilton and Weiss (1990), Nelson (1989), Wright (2002), Ellis and Brewster (2002), Grugeon and Gardner (2000), Gee (1999), Randolph (2001), Synder (2003), Mallan (1991), Ellis and Brewster (2002) and McQuillan and Tse (1998). While their recommendations may be compelling and their observations convincing, there may be a need to verify them with practitioners who may not necessarily share their views.

In 2006, with a grant of \$234,000 from the Singapore Ministry of Education Innovation Funds, I organised a 22-hour module, *Teaching English Language Skills through Drama and Storytelling* for eight secondary schools. That positive gesture set the direction for the Principals in these eight secondary schools that year and some of them continued with the storytelling and drama programme even after the completion of that pilot project. However, this is only one project with eight schools, and the findings have yet to be supported by similar or further research.

The focus and emphasis on storytelling or the use of the narrative genre seems positive. The question is: Has this approach been effective? That brings us to a related question: How do English language teachers in Singapore feel about this approach?

1.2 Rationale for the Study

Whether a learner is motivated to learn a language is very much influenced by his or her perception of, attitude towards, and belief in, the language, and how easy or difficult it is to

learn the language. The same argument applies to the language teacher - a language teacher's motivation to explore varied teaching pedagogies is also contingent upon his or her perception of, attitude towards, and belief in, the language he or she is charged to teach. Figure 1 below draws very broad links between perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and motivations of the learner, and also the practitioner.

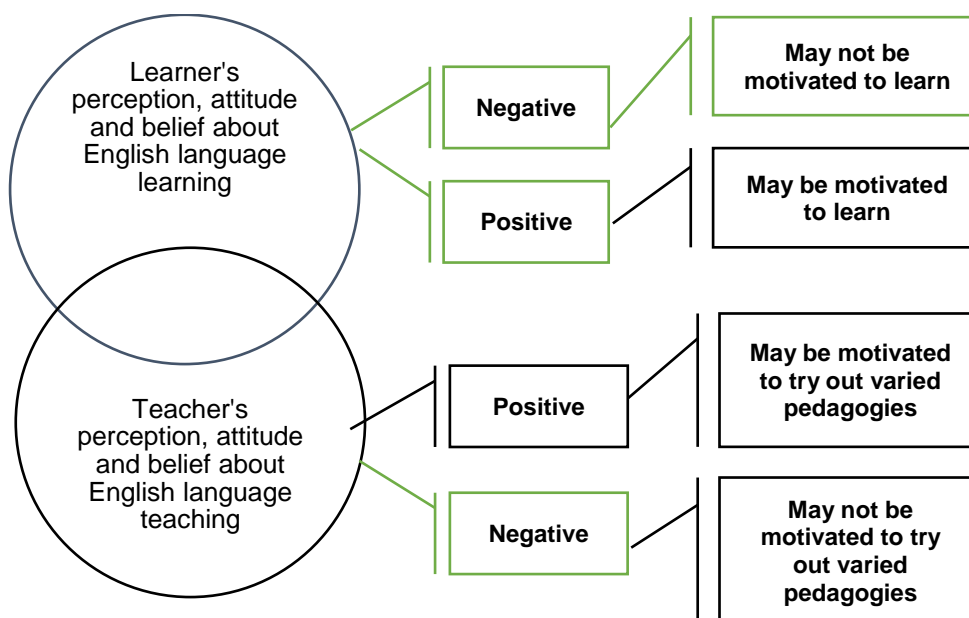


Figure 1. Perception, Attitude, Belief and Motivation in Relation to English Language Teaching and Learning

A teacher's approach to the teaching of English can affect the learner's attitude towards the language and hence, his or her learning of the language. Competent teachers know that learners who find meaning in their learning will be motivated to learn. Hence, they will often integrate experiential learning into their language teaching, and relate their teaching to real-life experiences to make English language learning interesting and relevant to their students.

Despaigne (2010) bemoans the fact that English language teaching in Mexico is "known to be deficient as the teachers have no specialized didactical training" (p. 62). According to her, some of the teachers' oral communication proficiency is not of a high level. She also observes that English language teaching in her country is largely through "repetition drills, rote learning and memorization" (p. 62), and very much dependent on textbook learning.

Thankfully, the situation in Singapore is not as pathetic as the picture painted by Despaigne. The Singapore Ministry of Education actively recommends engaging teaching methods in schools especially in the foundation years in the primary schools. The problem is that this

injunction for innovative practices seems to be based on the assumption that all teachers are capable of designing and implementing innovative or novel pedagogical approaches to engage students. Are they really? There are also other issues the teachers have to grapple with – class size and undue emphasis on examination results. In Singapore, large class sizes are normal – about 30 students in each of the primary one² or two classes, but about 40 for the primary 3 to 6 classes. The high premium parents and school administrators place on tangible academic achievements can take its toll on the teachers as well.

Figure 2 below foregrounds an important concern: Are Singaporean teachers in the primary schools capable of, or confident about, adopting innovative pedagogical approaches or programmes such as using storytelling as a way of introducing and consolidating language skills?

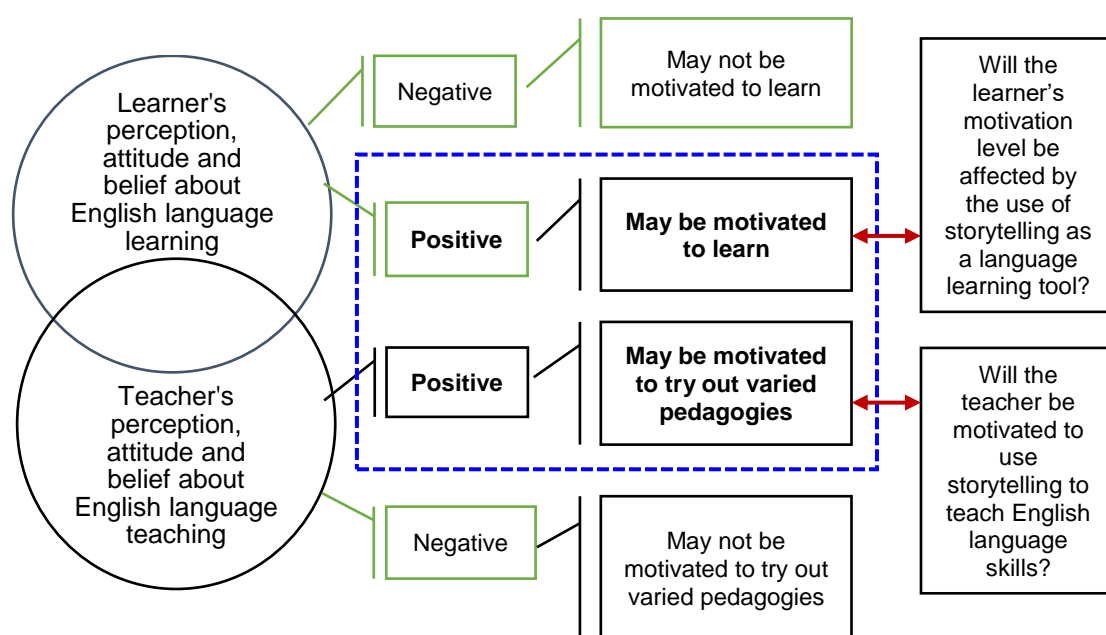


Figure 2. Motivation Level and the Use of Storytelling as an English Language Teaching and Learning Resource

Singaporean teachers' reservation about adopting storytelling as a formal language teaching tool may not be unfounded. This is because while literature on the use of storytelling in children's language development tends to be very positive about its gains, research on the use of storytelling in the English language classroom is not always definitive about its value in language learning.

² Primary one is equivalent to grade 1.

Literature and research on storytelling seems to suggest a causal link between story-based instruction and target language improvement (Ghosn, 2002; Emery, 1996; Klesius and Griffith, 1996; Nelson, 1989; Trachtenburg and Ferruggia, 1989; McQuillan and Tse, 1998; Mallan, 1991; Hamilton and Weiss, 1990; Wright, 2002; Ellis and Brewster, 2002; Grugeon and Gardner, 2000; and Gee, 1999). However, the causal link suggested by storytelling advocates needs to be verified and supported by sufficient empirical research. My study aims at investigating some of their claims and finding out what teachers think about using storytelling as a language learning tool. Chapter two, Literature Review, of this present study focuses on this issue, and critically examines the various claims by storytelling advocates and researchers in relation to English language learning.

Storytelling advocates are convinced that hearing or reading stories improves language skills such as vocabulary building, comprehension, sequencing and story recall. They also believe that it encourages creative writing as it fires children's imagination and inspires them to tell and write their own stories. The passion and fervent beliefs of these storytelling advocates are evident but the possible language improvements that they claim can come with children being engaged in storytelling activities need research backing. Even with research, it is difficult to draw direct causal links between storytelling activities and language improvements. Given the inconclusive findings, the activities suggested by these storytelling supporters can only be perceived as recommendations for teachers to explore and try out in their classrooms.

Since stories, as conceived by storytelling advocates, seem a rich resource for language teaching and learning, storytelling should serve as a powerful platform for engaging children in language learning. It is also recommended in the official curriculum for the teaching of English language in Singaporean schools. Teachers in the lower primary classes who subscribe to the STELLAR programme do carry out the SBA approach to language teaching. However, in the upper primary classes, teachers tend to be more preoccupied with preparing their pupils for the Primary School Leaving Examination³ and less religious with the STELLAR recommendation of the SBA approach to language learning. If ever storytelling is introduced at the upper primary levels in Singaporean schools, it is very often done in an unstructured and unplanned way, very much left to the interest and discretion of individual teachers. That raises the question of teachers' perceptions of such instructional method: Do teachers in Singaporean schools really believe in the merits of storytelling or story-based instruction as claimed by storytelling researchers and advocates?

³ Singaporean students take this placement examination after completing six years of primary education (at the end of grade 6).

What gets taught in the classroom is contingent upon individual teachers' perceptions of what matters in teaching and learning, and teachers' perceptions of particular instructional methodologies may not parallel the claims documented by researchers or proliferated in related literature. This is because when planning their instructional programmes, teachers actively construct "a personal theory that works for them in teaching" (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007, p. 351). How teachers perceive a set of instructional tools or materials will determine their instructional planning and selection of instructional materials, strategies and approaches. What are teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource then? This awareness is necessary because teachers' theoretical beliefs about storytelling as a language teaching and learning tool can influence their instructional practices (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007). Their perceptions will decide whether storytelling will be promoted in their classrooms, because the teacher, "guided by his/her theoretical beliefs, decides the material which suits the needs of the learners" (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007, p. 351).

If conceptualisation and implementation of instructional programmes are very much reliant on teachers' perceived notion of the value of the programmes, it may be valuable and justifiable to investigate teachers' perceptions of storytelling and story-based instruction. And if teachers' perceptions of instructional programmes are related to how lesson plans and activities are conceived and conducted, it may also be necessary to examine learners' perceptions of planned instructional programmes.

Furthermore, research on learner and instructor perceptions do not always show corroboration of findings. Wesely (2012) reported that researchers studying English learners in Georgia, Eurasia, found that learner and instructor beliefs were "quite similar" (Wesely, 2012, p. S101), but other research studies surfaced disparities between learner and instructor beliefs. Wesely, (2012, p. S101), in reviewing studies of perceptions of instructors and learners, reported instances of such mismatches: grammar teaching versus communicative approaches (Brown, 2009); frequency of use of pedagogical strategies (Bernaus and Gardner, 2008); frequency of use of target language in university-level foreign language classes (Levine, 2003); and interpretation of learners' self-expressive speech (Yoshida, 2007).

Such inconsistencies between learner and teacher perceptions of the same set of instructional activities were also reported by Ferris and Tagg (1996), Kumaravadivelu (1991), Hawkey (2006), Barkhuizen (1998), Leki and Carson (1994), Block (1996), Nunan (1989), and Lee and Bathmaker (2007).

The aforementioned studies were all conducted outside Singapore. Would the diverse perceptions of the aforementioned storytelling research prevail in the Singaporean context? Would consistencies or inconsistencies persist in the local context amongst Singaporean teachers and students? These issues will be examined critically in chapter two, Literature Review, and chapter four, Research Findings, of this present study.

1.3 Aims and Research Questions

Given that there might be a possible tension between perceptions of instructor and learner, the present study aims at investigating whether there is indeed inconsistency between teachers' and students' perceptions of the value of storytelling as a pedagogical resource, and whether inconsistency also prevails in the perceptions of teachers and their reported practices. With this debate about possible disparity in perceptions as the backdrop, the research questions for my current study are formulated as follows:

Research Question 1: What are teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?

Research Question 2: What are students' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?

Research Question 3: Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?

Research Question 4: Do teachers' reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?

Research Question 5: If storytelling were to be recommended as a strategy for teaching English language skills, what kind of implementation support would English language teachers like their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education to provide for them, and why?

1.4 Scope of the Study

Surveys of perceptions on stories or storytelling can be extensive in scope. A survey to consider teachers' views on the use of stories in the English language classroom could cover anything from whether stories or storytelling should be adopted as a pedagogical approach to what should be included in the curriculum and how it should be conducted, at which level and on which group of pupils. Most assuredly, a wide scope can be very informative. Yet, like a double-edged sword, it can lead to massive data that could be diffuse and difficult to manage. Having considered all these possible setbacks, my study centres on how teachers perceive the use of stories in their classroom in view of pupils' language learning interest and achievement (Research Question 1), and also how students perceive this mode of learning language skills (Research Question 2). Teachers' interest in stories and their use in the classroom could be affected by students' response to the use of stories

in the language learning context. It is, therefore, necessary and relevant to investigate students' perceptions of the use of stories for language learning.

Would teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a pedagogical resource affect their pedagogical approach in the English language classroom? This is another area of concern in this study and hence, the formulation of my research question 4. In this respect, I would also examine why teachers delve into, or resist using, storytelling, and what professional or even administrative support they might need to succeed in a storytelling lesson (research question 5).

All primary (grades 1 to 6), secondary (grades 7 to 10) and junior college (pre-university, grades 11-12) government and government-aided⁴ schools in Singapore are grouped into four zones for ease of monitoring by the Singapore Ministry of Education. The division of schools into zones is mainly based on their location in Singapore. Broadly speaking, schools in the north zone will be those located in the northern part of Singapore, and the south zone comprises schools located in the southern part of Singapore. Hence, we have schools in the north zone, south zone, east zone and west zone. In each zone, the schools are further divided into seven clusters, e.g. North 1, North 2, North 3, North 4, North 5, North 6 and North 7 cluster of schools. Each cluster of schools comprises 11 to 13 schools (a mix of primary and secondary). Some clusters may have a junior college as well. At the point of my present study, there were, in total, twelve schools in my cluster: six primary schools and six secondary schools.

Selection of the primary four⁵ classes (grade four) in my cluster of schools was done in consultation with the Heads of the English Department in the participating schools. I worked with the Heads of the English Department in all the twelve schools on English language issues and programmes. For my research, I invited all six primary schools to help me with my investigation. From my meetings with the Heads of the English Department, several issues were considered before deciding on the primary four teachers and pupils as my sample for the study:

⁴ Government schools are schools set up by the Singapore Ministry of Education. Government-aided schools are schools first set up and managed by private individuals or organisations, but subsequently came under the jurisdiction of the Singapore Ministry of Education.

⁵ In Singapore, children attend primary one classes (grade 1) when they are about seven years old. By primary four (grade four), they will be about ten years old.

- a) The STELLAR programme was introduced to primary one classes from 2006 in stages. Subsequently, the programme was escalated to the primary two classes, again in stages. To support teachers in these classes, Curriculum Specialists from the Curriculum Planning and Development Division⁶ of the Singapore Ministry of Education conducted workshops and lesson observations and professional dialogues with participating schools during the implementation period. At the start of my study, I felt that while primary one and two teachers were very much involved in the implementation of the STELLAR programme, they might not have the time to participate in additional surveys and interviews. Hence, I felt that it was advisable to leave the primary one and two classes alone so that they could be more focused on their respective STELLAR implementation programmes.
- b) I also decided to leave out the primary five and six classes because preparation for the Primary School Leaving Examination at primary six would usually begin in primary five for almost all schools in Singapore. That left me with primary three and four classes.
- c) The primary four classes were selected over the primary three classes because at the start of this study, I observed that some schools actually extended their STELLAR programme to the primary three classes. Data collected from teachers in the primary three classes might be biased as the teachers might feel obliged to speak positively of the use of stories in their lessons since their Principals agreed to adopt the STELLAR programme. Hence, at that point in time, it was felt that it might be judicious to just concentrate on the primary four (grade four) level.

To collect data on teachers' perceptions of storytelling, questionnaires and interviews would be administered to a small group of teachers teaching primary four classes in the six schools. Questionnaires and interviews would also be conducted with some primary four students taught by these teachers in the six primary schools. The students would randomly be selected from the primary four classes in the six schools to avoid bias (Isaac and Michael, 1982).

Before the administration of the main study questionnaires and conduct of interviews with teacher and student participants, two pilot-study questionnaires (one for the teachers and another for the students) would be conducted with a small group of teachers and students. Their responses and comments would provide invaluable inputs for the final set of

⁶ The Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD) of the Singapore Ministry of Education designs the teaching syllabuses for all schools in Singapore. When a new syllabus is launched, CPDD officers will mount workshops and consultative dialogues for teachers to help them interpret and implement the new syllabus.

questionnaires for the teacher and student participants. Details of the research design and profiles of the participants (teachers and students) are given in chapter three, Methodology and Procedures.

My five research questions aim at investigating primary school teachers' and students' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning tool. As an off-shoot from that key focus, I would also look at whether the teachers' proclaimed perceptions are played out in their classroom practices, and the reasons for the teachers' enthusiasm for, or aversion to, the use of storytelling in the classroom. Given these objectives, it would be necessary for me to examine literature and research on learners' and practitioners' perceptions of pedagogical practices pertaining to language learning in general and storytelling per se. Claims by storytelling advocates and research on storytelling are critically evaluated in my literature review in chapter two, Literature Review, of this study, vis-à-vis my research questions.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter begins with a clarification of significant concepts and terms used in this literature review and subsequent chapters before discussing literature and research on perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and practices, and relevant literature and research on the use of storytelling for English language teaching and learning. The chapter closes with a conceptual framework that serves to link my research questions identified in chapter one, Introduction, to my research findings in chapter four, Research Findings.

2.2 Clarification of Significant Concepts and Terms

2.2.1 Perceptions or Beliefs – Towards a Definition

Perception, according to the Cambridge dictionary definition, refers to “a belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem”. This dictionary definition does not seem to make a clear distinction between perception, belief or opinion.

Wesely (2012), referring to learner beliefs and perceptions, is of the view that learner beliefs, “although rarely distinguished formally from learner perceptions in the literature, have often been assumed to be more overarching and pervasive than perceptions, which have tended to focus on specific experiences. Learner beliefs have included what learners think about themselves, about the learning situation, and about the target community.” (Wesely, 2012, p. S100). This interpretation seems to suggest that perception is subsumed under beliefs.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in their 2009 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) examined “important aspects of professional development; teacher beliefs, attitudes and practices; teacher appraisal and feedback; and school leadership” (OECD, 2009, p. 1) in 23 participating countries. The 2009 TALIS did not seem to include “perceptions” when it looked at teacher beliefs, attitudes and practices. TALIS focused on teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning instead of specific perceptions about teaching and learning. Perhaps like Wesely (2012), OECD might have deemed it more appropriate to use broad concepts such as beliefs rather than perceptions in an international survey of such a colossal scale.

I concur with Wesely (2012) that “beliefs” tend to be broader than “perceptions” in scope. However, in my study, I am focussing on teachers’ and students’ perceptions – a specific set of experiences – of storytelling, and the perceptions might hint at the teachers’ and students’ beliefs about storytelling.

2.2.2 Stories or Storytelling

a) Sources of Stories

At the mention of stories, most people tend to think of fairy tales, storybooks, or any narratives in some formal print or non-print form. That seems a rather limiting definition. I tend to subscribe to the definition by Wright (2002, p. 1) who defines “stories” in a very broad sense to “range from full stories in a book to snippets of behaviour”, and they include “any descriptions of dramatic events in fact or fiction: traditional stories, local legends, contemporary fiction, the news, personal anecdotes, stories made by students...offered through...personal storytelling, television, theatre, cinema, newspaper, public events.” (p. 1).

Narratives need not be found in just children’s literature or novels; the source is far more wide-ranging. This view resonates with that held by McQuillan and Tse (1998) and Mallan (1991) who assert that there is a prevalence of narratives in individuals’ lives. In fact, Mallan is of the view that storytelling is “so basic to human existence that we often cannot see that we all engage in telling some form of story every day of our lives” (Mallan, 1991, p. 5). Expanding on this view, McQuillan and Tse explain that individuals use narratives to organise and make sense of past experiences and to understand new information. Indeed, natural interest in and familiarity with narratives make storytelling a powerful vehicle for providing rich language input and captivating students’ interest (McQuillan and Tse, 1998, p. 18).

b) Storytelling

Storytelling is an activity and at the heart of this activity is a story. The story may be narrated orally, or presented in the written medium (or media), through a reenactment or series of reenactments (skits, plays, dramatisation), or recorded on film and stored electronically in a digital form, or through a combination of oral, narrative, music and performance art forms such as art or dance.

c) Storytelling in the Context of English Language Teaching

(i) Language Value of Stories

Stories, narrated orally or told in the form of books or in digital form, are heavily reliant on words, and hence provide an immense source of language experience for children (Wright, 2009, p. 4). Told orally or through books, stories “introduce children to language items and sentence constructions...” and children can “build up a reservoir of language in this way.” (Wright, 2009, p. 5). One exemplary illustration of this is the use of simple past tense which children pick up readily and naturally from listening to or reading stories.

As a follow-up activity, the reenactment of stories by children could have tremendous linguistic value. Cremin et al. (2016) maintain that narrative and imaginary play are “valuable strategies for the development of spoken language and literacy within early years and elementary classrooms” (p. 1).

(ii) Relevance of Storytelling to this Research Study

In this present study, the focus is on storytelling and the value it offers rather than the forms it might take. Wright’s (2009) assertion about stories being a rich language resource forms a very compelling impetus for my study. My primary interest is the potential language benefits stories could offer, regardless of the medium through which they are presented.

2.3 Literature and Research on Beliefs, Perceptions, Attitudes and Practices

2.3.1 Teachers’ Perceptions and their Instructional Practices

Teachers’ beliefs, perceptions, attitudes and instructional practices are closely linked to the strategies they use “for coping with challenges in their daily professional life ... and they shape students’ learning environment and influence student motivation and achievement” (OECD, 2009, p. 89). Lee and Bathmaker (2007) are also of the view that teachers’ theoretical beliefs and perceptions can influence their instructional practices. Drawing on their professional knowledge and experience, teachers actively construct “a personal theory that works for them in teaching” (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007, p. 351). These personal theories form “a significant factor ... in the classroom” (Prabhu, 1988, p. 230). Seen in this light, how teachers perceive a set of instructional tools or materials will influence the way they plan and execute their instructional programmes. In short, perceptions may influence teachers’ practices; what they subscribe to may determine what they emphasize in the classroom.

While OECD (2009), Lee and Bathmaker (2007) and Prabhu (1988) may affirm the link between teachers’ beliefs, perceptions and their behaviours, other researchers (Wilcox-Herzog, 2002; and Charlesworth et al., 1993) seem less conclusive about this link between teachers’ perceptions, beliefs and their practices.

Wilcox-Herzog’s (2002) study with 47 early childhood educators aimed at examining the link between beliefs and behaviours of early childhood teachers. To compare the participants’ teaching beliefs with their teaching behaviour, Wilcox-Herzog looked at several parameters such as teacher sensitivity, teacher play styles, teacher verbalisations/verbal responsibility,

and teacher involvement. Her findings revealed that there were “no significant relationships between teachers’ beliefs and their behaviours” (Wilcox-Herzog, 2002, p. 96).

Charlesworth et al. (1993) observed 204 kindergarten teachers in their classroom interactions and found that the teachers’ reported developmentally appropriate beliefs were “moderately correlated” (p. 272) with their reported appropriate practices. There was, however, a “somewhat stronger relationship” (p. 272) between the teachers’ developmentally inappropriate beliefs and inappropriate practices. This might mean “when it comes to inappropriate practices, these teachers were more likely to teach in line with their beliefs” (p. 272). In other words, while most teachers might view the appropriate beliefs to be fairly important, they might not include these developmentally appropriate activities frequently in their practices and might use inappropriate practices more regularly instead (p. 272).

The link between teachers’ beliefs, perceptions and their practices seemed unclear, given the different findings. Did my investigation of teachers’ perceptions of storytelling affirm or undermine the link between perception and practice? This issue will be addressed in chapter four, Research Findings, of this present study. Whether the link is clear or uncertain, I am inclined to agree with OECD (2009), Lee and Bathmaker (2007) and Prabhu (1988) that teachers’ beliefs and perceptions may influence their practices. Whether this position is supported by my findings or not, it is important to find out why, as I believe it will be useful information for the educators.

2.3.2 Teachers’ Differing Perceptions and Instructional Practices

While it is generally acknowledged that teachers’ instructional practices are often informed by their theoretical beliefs, perceptions amongst teachers are not always consistent. In fact, studies on teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about their practices often reflect disparity between perception and practice (Bruns and Mogharreban, 2007; Proctor and Niemeyer, 2001; Minor et al., 2002; Joseph, 2012).

Bruns and Mogharreban (2007), in their study of early intervention and child development programmes, examined Head Start teachers’ and pre-kindergarten teachers’ beliefs about including children with special needs in early care and education environments. Using a survey to assess teacher perceptions, they reported that both Head Start teachers and Pre-kindergarten teachers indicated that all children could learn and that young children with or without disabilities were more alike than different. Both groups of teachers also alleged that

they were competent in arranging appropriate classroom environment to meet all children's needs (p. 234). The two researchers reported that over 80% of the Head Start and Pre-kindergarten teachers concurred that they "could effectively observe children with and without disabilities to learn about their developmental skills and needs" (p. 234). Yet only about 40% of them felt that they were familiar with the characteristics of children with motor impairments (p. 234). A high percentage (over 90%) of the participants claimed that they were capable of using positive guidance methods and efficacious strategies to "encourage positive behaviour of all children with and without disabilities" (p. 234, 235). Yet, they felt that their most exigent areas of training pertained to "behavioral issues", "communication strategies", and "handling and positioning" (p. 234) – suggesting their lack of confidence in supporting those children's needs.

Proctor and Niemeyer (2001) conducted a qualitative research to identify beliefs about inclusion of six preservice teachers serving young children (ages 3 to 5) with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The two researchers analysed responses from the preservice teachers' group and individual interviews as well as reflective writings. They noted that the preservice teachers in their study "valued inclusion and believed that inclusion is a positive experience in most situations" (p. 64). However, they also reported that the preservice teachers "had reservations whether meeting the needs of each child could always take place in inclusive settings" (p. 64), believing that inclusion "might not be a positive experience if a child with disabilities in the classroom consistently demands teacher energy and distracts other children from the learning process impeding their progress" (p. 64). This finding could suggest a mismatch between beliefs and practices; it seemed to imply that while the preservice teachers' beliefs about inclusion were positive, they might not be confident of their abilities "to plan, instruct, and manage an inclusive classroom" (Bruns and Mogharreban, 2007, p. 230).

Minor et al.'s (2002) investigation of preservice teachers' perceptions of characteristics of effective teachers also yielded unexpected findings. They administered the Preservice Teachers' Perceptions of Characteristics of Effective Teachers Survey (PTPCETS) and the Wicher-Travers (1999) Survey of Educational Beliefs (WTSEB) to 134 preservice teachers to ascertain their perceptions of characteristics of effective teachers and to investigate whether these perceptions were related to their educational beliefs. Their findings showed that, based on their educational beliefs, the preservice teachers were distributed thus: "28.4% transmissive, 12.7% progressive, and 59.0% eclectic" (p. 119). From the seven themes that emerged from the participants' perceptions of the characteristics of effective teachers, "student-centred characteristics" was ranked highest, followed by "effective classroom and

behaviour manager”, “competent instructor”, “ethical”, “enthusiastic about teaching”, “knowledgeable about subject”, and “professional”, in that order (p. 119). The findings indicated that there was “no statistically significant relationship between students’ levels of educational beliefs and each of the seven perception categories” (p. 120).

Admittedly, Minor et al.’s (2002) analyses were very detailed; their findings also showed that the preservice teachers’ seven perception categories of effective teachers were not related to their “race, year of study, and preferred grade level for teaching” (p. 119). This finding is not surprising, given that teachers teaching elementary schools are likely to rank the characteristics of effective teachers differently from their counterparts in middle or high schools, as their students are so different in terms of maturity and development.

Joseph (2012), in his study of teacher and student perceptions about the teaching and learning of history at upper secondary levels, also found that there was a mismatch between what the teacher participants indicated in their questionnaire about teaching historical concepts and their responses on the same topic in their focus group interviews. In their questionnaire responses, the teachers alleged that they taught historical concepts to their students. However, when probed at the interview, the majority of them admitted that they did not really set out to teach historical concepts. Instead, they taught facts presented in the history texts. They further confessed that if concepts were taught at all, they were taught incidentally (Joseph, 2012, p. 86). Quite obviously, there was a discrepancy between what the teachers perceived to be the right thing to do in the classroom and their practices.

The studies by Bruns and Mogharreban (2007), Proctor and Niemeyer (2001), Minor et al. (2002) and Joseph (2012) suggested a mismatch between teachers’ perceptions, beliefs and practices. It is possible that this difference may also be observed in the comparison of perceptions and practices of teachers in Singapore regarding the use of storytelling and story-related activities in the English language classroom. Whether Singaporean teachers’ classroom practices include storytelling activities may have to do with the way they perceive the value of such activities. But then the assumption is that their practices reflect their perceptions, which may not be the case. It is possible that some teachers may use storytelling activities as fun energisers or enrichment activities rather than core learning and teaching strategies. Hence, their practices may not reflect the value they attach to storytelling and story-related activities. The reverse may also be true – exclusion of storytelling activities from their classroom practices may not necessarily suggest an aversion to or a disbelief in the power of storytelling as a language teaching and learning tool. Teachers may avoid storytelling activities because of administrative reasons.

The aforementioned issues are concerns that inform my teacher questionnaire focus and coverage. At my interviews with the teacher participants, efforts were made to discuss these concerns with them, and the outcomes are discussed and deliberated in the analysis of the questionnaire and interview responses in chapter four, Research Findings, of this present study.

2.3.3 Learners' Beliefs, Perceptions, Attitudes and Motivations

Motivations to learn a language are very much influenced by the learner's perceptions of, beliefs about, and attitude towards, the language. A learner, who perceives English to be a dominant language of science and medicine, technology, aviation and economics worldwide, may hold the belief that learning English would offer him or her many pragmatic returns.

But, this positive belief may not reflect the same positive attitude towards (or motivation for) the language. This is because while a learner's perception of a language may reflect his belief about that language, beliefs can "lead to different behavioural attitudes" (Despagne, 2010, p. 58). Despagne, who conducted a study of difficulties of Mexicans in learning English, holds the view that "Mexicans' attitudes towards English will depend on how they perceive the power relationship between Mexico and the United States and their respective languages" (p. 58).

Just as attitudes may differ, perceptions of English may not be consistent amongst users of the language. Phillipson, referring to the learning of English in non-English speaking countries, commented that while the general perception is that English opens doors for many, it may disadvantage others (Phillipson, 2009, p. 148). Learners of English may not perceive the language favourably but they could have learnt it for the material gains it offers (Chew, 1999, p. 38). In other words, learners motivated or driven by the pragmatic value of English may not hold a positive attitude towards the language.

In many post-colonial countries, Singapore being one of them, English is very much entrenched in the local culture. Pennycook (2010), in tracing the development of English in the Philippines, noted that English, an American colonial legacy, has been "relocalised in Philippine lives, localities and letters" (p. 111). In such countries, the citizens' perceptions of English may not be so distinct because English is no more the same as the English language used during the colonial years. How would people in former colonial countries respond when asked what their perception of English is – the colonial English or the "relocalised" post-colonial English that has become irrevocably woven into their everyday practices?

In view of the aforementioned arguments, it seems that the relationship between beliefs, perceptions, attitudes and motivation in learning a language is never a simple correlational relationship. Does this inconsistency between belief and attitude prevail amongst my student participants? Do they like storytelling because it is fun for them and not because they can learn language skills (vocabulary, speaking, writing, reading skills) in a meaningful way? These are salient questions in my analysis of the student questionnaire and interview data, and they will be addressed in chapter four, Research Findings, of this thesis.

2.3.4 Learners' Differing Perceptions and Attitudes

Like Despaigne (2010), other researchers such as Arslan and Akbarov's (2012) and Focho (2011) are of the view that while perceptions may reflect a learner's motivation to learn a language, the learner's perception of a language may not reflect his or her attitude exactly. For instance, Despaigne's study (2010) illustrates the point that when a learner learns English, it does not automatically mean that he or she likes the language. Despaigne surveyed 300 Universidad Popular Autonoma del Estado de Puebla students in A1 and A2 English classes. Her respondents perceived English as very much a product of the American culture. About 60.3% of her respondents did not like the American culture, yet nearly 90% of them knew that English was extremely important to them. In fact, almost 99% of them thought that it would help them in their professional growth (Despaigne, 2010, p. 65). They knew the economic and pragmatic value of English enough to want to learn that language, as the Mexicans perceived English as "a synonym for the United States, "el gran Norte" (The Grand North), the American dream" (p. 61).

Such incongruence between perception and attitude was also observed in Arslan and Akbarov's (2012) study of EFL learners' perceptions and attitudes towards General English and English for specific purposes. They administered a 15-question questionnaire with 100 students from the International University of Sarajevo. Amongst their findings, they noted that 93% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "English will be useful in my future job." (p. 27), and 78% indicated that "Using English indicates prestige and civilisation" (p. 27). In addition, 88% of them actually responded positively to the question, "Do you think that these (EFL) classes will be helpful to you in your future job?". Yet, when asked, "Do you think these classes should be obligatory?", only 36% responded in the affirmative (p. 29). These findings seemed to suggest that while they perceived English positively, they were not so enthusiastic about these classes. This finding is of great interest to me as it relates to my concern about teachers' and students' perceptions of and attitudes towards storytelling in the English language classroom.

Focho (2011) who examined student perceptions of English as a developmental tool in Cameroon foregrounded this mismatch between perceptions and attitudes as well. Focho conducted her study with 70 EFL (English as a foreign language) students whose age ranged from 17 to 21 years old. A questionnaire covering four different facets of English development – English for academic success, English for international job opportunities, English for international communication and English for global education – was administered to ascertain students' perceptions of the importance of the English language to the four aspects of development. Following that questionnaire survey, the researcher conducted “whole class, group and individual discussions plus inspirational activities” and “further data was collected by monitoring class participation, attitude towards homework and scores in class tests” (p. 13). In her data analysis, Focho tabulated the students' pre- and post-activities scores.

Focho's findings showed that the students' perceptions of the importance of English for academic success were very positive – a composite mean score of 3.15 based on a scale of 1 to 4. The composite mean scores for the students' perceptions of the other three facets of English development were lower – contribution of English to international employment (2.14); importance of English in international communication (2.77); and contribution of English to global education (2.60). Focho's findings seemed to indicate that the students' perceptions of English for academic success did not corroborate very well their perceptions of the other facets of English development, especially English for international employment. These data seemed to suggest that while the students recognised the importance of English for academic success, they did not think it would help greatly in gaining international employment. Her findings would seem to suggest that there is a disparity between the students' perceptions of the different facets of English development.

Focho attributed the mismatch to teaching approaches in schools. It is possible, but I would extend from her conclusion to emphasize the importance of teachers' perceptions of English learning and the value of English beyond the classroom. Teachers' perceptions of English and its value will inform their pedagogical practices which, in turn, will affect students' motivation to learn the language. This is another area I explored in my study. My assumption is that if teachers perceive storytelling to be an effective way of teaching English language skills, then they will infuse storytelling into their English language lessons and programmes. My conjecture is that teachers' classroom practices will possibly reflect their perceptions. Does my conjecture hold? Chapter four, Research Findings, of this thesis addresses this issue.

2.3.5 Learners' Differing Perceptions, Beliefs and Practices

Other research studies have reported that even if a learner is aware of the value of learning a language and is positive about it, this may not translate into practice for the learner. This was Alkaff's (2013) observation when he looked at students' attitudes and perceptions towards learning English. He was concerned about students' opinions regarding the importance of English, whether they thought it was difficult to learn that language and where the difficulty lay, how frequently the students used English and in which particular areas, and how the students could improve their English. Using a questionnaire of 17 statements (Statements 1 to 17) and four questions (Questions 18 to 21) to elicit relevant responses to his concerns, he found that 93.6% of his 47 science and arts students either agreed or strongly agreed with the questionnaire statement, "Learning and speaking in English is fun". 91.5% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I like to listen to people speaking English", and 95.8% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I really want to learn English" (p. 110). His participants were very positive in attitude and perception of English. All the students either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "Learning English is important for my future" (p. 111). In fact, all of them either agreed or strongly agreed that they needed English when they travelled abroad – "I need English when I travel abroad" (p. 111).

However, these positive attitudes and perceptions of English were not translated into action. In response to the question, "How often do you use English outside the classroom?", 12.7% said that they used it a lot, 44.7% used it sometimes, 31.9% rarely used it and 10.6% never used it at all (p. 113).

In some studies, students might not be consistent in their responses, hence discrepancies between the learners' beliefs and practices might result. Nazara's (2011) study looked at the perceptions of students of the English Teaching Study Program of FKIP-UKI Jakarta towards the development of their English-speaking skills. Using a questionnaire, she investigated five aspects of the students' English speaking skill development: students' belief in their speaking mastery level; students' eagerness to develop their speaking skills; students' view of opportunities and time they had for practising speaking; students' perceptions of speaking class materials, activities and facilities; and students' view of classroom climate and psychological barriers. In terms of students' view of classroom climate and psychological barriers, the findings seemed to surface some inconsistencies in the students' perceptions and practices. About 60.0% of the students revealed that they were too shy to speak English for fear of being laughed at by their classmates, but 62.5% alleged that they always

communicated in English with lecturers in all speaking and non-speaking classes (Nazara, 2011, p. 39).

Would this divergence between learners' beliefs and practices or attitudes be seen in my study? Would my student participants feel that storytelling could only provide fun rather than be used for language learning? If their teachers were to use storytelling in their English lessons just to teach language skills instead of using it as a fun tuning-in activity, would the students still want their teachers to continue with those storytelling-infused English lessons? These are issues that underpin the objective of question 8 of the student questionnaire of my current research.

Joseph (2012), in his study, found that students' beliefs as reflected in their questionnaire responses were not borne out in their focus group interview responses. Their survey questionnaire responses indicated understanding of a multiplicity of factors affecting events, but during the focus group discussions, they provided only "single factor explanations" (p. 89) for historical events. Based on their responses, it would seem that the students believed that an event was "caused by a single factor rather than a mix of different factors" (p. 89).

Would such disparities between beliefs and practice be observed in my study of primary school pupils' perceptions of storytelling as a language learning tool? In question 7 of my student questionnaire, "Has storytelling helped you in your learning of English language skills?", the objective is to invite the students to talk about specific language skills they have learnt from the infusion of storytelling into their English language lessons. If the student participants were to tick "all the time" or "sometimes" but elaborated on that response with "because it is fun", or "it is interesting" or any response not related to language skills, then incongruence between their perception of storytelling and the perceived benefits might possibly prevail. That is precisely the purpose of the interviews with the students – to provide opportunities for the students to clarify and explain their perceptions.

2.3.6 Teachers' and Students' Differing Perceptions of Instructional Practices and Language Teaching Approaches

All teachers and students bring to the classroom their respective perceptions and philosophy of teaching and learning (Joseph, 2012). They have their own expectations of the roles of teachers and students in the teaching and learning process. According to Joseph (2012), "very often there appears to be a gap in what teachers and students expect of each other in the classroom" (p. 81). It is no surprise that inconsistencies may prevail with language teaching approaches in general, as attested by research on language teaching approaches

by Joong et al. (2009), Ferris and Tagg (1996), Kumaravadivelu (1991), Brown (2009), Bernaus and Gardner (2008) and Hawkey (2006). Their studies highlighted a possible disparity between teachers' and students' perceptions.

In their investigation of the perceptions of students, parents and teachers about China's education reforms in grades 7 and 8, Joong et al. (2009) observed that while most teachers claimed that they were using more activity-based teaching and supporting a greater variety of learning modes than before, the student respondents reported that the teachers used "lecture and individualized learning methods predominantly" (p. 150).

Ferris and Tagg (1996) conducted a survey to find out what types of listening and speaking tasks subject-matter instructors from four different tertiary institutions in California expected or required of their students. They focused especially on ESL students to establish if they could accomplish the listening and speaking tasks successfully. Their findings showed that instructors' requirements differed across academic discipline, type of institution and class size. They also noted that the degree of interaction reported in respondents' classes varied significantly across academic discipline (p. 48).

Brown's (2009) study aimed at identifying and comparing teachers' and students' ideals of effective teacher behaviours. He administered a 24-item, Likert-scale questionnaires with 49 teachers and 1,600 first and second year university L2 students. His findings showed that the teacher participants seemed to "value communicative approaches to L2 pedagogy, where information exchange takes precedence over discrete-point grammar practice" (p. 53). However, the student participants did not appreciate the communicative approaches as much as the teachers. The students seemed to favour grammar teaching more than their teachers. In short, the teacher and student participants' perceptions of ideal teaching practices demonstrated "disparate beliefs" (p. 54).

The study by Bernaus and Gardner (2008) examined teachers' and students' perceptions of the use of 26 pedagogical strategies (12 innovative and 14 traditional strategies), and the effects of those strategies. For their perceptions investigation, they administered questionnaires to 31 English teachers and 694 students. Their findings showed that the students and teachers had similar perception of 10 of the 14 traditional strategies. However, the teachers and students did not agree on the frequency of the use of the 12 innovative strategies. Of the 12 innovative strategies that the teachers claimed that they had used, 6 were not perceived likewise by their students (p. 391).

While Kumaravadivelu's (1991) study also investigated teacher and student perceptions, he had a slightly different emphasis. He focused on identifying potential sources of mismatch by exploring the learner's and teacher's perceptions of the nature, goals and demands of selected language-learning tasks. From his study, he identified ten potential sources of mismatch: cognitive, communicative, linguistic, pedagogic, strategic, cultural, evaluative, procedural, instructional and attitudinal. His premise was that a "knowledge of potential sources of mismatch between teacher intention and learner interpretation will help us sensitise ourselves to the exact demands made by language-learning tasks" (p. 106). Ultimately, the more we know about the "learner's personal approaches and personal concepts, the better and more productive our intervention will be" (p. 107).

Hawkey (2006), on the other hand, looked at teachers' perceptions of the Communicative Approach to language teaching. Hawkey did a fairly ambitious study, looking at seven case-study schools that spanned the elementary, middle and high school levels. He conducted questionnaires and interviews with his participants. Hawkey's findings showed that students' perceptions of some of their classroom language learning activities differed from those of their teachers, as evidenced by the marked difference between their rank ordering of the activities. For instance, the students ranked grammar exercises fifth as compared to the teachers' eleventh. The students perceived pair work as less prominent while the teachers ranked this activity second in their rank ordering.

2.3.7 Teachers' and Students' Differing Perceptions of the Usefulness of Digital Instructional Tools

Our digital age, which enables unprecedented access to information technology, requires modifications to teaching and learning processes. Growing Interests in how information and communication technology (ICT) can be harnessed for teaching and learning have led to studies with positive findings, e.g. improvement in writing efficacy (Xu et al., 2011) and listening comprehension (Verdugo and Belmonte, 2007) using digital stories or storytelling. Other studies using digital stories or storytelling also reported favourable outcomes, e.g. improvement in "learning motivation, attitude, problem-solving capability and learning achievements" in science (Hung et al., 2012, p. 376) and improvement in children's motivation to learn (Yuksel-Arslan et al., 2016).

Children today are digital natives, very comfortable and versatile with the use of ICT. What about teachers? How competent are they in managing ICT in the classroom? What are their perceptions of the use of ICT in their practice? Cope and Ward (2002) investigated teachers' perceptions about the integration of learning technology into classrooms. Their findings

underscore the importance of teachers' perceptions of learning technologies as they are instrumental in the successful integration of learning technologies in their instruction.

It is also possible that teachers' and students' perceptions of instructional tools may not be consistent. Parker (2007) examined student and staff perceptions of the usefulness of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) resources in learning English as a Second Language in self-access centres in the New Zealand tertiary system. Parker conducted her study using a staff and student questionnaire, follow-up interviews and field notes. In general, the students perceived CALL to be useful: 32.4% - "sometimes useful"; 40.3% - "useful"; and 27.4% - "very useful". The teachers' perceptions about the usefulness of CALL were, on the whole, positive: "sometimes useful" (16.7%), "useful" (27.8%) and "very useful" (55.6%).

There were discrepancies when the teachers' and students' responses to the usefulness of CALL for specific language skills such as writing, reading, listening and speaking were analysed. About 6.5% of the students felt that CALL was not useful for writing and reading skills but none of the staff felt that it was not useful. Some 62.9% of the students were of the view that CALL was either useful or very useful for learning writing skills, as compared to the teachers' responses of 66.6%. As for reading skills, 72.6% of the students found CALL either useful or very useful, as compared to 66.7% from the teachers. 71.0% of the students felt that CALL was either useful or very useful for learning listening skills, as opposed to 94.5% from the teachers. In the area of speaking skills, 29.0% of the students thought CALL was either useful or very useful but 44.5% of the teachers thought positively about CALL in this respect. On the whole, the teachers seemed to esteem the CALL system higher than the students although, in general, the students were also positive towards the CALL system. In her concluding remarks, Parker summed up her findings with this observation: while the student found CALL very useful especially in the listening domain, the staff "were significantly more positive about the usefulness of CALL than students" (Parker, 2007, p. 133).

In another study, disparity in perceptions between teachers and students also prevailed. Using direct observations, semi-structured interviews and surveys, Karakoyun and Kuzu (2016) explored 8 pre-service teachers' and 46 sixth-grade students' perceptions of digital storytelling. The pre-service teachers were trained on the use of digital storytelling and its software use for 10 hours over four weeks. At the end of their training, the pre-service teachers created their own digital stories and shared them online. The children also received training on digital storytelling using Wevideo and digital storytelling webpage, after which

they participated in digital storytelling activities for an hour per week over 10 weeks. The children created their own digital stories, receiving feedback on their scenario drafts from their peers and the pre-service teachers through the webpage.

From their data analysis, Karakoyun and Kuzu (2016) found that both the students and pre-service teachers believed digital storytelling activities improved the students' 21st century skills (learning and innovation; information, media and technology; and life and career). The pre-service teachers, however, were able to identify more specific aspects of the 21st century skills. For the learning and innovation skills, they cited critical thinking and problem solving; creativity and innovation; and communication and collaboration. For the information, media and technology skills, the teachers identified information and communication technologies literacy; information literacy; and media literacy. For life and career skills, the teachers were able to drill down to specific dimensions such as flexibility and adaptability; social and cross-cultural skills; responsibility; and productivity.

In terms of problems encountered, except for the common complaint of length of the study, the teachers and students differed in their perceptions of the problems associated with digital storytelling. The students complained about the Wevideo software and insufficient resources, whereas the teachers were concerned about lack of time, and the attitude and behaviour of the students.

The studies by Parker (2007) and Karakoyun and Kuzu (2016) illustrate divergent views of learners and teachers about issues and problems related to the use of digital resources in language learning. Would my study yield divergence in views between my teacher and student participants regarding the use of storytelling as a language learning and teaching resource? My conjecture is that it might. In Karakoyun and Kuzu's (2016) study, the pre-service teachers were able to drill down to the students' specific cognitive and linguistic benefits whilst the students identified broad benefits. My conjecture is that this observation would hold in my study, too, because younger children are usually limited by their language and experiences, as compared to adults.

2.3.8 Teachers' and Students' Differing Perceptions of Language-learning Strategies and Classroom Learning Activities

Some researchers focus on perceptions of classroom learning activities and learners' needs. Barkhuizen (1998), and Leki and Carson (1994) focused more specifically on the need to be cognizant of learners' needs in a learning situation. They surveyed students' perceptions of classroom learning activities.

Leki and Carson's (1994) study investigated several concerns, one of which was how well the EAP (English for academic purposes) writing classes had prepared the ESL students for the writing they were required to do in their content courses. Their findings showed that 77% of the student participants were satisfied with the EAP course: 48% felt well or very well prepared, and 29% felt adequately prepared. However, 17% felt that the course had prepared them "either not well or not well at all" (p. 85). The researchers reported that 6% of their respondents fell into the "unknown" category (p. 85). The researchers concluded that "by and large, these ESL students were quite satisfied with the training they received in EAP writing classes" (p. 85). However, it is difficult to ignore the fact that there was a small but not insignificant number of students who had different perceptions of the EAP course.

While Leki and Carson's (1994) findings are informative and helpful to the teaching fraternity, to achieve a more complete picture, it might be necessary for researchers to include teachers in the survey to see if there is alignment between instructor and learner expectations. For instance, a survey of teachers' expectations can complement a needs analysis of students. Teachers' expectations should be viewed from the context of students' readiness for learning particular concepts, skills or knowledge.

In Barkhuizen's (1998) study, the contradicting perceptions between teachers and students were more obvious. Barkhuizen investigated high school ESL learners' perceptions of the language teaching and learning activities conducted in their classes. He administered a questionnaire as well as conducted individual and group interviews, composition assessment and classroom observations. Amongst the questionnaire findings, he reported that the more mechanical aspects of language study, for example "using a dictionary", "learning about correct spelling" and "learning about the English tenses" were rated very highly on all three variables: enjoyment, learning English, and usefulness after school (p. 95-96). This finding astounded the teachers as they did not expect their students to attach so much significance to such mechanical language skills. In fact, Barkhuizen discovered that the teachers "were frequently surprised to learn about the thoughts and feelings of their students. In other words, the students' perceptions did not always match their own" (p. 102).

Mismatches in perceptions of teachers and students were also observed in Griffiths and Parr's (2001) study of language-learning strategies. Their study aimed to explore how language-learning strategy theory related to the practice in terms of learners' and teachers' perceptions. The researchers administered the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning questionnaire to 569 students of English for speakers of other languages, drawn from a variety of English-language learning situations (private language schools, tertiary institutions,

and high schools) in New Zealand. The participants' age range was from 14 to 64. The students were asked to rank the language-learning strategies (LLS) based on their perceived frequency of use. In addition, 30 teachers involved with students who spoke other languages completed the Inventory of Language Learning Strategies questionnaire. According to Griffiths and Parr, these teachers were drawn from private English language schools or tertiary institutions, and many of them also had high school experience. The teachers were asked to rank the LLS based on their perceptions of frequency of use by students.

Griffiths and Parr's findings (2001, p. 252) revealed that students and teachers had differing ranked orders of the language learning strategies (LLS):

<u>Students</u>		<u>Teachers</u>	
<u>Rank order</u>	<u>LLS</u>	<u>Rank order</u>	<u>LLS</u>
6	Social strategies	6	Memory strategies
5	Metacognitive strategies	5	Cognitive strategies
4	Compensation strategies	4	Social strategies
3	Cognitive strategies	3	Metacognitive strategies
2	Affective strategies	2	Compensation strategies
1	Memory strategies	1	Affective strategies

Their findings clearly indicated discrepancies between the students' and teachers' perceptions of the LLS use.

Other researchers – Ferris (1998), Block (1996), and Nunan (1989) – have also found similar disparities between learners' and teachers' perceptions of classroom learning activities. Very often, there are gaps between instructor's and students' perceptions of the purpose of classroom activities (Block, 1996). As such, often there are mismatches between learner's and teachers' views of what is important in the learning process (Nunan, 1989, p. 179).

Ferris' (1998) study investigated ESL students' perceptions of listening and speaking skills requirements in their subject-matter courses. Her findings showed "very little agreement between the instructors and the students" (p. 306). She concluded that instructors might not be the best source of information on the reasons why their students were grappling with their courses, and that students might not be the most accurate informants on what the professors actually required (p. 307). This could well be the case with my study – teachers' interest or lack of interest in storytelling as a pedagogical tool might not reflect their students' perception of storytelling in the English language classroom.

2.3.9 Teachers' and Students' Differing Perceptions of the Role of Teacher Power

McCroskey and Richmond (1983) did a series of studies investigating the role of teacher power in student learning. They were interested in examining how teacher power impacts student learning and how teachers might modify their communication behavior and use of power to enhance learning in the classroom. In the first of that series of studies, they tried to determine an acceptable method of measuring the use of power in the classroom, and the degree to which teachers and students had shared perceptions of the use of power in the classroom. For this study, they adapted the instrument developed by Richmond et al. (1980) as their primary measure of power in the classroom – perceived power measure (PPM) which measures use of power in an “absolute form” (p. 179). To supplement this instrument, they employed a second measure – relative power measure (RPM) which also explains the same power bases (coercive, reward, legitimate, referent, expert power) in a relative form.

Interestingly, both the students and teachers in their study (McCroskey and Richmond, 1983) indicated on the PPM that coercive power was less likely to be used than power from other bases. The teachers and students did not differ in their perceptions of how likely either coercive or legitimate power were to be employed. However, their perceptions differed on all three of the other power bases. In fact, the teachers saw themselves as somewhat more likely to use a high proportion of reward, referent, and expert power than did the students. This disparity in perceptions was also noted in the RPM scores. Both teachers and students reported greater use of expert, referent, and reward power than coercive power. The students saw coercive power as accounting for a higher proportion of power use than did teachers, but the teachers saw a significantly higher proportion for expert power than did students.

Would the practices of the teacher participants in my study be influenced by their sense of teacher power? If teacher power was in force, they would implement certain pedagogical approach that might not go down well with their students. This is another area of interest that relates to, albeit obliquely, to my research question three, “Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”

2.3.10 Teachers' and School Management's Differing Perceptions of Educational Reforms

Just as teachers' and students' perceptions of instructional practices may differ, teachers' and school management's perceptions about educational reforms may also vary, as attested by the studies by Li (1998) and Joong et al. (2009).

Li (1998) investigated teachers' perceptions of the Communicative Approach to language teaching. He undertook a case study of South Korea's secondary school teachers' understanding of the uptake of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in South Korea. For this study, he conducted questionnaires and interviews with his participants.

Li's participants (12 trainee teachers) were upfront about their difficulties with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. They attributed their difficulties to four possible sources: the teacher (their own lack of competence in CLT), students, educational system, and the CLT itself. Li's findings seemed to suggest that there was a mismatch between the expectations of educational policy makers (those in the educational system who recommend the CLT approach) and those of the teachers. The Korean educational policy makers held the view that teachers, being practitioners, should be able to adopt this new instructional approach fairly adequately. The teacher participants felt otherwise; they were quick in identifying their deficiencies – in spoken English, and strategic and sociolinguistic competence. They asked for professional development support – training or retraining in CLT, and provision of teaching resources.

Joong et al. (2009) also reported that the teacher participants struggled with implementation of China's educational reforms. They had great difficulty transitioning from a highly structured, teacher-centred instructional approach to student-centred pedagogies. They commented that there was inadequate support in terms of professional development and resources, especially in two key areas of the reforms: teaching methods and curriculum development.

Would the teacher participants in my study raise the same concerns about lack of professional development and administrative support that Li (1998) and Joong et al. (2009) foregrounded? Since storytelling as an instructional approach is relatively new in the Singaporean context, it might be possible that teachers might grapple with its implementation. It would not be unreasonable to request professional and administrative support not just from their school management but also from the Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD) of the Singapore Ministry of Education. Redesigning the curriculum to accommodate new or unfamiliar instructional methods does require the expertise and skill of syllabus developers from the CPDD of the Singapore Ministry of Education.

2.4 Literature and Research on the Use of Storytelling for English Language Teaching and Learning

2.4.1 Inclusion of Stories – Why the Reluctance

The prevalence of narratives in children's lives should argue for inclusion of stories or storytelling in the English language classroom in Singapore. We are not just talking about oral stories in print form. What about online or digital stories which are prevalent in our society? In fact, our children, being digital natives, might just take to digital stories or storytelling very readily. Yet, storytelling is not adopted extensively in classes beyond the primary one and two classrooms which adhere to the STELLAR (Strategies for the Teaching of English Language and Reading) programmes recommended by the Singapore Curriculum Planning and Development Division. Could the reluctance lodge with perceptions of storytelling by teachers and school administrators? Another possible reason could be the high premium placed on examination results in the country, with the consequence that schools may not link storytelling with improvement in examination results. Instead, teachers tend to concentrate their time and effort on examinable subjects. Stories and storytelling tend to be associated with enrichment activities – a common observation in the local schools. This debate should generate interest in research in this respect, but to date, there is no local research on it. I believe my research on the storytelling perceptions will fill this gap and ignite interest in using storytelling (in print or non-print form) as a pedagogical resource.

2.4.2 Claims by Storytelling Advocates

There is a plethora of readings on the power of storytelling for teaching language skills. Nelson (1989) feels that storytelling “can enhance both literal and inferential comprehension, as the listener brings meaning to the storyteller's words” (p. 386). She believes that the “repetitious language patterns and cumulative story events of predictable books and stories like ‘The Tailor’ help children to make accurate predictions of meaning and to anticipate language patterns and plot and sequence development” (p. 389). In narrating the story of ‘The Tailor’ to a group of children, she observed that when she came to “the part where the tailor realizes that his new garment ‘is old and worn’, children often mouthed the words right along” (p. 387) with her. It is credible that the children were very engaged as Nelson narrated the story, but her observations lack statistical backing to make generalizations about the value of storytelling.

While Nelson is very positive about enthusing students with stories, Gee (1999) and McQuillan and Tse (1998) explored effective strategies for teaching language and reading skills. Gee offered teachers of elementary and middle school ESL students specific

suggestions on how to help students develop a positive attitude towards reading, believing that there is “a vital relationship between affect and reading” (Gee, 1999, p. 3).

Mallan (1991), however, feels that the value of storytelling goes beyond the affective, believing that it also offers opportunities for children to develop their cognitive and linguistic skills. She elaborates that storytelling helps to develop children’s imagination, and understanding of self and others (p. 12). She firmly believes that it is a powerful platform for children to develop listening comprehension skills, which are “prerequisites for later reading comprehension” (p. 13). To help children with their comprehension skills (understanding at literal, inferential and critical levels), she recommends that storytelling should be accompanied by appropriate questioning and retelling strategies. Like Wright (2002), Mallan (1991) proposes numerous practical storytelling activities aimed at promoting cognitive, social and linguistic development. The linguistic development is the factor that prompted my present study as it is especially helpful in a second language context. Learning language skills through a familiar and fun activity such as storytelling should make language learning meaningful and engaging for children, but this needs to be validated by some form of research.

Other reading advocates such as Hamilton and Weiss (1990), Grugeon and Gardner (2000), are just as specific about the linguistic benefits of storytelling. Hamilton and Weiss are of the opinion that storytelling specifically improves expressive language skills and stimulates inventive thinking. They believe that hearing stories improves language skills such as vocabulary building, comprehension, sequencing and story recall. They also maintain that it encourages creative writing as it fires children’s imagination and inspires them to tell and write their own stories.

Grugeon and Gardner (2000), referring to the revised UK National Curriculum, noted that the range of speaking skills for Key Stage 1 includes telling stories (real and imagined) and drama-related activities include presenting stories to others. They feel that skills such as “speak clearly and confidently” and “listen, understand and respond to others” will be covered by listening to and telling stories (p. 6). They believe that oral storytelling helps to develop writing and reading skills. They feel that storytelling offers children the opportunity to use characters, action and narrative to retell stories of their own. They claim that retelling stories will raise children’s awareness of story structures, and how language is used in different contexts and for different purposes. Grugeon and Gardner are also of the view that developing skill as storytellers will inform students of both comprehension and composition of literary texts; they will become more aware of the construction of texts (p. 7).

Like those made by other storytelling advocates such as Hamilton and Weiss (1990), Ellis and Brewster (2002), and Wright (2002), the comments by Grugeon and Gardner (2000) reflect their perceptions. Certainly, these perceptions need to be explored further by research or verified by practitioners in the classroom.

Nonetheless, storytelling advocates such as Ellis and Brewster (2002), and Wright (2002) are firm about the potential of storytelling in promoting linguistic awareness and competence amongst children. Ellis and Brewster believe that storybooks will be an effective way of initiating a variety of language learning activities that will help to raise awareness of basic language functions and structures, and develop vocabulary and language-learning skills. They note that many stories contain repetition of key vocabulary and structures. Children will absorb these linguistic features as they listen to the stories over and over again. According to them, as students listen to the stories being read to them by their teachers, they will become aware of linguistic features such as rhythm, intonation and pronunciation. As the teacher invites them to respond to the story, the students will have opportunities to engage in reading skills – “listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing” (p. 2). The students will be exposed to the past tense in the stories besides the present tense in direct speech. Hence, learning the past tense will be a natural process for the students.

Like Ellis and Brewster, Wright (2002) sees stories as a vehicle for introducing language skills, for example, children ‘experience’ past tense forms in a story before being asked to use them. Wright also feels that stories offer an “ideal way of developing fluency in speaking and writing” (p. 6). In advocating teaching English through storytelling, Wright explains that students can hear “common language patterns and phrases, learn vocabulary, develop listening comprehension skills” (p. 26). The merits of storytelling endorsed by Wright (2002), and Ellis and Brewster (2002) seem very convincing but they need to be supported by research.

Ellis and Brewster (2002) also suggest that the “skills which are emphasized more for younger learners are learning vocabulary, listening and speaking. Learners with more English are better able to cope with activities which focus more on grammar, as well as reading and writing activities at different levels” (p. 24). Again, this claim lacks research backing. In fact, all those claims made by the aforementioned storytelling advocates need to be validated by research. The upshot is that research on the linguistic benefits of storytelling is still few and far between, especially here in Singapore, hence the relevance of my present research. There is a need also to hear from teachers who teach young children to verify

these claims as they are practitioners who are in touch with the ground. I believe my study is able to address this gap. During my interviews with the teachers and students, there would be ample opportunities to discuss language benefits that could be gleaned from storytelling.

In my research, both my student and teacher questionnaires include questions that offer opportunities for my participants to talk about the language benefits of storytelling. Whatever the claims of researchers and storytelling advocates, whether storytelling serves as a useful platform for engaging children in language learning depends on practitioners' (teachers') belief in this resource and whether they would include it in their pedagogical repertoire. That being the case, understanding teachers' belief and perceptions of the value of storytelling in language learning is crucial, and hence the relevance of my present research.

2.4.3 Storytelling Research

Research by Klesius and Griffith (1996), Emery (1996), Ghosn (2002), and Trachtenburg and Ferruggia (1989) draw links between language improvement and storytelling or story related activities.

Klesius and Griffith (1996, p. 554) conducted a three-week study on ten kindergarten children "whose language and literacy development fell below that of the other students". Using an interactive lapreading procedure, they scaffolded activities along the lines of Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development principles which argue for adults or more able peers providing scaffolding for less able children to help them go beyond their current ability to reach their potential. In Vygotsky's Social Constructivist theory, a child can go beyond his actual development to reach his potential development if an adult or a more proficient peer guides him or her along, providing him or her with sufficient and relevant learning support. In a similar vein, Klesius and Griffith's interactive lapreading procedure provided scaffolding activities to help those children in their study to read selected storybooks. Towards the end of the study, they noted that the children's comments and questions increased and they discussed more aspects of the text and in greater depth. They observed that as the experience of storybook reading became more familiar to the children, they began to internalize the interaction that was occurring. They were able to replicate many teacher behaviours, for example using detailed illustrations to retell parts of the story. The two researchers reported that the children's interest in books heightened and they were more attentive during the large group story read-alouds. They also reported that the children's interest in books and book reenactments increased.

Klesius and Griffith's (1996) findings seemed very astounding, given that the study spanned only three weeks. Some teachers might be inspired to replicate the strategies promulgated by Klesius and Griffith. However, there might be others who might be less convinced, arguing that the observed behaviours need to be more frequent and occur over a longer period for the claims to be justified. Klesius and Griffith's (1996) comments were based on general observations of the group of children as a whole. Perhaps it might be more meaningful to document each child's progress through video-recording and transcription of the recording to examine each child's response to the lapreading activities. From the individual documentation of all ten children, general observations about their progress could then be drawn and validated.

Other research on story read-alouds also made very firm assertions of the value of stories. Trachtenburg and Ferruggia's (1989) study aimed at exploring the value of repeated readings to ascertain the power of a whole language shared book experience on young children. Using a pre- and post-test design, they focused on word attack, vocabulary, oral comprehension, total reading ability and language expression through a shared book experience. After they had read the original story to the fourteen first graders several times, they conducted dramatisations and discussions to intensify the children's desire to read the book. Each child then engaged in picture reading of the story and the reading was recorded. From their video recording of the children's picture reading of the story, they combined the two most fluent deliveries of the recorded story with minor editing before writing them on large chart paper. Using this co-created text by the researchers and children as their reading resource, the researchers conducted "teacher reading, echo reading, choral reading and assisted reading" (p. 286) before moving on to sight word recognition and writing activities. They reported that the children made improvements in all five areas investigated: work attack, vocabulary, oral comprehension, total reading ability and language expression.

The improvements claimed by Trachtenburg and Ferruggia (1989) should be viewed in context – the generated text was created by the children and assisted by the researchers. Improvements could be expected since the children had many opportunities, through the researchers' diverse activities (teacher reading, echo reading, choral reading and assisted reading; sight word recognition and writing activities) to be familiar with the vocabulary, structure and story of the created text. Perhaps their research findings may be further strengthened if new texts (unfamiliar to the children) are used to test how the children will perform in the five areas (word attack, vocabulary, oral comprehension, total reading ability and language expression) the researchers had identified.

The other point of possible contention in their study is the single-group pre- and post-test methodology and design. The threats such as maturation threat may be real, so may the instrumentation threat (Isaac and Michael, 1982, p. 59).

Ghosn's (2002) study seemed very impressive at the outset. She conducted 18 hours of observation of twelve primary school classrooms in Lebanon and used transcript data collected to examine how different course book tasks unfolded in the reality of the classroom. Six teachers conducted 9 hours of English language teaching (ELT) lessons and 9 hours of story-based (SB) lessons – three teachers using the communicative approach for the ELT lessons, and three story-based lessons. Her findings suggested that “a story-based approach to English language teaching provides a more culture-sensitive medium for classroom interactions, adaptable to diverse cultural expectations about the roles of teachers and learners” (p. 109). She reported that all the three SB lessons revealed an aspect of learning that was not evident in the ELT classes – frequent open-ended and challenging teacher questions, and the open-ended questions resulted in longer and syntactically more complex student responses and subsequently more negotiated exchanges (p. 121).

Ghosn (2002) commented that the children's responses in the SB lessons were encouraging. However, the difference between the responses in the SB and ELT lessons might also be attributed to the approach (teacher-fronted instruction in the ELT classes as opposed to the small-group discussions of the SB lessons). In other words, the difference in responses might have been caused by multiple factors. Logistical arrangement, and teacher's competence in eliciting responses might also have contributed to the differences in the two types of lessons.

This multiple-factor problem seems to apply to the study by Trachtenburg and Ferruggia (1989), too. Undoubtedly, the sense of pride that came with the realization that they could actually 'produce' a book, however basic it might be, must have given the children the motivation to learn and the desire to engage in reading. The two researchers set out to test the value of repeated readings, but they also used pedagogical strategies such as dramatizations and oral discussions to help the children to remember the events and to make sense of the story. Hence, the positive findings might not be due to the repeated readings of the story only; the interesting dramatizations and oral discussions might have made the crucial difference.

In both the studies by Ghosn (2002), and Trachtenburg and Ferruggia (1989), it was a multiplicity of factors that contributed to the success of that research. Perhaps, further research on the effect of repeated readings of a story could consider including two groups – one group without the inclusion of dramatizations and oral discussions, and another group with dramatizations and oral discussions.

Just as intended outcomes and actual outcomes of a study should be aligned, so should perception and practice. Otherwise, teachers may not be convinced to try out the story-related activities in their classrooms. Logically, a practitioner's practice should reflect his or her practice. However, in reality, this may not hold true. This is one of my research questions (RQ 4), "Do teachers' reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?" My hypothesis is that it should. This concern is discussed further in my data analysis in chapter four, Research Findings.

2.4.4 Perceptions of Storytelling

"As a professional storyteller, I always marvel at the magic and power of stories. Whenever I look out at my audience I see that eager anticipation on their faces, and as soon as we begin, that wonderful magic of story takes us to another place as the story is woven into the listeners' lives and becomes a part of their experiences."

(Nelson, 1989, p. 386)

Children's response to stories is always one of delight and full attention. Nelson (1989) and other storytelling advocates firmly believe in the power of stories and storytelling in the classroom. Other storytelling advocates emphasize the value of stories to language learning. Wright (1995) believes that stories, which rely so much on words (spoken or written), "offer a major and constant source of language experience for children." (p. 3). This sentiment is echoed by Ellis and Brewster (2002), Lowe (2002), Paran and Watts (2003), and Hamilton and Weiss (1990).

With all these testimonies, there should be much enthusiasm amongst English language teachers in the primary schools to use storytelling or stories as a formal language teaching approach to teach English language skills (for example, the teaching of oral communication, reading or writing skills). This is one of the primary concerns of my study – all six questions in my teacher questionnaire either directly focus on this issue, or indirectly allude to it. In no uncertain terms, the interviews with the teacher participants would be an avenue for me to explore this issue.

Children generally enjoy activities related to storytelling (Nelson, 1989). Would my student participants in my current study go beyond the entertainment value and cite specific language improvements they could have benefited from lessons taught through storytelling? Questions 3 to 8 of my student questionnaire specifically focus on this concern.

2.4.5 Mixed Perceptions of the Value of Storytelling

Research on the relationship between storytelling activities (such as reading aloud stories to children) and children's reading ability do not always yield positive value of storytelling activities in helping children to read. Mcgee and Schickedanz (2007) and Meyer et al. (1994), in studying the effect of reading aloud stories on children's reading ability, maintain that research is ambivalent about the value of reading aloud stories.

On the one hand, there are research studies that reported positive outcomes: Elley and Mangubhai (1983), Morrow and Smith (1990), Robbins and Ehri (1994), Klesius and Griffith (1996), Beck and McKeown (2001); (Purcell-Gates et al., 1995); (Duke and Kays, 1998); and (Van den Broek, 2001).

Elley and Mangubhai (1983) compared the effects of Book Flood (Shared Book and Sustained Silent Reading) on classes 4 and 5 students (9-11 years old) in 1980 and 1981. The two researchers found that, at the end of the second year, the two Book Flood groups in the 1981 Class 5 (1980 Class 4) students showed much more English language growth than the Control group in reading, listening, English structures and total scores. The 1981 Class 6 (1980 Class 5) students showed even greater improvement in reading, word knowledge, English structures, written composition and total scores (p. 63-4) as compared to the Control group. Surprisingly, they found that there were no significant differences between the performance of the two Book Flood groups (Shared Book and Sustained Silent Reading groups) in all the domains tested. This finding would seem to suggest that follow-up activities in the Shared Book approach did not have as much impact on language improvement as anticipated by the two researchers. However, the fact that the Shared Book and Silent Reading groups did much better than the Control group speaks volumes about exposure of children to storybooks (especially high-interest books).

In their study, Purcell-Gates et al. (1995) aimed to ascertain if children who began kindergarten with lower linguistic knowledge of books could acquire linguistic knowledge through their exposure to books in kindergarten and first grade. They examined three different groups of children: well-read-to children, skill-based beginning literacy instruction classes, and whole language classes. Their findings showed that children who started

school with low levels of knowledge of written syntax and vocabulary – children from skill-based classes and those from whole language classes – were able to catch up to the well-read-to children's baseline kindergarten scores on this dimension by the end of first grade. They also found that children in the whole language classes made greater progress in their acquisition of knowledge of written language.

Morrow and Smith (1990) conducted a research study with 27 kindergarten and first grade children to examine the effects of group size on children's comprehension of stories and their verbal interactions during storybook readings. Nine picture storybooks were selected for the study. Three settings were identified: one-to-one, small group and whole class. Each of the 27 children in their study "heard three stories in a one-to-one setting, and another three stories in a small-group setting, and another three stories in the whole-class setting" (Morrow and Smith, 1990, p. 218). Measures were considered on only the third reading in each of the three settings. Their analysis of the children's comprehension performance based on probed and free recall comprehension tests showed that children who heard stories in the small-group setting performed significantly better than children in the one-to-one setting (p. 224). But the children in the one-to-one setting performed significantly better than children who heard stories read to them in the whole-class setting. They also found that children in the one-to-one and small group settings made significantly more comments and raised more questions than children in the whole-class setting (p. 223). Their findings indicated that storytelling, in general, enabled the children to make comprehension improvements, even though progress was most apparent in a small-group setting.

In another study that validates that reading aloud stories to children promotes vocabulary development, Robbins and Ehri (1994) conducted storytelling sessions with 51 native English-speaking 5- and 6-year-old kindergarteners. They were all identified by their teachers as nonreaders for this vocabulary study. Their posttest analysis supported their hypothesis that kindergarteners "expand their recognition vocabularies when they listen to stories at least twice and hear unfamiliar words repeated in the stories" (p. 59). Their study affirms the belief that young children can acquire new vocabulary from listening to stories.

Klesius and Griffith (1996) also investigated the effect of interactive read alouds on language development. Their study showed that the teacher participants were able to encourage desirable behaviours in the children being read to. For instance, as the teacher reading the story pointed to details in illustrations, she asked "metacognitive process questions to help the children get in touch with their own abilities to construct meaning (e.g., 'Why do you think the title might be *Hatch, Egg, Hatch?*')" (p. 556). The children were very interactive, asking

questions about vocabulary meaning when confronted with new words. The interactive reading aloud sessions also allowed the teacher to subtly explain ideas during the reading and to ask questions about vocabulary words – the teacher “gave explanations to clarify, or extend information provided in the text” (p. 557). After the interactive lapreading, the researchers found that the children “began to internalize the interaction that was occurring. They also replicated many teacher behaviours, such as when they used details of the illustrations to retell parts of the story” (p. 558).

Beck and McKeown (2001) did a project on ‘Text Talk’, “an approach to read-alouds that is designed to enhance young children’s ability to construct meaning from decontextualized language” (p. 13). Their study aimed to “enhance young children’s language and comprehension abilities through in-depth and extensive experiences listening to and talking about stories read to them” (p. 10). For their project, they used texts that are “intellectually challenging” (p. 13). They guided the teacher participants in using open questions during the reading to lead the children to consider the ideas in the story and talk about them and connect them as the story progressed. The teacher participants were also guided to invoke background knowledge so as to integrate it with the text content. For vocabulary building, the teachers adhered to instructional activities for each vocabulary word by “bringing to mind the use of the word from the story and explaining its meaning” (p. 18). They also created charts of the words from each story and this enabled the teachers to tally each use of citing of a word. The researchers reported that this vocabulary activity was quite successful as on every school visit, they observed that there was “continuing accumulation of tallies next to words” (p. 18).

Like Klesius and Griffith’s (1996) study, Beck and McKeown’s (2001) study registered a positive impact on children’s language ability. However, I feel that the success of Beck and McKeown’s Text Talk depends on the teachers’ competence in using open questions and responding appropriately to the children’s responses. Beck and McKeown actually guided the teachers in this skill as well as skills in the other domains (vocabulary acquisition and invoking of story information). Since the teachers in Beck and McKeown’s study needed training in questioning techniques to execute Text Talk successfully, would the teacher participants in my study require training in conducting storytelling lessons? This is another area that I explored and it is reported in chapter four, Research Findings, of this thesis.

While McGee and Schickedanz (2007) acknowledge that some studies have validated that reading aloud stories have yielded language improvements, they also maintain that not all research on reading aloud stories to young children have positive findings. This

ambivalence is echoed by Scarborough and Dobrich (1994). After reviewing more than three decades of empirical research on the influence of parent-preschooler reading experiences on the development of language and literacy skills, Scarborough and Dobrich concluded that the “association is probably not as strong and consistent as is generally supposed” (Scarborough and Dobrich, 1994, p. 285).

There are research studies that registered a negative relationship between the amount of time teachers spend reading aloud in kindergarten and children’s decoding skills (Meyer et al., 1994). These studies suggest that merely reading books aloud is not sufficient for accelerating children’s oral vocabulary development and listening comprehension. Instead, the way books are shared with children matters.

Meyer et al. (1994) expressed the same ambivalent sentiments as Mcgee and Schickedanz (2007). They commented that educators, in recommending highly the use of reading storybooks aloud to children, may advance the perception that this is a “panacea for reading problems” (Meyer et al., 1994, p. 69). Citing naturalistic, process-product studies of the lower elementary grades, Meyer et al. (1994) reported that teachers’ reading to students has correlated negatively or not at all with students’ achievement in reading comprehension. Citing findings by Anderson et al. (1985), Meyer et al. (1994) admitted that this finding is “counterintuitive and certainly inconsistent with or in direct opposition to recommendations from well-recognised leaders in the field of reading” (p. 70).

Anderson et al. (1985), tapping on their research-based knowledge of reading instruction, highlight problems related to current reading practices before recommending possible solutions (p. 389). For instance, in reviewing the effectiveness of emerging literacy practices, they maintain that the typical lesson would have a preparation phase where new words, ideas and motivating questions are introduced, followed by reading in groups, discussion, and seatwork assignment. They also note that, at the preparation phase, often insufficient attention is given to developing the background knowledge that is required for children to understand the story (p. 393). The other problem they highlight is that in the reading phase, often students take turns to read the story. However, they assert that there is “no substitute for a teacher who reads children good stories” (p. 393), explaining that the teacher serves as a model of skilful oral reading. Anderson et al. also take issue with the discussion phase where comprehension instruction is supposed to be provided, phonic lessons are conducted and seatwork is explained. The problem is that few curricula adhere to this practice. In short, their analysis is that current reading practices are not really effective.

The research studies discussed in this section do indeed show that there are mixed perceptions about the value of storytelling. Morrow and Smith (1990), Robbins and Ehri (1994), Klesius and Griffith (1996), and Beck and McKeown (2001) all claimed that children made improvements in language skills through storytelling activities. Yet, other researchers such as Scarborough and Dobrich (1994), Meyer et al. (1994), and Anderson et al. (1985) reported modest or negative findings. Where would the findings of my study lean – the group of positive perceptions and effect, or the ambivalent group of researchers? In my teacher questionnaire, there are two questions that probe participants' perceptions of storytelling, and other questions that focus on language and socio-emotional benefits. The same emphases prevail in my student questionnaire, too. At the interviews, the same emphases were reiterated, allowing participants to expand, and amplify their responses to the questionnaire questions. Discussion of these issues is in chapter four, Research Findings.

2.4.6 Mixed Perceptions of Reading Aloud Stories

Like Mcgee and Schickedanz (2007) and Meyer et al. (1994), other researchers have also cautioned that merely reading stories to children is no magic. Children's interaction with the reading texts is more likely to have a positive impact on children's reading ability. "Research has demonstrated that the most effective read-alouds are those in which children are actively involved in asking and answering questions and making predictions rather than passively listening" (Mcgee and Schickedanz, 2007, p. 742). In their paper, they refer to several studies which recorded positive impact on different aspects of language learning.

Referring to the work by Dickinson and Smith (1994), Mcgee and Schnickedanz stress that merely inviting children to talk during interactive read-alouds, however, is not sufficient to accelerate their literacy development. Instead, improvement is very much related to frequency of analytic talk by the children. Analytic talk involves encouraging children to make predictions or inferences that explain a character's motivation or connect events from different parts of the story.

I would think that teachers who are well-versed in the Socratic Questioning technique (Paul, 1995; Paul and Elder, 2007) will be able to draw on Richard Paul's taxonomy of Socratic Questions (Paul 1995, p. 341-344) – questions of clarification, questions that probe assumptions, questions that probe reasons and evidence, questions about viewpoints or perspectives, questions that probe implications and consequences, and questions about questions – to engage their learners in analytic thinking. A skilful teacher would be able to stimulate his or her students' thinking through such thought-provoking questions that promote higher-order thinking.

Mcgee and Schickedanz (2007) also refer to research studies which indicate that certain activities can increase comprehension and language development, for example, inviting preschoolers and kindergarteners to retell or dramatize stories, reading several books on a similar topic and inviting children to play with objects related to the concepts or characters introduced in these books, reading a book repeatedly, inserting short definitions for some words while reading aloud, and encouraging children to use these same words when they answer questions, discuss book events, or describe illustrations (p. 742). In fact, they suggest that for interactive read-alouds to be effective, a systematic approach needs to be adhered to. Teachers have to model higher-level thinking and ask thoughtful questions that facilitate analytic talk and story recall. The children can be encouraged to read a single book repeatedly. Vocabulary development should also be done through a systematic approach, for example during reading, short definitions of words and phrases could be introduced (Mcgee and Schickedanz, 2007, p. 742-743).

To be precise, Mcgee and Schickedanz are suggesting that it is not enough to just expose children to stories if we want them to develop language and cognitive skills through storytelling. There should be storytelling activities (during- and after-activities) planned around specific learning outcomes. The story serves as the reference point for teaching different cognitive, linguistic and even social skills. It is with this end in mind that I have included three lists of storytelling activities: pre-, during- and after-activities adapted from Wright's (2002, p. 4-5) book in my teacher questionnaire (question 6) for the teacher participants to respond to.

I would think that for any read-aloud programme to be effective, the teacher is key. He or she needs to have the appropriate attitude and skills to model the learning process. In fact, Mcgee and Schickedanz (2007) observed, in their study, that few teachers "go for sophisticated stories and nonfiction books in preschool and kindergarten; teachers prefer reading easier, predictable and concept books" (p. 723). By sophisticated picture books, they are referring to "stories in which readers must infer characters' motivations and thoughts and connect them to actions (i.e., causes and effects). These books have a rich repertoire of vocabulary." (p. 723).

Mcgee and Schickedanz's comment about teachers not going for "sophisticated stories" might not be fair because guiding children into the characters' psyche to infer their motivations and thoughts and relating them to their actions is a challenging task. Perhaps we have overlooked the fact that it requires specialised knowledge and skill to use storytelling to teach particular learning outcomes, and it undoubtedly warrants some sort of

formal training. Essentially that is the main concern of my research question 5 (RQ5) which encapsulates several issues: (1) Do we need to provide our teachers with some kind of professional support such as teaching resources, and training in telling stories and relating the stories to specific learning outcomes? (2) What about administrative support such as giving teachers time off or scheduled time to plan storytelling lessons either individually or collaboratively with colleagues?

Cope and Ward (2002), in their analysis of experienced high school teachers' perceptions of learning technology, also saw the importance of professional development for teachers. They emphasized that in addition to instruction in the use of learning technologies, experienced teachers "need professional development in modern research knowledge about the nature of learning and how learning technologies can be used to encourage enhanced learning outcomes in students" (p. 73). In fact, they recommended "increased time release for experienced teachers to undertake this professional development" (p. 73). These concerns underpin my research question 5, "If storytelling were to be recommended as a strategy for teaching English language skills, what kind of implementation support would English language teachers like their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education to provide for them, and why?"

2.5 Conceptual Framework of my Research Study

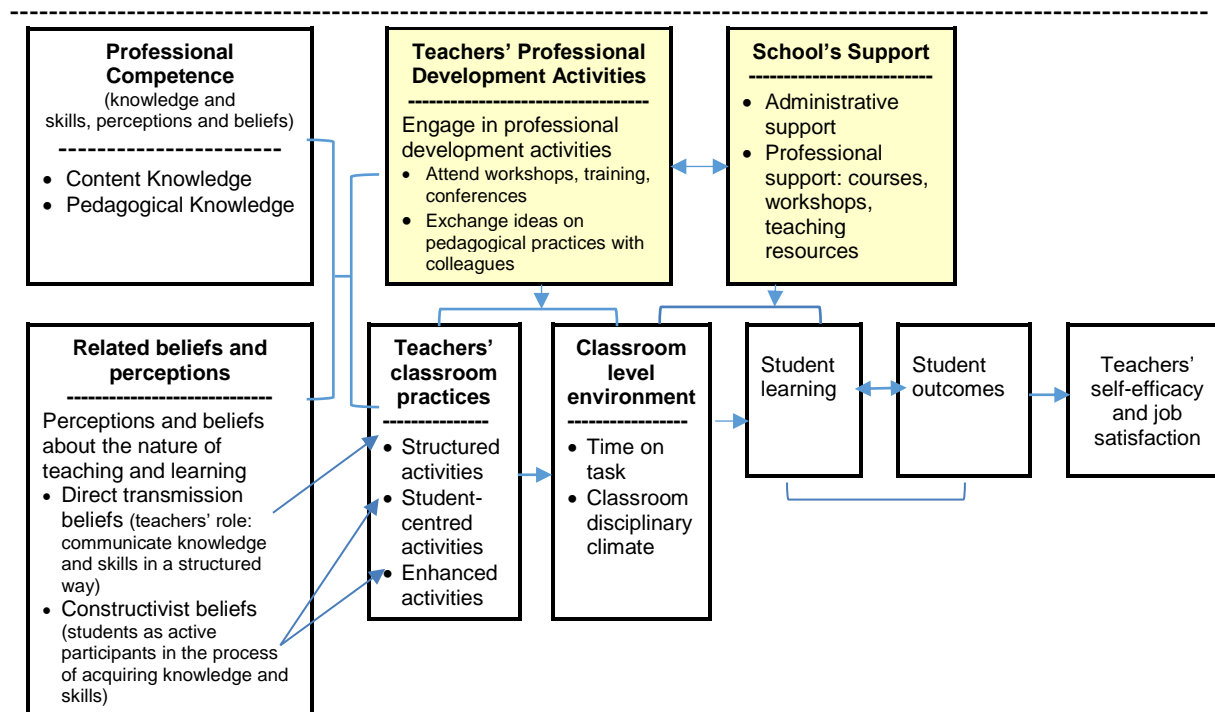
The framework in Figure 3 below is adapted from the "Framework for the Analysis of Teaching Practices and Beliefs" (OECD 2009, p. 91) developed by OECD. In the "Professional Competence" box, I expanded on OECD's "Knowledge and Beliefs" to "Knowledge and Skills, Perceptions and Beliefs". The word, "skills", is added because I feel that English language is very much a skill-based subject. As the prime focus of my study is teachers' perceptions, I feel that I need to include this concept as well. In the "Related Beliefs and Perceptions" box, I included "perceptions" for the same reason. I also feel that it is necessary to explain the two beliefs about teaching and learning, "Direct Transmission Beliefs" and "Constructivist Beliefs", as they are rather abstract.

I also expanded on OECD's "Teachers' Professional Activities" to "Teachers' Professional **Development** Activities" as I feel that the latter version emphasizes teachers' professional growth – teachers developing their pedagogical skills by engaging in professional collaboration (sharing resources) and attending professional training (workshops, courses).

I also included another box, "School's Support", because I feel that teachers' participation in professional development activities can increase if their school management encourages it.

School support could take two forms: administrative and professional. The rest of my conceptual framework is very similar to OECD's.

My adapted framework below serves as a basis for me to examine how a teacher's professional competence and beliefs, perceptions and attitudes influence his or her practice and effect student learning and outcomes. Like the OECD (2009) framework, I am cognizant of the powerful influence of school support on a teacher's practice as well as his or her willingness to participate in professional development activities.



(Adapted from OECD "Framework for the Analysis of Teaching Practices and Beliefs" (2009, p. 91))

Figure 3. Framework for the Analysis of teachers' Beliefs, Perceptions and Practices

Teachers' beliefs (or perceptions) and instructional practices are irrevocably linked to the strategies they adopt "for coping with challenges in their daily professional life ... and they shape students' learning environment and influence student motivation and achievement" (OECD, 2009, p. 89). Apparently, teachers' instructional practices are greatly influenced by their theoretical beliefs and perceptions of teaching and learning (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007). As the teacher plans his or her daily teaching routines, he or she will tap his or her professional knowledge and experience to create a personal theory that makes sense to him or her, which enables him or her to cope with the daily demands of the classroom (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007; Prabhu, 1988).

Instructional practices are very much reliant on what teachers bring to the classroom – their professional competence (knowledge about the subject matter and knowledge of

pedagogical approaches and strategies). Their professional competence can not only contribute to the success of their instructional practices but also affect student learning. Indeed, their professional competence can shape students' learning environment and affect their motivation and achievement.

However, teachers' professional competence is, in turn, influenced by their beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes. The two teaching and learning-related indices – constructivist and direct transmission – cover teachers' beliefs and fundamental understanding of the nature of teaching and learning (OECD, 2009, p. 89). A teacher who subscribes to the direct transmission view of student learning will see his or her role as one who imparts knowledge in a structured way, focuses on explication of 'correct' solutions to "clear and resolvable problems" (p. 92), and ensures order in the classroom. On the other hand, a teacher who adheres to the constructivist view, tends to involve students actively in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills. He or she will facilitate student inquiry, providing ample opportunities for students to come up with solutions to problems on their own, and encouraging students to be actively involved in the learning process (OECD, 2009, p. 92).

While it is plausible that teachers may adhere to either the direct transmission view or constructivist view, it does not mean that a teacher with the direct transmission view will stay that way in his or her entire teaching career. Doyle's (1997) study showed that many preservice teachers' beliefs eventually changed from viewing teaching and learning as passive acts of teachers imparting knowledge to students at the start of their preservice training programme to the constructivist view that perceives teaching and learning as active processes in which teachers serve as facilitators of learning. A teacher's beliefs and perceptions about teaching and learning might also change with years of teaching experience and growth in professional knowledge and competence.

With reference to professional knowledge, OECD also cautions that teachers' professional knowledge may not be consistent with their actual practices. And this view is supported by findings by Bruns and Mogharreban (2007), Minor et al. (2002) and Joseph (2012). This is understandable in view of the influence of teachers' theoretical beliefs and perceptions on their instructional practices (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007). As they tap their professional knowledge and experience, they would construct "a personal theory that works for them" in their daily classroom interaction (OECD 2009, p. 351). These personal theories set the direction for the teachers' classroom interactions (Prabhu, 1988, p. 230). Hence, whatever view a teacher subscribes to will determine what he or she is likely to focus on and emphasize in the classroom.

To sharpen their craft, teachers should involve themselves in professional activities such as attending professional training programmes (workshops, courses, conferences) or engage in professional collaboration (sharing ideas and resources) and learning from one another. I would also think that schools can play an important role in teachers' professional development. School support can be in terms of giving teachers time off to attend courses, workshops, conferences, and providing resources such as reading materials and teaching resources. Administrative support can include giving professional training grants or other related financial aid for teachers to upgrade themselves professionally. In Singapore, some schools form learning circles which are professional platforms for teachers to learn from one another. These learning circles are quite akin to the "co-operating teams, building professional learning communities, participating in school development, and evaluating and changing working conditions" recommended by OECD (OECD, 2009, p. 90). A competent teacher who is positive in attitude towards his or her teaching practice is more likely to create a learning environment that will facilitate student learning and achieve desired student outcomes which will, in turn, enhance the teacher's self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

It has always been of great interest to me to find out if this relationship between teachers' perceptions and their instructional practice as advanced by Lee and Bathmaker (2007) Prabhu (1988) and OECD (2009) holds true in Singaporean schools. More specifically, I am keen to find out what teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching tool are. This issue was explored with a group of thirty-four teachers in six primary schools in a cluster of schools in the northern part of Singapore. Their responses would help to determine whether storytelling could be promoted in their classrooms, because the teacher, "guided by his/her theoretical beliefs, decides the material which suits the needs of the learners" (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007, p. 351). Furthermore, this perception study would give me an avenue to examine my teacher participants' perceptions about storytelling in the English language classroom. Minor et al. (2002), in their study, found that the preservice teachers' levels of educational beliefs did not corroborate their perceptions of the characteristics of effective teachers (p. 120). Would I find similar mismatch in my study of the perceptions of teachers about storytelling? That is one of the principal areas of focus in my study.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Methodological Approaches – an Overview

3.1.1 Different Views about Educational Research

Educational research can be perceived from two different views of the social sciences – one focuses more on “discovering natural and universal laws regulating and determining individual and social behaviour” while the other “emphasizes how people differ from inanimate natural phenomena and, indeed, from each other” (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2001, p. 5). As these two views represent different ways of perceiving social reality, they inevitably vary in their interpretation of it as well.

Both views have underlying assumptions which may be ontological, epistemological, or based on human nature and the relationship between human beings and their environment. The ontological assumptions evolve around the nominalist-realist debate of whether social reality is of “an objective nature” (“out there’ in the world”), or “the result of individual cognition” (“created by one’s own mind”) (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 6). The epistemological approach, which focuses on the nature of knowledge and how it is acquired and communicated, is more concerned with the issues of whether knowledge is something one can acquire or something one has to personally experience (p. 6).

Whatever the assumptions, they have direct implications for the methodology adopted by researchers. The positivist approach will tend to select data collection methods from a range of traditional alternatives such as surveys and experiments. However, if one conforms to the alternative view of social reality, which emphasizes the “subjective experience of individuals in the creation of the social world” (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 7), then the approach will include both the qualitative and quantitative.

The positivist assumptions are premised on the basis that analyses of the end-products of investigations can be expressed in some form of generalisations. However, that positivist view is less adequate when applied to the study of human behaviour which is complex and dynamic. Despite this limitation, traditional options such as surveys can be a quick way of collecting data that can offer preliminary findings of the target sample. In my study, I used questionnaires to collect data about the teachers’ and students’ perceptions of storytelling in the English language classrooms, their reasons and reservations. The questionnaire data were just preliminary findings that I explored further through interviews with a subset of the teacher and student participants.

However, I am aware that my findings only held true for this sample of participants. As it is not the objective of this study to make generalisable claims, the findings were explained or theorized in the context of this small group of participants only. It is not possible to postulate generalisable behaviours based on this small group of participants. Neither is it the objective of this study to prove anything, since the primary concern is about perceptions of teachers and students about storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Qualitative vs Quantitative Research Methodology

In a research design or methodology, data collection during the research process may be conducted in different ways. In qualitative studies, qualitative data are collected and analysed, whereas in quantitative studies, quantitative data are collected and analysed. In a mixed methodology study, the researcher collects and analyses both qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitative research methods seek to understand the “experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of participants” (Harwell, 2011, p. 148). Hence, qualitative research focuses on a detailed investigation of a topic of interest, relying very much on case studies, ethnographic work, and interviews as means of collecting data. Qualitative research methods tend to be inductive; the researcher may “construct theories or hypotheses, explanations, and conceptualisations from details provided by a participant” (p. 149).

In quantitative research methods, however, the prime objective is to attain objectivity, replicability, and generalisability of findings (Harwell, 2011, p. 149). Typically, instruments such as experiments or surveys are employed to collect data (Creswell, 2003, p. 18). There is much reliance on probability theories to test statistical hypotheses that are based on particular research questions. Quantitative researchers often form general inferences about a population based on their tests of statistical hypotheses. Hence, quantitative methods are frequently described as deductive in nature (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

In discussing the differences between qualitative and quantitative methodological designs, Dornyei (2007) identified three positions researchers take: ‘purist’, ‘situationist’, and ‘pragmatist’ approach. The ‘purist’ approach to research methodology tends to treat qualitative and quantitative methodologies as “mutually exclusive” (p. 29). The ‘situationist’ researcher upholds the notion that both methodological designs are relevant and useful when applied in an appropriate research context (p. 30). The ‘pragmatist’ approach which underpins mixed methods research recommends the “integration of methods in a single

study” (Rossman and Wilson, 1985, p. 631). Integration of methods enriches data analysis: one method can be used to “corroborate (provide convergence in findings), elaborate (provide richness and detail), or initiate (offer new interpretations) findings from the other method” (p. 627).

For my present study, I adopted the ‘pragmatist’ approach of using mixed methods. I started with two sets of questionnaires – one for my teacher participants and another for my student participants. The teacher and student questionnaire data served as preliminary data which were compared with the teacher and student interview data. The teacher questionnaire data covered four primary concerns of my study: (a) the teacher participants’ perceptions of storytelling as suggested by their responses to the merits of storytelling highlighted by storytelling advocates and research findings; (b) whether the teacher participants had been using storytelling in their English lessons, and why or why not; (c) whether the teacher participants were confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills, and if they were not confident, why not; and (d) whether they needed some formal support from their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education. The student questionnaire data focused on (a) their perceptions of storytelling (based on their responses about whether they enjoyed listening to, reading and acting out stories); and (b) how storytelling benefited them.

The teacher and student interviews were meant to augment the quantitative data yielded by the teacher and student questionnaire responses. The principal objective was to use the interviews to elicit more detailed responses and validate the questionnaire data.

3.2.2 Mixed Research Methods

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) define mixed methods research as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (p. 17). However, other researchers may feel that it is not really clear what exactly constitutes a mixed methods study (Harwell (2011, p. 151). They may argue that it must have a mixed methods question, both qualitative and quantitative analyses, and integrated inferences (Harwell, 2011, p. 152). I tend to agree with Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) that mixed methods research is an “attempt to legitimate the use of multiple approaches in answering research questions” (p. 17). The goal of mixing methods is “to expand one’s understanding” (p. 19).

Greene et al. (1989) conducted a comprehensive review of 57 mixed-method evaluation studies that covered the period from 1980 to 1988. That review generated for them five

mixed-method purposes (triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation and expansion) and seven relevant design characteristics (p. 258). A mixed-method design with the purpose of triangulation examines the convergence or consistency of findings obtained through different instruments, e.g. a qualitative interview and a quantitative questionnaire. A complementarity mixed-method study uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess overlapping yet distinct facets of the phenomenon under study. In the case of the mixed-method study with development intent, the researcher employs the qualitative and quantitative methods sequentially, using the first method to inform the development of the second method (p. 260). For mixed-method studies with the purpose of initiation, the results from one method may challenge other results or stimulate new directions for the research. In a mixed-study method with the purpose of expansion, the study aims for scope and breadth by including multiple components which may clarify the findings or enhance the findings (Greene et al., 1989, p. 258-59; Harwell, 2011, p. 152).

Of the five purposes delineated by Greene et al. (1989), the purpose of triangulation resonated with the purposes of my study. I wanted to ascertain if the teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning tool were consistent with the students'. If there was convergence in their perceptions, what was the extent of the overlaps and in which aspects? The prime objective was for the findings from the teacher and student interviews to elaborate on the questionnaire findings and generate further insights on how teachers and students perceived storytelling as a pedagogical tool.

Creswell (2003, p. 16) outlines three strategies associated with the mixed methods approach: sequential procedures design which uses one method to amplify the findings of another method; concurrent procedures design which analyses for convergence of quantitative and qualitative data to attain a detailed and thorough analysis of the research topic; and transformative procedures design which uses a "theoretical lens as an overarching perspective" (p. 16) in a design with quantitative and qualitative data. For my study, I adopted Creswell's sequential procedures design, which is elaborated in my next section, 3.3, Research Methodology of this Study.

3.3 Research Methodology of this Study

In this present study, the focus is on teachers' and students' perceptions of storytelling as a language learning and teaching resource. As perceptions (as well as attitudes and beliefs) are "unobservable attributes" (Wesely, 2012), there is a need to look beyond data gleaned from quantitative sources such as questionnaires. My teacher and student questionnaires are largely closed items (questions or statements with fixed alternatives for my participants

to respond to) although there are also a few open-ended sections that invite participants to give their reasons or views. The assumption was that the teacher and student participants would respond to the open-ended sections, but there was a need to also preempt the possibility of participants not completing those open-ended sections. For example, a student might respond positively to question 7 (“Has storytelling helped you in your learning of English language skills?”). But, if he did not respond to the open-ended sub-question, “How has it helped you?”, it would not be possible to know how storytelling had been useful to him. It would seem that questionnaire responses from my study might not be adequate, hence the need to supplement with teacher and student interviews.

The interviews would offer opportunities for me to probe for details such as why participants found storytelling to be beneficial and in what way it was beneficial to them. There would also be opportunities to revisit some areas of the questionnaire that might require further information or amplification from my participants. The interviews would be an opportune avenue for my participants to clarify their questionnaire responses, and/or amplify key points captured in the questionnaires. The interviews would provide insights into what the teachers and students might be thinking about the value of storytelling in the classroom. Hence, in my study, I used a mixed method research design, Sequential Procedures Design, propagated by Creswell (2003, p. 16).

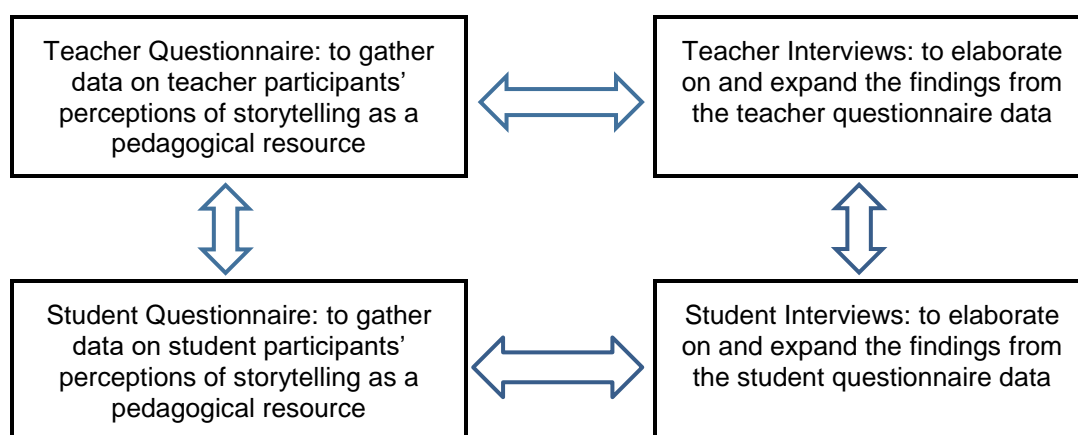


Figure 4. Sequential Procedures Design

In this design, the researcher seeks to “elaborate on or expand the findings of one method with another method” (Creswell 2003, p. 16). According to Creswell, the researcher may begin with a qualitative method as a way to examine the issue and follow it up with a quantitative method with a fairly large sample that would facilitate generalization of the findings. The researcher could also collect quantitative data first to test preliminary theories or concepts and follow up with a qualitative method for close examination of a few cases or

participants (p. 16). In my case, I followed the latter procedure; I started with questionnaires and then conducted interviews with two sub-groups of participants.

Other researchers who share similar aims as mine have also adopted this research design effectively in their research studies. Take for instance Joseph's (2012) study on the perceptions of teachers and students about the teaching and learning of history at the upper secondary school level. He used "a mixed-method research design aimed at triangulating quantitative and qualitative data obtained from questionnaires and focus group interviews" (p. 82). His focus group interviews were able to offer him very insightful findings. For example, his focus group discussions revealed that while the students could identify appropriate responses on the survey, they could not "defend their positions with any adequacy" (p. 85) at the focus group interviews. The teacher focus group interviews were just as revealing. When asked to explain their approaches to teaching historical concepts, "the majority of participants admitted that they did not really set out to teach concepts, rather, they taught facts presented in the history texts" (p. 86).

Joseph's study seemed to confirm that conducting interviews with my teacher and student participants was a step in the right direction. I hoped the interviews would yield valuable insights about my participants' perceptions and why they felt that way about storytelling. This view is also endorsed by Creswell (2003) who explains that the mixed method research design would enable the researcher to gather qualitative data to explain and extend quantitative data in order to attain more comprehensive insights to the research. Using this Sequential Procedures Design, I aimed to triangulate quantitative data (obtained from teacher and student questionnaires) with qualitative data (obtained from individual teacher and student interviews). I collected data from the questionnaires administered to the teacher and student participants before conducting interviews with a subset of the teacher and student groups. As I analysed both the questionnaire and interview data, I tried to discern if there were elaborations, or overlaps, or emerging themes, patterns or trends.

I am mindful that this mixed method has its weaknesses as well. Collecting data via two different methods may mean more time and effort, and more resources to be utilised. Furthermore, expertise may be needed to efficiently apply both methods and to analyse two sets of data for explicit purposes.

Instead of conducting the questionnaire survey and interviews at the same time, I administered the questionnaires, and then conducted the individual interviews after that over a few weeks. I felt that if the time lapse between the questionnaires and interviews was too

long, there might be memory lapses and my participants might not be able to recall their responses to the questionnaires when they were interviewed. The student participants were of great concern to me as they were only ten years old. Hence, the shorter the interval between the questionnaire administration and the individual interviews, the less likelihood of incidence of memory lapses for my student participants.

3.4 Research Participants

3.4.1 Selection of Teacher and Student Participants

In the present study, data were generated from two groups of participants (a group of 34 primary four teachers and a group of 116 students taught by those 34 teachers). The teacher and student participants were invited to respond to either a teacher or student questionnaire and help with individual interviews which served as an extension of the questionnaire. A total of thirteen teacher participants from the six participating schools agreed to be interviewed – two from each school but three teachers from school E consented to be interviewed. The 13 teachers who agreed to be interviewed then asked two of their students who had participated in the questionnaire survey to participate in the student interviews.

3.4.2 Sample Size

Cohen et al. (2001) commented that “a sample size of thirty is held by many to be the minimum number of cases if researchers plan to use some form of statistical analysis on their data” (p. 93). In a quantitative study, the researcher needs to obtain the minimum sample size that will “accurately represent the population being targeted” (p. 93). They caution that it is not just about size, but the representativeness of the sample that is crucial. Sample size is also determined by the “style of the research” (p. 93). In a qualitative research, the sample size tends to be small.

To achieve a representative sample for my study, I would need to involve a substantial number of primary schools in Singapore, and there are about 190 primary schools here. A study of this colossal scale would need to be initiated or mandated by the Singapore Ministry of Education. Given this circumstance, my study would have to be a “non-probability sample” that “seeks only to represent a particular group, a particular named section of the wider population” (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 99). In my case, my research findings would hold true only for the 34 primary four teachers and 116 students in six primary schools in the identified cluster of schools. I would not be able to make generalisations that would reflect the entire primary four population of teachers and students in Singapore.

I did not meet the primary four teachers and students, prior to the survey, as I did not want to unwittingly exert any influence on them. Instead, invitation to participate in my study was to all 39 primary four teachers in the six primary schools in the identified cluster of schools through their respective English Department Heads. By being inclusive in my invitation, all the primary four English teachers had “an equal chance” (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 100) of participating in my study. The invitation also allowed for participants to opt out. Hence, selection of the teacher and student samples was “random” in the broad sense (p. 100) and, as such, would avoid construct bias to some extent.

In total, 39 questionnaires were sent to the primary four English language teachers but 34 responded. The 34 teachers then invited their primary four students to participate in my survey, with the students’ parents’ consent. The ethical consent process is detailed in the next section. The table below shows the number of student and teacher participants from the six primary schools.

Table 1. Details of Student and Teacher Participants

School	Type of school		Number of student participants	Number of teacher participants		Number of years of teaching experience
				F	M	
School A	Co-education school	Government school	21	4	1	3 – 10 years
School B	All boys’ school	Government-aided school	25	6		1 – 25 years
School C	All boys’ school	Government-aided school	23	5		½ - 30 years
School D	Co-education school	Government school	21	4	2	2 – 10 years
School E	All girls’ school	Government-aided school	10	5		3 – 25 years
School F	Co-education school	Government school	16	5	2	1 – 6 years
Total			116	34		-

Government schools are schools that are set up by the Singapore Ministry of Education. On the other hand, Government-aided schools are schools that were first set up and managed by private individuals or organisations, but subsequently came under the jurisdiction of the Singapore Ministry of Education.

In terms of academic qualifications, the teachers were mostly graduates with a small proportion (about 30%) with post-secondary (grade 12 equivalent) or vocational training (diploma) qualifications. All of them were trained teachers, holding Diploma of General Education certificates.

In Singapore, pupils enter primary one classes based on proximity to their homes (within one kilometre). In addition, priority is given to children registering for primary one classes if they have siblings in the same school, or if their parents are former students of the school. Based on these regulations, one could conclude that registration for primary one classes is not based on socio-economic status (SES), or ability. However, many parents who are former students of government-aided schools may use this priority advantage to register their children in those schools. This may give the perception that the children from government-aided schools are from more privileged homes. But, it is difficult to conclude that more children in government-aided schools come from homes with higher SES. The reality is that, in terms of curriculum, all schools adhere to the syllabuses developed by the Singapore Ministry of Education. They follow the same educational system for primary schools and all pupils, regardless of the type of school, sit the Primary Six Leaving Examination conducted by the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board at the end of six years of primary school education. Furthermore, teachers can ask the Singapore Ministry of Education for a transfer to any school. Newly-trained teachers can be posted to any school, too. Hence, there is no wide disparity amongst my six participating primary schools in terms of student ability or SES.

Given the fact that participation was voluntary, it was difficult to predetermine definitive number of male and female participants, or specify particular age range and years of teaching experience. In the Singaporean primary schools, there tend to be many more female teachers than male teachers. The male-female ratio in my sample is quite reflective of the demography of the teacher population in the primary schools in Singapore. As for age range, the wide gap in the teacher participants' age might offer opportunities to compare the perceptions and practice of younger and older teachers in chapter four, Research Findings.

3.4.3 Ethical Issues of this Research Study

(a) Ethical Consent from Teacher and Student Participants

Before embarking on the research proper, application for ethical review was sought from the Ethical Review Board of Sheffield University which approved this research study. A copy of the approved ethical review is at Appendix C.

Before the start of the research, I was advised by the Superintendent of the cluster of schools where I was attached to meet up with the Principals of the six primary schools in that cluster to seek their permission to invite all their Primary Four English language teachers and students to participate in the research and to inform them of the focus and

objectives of the research. I heeded the Superintendent's advice and met up with the Principals of the six primary schools in that cluster.

I shared with the six Principals my research interest and focus, the purpose of my research, and research methodology. I assured them that my data collection would adhere closely to ethical procedures such as maintaining confidentiality of the identities of all teacher and student participants, and their questionnaire and interview responses. I also emphasized that participation in my research study was voluntary and that no teacher or student would be coerced into participating in this research. I explained that teacher participants should only include those who felt inclined to participate in this research, and in the same democratic spirit, only students whose parents had granted their consent could be invited to participate in the research. I also assured the Principals that the size of my sample was not critical as it was not my aim to make generalisations from the data I would be collecting.

To avoid compounding any unconscious or unintentional positionality influence I might have over the teachers who might be assisting me in my research, I liaised with the English Department Heads in the six schools directly only after all the six Principals from the six schools gave their permission for me to conduct the research with the primary four teachers and students from their schools. Letters of invitation explaining the focus and objectives of my research were sent out to the teachers through the Head of the English Department in each school before the questionnaires were administered.

I did not have a prior meeting with the teacher participants because I did not want to influence their decision to opt in or out of the survey. Since they did not meet me, it would be easier for them to decline the invitation to participate. The Ethical Consent Form was written in a polite and friendly tone, explaining my purpose in conducting the research and assuring them that their identities and responses would be kept confidential. Instead of their names, a simple coding system would be used, for example, T1, T2, T3..., and pseudonyms for the teachers. The teacher participants were also informed of the follow-up interviews in the letters. The letter of invitation included an option for the teacher participants to decline the invitation to participate in my research. A sample of the consent form is attached at Appendix G.

Invitation to the students was given through their parents as the students were only ten years old. Full details of the research objectives and procedure were also communicated to the parents. Measures to ensure confidentiality of information elicited from the questionnaire and interviews would be put in place, e.g., the participants' names would be replaced by

codes (S1, S2, S3,...) and pseudonyms to maintain their anonymity. The letter to the parents had a section that asked for their consent; they had full liberty to reject the invitation for their children to participate in my research or withdraw at any time without the need to provide a reason. A sample of the consent form is attached at Appendix G.

Ethical Letters of Consent given to the teacher and student participants for my Pre-survey Pilot study and my main study are at Appendices F and G respectively. In the Ethical Letters of Consent, I was upfront about the possibility of a follow-up interview after the initial questionnaire survey so that the teacher participants and the parents of the student participants could decline the invitation to participate in the study if they did not feel comfortable with either or both measurement instruments. In addition, a short note of assurance of confidentiality was included in the letters. Also included in the letters was my personal contact number so that the teachers and parents could call me if they needed any clarification about the study (how the data would be collected and how confidentiality would be maintained, or just any concerns they might have about the data collection process).

Ethical Letters of Consent were sent out to all 39 Primary Four teachers in the six primary schools identified for this study, inviting them to participate in this study. Thirty-four teachers responded to the participation request and they each, in turn, invited about three to five of their students to participate in this study. In total, 116 students responded to the invitation to participate in the study, with their parents' consent.

From the Ethical Letters of Consent to the students, the students' parents were aware of the student interview that would come soon after the questionnaire. Only those who gave their consent were asked through their teachers to participate in the interview. 26 out of the 116 student participants agreed to be interviewed. To cover a wide range of students, students of different attainment levels in English language were identified by their respective teachers for the interviews; the teachers used the students' primary three End-of-Year English examination scores as the determinant. As participation in the study was on a voluntary basis, it was difficult to ask for equal number of male and female participants for the questionnaire or interviews. Hence, it was a challenge including gender difference as a focus in this study.

(b) Positionality and Reflexivity

Despite my assurances and being very open about the intention of my project and the measures I had taken to ensure that my participants were not compelled to participate in the study, I could not ignore the effect of my positionality as a Master Teacher in the identified

cluster of schools throughout the research process. The fact that I worked very closely with the Superintendent in charge of that cluster of schools could have some impact on my relationship with the English Department Heads and their teachers, too. Consciously or unconsciously, my own biases might have influenced the participants and their responses, my own observations and interpretations (Bourke, 2014, p. 2). I could strive to remain objective, but subjectivity is something very real. I am cognizant of the fact that every aspect of my research has been “mediated by who I am, and the lens through which I view the world” (p. 5).

This issue of clarifying researcher bias or reflexivity is not without opposition from some researchers. Interpretive researchers, in particular, would argue that if the inquirer does not sufficiently detach himself or herself from the subject of inquiry so as to maintain an objective distance, it would be difficult for “the truth to show itself” (Angen, 2000, p. 383). But, must positionality be all negative? Bourke (2014) commented that being cognizant of his positionality as a White man trying to discuss race issues with students, he “aided in creating spaces in which voices that are often silenced were sought and heard” (p. 5). Bourke was referring to the participants in his research project – the students of colour who were much more open in discussing issues of race with him. In my teacher questionnaire, questions 5 and 6 invite participants to respond to the possibility of pre- or in-service training in storytelling and what to include in such training workshops or courses. At my interviews with the teacher participants, if I were to show that I understood their misgivings about the usefulness of storytelling and their reluctance to try out this pedagogical approach, they might be more responsive when I asked them if they would like some form of support (be it professional or administrative) from their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education. By posing these questions, I hoped to be seen by my participants as being on their side and attempting to solicit assistance for them, thus turning the negativity of my positionality into something constructive.

Throughout the research process, I was aware of my positionality and consciously tried to assume the reflexive stance, or “self-analysis” (Bourke, 2014, p. 2) constantly. For instance, at the data collection phase, I did not meet up with the primary four teachers or students prior to the questionnaire surveys or interviews, lest I be perceived as applying pressure on my participants. Also, I figured that if I truly believed in confidentiality, then I should allow the teachers and students to hand in their responses in sealed envelopes so that they would not fear their responses being seen by their English Department Heads. Assured of confidentiality, they could be as candid as possible in their responses.

Before the teacher and student interviews, I tried to envisage how my participants might feel being interviewed. Hence, upon reflection, I felt that there was a need to spend time helping my participants to warm up towards me and feel relaxed. Thus, all my interviews were preceded by a short chit-chat session. At the data analysis phase, I knew I needed to be conscious of my positionality and interpret my data with that self-awareness, too. I had to constantly check myself from being too hasty in drawing conclusions from my teacher and student participants' interview responses, for instance.

3.4.4 Rationale for Adopting Convenience Sample Design

Convenience Sampling is the predominant sample design of my study. According to Boudah (2011), in convenience sampling, “the researcher chooses the most efficient and convenient sample available. For example, if you are teaching, your classroom of students would be a convenient sample” (p. 142). Boudah (2011) and Cohen et al. (2001) caution that this method has its limitations in that it is “usually not very defensible for research purposes; however, it may have to be used in order for a study or a pilot study to be completed.” (Boudah (2011, p. 142).

Although I am aware of the limitations of convenience sampling, the sample of teachers and the sample of students for my study were chosen because of easy access. The more compelling reason is that generally, teachers in Singapore, being very concerned with examination results, do not like their curricular time to be disrupted. They are very concerned about the exigency to complete the English language syllabus for the classes they are in charge of.

Efforts were made to triangulate and hence strengthen the questionnaire data with the interview data. Nevertheless, I was also aware that while the interviews might be intensive and hence might have the potential to bring to light some “important variables, processes and interactions that deserve more extensive attention” (Isaac and Michael, 1982, p. 48), they might not allow “valid generalizations to the population” (p. 48), be it the population of primary school teachers, or students in the primary schools in Singapore.

I was also cognizant of the fact that the sample would not be representative of the teacher or student population in my country. The crux of the issue is that it was not the aim of my study to draw general inferences about perceptions of storytelling. The aim of my study was to find out how my sample of teachers and students perceived storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource, and reasons for their perceptions and the thinking behind the teacher participants' interest in or aversion to storytelling. The questionnaires for both the teacher

and student participants would serve as a quick snapshot that would form the starting point for further probing for reasons for their thinking and practice or behavior through subsequent interviews with the teacher and student participants.

3.5 Generation of Data

3.5.1 Pre-survey Pilot

To develop the final questionnaires, a preliminary pilot study was conducted. For this pilot study, two fairly open-ended questionnaires (one for the teacher participants and another for the student participants) were administered to three teachers and six primary four students from the six primary schools in the cluster of schools where I worked. The three teacher participants were Senior Teachers with a lot of teaching experience. They assisted their respective English Department Heads in guiding the teachers in their schools. The primary objective of the open-ended responses was to “provide the data from which objective-type answers will be derived” (Isaac and Michael, 1982, p. 133-134). The two questionnaires for pilot testing are at Appendices D and E. The objectives of the pilot study questions are presented below.

Table 2. Pilot Study Teacher Questionnaire Questions and Objectives

Pilot Study Question	Objective
1 “My perception of storytelling as a mode for teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool.” My reasons are:	To ascertain the teachers’ perception of the claims about the benefits of storytelling for teaching English language skills
2 “I agree with literature on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills.” My reasons are:	To find out what their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching tool are and what influences their perceptions
3 “I have been using storytelling as a mode of teaching English language skills for the past ___ year(s).” My reasons are: or “I have not been using storytelling as a mode of teaching English language skills.” (a) My reasons are: (i) My reasons are: (ii) “Would you like to try using storytelling to teach English language? ____” My reasons are:	To find out why they are using storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource To find out why they are not using storytelling as a teaching and learning resource
4 “I am confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills.” My reasons are:	To discern their confidence level in using storytelling as a teaching and learning resource and the reasons for their confidence or lack of it
5 “I feel that storytelling facilitation skills should be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers.” My reasons are:	To ascertain their reaction to the inclusion of storytelling in formal teacher training and the reasons for their reaction
6 “If storytelling activities were to be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers, which activities would you like to be included?” (Three lists of “before-activities”, “during-activities” and “after-activities” were provided for participants to tick.)	To establish the kind of activities teachers might deem useful and would like some support in conducting them

Table 3. Pilot Study Student Questionnaire Questions and Objectives

Pilot Study Question	Objective
1 "I have attended English storytelling lessons before." Yes/No	To ascertain students' familiarity with the storytelling genre
2 "If your answer is 'yes' , please let us know the following: a) the number of English storytelling lessons you attended: _____ b) where the English storytelling lessons were conducted: _____ c) who conducted the English storytelling lessons: _____ d) When the English storytelling lessons were conducted: _____"	To probe for details as a way of verifying students' response to question 1
3 "Do you enjoy listening to stories in English during English language lessons?" <input type="radio"/> all the time <input type="radio"/> sometimes <input type="radio"/> not at all	To find out whether students enjoy listening to, reading, or acting out stories
4 "Do you enjoy reading stories during English language lessons?" <input type="radio"/> all the time <input type="radio"/> sometimes <input type="radio"/> not at all	
5 "Do you enjoy acting out parts of the stories read by you, your classmates or your teacher during English language lessons?" <input type="radio"/> all the time <input type="radio"/> sometimes <input type="radio"/> not at all	
6 "Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language skills?" <input type="radio"/> all the time <input type="radio"/> sometimes <input type="radio"/> not at all Why/Why not?	To find out if students would like their teacher to use stories to teach English skills, as a way of verifying responses to questions 3 to 5
7 "Has storytelling helped you in your learning of English language skills?" How has it helped you?	To find out how storytelling has helped students
8 "If storytelling has never been included in your English language lessons in primary one, two or three, would you like it to be included in your primary four English language lessons?" My reasons are:	To find out why students desire to include or exclude storytelling in their primary four English lessons.

3.5.2 Reviewing the Pilot Study Questionnaires for the Main Study

Boudah (2011) recommends that researchers field test their instruments. He suggests that they conduct their interviews or administer their questionnaires to "people similar to those in your target population and get their feedback" (p. 166). The whole idea is to establish whether the questions in the intended instrument are clear, and easily understood. If there is a lack of clarity or coherence, the researcher needs to know which questions need to be refined or rewritten for better clarity and focus. Boudah stresses that it is important that the instrument is "easy to use and is understandable to bolster reliability and validity" (p. 166). In a nutshell, Boudah captures the intention I had when I piloted my teacher and student questionnaires with three Senior Teachers and six students from three of the six primary schools in my cluster of schools. I also wanted to find out if the questions in my pilot survey questionnaires covered my research questions adequately, and if there were areas I might have overlooked, or details I needed to pay attention to.

(a) Teacher Questionnaire

Analysis of the pilot questionnaire responses also prompted me to rethink how I could design my questionnaires for my main study such that not only must they be relevant but they would also have to be comprehensive and yet easy for my participants to complete. Take the first two questions in my pilot teacher questionnaire for instance. For question 1, I had a four-point scale for the teacher participants to respond to. In addition, the teacher participants (Senior Teachers) were required to provide reasons for their responses. It was the same format for question 2. After reviewing the three Senior Teachers' responses to these two pilot survey questions 1 and 2, I amended them for my main study questionnaire. For instance, in my pilot survey question 2, I wanted to find out if my teacher participants agreed with what literature said about the value of storytelling. However, in my main study, I felt that it would be more encompassing to include "research on storytelling". Since the focus was on the value of storytelling claimed by literature and research, it was deemed necessary to include actual comments made by storytelling advocates and researchers. Hence, I delved into my readings and culled essential points or comments made by storytelling advocates and research, and they then formed the list of quotes for my main study question 2. The reasons the three Senior Teachers gave for my pilot study questions 1 and 2 were invaluable and I collapsed them into a helpful list for my main study question 1. The full version of my main study teacher questionnaire is at Appendix H.

Table 4. Modifications to the Pilot Study Teacher Questionnaire – Questions 1 and 2

Pilot Study	Main Study																																													
<p>(1) My perception of storytelling as a mode of teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool.</p> <p><u>Reasons given by the 3 teacher participants:</u></p> <p>Ram: "It increases students' interest and is a tool to help teachers convey abstract concepts such as filial piety and honesty."</p> <p>Jess: "Stories usually captivate the pupils so it can be a good teaching tool."</p> <p>Sue: "Many activities / teaching points can be elicited from a story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Children love to listen to stories, no problem in getting their attention -It is easier and less time consuming to arouse pupils' interest in a lesson with storytelling than playing games. -It helps in classroom management – more attentive, less distracted" <p>(2) I agree with literature on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills.</p> <p><u>Reasons given by the 3 teacher participants:</u></p> <p>Ram: "Listening to stories instils the love of language in students and motivates them to read. It also encourages them to see that there is a logical sequence in stories, and hopefully, allow them to apply this in their own stories. Storytelling develops listening skills."</p> <p>Jess: "It promotes critical and higher order thinking. Heard from people who went through such courses that it was interesting."</p> <p>Sue: "Through storytelling,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – pupils learn oral skills: voice projection, pronunciation and articulation, expression, etc – teachers can instil in pupils the love of reading – teachers can inculcate values for character development – it helps pupils to develop reading skills, writing skills (plot, introduction, problem, conclusion), vocabulary, etc. – it stretches thinking - prediction, sequencing, comprehension, analysis." 	<p>(1) My perception of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool.</p> <p>My reasons are (<i>Please tick relevant boxes</i>):</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>Stories are able to captivate children's interest because they love to listen to stories.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>It is a tool to help teachers convey abstract concepts such as filial piety and honesty.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>Many activities/teaching points can be elicited from a story.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>It is easier and less time consuming to arouse pupils' interest in a lesson with storytelling than playing games.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>e</td> <td>It helps in classroom management – students become more attentive, and are less distracted.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>Listening to stories instils the love of language in students and motivates them to read.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>g</td> <td>Storytelling encourages children to see that there is a logical sequence in stories, and it is hoped that they may apply this knowledge to their own storytelling.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>h</td> <td>Storytelling promotes critical and higher order thinking such as analysis and evaluation.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>I</td> <td>Through storytelling, teachers can instil in pupils a love for reading.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>J</td> <td>Through storytelling, teachers can inculcate values for character development.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>k</td> <td>It is very time consuming to tell stories.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>L</td> <td>It is difficult to teach English language skills through storytelling.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>m</td> <td>Storytelling can only serve as a pre-activity to generate interest.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>n</td> <td>Literature or research on storytelling only focuses on successful cases.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>p</td> <td>Literature or research on storytelling in English language very often focuses on children who are native speakers of the English language.</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	a	Stories are able to captivate children's interest because they love to listen to stories.		b	It is a tool to help teachers convey abstract concepts such as filial piety and honesty.		c	Many activities/teaching points can be elicited from a story.		d	It is easier and less time consuming to arouse pupils' interest in a lesson with storytelling than playing games.		e	It helps in classroom management – students become more attentive, and are less distracted.		F	Listening to stories instils the love of language in students and motivates them to read.		g	Storytelling encourages children to see that there is a logical sequence in stories, and it is hoped that they may apply this knowledge to their own storytelling.		h	Storytelling promotes critical and higher order thinking such as analysis and evaluation.		I	Through storytelling, teachers can instil in pupils a love for reading.		J	Through storytelling, teachers can inculcate values for character development.		k	It is very time consuming to tell stories.		L	It is difficult to teach English language skills through storytelling.		m	Storytelling can only serve as a pre-activity to generate interest.		n	Literature or research on storytelling only focuses on successful cases.		p	Literature or research on storytelling in English language very often focuses on children who are native speakers of the English language.	
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For questions 3a and 3b, I applied the same modification process as questions 1 and 2. In the Pilot survey questionnaire, the teacher participants (Senior Teachers) were asked to provide reasons for their responses, and their reasons were later included in the main study questionnaire. I added more reasons based on my readings. Some of the participants' reasons were rephrased for better clarity.

Table 5. Modifications to the Pilot Study Teacher Questionnaire – Questions 3a and 3b

Pilot Study	Main Study																																						
<p>(3a) (i) I have been using storytelling as a mode of teaching English language skills for the past ___ year(s). My reasons are:</p> <p>(ii) I have used the following storytelling activities and found them very helpful in teaching English language skills.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="225 577 587 1332"> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>Teacher shows the book cover to students to promote predictive skills and to motivate them</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>Teacher asks questions on the title (or subject) of the story to arouse interest and focus meaning.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding their feelings to show their understanding.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e</td> <td>Students respond to questions on the content of the story to show their understanding.</td> </tr> </table>	a	Teacher shows the book cover to students to promote predictive skills and to motivate them	b	Teacher asks questions on the title (or subject) of the story to arouse interest and focus meaning.	c	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding their feelings to show their understanding.	d	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.	e	Students respond to questions on the content of the story to show their understanding.	<p>(3a) (i) I have been using storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills for the past ___ year(s).</p> <p>(ii) I have used the following storytelling activities and found them very helpful in teaching English language skills.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="619 412 1374 1025"> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>I usually show my students the cover of a storybook to promote predictive skills and to motivate them.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>I usually ask my students questions about the title (or subject) of the story to arouse their interest.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>During the storytelling, my students will respond to my questions regarding their feelings to show their understanding.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>During the storytelling, my students respond to my questions regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e</td> <td>I get my students to retell the stories they have read or heard because I believe that they will become aware of story structures and how to sequence the events and recount them in an intelligible way.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f</td> <td>I get my students to dramatize part of the story, or the whole story, to help them remember the story in a fun way and learn the language and vocabulary used in the story.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g</td> <td>I conduct meaningful follow-up activities such as art and craft, music, poetry, book review, journal writing or visual mapping.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>h</td> <td>I get my students to create vocabulary maps to record the new vocabulary they have learnt from the stories.</td> </tr> </table> <p>Other activities:</p> <p>(3b) (i) I have not been using storytelling as a mode of teaching English language skills.</p> <p>My reasons are (<i>Please tick relevant boxes</i>):</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="619 1167 1374 1473"> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>I am not sure how to use storytelling as a mode for teaching English language skills.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>I have not received any training in storytelling.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>I do not see the relevance of storytelling in learning English language skills.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>I am not able to relate storytelling to the specific English language skills I want to teach.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e</td> <td>I think telling stories to a large class will not be effective.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f</td> <td>I am more concerned about covering the syllabus and the learning outcomes listed in the syllabus document or department scheme of work.</td> </tr> </table>	a	I usually show my students the cover of a storybook to promote predictive skills and to motivate them.	b	I usually ask my students questions about the title (or subject) of the story to arouse their interest.	c	During the storytelling, my students will respond to my questions regarding their feelings to show their understanding.	d	During the storytelling, my students respond to my questions regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.	e	I get my students to retell the stories they have read or heard because I believe that they will become aware of story structures and how to sequence the events and recount them in an intelligible way.	f	I get my students to dramatize part of the story, or the whole story, to help them remember the story in a fun way and learn the language and vocabulary used in the story.	g	I conduct meaningful follow-up activities such as art and craft, music, poetry, book review, journal writing or visual mapping.	h	I get my students to create vocabulary maps to record the new vocabulary they have learnt from the stories.	a	I am not sure how to use storytelling as a mode for teaching English language skills.	b	I have not received any training in storytelling.	c	I do not see the relevance of storytelling in learning English language skills.	d	I am not able to relate storytelling to the specific English language skills I want to teach.	e	I think telling stories to a large class will not be effective.	f	I am more concerned about covering the syllabus and the learning outcomes listed in the syllabus document or department scheme of work.
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<p>(3b) (i) I have not been using storytelling as a mode of teaching English language skills. My reasons are:</p> <p><u>Reasons given by two of the three teacher participants:</u> Ram: I'm not sure how to use it. Jess: Not trained</p> <p>(ii) Would you like to try using storytelling to teach English language skills? ____ My reasons are:</p> <p><u>Reasons given by two of the three teacher participants:</u> Ram: I believe storytelling is a useful tool to teach English language. Jess: I believe it is a good tool I can tap on.</p>	<p>Other reasons:</p> <p>(ii) Would you like to try using storytelling to teach English language skills? ____ My reasons are (<i>Please tick relevant boxes</i>):</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="619 1599 1374 1995"> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>I believe storytelling is a useful tool to teach English Language skills.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>I believe it is a good tool I can draw on.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>Literature and research on storytelling have highlighted many benefits in terms of teaching English language skills.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>Children enjoy listening to stories and I want to learn to use this as a tool for teaching English language skills.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e</td> <td>I would like to use storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills, but I would need some training on how to relate it to specific language skills.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f</td> <td>I do not think it is the best way to teach English language skills.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g</td> <td>I prefer to use other means of teaching English language skills, e.g. multi-media resources, music, experiential learning.</td> </tr> </table>	a	I believe storytelling is a useful tool to teach English Language skills.	b	I believe it is a good tool I can draw on.	c	Literature and research on storytelling have highlighted many benefits in terms of teaching English language skills.	d	Children enjoy listening to stories and I want to learn to use this as a tool for teaching English language skills.	e	I would like to use storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills, but I would need some training on how to relate it to specific language skills.	f	I do not think it is the best way to teach English language skills.	g	I prefer to use other means of teaching English language skills, e.g. multi-media resources, music, experiential learning.																								
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The same modification process was also applied to questions 4 and 5, as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Modifications to the Pilot Study Teacher Questionnaire – Questions 4 and 5

Pilot Study	Main Study																																	
<p>(4) I am confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills My reasons are:</p> <p><u>Reasons given by the three teacher participants:</u> Ram: I like to learn Jess: I have not attended any formal courses on this. Sue: I have attended at least two workshops related to storytelling. Both workshops focus on different aspects. The earlier one focuses on how to be a good storyteller while the latter on the process of storytelling</p> <p>(5) I feel that storytelling facilitation skills training should be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers. My reasons are:</p> <p><u>Reasons given by the three teacher participants:</u> Ram: That'll help teachers get ready to use storytelling as a tool. Jess: (nil) Sue: Teachers are trained right from the beginning, so they can apply the skills straightaway when they join the school. - Emphasizes its importance at an earlier stage -useful tool not just for teaching English language skills but also for others.</p>	<p>(4) I am confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills My reasons are (Please tick relevant boxes):</p> <p><u>My reasons are (Please tick relevant boxes):</u></p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>I like to learn new strategies, and storytelling seems a useful strategy.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>I have attended workshops on storytelling.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>I can relate storytelling to specific English language skills.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>I am able to vary my tone and pitch to convey the different emotions in a story, and I will be a good model for my students' oral communication.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>e</td> <td>I have not attended any formal courses on storytelling.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>f</td> <td>I am not expressive enough to tell stories in an interesting manner.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>g</td> <td>I don't know how to relate storytelling to specific English language skills.</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Other reasons:</p> <p>(5) I feel that training in storytelling facilitation skills should be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers.</p> <p><u>My reasons are (Please tick relevant boxes) :</u></p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>Such training in storytelling facilitation skills will help teachers to prepare for incorporating storytelling as a teaching tool.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>With pre-service training, teachers will be trained right from the beginning, so they can apply the skills straightaway when they join the school.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>It is important to emphasize the relevance of storytelling at an earlier stage of teacher development.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>It is a useful tool not just for teaching English language skills but also for relating to adults/colleagues.</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Other reasons:</p>	a	I like to learn new strategies, and storytelling seems a useful strategy.		b	I have attended workshops on storytelling.		c	I can relate storytelling to specific English language skills.		d	I am able to vary my tone and pitch to convey the different emotions in a story, and I will be a good model for my students' oral communication.		e	I have not attended any formal courses on storytelling.		f	I am not expressive enough to tell stories in an interesting manner.		g	I don't know how to relate storytelling to specific English language skills.		a	Such training in storytelling facilitation skills will help teachers to prepare for incorporating storytelling as a teaching tool.		b	With pre-service training, teachers will be trained right from the beginning, so they can apply the skills straightaway when they join the school.		c	It is important to emphasize the relevance of storytelling at an earlier stage of teacher development.		d	It is a useful tool not just for teaching English language skills but also for relating to adults/colleagues.	
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For question 6, three lists of activities (Before-, During- and After-activities) were given for the teacher participants to respond to. The lists of activities were adapted from those in Wright's (2002, p. 4-5) book. There were very slight amendments to the three lists of activities in the pilot study; only rephrasing of the descriptions of a couple of the activities for greater clarity. For example, an after-activity was rephrased thus:

Pilot study version:

"Students make a big picture book as a class (Each student or pair of students might do one page with an illustration and a text) to show their understanding and make a creative response."

Main study version:

"Students make a big picture book as a class to show their understanding and make a creative response. (Each student or pair of students might do one page with an illustration and a text.)"

(b) Student Questionnaire

Besides pilot testing the questionnaire with six students, the pilot study student questionnaire (Appendix E) was also discussed with the three Senior Teachers individually in their respective schools to ask them for their views about the student questionnaire. Their

general feedback was that all the eight questions in the questionnaire were clear and that having graphics (smiley and grumpy faces) would help. I asked them if I should have lists of possible reasons for the students to tick for questions 6 to 8. The teachers felt that a student questionnaire should not be long, or fatigue would set in.

The children's responses to the open-ended sections of the pilot study suggested that the questions were clear to them. Table 7 below shows the children's responses to the open-ended questions in the pilot study student questionnaire. The children's responses to questions 2a to 2d were relevant. Their responses to questions 6 to 8 indicated that they understood the questions and were able to give relevant responses. Hence, no modifications were made to all 8 questions.

Table 7. Pilot Study Student Questionnaire – Responses to Open-ended Sections

Question	Responses
1) I have attended English storytelling lessons before. - Yes: 2 No: 4 2) If your answer is "yes", please let us know the following: a) The number of English storytelling lessons you have attended - "Two", "One term", "once a week" b) Where the English storytelling lessons were conducted - "North Vista Primary School", "Greendale Primary School" c) Who conducted the English storytelling lessons - "Teacher", "Mr Roger Jenkins (Storyteller)" d) When the English storytelling lessons were conducted - "National Education Storytelling Carnival", "After school"	
(6) Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language skills? Why / Why not?	Roland: "Because we will understand what the teacher is telling us." Dawn: "It makes it enjoyable." Sheila: "I want to be a bookworm and read many books." Xiqi: "I like to listen. I like reading some books that I can use to be more smarter. I do sometimes enjoy acting because I am a little shy." Luella: "It is interesting and funny." (1 student did not provide any reason)
(7) Has storytelling helped you in your learning of English language skills? How has it helped you?	Roland: "It helps me by learning how to be expressive." Dawn: "It helped me learned how and when the different tenses are used." Sheila: "It helps me to understand English more." Xiqi: "It helps me to learn my vocabulary and teaches me new words I do not know but some books do not teach me on my vocabulary because I already know." Luella: "I can pick up a new vocabulary words and use in daily life." (1 student did not provide any reason)
(8) If storytelling has never been included in your English language lessons in primary one, two or three, would you like it to be included in your primary four English language lessons? My reasons are:	Roland: "It will help us with our language." Dawn: "I like reading storybooks." Sheila: "I want to learn about interesting storybooks from storytelling." Xiqi: "I want to become more better in my English. My English is the hardest but my mother likes it. And I want to become like her when I grow up. She is smart." Luella: "I can pick up a few vocabulary words and use them in my compo." (1 student did not provide any reason)

3.5.3 Research Instruments

(a) Questionnaires

Two questionnaires – one for 34 primary four teachers and another for 116 students of those 34 teachers – were designed to find out about the teachers' and students' perceptions of

storytelling as a language teaching and learning tool and to ascertain if there was any disparity between the two groups' perceptions. Both the teacher and student questionnaires were semi-structured in that they contained closed and open-ended questions. The closed items in the teacher questionnaire included 4-point rating scales (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) followed by lists of reasons or activities for participants to respond to. The lists of reasons or activities were followed immediately by open-ended prompts such as "Other reasons", "Other activities", or "Comments, if any". In the student questionnaire, the closed items were 3-option multiple-choice questions and dichotomous (Yes-No) questions, but like the teacher questionnaire, there were open-ended prompts such as "Why/Why not?", "My reasons are...". Hence, the questionnaires would provide quantitative as well as qualitative data.

Although the qualitative data from the open-ended sections of the questionnaires might "catch the authenticity, richness, depth of response" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 255), the assumption is that the participants are sufficiently capable of expressing their thoughts on paper (p. 256). In view of this, interviews would also be conducted. While I hoped the questionnaire questions would reflect components of the construct I was investigating, I was aware that this method of collecting data had its limitations. Participants' responses would not always tell me directly how they view storytelling as a language learning or teaching tool; quite often, I would need to infer their perceptions from their responses. For instance, if a teacher affirms the statement, "I agree with literature or research on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills", it could be inferred that he or she is positive in his or her perception of storytelling as a teaching tool. But, it would not tell me the reasons for his or her agreement or disagreement. The interviews would provide an avenue for me to seek clarification of views given by my participants in the questionnaire, and probe for more details and information.

(i) Teacher Questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire at Appendix H contains six questions in either statement or question format. The questions are based on my research questions 1, 4 and 5.

Teacher Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2:

The two statements in Table 8 below focus specifically on teachers' perception of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource. Fifteen possible reasons culled from the responses by teachers at the Pre-Survey Pilot are provided for the teacher participants to respond to. Both the statements are based on my RQ1 ("What are teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?").

Table 8. Main Study Teacher Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2

Description of Statements	
(1) My perception of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool. My reasons are (Please tick relevant boxes):	
a	Stories are able to captivate children's interest because they love to listen to stories.
b	It is a tool to help teachers convey abstract concepts such as filial piety and honesty.
c	Many activities / teaching points can be elicited from a story.
d	It is easier and less time consuming to arouse pupils' interest in a lesson with storytelling than playing games.
e	It helps in classroom management – students become more attentive, and are less distracted.
f	Listening to stories instills the love of language in students and motivates them to read.
g	Storytelling encourages children to see that there is a logical sequence in stories, and it is hoped that they may apply this knowledge to their own storytelling.
h	Storytelling promotes critical and higher order thinking such as analysis and evaluation.
i	Through storytelling, teachers can instil in pupils a love for reading.
j	Through storytelling, teachers can inculcate values for character development.
k	It is very time consuming to tell stories.
l	It is difficult to teach English language skills through storytelling.
m	Storytelling can only serve as a pre-activity to generate interest.
n	Literature or research on storytelling only focuses on successful cases.
p	Literature or research on storytelling in English language very often focuses on children who are native speakers of the English language.
Other reasons: _____	
(2) I agree with literature or research on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills. Below are some claims made by storytelling advocates. Please tick the statements you agree with (You may tick more than one box):	
a	"Hearing stories instills love of language in children and motivates them to read." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990:4)
b	"Hearing stories stimulates the imagination." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 3)
c	"Indeed, an important aim of nurturing children as storytellers is to help them develop confidence in themselves as communicators, and a sense of self-worth in their ability to share stories with their peers." (Mallan, 1991, p.15)
d	"Storytelling improves expressive language skills and stimulates inventive thinking." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 15)
e	"... the requirements to 'speak clearly and confidently' and to 'listen, understand and respond to others', will be met by hearing and telling stories where the need to speak with 'clear diction, to choose words with precision, organize what they say and take into account the needs of their listeners is self-evident." (Grugeon and Gardner, 2000, p. 6)
f	"Listening to stories helps children become aware of the rhythm, intonation and pronunciation of language." (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p. 2)
g	"Storybooks develop children's learning strategies such as listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing." (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p. 2). "Exposure to stories, heard or viewed, enables children to extend their knowledge of story schema; that is to establish expectations as to what will occur in the story." (Mallan, 1991, p. 13)
h	"The repetitious language patterns and cumulative story events of predictable books and stories ... can help children to make accurate predictions of meaning and to anticipate language patterns and plot and sequence development." (Nelson, 1989, p. 389) (Wright, 2002)
i	"In the classroom, stories help to uncover the lenses through which individual students interpret experience." (Lowe, 2002, p. 4) Storytelling helps to develop children's understanding of self and others. (Mallan, 1991, p. 12)
j	"...storytelling helps children to read and write because it gives them frameworks or schema for understanding text." (Mallan, 1991, p. 15)
k	"Hearing stories improves many language skills, such as vocabulary, comprehension, sequencing and story recall." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 6)
l	"The storytelling experience ... is a vehicle for enhancing comprehension, both literal and inferential; motivating oral discussion ..." (Nelson, 1989, p. 389) "When storytelling is combined with judicious questioning and retelling strategies, comprehension skills at the literal, inferential and critical levels can be developed." (Mallan, 1991, p. 13)
m	"Stories, which rely so much on words, offer a major and constant source of language experience for children." (Wright, 1995, p. 6). "... students will acquire over time the language necessary for communication as the stories will contain a wide variety of natural language rich in vocabulary and grammatical complexity ." (McQuillan & Tse, 1998, p. 21).
n	Storytelling "contributes to pupils' written English": pupils are required "to communicate meaning in narrative" and "sequence events, and recount them in appropriate detail", "to use a language and style appropriate to the reader and to develop ideas into structured written texts". (Grugeon and Gardner, 2000, p. 6)
o	Storytelling improves children's vocabulary (Hamilton & Weiss, 1990). "Listening to stories allows the teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures by exposing the children to language in varied, memorable and familiar contexts, which will enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech." (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p. 2).
Comments, if any: _____	

Teacher Questionnaire Questions 3a and 3b:

This is an either/or segment targeted at two groups of teachers – teachers who have used storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills, and those who have not. In a sense, questions 3a and 3b are an extension of questions 1 and 2 and relate directly to my RQ1. Responses to these two questions are expected to address, albeit obliquely, my RQ3 (“Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”) and my RQ4 (“Do teachers’ reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?”).

Teacher Questionnaire Question 4:

Question 4 is in statement format, and aims at ascertaining whether the participants have confidence about using storytelling as an approach to teach English language skills. Again, possible reasons are provided for the teacher participants to respond to. It is meant to serve as a prelude to Questions 5 and 6 in that if the teacher participants are not confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills, then one of the possible ways of helping them to gain confidence might be to provide them with some form of assistance. There might be other reasons and a list of likely reasons is provided in the questionnaire for them to respond to.

Teacher Questionnaire Questions 5 and 6

Questions 5 and 6 relate to my RQ 5 (“If storytelling were to be recommended as a strategy for teaching English language skills, what kind of implementation support would English language teachers like their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education to provide for them, and why?”. Questions 5 and 6 are meant to elicit responses to the possibility of introducing pre- or in-service training on storytelling. Question 5 is a statement on professional development: “I feel that training in storytelling facilitation skills should be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers.” Question 6 is crafted in question format, “If storytelling activities were to be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers, which activities would you like to be included?” Three lists of activities – *Before-Activities*, *During-Activities*, *After-Activities* – adapted from Wright (2002) are provided to elicit responses from the participants.

Table 9. Main Study Teacher Questionnaire Questions 3a, 3b and 4

(3a) (i) I have been using storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills for the past _____ year(s).		
(ii) I have used the following storytelling activities and found them very helpful in teaching English language skills.		
a	I usually show my students the cover of a storybook to promote predictive skills and to motivate them.	
b	I usually ask my students questions about the title (or subject) of the story to arouse their interest and focus meaning.	
c	During the storytelling, my students will respond to my questions regarding their feelings to show their understanding.	
d	During the storytelling, my students respond to my questions regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.	
e	I get my students to retell the stories they have read or heard because I believe that they will become aware of story structures and how to sequence the events and recount them in an intelligible way.	
f	I get my students to dramatize part of the story, or the whole story, to help them remember the story in a fun way and learn the language and vocabulary used in the story.	
g	I conduct meaningful follow-up activities such as art and craft, music, poetry, book review, journal writing or visual mapping.	
h	I get my students to create vocabulary maps to record the new vocabulary they have learnt from the stories.	
Other activities: _____		
(3b) (i) I have not been using storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills.		
My reasons are (Please tick relevant boxes):		
a	I am not sure how to use storytelling as a mode for teaching English language skills.	
b	I have not received any training in storytelling.	
c	I do not see the relevance of storytelling in learning English language skills.	
d	I am not able to relate storytelling to the specific English language skills I want to teach.	
e	I think telling stories to a large class will not be effective.	
f	I am more concerned about covering the syllabus and the learning outcomes listed in the syllabus document or department scheme of work.	
Other reasons: _____		
(ii) Would you like to try using storytelling to teach English language skills? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
My reasons are (Please tick relevant boxes) :		
a	I believe storytelling is a useful tool to teach English Language skills.	
b	I believe it is a good tool I can draw on.	
c	Literature and research on storytelling have highlighted many benefits in terms of teaching English language skills.	
d	Children enjoy listening to stories and I want to learn to use this as a tool for teaching English language skills.	
e	I would like to use storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills, but I would need some training on how to relate it to specific language skills.	
f	I do not think it is the best way to teach English language skills.	
g	I prefer to use other means of teaching English language skills, e.g. multi-media resources, music, experiential learning, etc.	
Other reasons: _____		
(4) I am confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills.		
My reasons are (Please tick relevant boxes) :		
a	I like to learn new strategies, and storytelling seems a useful strategy.	
b	I have attended workshops on storytelling.	
c	I can relate storytelling to specific English language skills.	
d	I am able to vary my tone and pitch to convey the different emotions in a story, and I will be a good model for my students' oral communication.	
e	I have not attended any formal courses on storytelling.	
f	I am not expressive enough to tell stories in an interesting manner.	
g	I don't know how to relate storytelling to specific English language skills.	
Other reasons: _____		

Table 10. Main Study Teacher Questionnaire Questions 5 and 6

(5) I feel that training in storytelling facilitation skills should be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers.	
My reasons are <i>(Please tick relevant boxes)</i> :	
a	Such training in storytelling facilitation skills will help teachers to prepare for incorporating storytelling as a teaching tool.
b	With pre-service training, teachers will be trained right from the beginning, so they can apply the skills straightaway when they join the school.
c	It is important to emphasize the relevance of storytelling at an earlier stage of teacher development.
d	It is a useful tool not just for teaching English language skills but also for relating to adults/colleagues.
Other reasons: _____	
(6) If storytelling activities were to be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers, which activities would you like to be included? <i>(Activities adapted from Wright, 2002: 4-5)</i>	
<i>Before Activities: (You may tick as many as you like.)</i>	
a	Students make pictures of key elements in the story which the teacher can then use when s/he tells it (to create readiness and teach new vocabulary).
b	Students mime key elements of the story (as a way of motivating students and promoting prediction of key elements in the story).
c	Teacher shows the cover of a storybook to students to promote predictive skills and to motivate them.
d	Teacher asks questions about the title (or subject) of the story to arouse interest and focus on meaning.
e	Students place muddled pictures in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements.
f	Students place a few key words from the story in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements.
g	Students place ten key sentences from the story in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements.
h	Teach students or revise keys words with them to focus meaning and promote prediction.
<i>During Activities: (You may tick as many as you like.)</i>	
i	Students listen to the story and mime it as they listen to show their understanding.
j	Students listen and point to pictures to show their understanding.
k	Students listen and put the muddled pictures in sequence to show their understanding.
l	Students listen and arrange story texts to show their understanding.
m	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding their feelings to show their understanding.
n	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding the protagonists' feelings to show their understanding.
o	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.
p	Students join in on the chorus or make background noises, as an indication of their interest in the story.
<i>After Activities: (You may tick as many as you like.)</i>	
q	Students <u>mime</u> the story or bits of it to show their understanding and make a creative response.
r	Students <u>dramatize</u> the story or bits of it to show their understanding and make a creative response.
s	Students make a big picture book as a class to show their understanding and make a creative response. (Each student or pair of students might do one page with an illustration and a text).
t	Students use the big picture book they have collectively created for re-telling the story to show their understanding and make a creative response.
u	The teacher tells the story again, but this time with mistakes for the students to correct to test their understanding.
v	Students extend the story or change part of it to show their understanding and creativity.
w	Students write letters to each other as if they are the protagonists from the story to show their understanding and creativity.
x	Students put card strips with key sentences on them in the correct sequence to show their understanding.
y	Students respond to questions on the content of the story to show their understanding.
z	Students produce visual maps to capture key elements of the story as a way of showing their understanding.

All the lists of possible reasons provided for most of the questions were culled from the responses by teachers at the Pre-Survey Pilot. The greater part of the questionnaire requires participants to tick relevant boxes, but provision was also made for as many of the sections as possible to elicit further comments on areas not covered.

(ii) Student Questionnaire

The student questionnaire at Appendix I consists of eight questions. Like the teacher questionnaire, the student questionnaire has boxes for students to tick accordingly as well as open-ended questions to elicit reasons and elaboration. The eight statements address my research question 2 (“What are students’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”) directly. They are expected, by inference, to help to address my research question 3 (“Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”).

Table 11. Main Study Student Questionnaire Questions 1 – 8

		☺ Yes	☹ No
1	I have attended English storytelling lessons before.		
2	If your answer is “ yes ”, please let us know the following: a) the number of English storytelling lessons you have attended: _____ b) where the English storytelling lessons were conducted: _____ c) who conducted the English storytelling lessons: _____ d) when the English storytelling lessons were conducted: _____		
3	Do you enjoy listening to stories in English during English language lessons?	☺ all the time	☹ not at all
4	Do you enjoy reading stories during English language lessons?	☺ all the time	☹ not at all
5	Do you enjoy acting out parts of the stories read by you, your classmates, or your teacher during English language lessons?	☺ all the time	☹ not at all
6	Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language skills?	☺ all the time	☹ not at all
	Why / Why not?		
7	Has storytelling helped you in your learning of English language skills?	☺ all the time	☹ not at all
	How has it helped you?		
		☺ Yes	☹ No
8	If storytelling has never been included in your English language lessons in primary one, two or three, would you like it to be included in your primary four English language lessons?		
	My reasons are:		

Student Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2

Regarding Table 11 above, student questionnaire questions 1 and 2 aim at finding out whether students have any prior experience with storytelling lessons.

Student Questionnaire Questions 3 to 6

These questions focus on whether the students enjoy listening to, reading and acting out, stories. They are also intended to find out if the student participants would like their English language teachers to use storytelling in class.

Student Questionnaire Question 7

This question asks students to think about whether storytelling has helped them in their language learning and how it has helped them. The objective is to find out specifically how storytelling has helped them in their language learning.

Student Questionnaire Question 8

This last question asks the student participants if they would like storytelling to be included in their Primary Four English language lessons and why.

(b) Likert Scale for Perceptions Rating

The Likert Scale or Summated Rating Scale was selected over other similar measurement instruments such as the Thurstone Scale or Guttman Scale for several reasons. With the Thurstone Scale or Equal-appearing Interval Scale, a respondent is placed along an agreement continuum for a given attitude. Each attitude item is also scaled. (Isaac and Michael, 1982, p. 142). The scale value represents the strength of the attitude. The items in the scale are assumed to be differentially ordered. Thurstone Scales yield similar outcomes as the Likert Scale but are more difficult to construct (p. 142) as they are more complex.

Guttman Scales are also known as Cumulative Scales because of the cumulative relation between the items and the total score of each respondent. The items are arranged hierarchically in terms of item difficulty, complexity or value. Each Guttman Scale comprises a “relatively small set of homogeneous items that are supposedly unidimensional, measuring one, and only one, attribute” (Isaac and Michael, 1982, p. 143). These scales are appropriate for measuring only one clear-cut attribute. However, they have “limited application” (p. 143). Developing Guttman Scales is a “time-consuming endeavor, frequently requiring many repetitions of piloting” (Christ and Boice, 2009, p. 246).

The Likert Scale, generally on a five-point scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree), requires respondents to make a decision on their level of agreement. The items in a set are estimated to be somewhat equal in attitude or value loading. Their main weakness is their susceptibility to “biasing response sets (e.g., the over-rater or the under-rater)” (p.142). One respondent’s “strongly agree” may be another’s “agree” and vice versa (Cohen et al. 2001, p. 253). However, they “are easier to develop and yield about the same information as the more laboriously constructed equal-appearing interval scale” (Isaac and Michael, 1982, p. 142).

For my study, a four-point rather than five-point Likert scale was selected so as to avoid a scenario where respondents might go for the mid-point or neutral point as is often the case with a three- or five-point scale. When respondents opt for the neutral point, they avoid making a decision. By eliminating a neutral level, the participants would be compelled to make a decision about their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource. The four-point Likert scale would force the respondents to be decisive about their perceptions, i.e., state, in no uncertain terms, whether they “agree” or “disagree” with the statements in the questionnaire. This would increase the reliability of the scale as the results would more likely reflect their views (perceptions or beliefs). It was hoped that the interview data would resolve this reliability issue to a fair extent.

The responses “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree” to each of the Teacher and Student Questionnaires Questions were analysed, and summated according to positive responses (“Strongly Agree” and “Agree”) and negative responses (“Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree”). Summating the responses into two broad categories – positive (accept) and negative (reject) – was deemed necessary as the interval between values cannot be presumed equal (Jamieson, 2004). Hence, to enhance the validity of the Likert Scales used, the positive responses (“Strongly Agree” and “Agree”) were aggregated. The same procedure was applied to the negative responses.

(c) Interviews

I am mindful that while open-ended responses to questionnaires may reveal depth and details of feelings of the participants, they have “limitations related to the writing skills of respondents, the impossibility of probing or extending responses, and the effort required of the person completing the questionnaire” (Patton, 1988, p. 29). There is, thus, a need to complement the questionnaire with “detailed qualitative, open-ended interviews” (Creswell, 2003, p. 21) to collect detailed views of the teachers and students on storytelling as a tool for teaching and learning English language skills.

To triangulate the quantitative data from the questionnaire responses, follow-up interviews were conducted with 13 of the 34 participating teachers and also 26 of the 116 students. Two teachers from each of the six schools agreed to participate in this interview, but School E was so enthusiastic that they invited three teachers to participate in the interviews. As a result, there were a total of 13 teachers from the six participating schools. The 13 teachers who agreed to participate in the interviews were asked if they could invite two students each to be interviewed. The condition was that the students to be interviewed must be from the 116 whose parents had consented to have their children complete the student questionnaire and be interviewed if required. All consent forms of the 116 students were signed by their parents so that they were aware of the interviews as well. At no point of the selection process did I interfere with the selection of teacher or student participants.

Understandably, interviews, like most qualitative measures, are difficult to analyse, but the “open-ended responses permit one to understand the world as seen by the respondents” (Patton, 1988, p. 28). The in-depth interviewing (Burgess, 1985) will provide descriptive data that will supplement the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires. The interviews were considered important as it “is an opportunity for the researcher to get information about beliefs, perspectives, and views from the participant” Boudah (2011, p. 137). As perceptions of storytelling are unobservable attributes (Wesely, 2012), I had to rely on interviews where my teacher and student participants could share their thoughts about storytelling, and from the interview data, I could infer what their perceptions were about storytelling as a language learning and teaching tool. But, like Boudah, I am aware that while an interview is an important avenue to gather valuable information, it can also “result in getting only what the participant thinks the researcher expects or wants to hear” (Boudah, 2011, p. 137). This concern was also raised by Mills, Pajares and Herron (2006) in their discussion of their research findings; they expressed their concern that participants “sometimes report what they believe is expected, rather than their true beliefs” (p. 285). However, Mills et al. (2006) also commented that the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity in reporting the data might mitigate this problem (p. 285).

Patton (1988) describes four interview types: informal conversational interview, interview guide approach, standardised open-ended interview, and closed quantitative interview. According to Patton, the first three interview types are basic approaches to collecting qualitative data (p. 197). In an informal conversational interview, the researcher asks questions that flow spontaneously “from the immediate context” (p. 199). The questions are asked in the “natural flow of an interaction” (p. 198); the question topics or wording are not predetermined. Boudah (2011), in explicating this interview approach, elaborates that “the

researcher engages the participant in conversation about the situation and asks questions about specific events, interactions, or perceptions relevant to this situation.” (p. 137). This helps to ensure that questions regarding what has been observed are addressed or that rationales for actions are explicated. The drawback of this type of interview is its “randomness – questions come up in the situation and are not always consistent across participants or interviews.” (Boudah, 2011, p. 137).

In Patton’s (1988) interview guide approach, the topics and issues to be covered are prepared in advance, usually in outline form. The interviewer determines the sequence and working of questions in the course of the interview (Patton, 1988, p. 200, 207). As Boudah (2011) elaborates, the researcher “has developed a general guide outlining types of questions to ask, but specifics about wording and elaboration are not included” (Boudah, 2011, p. 137). The interview approach has advantages in that the researcher has a general idea about topics to be covered in the interview and can concentrate on amplification of those topics and filling in gaps in the data as the interview progresses. However, as Boudah (2011) cautions, this approach may have a setback in that some areas of significance or interest may be missed or may not be connected, depending on “how the guide was developed or what has transpired since the guide was created” (p. 138).

According to Patton (1988), in the standardised open-ended interview, the questions are “written out in advance exactly the way they are to be asked during the interview” (p. 202). All participants are asked essentially the same questions in the same order (p. 202, 207). Boudah (2011), in analyzing this approach, feels that since the researcher has pre-determined the questions to be asked, the individual responses can vary. In other words, it is possible that the questions may allow the participant to take the response into an area that the researcher might not have considered. This type of interview enhances standardisation across researchers or situations and thus may reduce bias on some issues. However, Boudah cautions that “it does not allow the researcher the spontaneity or flexibility to pursue an area of emergent interest.” (Boudah, 2011, p. 138).

In a closed, fixed-response interview (Patton, 1988, p. 207), questions and response categories are pre-determined, and thus, the responses are fixed, i.e. the participant selects from among pre-determined fixed responses provided. Patton thinks that in such a rigid design, respondents have to “fit their experiences and feelings into the researcher’s categories” (Patton, 1988, p. 207). This approach is efficient and it is uniform across participants, hence greatly facilitates data analysis (Boudah, 2011, p. 138). However, it

“does not allow for unique participant responses or for flexibility in questioning.” (Boudah, 2011, p. 138).

For my study, I adopted Patton’s (1988) interview guide approach. My research questions served as the first point of reference. In all my interviews with the teacher and student participants, I used their respective questionnaire questions as a guide. The questions in my teacher and student questionnaires, in a broad sense, determined the sequence and working of questions in the course of my interviews with each teacher or student participant. Hence, I had a general guide outlining types of questions to ask but not specific wordings or possible elaboration of the topic or issue to be pursued. This approach allowed me to have a general sense of the areas I intended to cover in each interview and I could, thus, focus on elaboration of those topics and filling in gaps in my questionnaire data.

However, I was aware of the fact that in adopting this approach, I might miss out on some areas that might be of significance to my study, as Boudah (2011, p. 138) cautions. Hence, during the interviews, I consciously tried to go slow and build in pauses for my participants to think about issues that arose and to process and formulate their responses.

Below are some examples of how the teacher interviews began:

Teacher Anne

Researcher: “We’ll now look at the questionnaire that you’ve filled in....In the first question, you seem to agree a lot with whatever reasons we’ve listed down. So, for you, storytelling is a good teaching tool?”

Teacher Betty

Researcher: “In your survey response, you seem to be for storytelling. Can you cite a lesson where you used storytelling as a way of teaching language skills?”

Teacher Cara

Researcher: “Right. We’ll look at your survey form. I notice that you have been teaching for about 11 years and you seem to have tried out storytelling quite a bit. And you also agree quite a lot with the statements in the survey. How have you used storytelling as a language tool?”

More examples of the opening interview prompts for the rest of the 13 teacher participants interviewed are at Appendix K.

Student Amos

Researcher: In this questionnaire, you said that you enjoy listening to stories. Can you remember one story that you like to listen to?

Student Ben

Researcher: Look at your questionnaire now. You said that you enjoy listening to stories. Can you recall some stories that you enjoy listening to?

Student Cavin

Researcher: In the questionnaire, you said that you attended storytelling lessons. How many lessons did you attend?

More examples of the opening interview prompts for the rest of the 26 student participants interviewed are at Appendix L.

The interviews were semi-structured, using the statements and open-ended questions from the questionnaires as a starting point. In the interview process, I generated other related questions based on the direction and flow of the interviews.

(i) Teacher Interviews

The questions for the teacher interviews aimed at probing the following areas:

- the teachers' perceptions of the value of storytelling as a language teaching tool, and their reasons, evidence, illustrations and explanations
- their response to professional (training, resources) and administrative (e.g. timetabling) support
- their response to the possibility of including storytelling as a formal language teaching resource

(ii) Student Interviews

The questions for the student interviews followed the questionnaire questions quite closely. The main objective was to provide the students with the opportunity to elaborate on their questionnaire responses. As these students were only ten years old, a more structured interview approach would be more reassuring to them.

3.6 Approach to Data Analysis

3.6.1 Analysis of Teachers' and Students' Questionnaire Responses

Responses to each question in the two questionnaires were recorded, scored and analysed in relation to my research questions. The closed questions in the questionnaires, being quantifiable, were tabulated to ascertain the percentage of agreement or disagreement to each question.

The open-ended responses were also recorded and analysed using Gillham's (2000a) "content analysis of open questions" method. Gillham suggested two questions to guide analysis and categorising of the varied responses to the open-ended questions: "What categories do they seem to fall into?" and "What categories are going to be useful or necessary for your research purposes?" (p. 64). Gillman recommends that each response

be analysed to highlight substantive statements – statements which underscore a key point. Gillham also suggests that the “first stage is to decide on the categories” (p. 64). I feel that pre-determination of the categories might create a sort of ‘tunnel vision’ and I might miss out on the richness of the data. Hence, for my study, I analysed the data I had collected and then categorised the responses based on broad themes that surfaced. The responses were analysed for possible patterns that might reflect particular tendencies in perception and possible reasons for those tendencies.

Adopting Gillham’s (2000a) content analysis method, I first examined all substantive statements in my corpus of teacher data and categorised them under different headings. The same approach was employed for my student data. The categorisation process for both sets of data was iterative. In my analysis, I noted that the wording of some category headings needed to be modified to fit the statements better. As the categorisation was quite firm, the categorised substantive statements were separated into two lists - negative and positive perceptions – in a grid for better reference and analysis. The categorised substantive statements in the two lists were then analysed as a qualitative report – a descriptive, interpretive analysis of what the teachers and students said. I did not adopt the quantitative (count) analysis method (Gillham, 2000a, p. 69) suggested by Gillman as I felt that the content of the substantive statements was more essential and meaningful.

3.6.2 Analysis of Teachers’ and Students’ Interview Responses

The interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the participants, and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Ethical Consent Letters to teacher participants and parents of student participants are attached at Appendix G.

All the tape-recordings of the thirteen teacher participants and twenty-six student participants were transcribed verbatim. I was aware of the inadequacies of transcripts in that the nonverbal aspects of the original communication such as the body language of the participants – “facial expressions, gestures, or eye-movement” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 246) – would be lost in the transcripts. Dornyei feels that “written transcriptions are seriously impoverished in this respect” (p. 247). Perhaps “seriously impoverished” is rather exaggerated, I feel. True, kinesics features like facial expressions, gestures and eye-movement could be very informative, but prosodic and paralinguistic features could be just as informative too.

a) Identifying Substantive Statements Using Content Analysis

Content analysis “originates from quantitative analytical method of examining written texts that involves the counting of instances of words, phrases, or grammatical structures that fall into specific categories” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 245). As qualitative data tend to be textual in nature, content analysis has become an appropriate method with one fundamental distinction – “the qualitative categories used in content analysis are not predetermined but are derived inductively from the data analysed” (p. 245).

To facilitate content analysis of qualitative data, Gillham (2000a) suggests going through each participant’s response in turn to identify “substantive statements – the statements that make a key point, that really say something” (p. 66). In my study, the substantive statements would have to be key points relating to my research questions (RQ). For instance, from the teacher interview responses, substantive statements would be those related to the teacher participants’ perceptions of storytelling and their reasons (RQ1); the teacher participants’ classroom practices – whether they had infused storytelling into their English lessons and their reasons (RQ4); and professional development needs pertaining to the teaching of English language skills through storytelling (RQ5). Substantive statements drawn from the student interview data would cover students’ perceptions of storytelling and reasons; whether they would like storytelling to continue in their English lessons and why; and how storytelling had benefited them (RQ2).

To illustrate how I would be analysing substantive statements (in relation to my research questions), here is an extract from my teacher interview responses.

<u>Breaking up utterances into Substantive Statements (SS):</u>		<u>Analysis of utterances</u>
21	R	What about <i>teaching aid</i> ? If the school gives enough <i>support</i> to the teacher, will that help?
22	Betty	I think it will be very helpful. ^{SS11} <u>because</u> to me, I feel that even to read a story at the start of a lesson, or even a book or a chapter that you read consistently every day, it will help the child in not only understanding or appreciating the story; it will help them with their listening, and eventually learning how to pronounce some words, learning intonation and things like that. It doesn’t come by reading the text itself but by listening. ^{SS12}
		Question to probe for response to professional support SS11: thinks that it will be very helpful if the school provides teaching aid as a form of support (“I think” seems low in degree of confidence, though) SS12: gives reasons (conjunction “because”) for her agreement by highlighting the benefits children get from listening to stories read to them every day – it will help them with their listening skill and <u>pronunciation of words and intonation</u> . (NB: Betty’s emphasis in the last sentence – the benefits come from <u>listening</u> to stories)

When identifying Betty’s response, I have to interpret her comments and make connections using grammatical features such as conjunctions. For instance, her first utterance, “I think it will be very helpful”, is a reply to my questions, “What about *teaching aid*? If the school gives

enough *support* to the teacher, will that help?”. She elaborates with reasons for her concurrence, and this is signalled by the reason conjunction, “because”.

However, for me, the key issue was: How would I interpret the substantive statements identified? What would be the basis for my interpretations? Hence, I felt that there was a need to go beyond the content analysis structure to include more detailed analysis of the discourse generated from the teachers’ and students’ interviews in order to understand their perceptions of storytelling and their justifications.

The essential point here is that content analysis needs to be augmented by discourse analysis because identifying the substantive statements inevitably necessitates interpreting the data. To gain any real insights into the meaning of the data, there is a need to not only analyse the data and make inferences, but also interpret the data. It is this interpretation that “gives meaning to the content” (Mostyn, 1985, p. 116). The data have “attributes of its own” and are a “reflection of deeper phenomena” (p. 116). Interpreting the interview responses requires more than content analysis; it warrants utilising discourse analysis.

b) Combining Content Analysis and Discourse Analysis

Analysis of each set of the teacher and student interview transcripts utilises a combination of content analysis (Gillham, 2000a; Gillham, 2000b; Dornyei, 2007; Mostyn, 1985) and discourse analysis (Wooffitt, 2005; Fairclough, 1992 and 2003; Locke, 2004; Halliday, 1985; Hyatt, 2005).

In using the discourse analysis method, I looked at the following analytical categories:

- (i) Prosodic and Paralinguistic Features
- (ii) Speech Functions and Grammatical Mood
- (iii) Cohesion and Semantic Relations between Sentences/Clauses
- (iv) Modality
- (v) Lexical Choices

The analytical categories, Speech Functions and Grammatical Mood, Cohesion and Semantic Relations between Sentences/Clauses, Modality, and Lexical Choices are based on the analytical frameworks by Fairclough (1992 and 2003), Locke (2004), Hyatt (2005) and Halliday (1985). I am mindful that Fairclough’s prime concern is language and power. Even though that is not my focus in this study, some of the analytical categories Fairclough (1992, 2003) uses for his discourse analysis of oral texts are a useful guide for my analysis of my participants’ perceptions of storytelling and their reasons. Specifically, I adapted his analytical categories, Sentences and Clauses, Cohesion and Modality, for my interview data

analysis, just as Fairclough has adapted Halliday's (1985) Systemic Functional Grammar frameworks for his discourse analysis frameworks.

(i) Prosodic and Paralinguistic Features

Although my study is not concerned with turn-taking in verbal interaction and its associated regularities in the patterns of activities referred to by Wooffitt (2005), prosodic and paralinguistic features of the oral texts (interview transcripts) are salient in my data analysis. I omitted what Locke (2004, p. 74) terms kinesics signals (body movements, nods of the head, facial expressions and shifts in gaze) because it was difficult for me to jot down observations when I interviewed the participants myself.

The prosodic (variations in tone, pitch, loudness and emphasis) and paralinguistic (pauses, gaps and false starts or restarts) data, I feel, could be just as informative as the verbal data, as I identified and interpreted substantive statements from the interview data. When I examined my interview transcripts, I had to discern if there were redundancies in speech, repetitions, false starts, digressions, and just focus on the bits of discourse that related to key issues pertaining to my five research questions.

In my transcripts, I tried to include as many instances of prosodic and paralinguistic features as possible. For instance, pauses and tone are often associated with different emotions and this could suggest certain attitudes, or perceptions and beliefs about the situation (in my study, perceptions about storytelling as a pedagogical tool). The extract abstracted from my teacher interview responses illustrates this.

Extract from teacher Elin's interview response:

19 Researcher So, we see very rich outcomes. That's good. *What about vocab and grammar? Do you see improvement in those areas?*

20 Elin Definitely, because they are exposed to a wide vocabulary in the books that we have selected for them. Definitely in terms of vocabulary, they do have an extensive vocabulary.

Tone: confident, very self-assured
Loudness and emphasis: said fairly loudly and with emphasis on "definitely", "wide vocabulary", "extensive" – suggesting that Elin indeed saw improvement in her students' vocabulary

(ii) Speech Functions and Grammatical Mood

Fairclough (2003), suggests that there are two primary types of exchange in dialogue, viz, "knowledge exchange", where the focus is on exchange of information, eliciting and giving information, making claims, stating facts, and so forth; 'activity exchange', where the focus is on activity, on people doing things or getting others to do things" (p. 105). To explain this distinction, he refers to a set of "primary speech functions, major categories of things people

do with words, including Statements, Questions, Demands and Offers” (p. 105). He also examines grammatical mood and speech functions through analysis of the main sentence types, declarative, interrogative and imperative sentences. To illustrate this, Fairclough (2003) uses a dialogue, or more precisely, an interview taken from Hodge and Kress (1988).

Max: A couple of questions very easy to answer for a radio programme we're doing. The first of the questions is *What would you say language is?*
 Woman: Language ... well it's the dialogue that people speak within various countries.
 Max: Fair enough aaand what would you say it's made out of?
 Woman: (Pause, 8 seconds.) It's made out of (puzzled intonation) ...
 Max: Hmmmm.
 Woman: Well I don't know you'd tell what's it's made out of... it's a person's expression I suppose is it?
 Max: I haven't got the answers, I've only got the questions (*laughing*).
 Woman: (*Simultaneously, small laugh.*)
 Sid: That's not bad though.
 Woman: Well it's an expression, it would be a person's expression wouldn't it?
 Sid: That's a good answer.
 Max: Thank you very much.

Hodge and Kress (1988), cited in Fairclough (2003: 116)

This extract starts with a 'minor clause' (grammatically incomplete) by the interviewer, Max: "A couple of questions very easy to answer for a radio programme we're doing." In his analysis, Fairclough explains that this minor clause functions like a statement – the interviewer seems to be telling the woman he is going to ask her some questions. He also elaborates that although questions in an interview genre are usually interrogatives, there are also 'declarative questions' (for example, "you're over eighteen?"). In this example, despite the question mark, the sentence is declarative. In this interview extract, he also highlights the use of declarative sentences with questions 'tagged onto' the end – "it's a person's expression I suppose is it?" and "it would be a person's expression wouldn't it?" The first example, "it's a person's expression I suppose is it?" is interpreted by Max as a question as he responds with "I haven't got the answers" whereas in the second example, "it would be a person's expression wouldn't it?", Sid responds with "That's a good answer.", which suggests that it is a statement. The examples show that the same tag questions can have different speech functions.

Fairclough's (2003) analysis of this interview extract was a helpful reference when I interpreted the comments raised by my teacher and student participants. Analysis of grammatical mood and syntactic structures of utterances can aid in meaning analysis at the social and emotional levels which could help me to understand my participants' perceptions, and even their attitudes and practice, about storytelling. The extract below from my teacher interview data illustrates this.

Extract from teacher Cara's interview response:

- 17 Researcher Do you think it should be part of the syllabus?
- 18 Cara ***I think it is a different kind of approach, right?*** ^{SS8} Storytelling ... um ... someone with something to tell, to share ...

SS8: Cara does not answer the Researcher's (my) question. Instead she uses an interrogative question that functions like a declarative statement, "it (storytelling) is a different kind of approach", and hence she is not sure if it should be part of the syllabus.

(iii) Cohesion and Semantic Relations Between Sentences/Clauses

Cohesion gives insight into connectives and argumentation of a text and relates very much to the functional relationship between clauses (Fairclough, 1992, p. 175). Fairclough bases his cohesion analysis on Halliday's (1985, p. 202-227) framework on the types of relation between clauses: elaboration, extension and enhancement. Fairclough (1992, p. 175) explains that in elaboration, one clause or sentence "elaborates on the meaning of another by further specifying or clarifying it". In extension, one clause or sentence "extends the meaning of another by adding something new to it" (p. 175) whereas in enhancement, one clause or sentence "enhances the meaning of another by qualifying it in a number of ways: by reference to time, place, manner, cause or condition" (p. 175).

Fairclough (2003, p. 89), in explaining the semantic relations between sentences and clauses, offers a list of semantic relations: causal (reason, consequence, purpose), conditional, temporal, additive, elaboration and contrastive/concessive. I applied this list to my interview data interpretation, where applicable. In my analysis, I made reference to explicit cohesive markers (for example, conjunctions to show causal relations) to indicate their functions in the interview texts. The extract from my interview data below illustrates the functional relationship between clauses:

Extract from teacher Dora's interview responses:

- 52 Dora ***I think we still need a bit of training*** ^{SS13} ***because it may need different strategies and methods to carry this out.*** ^{SS14} ***So, I think training is essential.*** ^{SS13 repeated}

SS13: Dora thinks training is essential
 SS14: causal relation (reason) to SS13 – (signalled by the conjunction, "because") – she and the teachers (inclusive pronoun, "we") may need different strategies and methods to carry out storytelling
 SS13 repeated for emphasis

Teacher participant, Dora, felt that the teachers, herself included (inclusive pronoun "we"), would require training to teach English language skills through storytelling. She then gave her reason for this by elaborating on the need for different strategies and methods to conduct storytelling lessons.

(iv) Modality

As for modality, even though it relates to grammar, this property refers to the “strength with which a particular proposition or statement is endorsed” (Locke, 2004, p. 47). Modality most centrally include modal verbs such as “can, could, will, would, may, might, must, should”. But it also includes modal adverbs such as “certainly”, modal adjectives such as “possible” and “probable”, and verbs of appearance (“seem”, “appear”) (Fairclough, 2003, p. 170-171). Fairclough also includes adverbs such as “in fact, obviously, evidently, usually, often, always”, and hedges such as “sort of”, “kind of”, “I suppose”, “I think”, or tag questions, “is it?”. Even intonation and other aspects of oral delivery such as “a speaker’s degree of commitment – whether things are said in a hesitant, tentative, confident or assertive tone” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 171) – are part of modality.

Modality is indicative of underlying beliefs or attitudes, and hence is particularly relevant to my study. Take this extract below for instance. Teacher Greg uses “I think” in this short utterance twice. It seems to suggest that he was rather low in degree of commitment; he was tentative about trying out storytelling and was not totally convinced that storytelling would make the lessons more interesting for the pupils.

Extract from teacher Greg’s interview responses

7	R	Give it a try?	
8	Greg	<i>Yeah, I think I wouldn’t mind giving it a try because I think it will make the lessons more interesting for the pupils.</i> ^{SS3}	SS3: Greg does not mind giving storytelling a try, the reason being that he thinks it will make the lessons more interesting for the students (“I think” is repeated, suggesting Greg’s degree of commitment is not high; he is tentative about trying out storytelling)

(v) Lexical Choices

For this discourse analytical category, I focused on the use of pronouns, repetition of words and synonymy. Pronouns may be inclusive, for example, “we, our, us”, or exclusive for example, “they, their, them, he, she, it, you, your”. Inclusive and exclusive pronouns reveal “how the reader and other participants are positioned as allies or in-group members with the author, thus assuming shared knowledge, beliefs and values, or how readers and other participants are marginalized as ‘outsiders’ with different beliefs and agendas” (Hyatt, 2005, p. 47). In my interview data analysis, the participants’ use of pronouns in an inclusive or exclusive way did reveal their perceptions and attitude about the value and practice of storytelling. Take the following extracts, for instance.

Extract from teacher Dora's interview responses:

- | | | | |
|----|------|---|--|
| 41 | R | It focuses on ... drama and also speech. So, you don't think there is a place for storytelling? | |
| 42 | Dora | <i>Unless they can work that into the syllabus.</i> ^{SS8 repeated} <i>That means they have to give us time to actually carry it out.</i> ^{SS9 repeated} | Repeats SS8 and SS9 for emphasis
"us" (inclusive pronoun) – Dora identifies with other teachers who find planning and conducting storytelling lessons time-consuming but would like to try this pedagogy if they (the syllabus writers) could work storytelling into the syllabus for her and the other teachers. |

Repetition and synonymy of lexical items can contribute to lexical cohesion (Halliday, 1985, p. 310). I feel that deliberate repetition of certain words or the use of synonymy may also signal a particular viewpoint, perception or attitude. Take the two extracts below from my interview data, for instance.

Extract from teacher Elin's interview responses:

- | | | | |
|----|------|---|--|
| 29 | R | Do you see them improve in their oracy skills as well? | |
| 30 | Elin | <i>Definitely. In terms of their oral examination, they can just come up with ideas, you know, for the picture discussion. They are able to come up with ideas, descriptive words and all that. And also, I told them that they need to give a conclusion. So, they are able to say "in conclusion, ..." what did they learn from the picture with storytelling, the moral values that are highlighted in the picture.</i> ^{SS15} | |
| 31 | R | So they are applying what they have learnt to their oracy skills. That's very good. So, you would recommend storytelling? [| |
| 32 | Elin | | <i>Yes, definitely.</i> ^{SS16} |

In Elin's extract, she repeatedly used the adverb, "definitely", to reflect her confidence in the value of storytelling and her commitment to recommend storytelling.

In the next extract, teacher Greg repeated his point that teachers must not conduct storytelling just because they were asked to do so. Instead they must find it meaningful to do so. Hence, in utterance 46, he made the point that teachers must feel "comfortable carrying out the (storytelling) lessons" and repeated it with "They must have some personal meaning in conducting the lesson" in utterance 48. Along the same line of argument, he asserted in utterance 46 that "teachers will just take it as another thing to do,...they'll just do it for the sake of doing" and repeated this concern in utterance 48, "Not because somebody tells them to do it, then they do it".

Extract from teacher Greg's interview responses:

- | | | | |
|----|------|--|--|
| 46 | Greg | Yeah, correct, correct ...Because if it is over and above, <i>I'm concerned that teachers will just take it as another thing to do, you know. Then they'll just do it for the sake of doing. And that shouldn't be the case. Should achieve a nice balance, so that teachers are comfortable carrying out the lessons</i> ^{SS18} and <i>they really see the value.</i> ^{SS19} | |
| 47 | R | So, we start with the value. They must see the value. | |
| 48 | Greg | <i>They must have some personal meaning in conducting the lesson so that they can convince themselves that what I am doing is useful and then they are willing to carry out the lesson. Not because somebody tells them to do it, then they do it, you know.</i> ^{SS19 cont'd} | |

3.6.3 Comparison of Teachers' and Students' Responses

The two sets of responses – teachers' perception responses and students' perception responses – were compared to address my third research question (RQ 3), “Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?” The whole objective was to establish how similar or different the students' or teachers' perceptions were and in which aspects in particular. The two sets of data were also analysed to see if the students' or teachers' perceptions followed any discernible patterns, and whether there was any similarity in the emerging patterns in the two sets.

The responses to the closed questionnaire statements were more readily tabulated to facilitate the comparison. However, with responses to the open-ended questions in both questionnaires, there was a need to identify possible themes, concerns, or patterns.

3.7 Enhancing the Credibility and Trustworthiness of Findings

All researchers aspire to design and conduct valid research that demonstrates credibility and trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 301) propose five techniques that will enhance trustworthiness and credibility of the research process: (1) activities that increase credible findings and interpretations; (2) peer debriefing; (3) referential adequacy; (4) negative case analysis; and (5) member checking.

3.7.1 Techniques Relevant to my Study

Of the five techniques proposed by Lincoln and Guba, only the first three are relevant to my study.

(a) Activities that Increase Credible Findings and Interpretations

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 301-307) suggest three activities that aim at enhancing the probability of producing credible findings and interpretations: prolonged engagement, persistent observation and triangulation.

(i) Prolonged engagement

According to Lincoln and Guba, prolonged engagement refers to the “investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purpose: for learning the ‘culture’, testing for misinformation introduced by distortions either of the self or of the components, and building trust” (p. 301). Before I embarked on my study, I spoke to different educators about my interest in storytelling perceptions – fellow Master Teachers from the English Language Institute of Singapore, English Department Heads, Senior Teachers and teachers. Inevitably, our conversations would gravitate towards a discussion of the STELLAR programme for primary

one and two English classes, especially when we deliberated on the value of storytelling and their observations of English language teachers' classroom practice in general. Those informal conversations were instrumental in confirming that a study of teachers' and students' perceptions about storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource would interest educators in Singapore. My informal conversations with school personnel (Head of English Department, teachers and Senior Teachers) were more focused; I tried to steer them to specific areas of concern they might have if storytelling were to be introduced in primary schools as a formal language teaching strategy.

At the inception of my current study, instead of plunging into the main study, I conducted a pilot study using questions that arose from those informal conversations with teaching staff in the school and fellow colleagues in the English Language Institute of Singapore. That pilot study provided further opportunities for allowing my research questions to be tested and validated. The pilot study questionnaires were analysed and later discussed individually with a few Senior Teachers (who did not participate in the main study). I wanted to hear fresh inputs and to have my refined pilot study questionnaires reviewed by new pairs of eyes.

Ethical consent was obtained from my teacher and student (through their parents) participants for both the pilot study and main study. The letters of invitation to both groups of participants stated very clearly the purpose of my study and my data collection process. The participants were told explicitly that they could decline the invitation to participate and that all information garnered from the questionnaires and interviews would be kept confidential.

At the teacher and student interviews, every participant was given time to relax through a few minutes of chit chat with me. I took pains to ensure that our seating arrangement would not cause undue stress or the impression of power relationship. All interviewees sat beside me so that it was more a solidarity relationship instead. I felt that that simple physical arrangement helped, especially with the children.

I also assured all my participants that the recordings would be kept confidential. The informal chit chat and the anonymity assurance helped to build trust between the participants and me as the teacher participants were forthcoming in their comments and views. The student participants were, in general, more reticent at the start of the interviews but they warmed up very quickly.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasize that building trust between interviewer and interviewee is critical if the researcher wants to "demonstrate to the respondents that their confidences

will not be used against them; that pledges of anonymity will be honored; that hidden agendas, whether those of the investigator or of other local figures to whom the investigator may be beholden, are not being served” (p. 303). From the interview recordings, it was evident that the participants were not hesitant in responding to my prompts. Hence, I believe I did achieve some degree of trust with my participants.

At the data analysis phase, it was almost impossible to go back to the schools to seek clarification or amplification from my participants as all the participants were told that their identities would remain anonymous. Pseudonyms and a simple coding system of T1, T2, T3,... and S1, S2, S3,... were used instead. In analysing my data, I applied self-scrutiny (reflexivity) instead, looking out for my participants’ and my own “preconceptions ...misinformation ... deliberate or unintended...” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 303) through my data analysis methods, discourse and content analysis.

(ii) Persistent observation

In my study, all my teacher and student interview recordings were transcribed verbatim. I was able to go through the transcriptions repeatedly to identify substantial statements using Gillham’s (2000a) content analysis procedure. The transcripts also made it more convenient to identify broad themes using discourse analysis.

(iii) Triangulation

Triangulation refers to “the use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 305). Lincoln and Guba claim that the “most persuasive evidence comes through a triangulation of measurement processes” (p. 306). Some researchers, however, have their reservations. Mathison (1988) cautions that in reality, data collected do not always converge. Instead, very often researchers find that their data are either inconsistent or contradictory. The researchers will then need to make sense of their data and try to construct plausible explanations about the phenomena being studied (p. 17).

For my study, I did not use my teacher and student interview data to enhance convergence of findings from my teacher and student questionnaire data. Instead, I included interviews in my study with the hope that the interview responses would expand on, or complement the teacher and student participants’ questionnaire responses. Whether this objective was fulfilled or not is reported in chapter four, Research Findings, of this thesis.

(b) Peer Debriefing

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 308) are of the view that peer debriefing can serve as an external check on the inquiry process to strengthen its credibility. In this technique, the researcher allows a disinterested peer to examine his or her inquiry process, “exposing him or her to searching questions by an experienced protagonist doing his or her best to play the devil’s advocate” (p. 308). In this way, the researcher’s “biases are probed, meanings explored, the basis for interpretations clarified” (p. 308). Presumably, the process will provide the researcher with an opportunity to test his or her hypotheses, and develop and test next steps in the emerging methodological design.

Peer debriefing is based on the assumption that the researcher’s peers has as much information of the research process as the principal investigator. The upshot is that the main researcher’s peers do not have the same level of in-depth involvement with the research process as the main investigator (Morse, 1994; Angen, 2000), and hence will not have the same “bank of knowledge” (Morse, 1994, p. 231) from the investigation process as the main investigator. This makes it difficult for the peers to judge whether the principal investigator’s interpretations are a result of adequate consideration of all perspectives (Angen, 2000, p. 384).

Nonetheless, there is merit in having the peers comment on the cogency of the investigator’s written report (Morse, 1994; Angen, 2000). I concur with Angen and Morse about this language and presentation check because a fresh pair of eyes is always helpful in identifying areas that lack clarity or seem inconsistent with other sections of the thesis, or instances of unintended language inaccuracies.

(c) Referential Adequacy

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend using the Referential Adequacy technique to check preliminary findings and Interpretations against archived “raw data”. They are of the view that videotape recordings and cinematography could be useful ways of capturing data. These digital resources could hold episodes of classroom life. As such, they could be compared to the critiques that had been developed from all of the data collected, and they could provide “a kind of benchmark against which later data analyses and interpretations (the critiques) could be tested for adequacy” (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 313).

Analogously, the verbatim transcriptions of my teacher and student interviews formed useful ‘archived data’ that I could regularly refer to when I analysed my data and reported about them in chapter four, Research Findings, and chapter five, Discussion and Conclusion, of

this thesis. Despite this merit, I do recognise that participants may find digital recordings intrusive and that could have been one reason why some teachers declined my invitation to participate in this study. The responses of the teacher and student participants might be more 'guarded' for this reason. Hence, my data analysis would need to factor in this setback.

3.7.2 Techniques Less Relevant to my Study

Two techniques recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985), negative case analysis and member checking, were of less relevance to my study and thus not adhered to in my credibility check.

a) Negative Case Analysis

Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that with this technique, the aim is to continuously refine a hypothesis until "it accounts for all known cases without exception" (p. 309). This deductive reasoning method is not commensurate with the core objective of my study – the reasons for my participants' perceptions (be it negative or positive) of storytelling as a pedagogy for language teaching and learning. It is not the prime intent of my study to verify any theory, or to deduce a theory or formulate generalisations based on my findings.

(b) Member checking

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) member check is "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314). What gets checked includes data, analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions. The checking member, suggested Lincoln and Guba, is usually a member from the "stakeholding groups from whom the data were originally collected" (p. 314). A recording may be played back to an interviewee for reaction or a recording may be played for another respondent to comment.

Some researchers, who have their reservation about this validity checking criterion, argue that it assumes that there is "a fixed truth or reality against which the account can be measured" (Angen, 2000, p. 383). It also assumes that the perspectives of the research participants remain unchanged throughout the research process. The reality is that "the stories that members tell in interviews are themselves constantly changing" (Sandelowski, 1993, p. 5). The interview experience itself may have an impact on the participants' original perspective of the issue under investigation, causing them to review their initial evaluation of the issue (Angen, 2000, p. 383). Similarly, new experiences could cause the participants to change their minds about the issue and disagree with the researcher's interpretation.

In my present study, my interview responses were not played back to any of my teacher or student interviewees, as our agreement at the start of the interviews was that their recordings would remain anonymous and I would not go back to them for re-recording or review. My interview recordings went through two rounds of the transcribing process – the first was executed through a paid service and the second was by me. The objective of listening to the recordings and checking them against the transcriptions completed in the first round was to ensure that the verbatim transcriptions were accurate.

3.8 Summing Up

In this chapter, I describe my research design and methodology in relation to my student and teacher samples. I also discuss the data analysis methods for this study and my efforts to manage positionality and reflexivity issues and ensure credibility and trustworthiness of my data analysis and methods. In discussing the content and discourse analysis methods I have adopted, I drew examples from my interview data to illustrate how I used the data analysis methods. The samples in this chapter illustrate how I have applied content and discourse analysis to my interview data, and they serve as a prelude to my discussion of my research findings in chapter four, Research Findings.

CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Chapter Overview: Data Analysis Procedure

This chapter presents and discusses the findings based on my conceptual framework, Conceptual Framework of my Research Study, explained in chapter two, Literature Review, section 2.5. The chapter begins with my rationale for presenting my data analyses in a particular order before delving into my analyses of the questionnaire and interview data.

Analyses of the teacher and student questionnaire responses are presented separately, linking the findings to my research questions (RQ). The teacher questionnaire data analysis is discussed in relation to my RQ1, RQ4 and RQ5, and the student questionnaire data analysis in relation to my RQ2. The section on questionnaire analyses ends with a comparative analysis of the teacher and student questionnaire responses, with the objective of relating the data to my RQ3.

The comparative analysis is followed by analyses of the teachers' and students' interview responses. The teachers' and students' interview data analyses are presented separately, referring constantly to my research questions as well as the questionnaire data to indicate whether the interview data supported or deviated from the questionnaire data. Finally, a comparative analysis of both sets of data is discussed to show whether my research questions were endorsed or challenged.

4.1.1 Rationale for the Data Analyses

Both the quantitative or qualitative data were analysed in relation to my research questions delineated in chapter one, Introduction, section 1.3, Aims and Research Questions.

- RQ1: What are teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?
- RQ2: What are students' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?
- RQ3: Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?
- RQ4: Do teachers' reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?
- RQ5: If storytelling were to be recommended as a strategy for teaching English language skills, what kind of implementation support would English language teachers like their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education to provide for them, and why?

4.1.2 Order of the Data Analyses

The data collected were analysed in the following order:

- Step 1: Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire Responses
- Step 2: Analysis of the Student Questionnaire Responses
- Step 3: Comparative Analysis of the Teacher and Student Questionnaire Responses
- Step 4: Analysis of the Teacher Interview Responses
- Step 5: Comparative Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses
- Step 6: Analysis of the Student Interview Responses
- Step 7: Comparative Analysis of the Student Questionnaire and Interview Responses

4.1.3 Rationale for the Order of the Data Analyses

(a) Rationale for Step 1 (Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire Responses)

Responses to questions (1) and (2) of the teachers' perceptions questionnaire were analysed first to ascertain what the teacher participants' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning tool was, and whether they agreed or disagreed with literature or research in this area. For positive responses, further analysis was conducted to find out why and whether they actually infused storytelling as a teaching method into their pedagogical practices. For negative responses, the teacher participants' responses to questions (3a) and (3b) of the teacher questionnaire were analyzed to establish what their concerns were. These analyses would address the issues encapsulated in my RQ1 ("What are teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?") and RQ4 ("Do teachers' reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?").

(b) Rationale for Step 2 (Analysis of the Student Questionnaire Responses)

The first two questions in the student questionnaire aimed at finding out if the students had any experience with storytelling. The remaining six questions pointed to the same focus: whether the student participants liked storytelling to be included in their English language lessons, and why. The responses to the questionnaire were analysed to establish if they addressed the concerns raised in my RQ2.

(c) Rationale for Step 3 (Comparative Analysis of the Teacher and Student Questionnaire Responses)

Responses to the teacher questionnaire were compared with those from the student questionnaire to find out if there was any consistency in perceptions between the teacher and student participants. From this comparative analysis, it would be clear whether there

was any difference between the teacher and student participants' perceptions of storytelling as a teaching and learning tool, which is the focus of my RQ3.

(d) Rationale for Step 4 (Analysis of the Teacher Interview Responses)

The interview responses aimed at extending the data collected from the teacher questionnaire as the interview prompts were aligned to the questionnaire questions, albeit broadly, so that there could be opportunities for further probing of details or information that would enrich my findings. Analysis of the teacher interview data will be presented and discussed in relation to RQ1, RQ4 and RQ5. Comparative analysis of the teacher questionnaire and interview data will also be presented and discussed vis-à-vis RQ1, RQ4 and RQ5, to indicate whether the interview data amplified and enriched the teacher questionnaire responses. The analysis would include common themes and trends of thought amongst the teacher participants' responses, consistencies and inconsistencies in the responses of the teacher participants, common reasons for certain responses, the teacher participants' concerns and any other insights that might have surfaced from the interviews.

(e) Rationale for Step 5 (Comparative Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses)

In chapter three, Methodology and Procedures, section, 3.2.2, Mixed Research Methods, reference was made to the five purposes of mixed research methods outlined by Greene et al. (1989, p. 258-259). Of the five purposes, triangulation was deemed to be the most relevant to my present study. My intention was to triangulate the teacher interview responses with their questionnaire responses to ascertain if there was any convergence between the two sets of data. In this chapter, comparative analysis of the teacher questionnaire and interview data will be presented and discussed, highlighting aspects of the two sets of data that corroborated or differed in relation to my RQ1, RQ4 and RQ5. The analysis will also indicate whether the interview findings 'expanded' or clarified or added richness to the questionnaire findings.

(f) Rationale for Step 6 (Analysis of the Student Interview Responses)

The same rationale for the analysis of the teacher interview data applies here for the student interview analysis. Like the teacher interview structure, the student interviews took reference from the student questionnaire. Analysis of the student interview data will be presented to indicate students' perceptions of storytelling as a language learning tool (RQ2), and their reasons. The analysis will also indicate whether there were common trends and themes, and consistencies or inconsistencies in the students' interview responses.

(g) Rationale for Step 7 (Comparative Analysis of the Student Questionnaire and Interview Responses)

The objective here is to discern if there was triangulation of the student questionnaire and interview data in relation to RQ2. The comparative analysis will indicate whether the students' interview responses corroborated and amplified their questionnaire responses, and whether there were any overlapping facets of the perceptions of the students in the two sets of data.

4.2 Questionnaire Analyses

The teachers' perceptions questionnaire and students' perceptions questionnaire were conducted with 34 primary four teachers and 116 primary four students respectively. The responses from the teachers and students were analysed separately before a comparative study was made between the two sets of participants.

4.2.1 Teacher Questionnaire Responses

My premise, right from chapters one and two of this thesis, has been that teachers' professional competence (content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge) and their beliefs and perceptions are likely to affect their practice, as shown in Figure 5 below. Figure 5 is extracted from Figure 3, Framework for the Analysis of Teachers' Beliefs, Perceptions and Practices in section 2.5, chapter two, Literature Review. Figure 5 highlights the relationship between a teacher's professional competence, his or her beliefs and perceptions which inform his or her classroom practice. My reasoning is that a language teacher who subscribes to the Direct Transmission beliefs about teaching and learning is likely to teach in a structured way. He or she will probably keep to traditional approaches to language learning, in which the teacher's primary role is simply to communicate the necessary knowledge and skills to students. However, a language teacher who upholds the constructivist beliefs about teaching and learning will tend to use student-centred approaches, involving students actively in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills. He or she is more likely to explore engaging pedagogical approaches, and using storytelling to teach language skills may appeal to him or her.

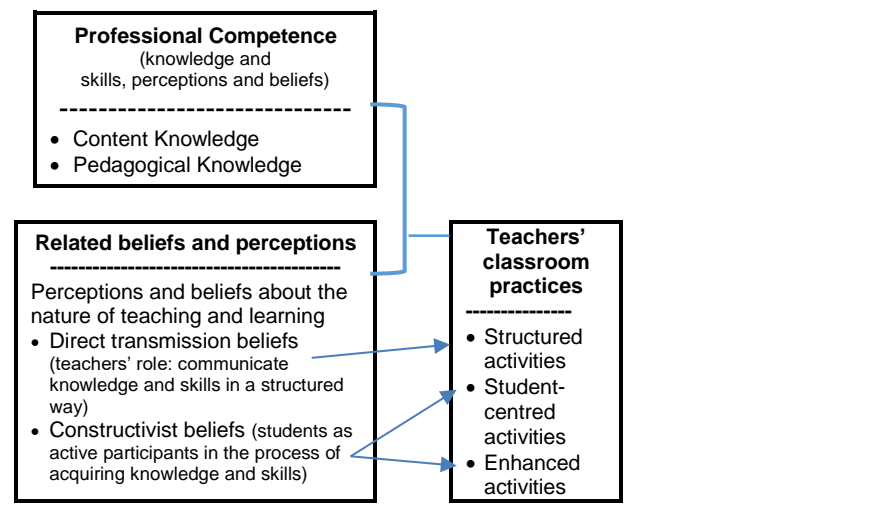


Figure 5. Relationship between Professional Competence, Related Beliefs, Perceptions and Teachers' Classroom Practices

a) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2

Teacher questionnaire questions 1 and 2 are two statements which relate to my research question 1, “What are teachers’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?” The relationship between teachers’ beliefs, perceptions and practice forms the basis for analyzing teacher questionnaire questions 1 and 2. For question 1, all the teacher participants had a positive perception of storytelling as a language teaching tool: 70.6% agreed and 29.4% strongly agreed. All the teacher participants either agreed (79.4%) or strongly agreed (20.6%) with question 2, as shown in Table 12 below. On hindsight, the list of quotes from storytelling advocates and researchers might be a trifle too authoritative for my teacher participants to disagree. Nonetheless, the statistics seem to suggest that the teacher participants supported the view promulgated in literature or research on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills.

Table 12. Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2
(RQ1: *What are teachers’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?*)

(n=34) SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree

	SA	A
Q1 My perception of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool.	10	24
Q2 I agree with literature or research on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills.	7	27

Question	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)
1	29.4%	70.6%
2	20.6%	79.4%

After question 1, a list of possible reasons was provided for the teacher participants to tick. For question 2, a list of claims made by storytelling advocates was included for the teachers to respond to. The possible reasons or claims for questions 1 and 2 were analysed. The responses seemed to display some overlaps in terms of ideas and views. For instance, the idea that storytelling could develop in children a love for reading seemed to recur fairly frequently. Another common response that the teachers seemed to agree on was the view that storytelling could improve language skills. Taking the overlapping occurrences in the data into consideration, it seemed sensible to categorise the data broadly as follows: (i) develops a love for reading, (ii) facilitates improvement in language skills, (iii) stimulates thinking, (iv) promotes positive socio-emotional habits, (v) builds character, and (vi) offers general teaching points.

i) Develops a Love for Reading

As captured in Table 13 below, more than 80% of the teachers were of the opinion that storytelling could inculcate in students a love for reading. The general feeling amongst the teacher participants was that storytelling could instill in children a love for the language and motivate them to read, as claimed by Hamilton and Weiss (1990, p. 4).

Table13. Develops a Love for Reading

(n=34) A=Agree D=Disagree

	A	D
1i Through storytelling, teachers can instil in pupils a love for reading.	30	4
1f Listening to stories instils the love of language in students and motivates them to read.	30	4
2a "Hearing stories instils love of language in children and motivates them to read." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p.4)	28	6

Statement	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)
1i	88.2%	11.8%
1f	88.2%	11.8%
2a	82.4%	17.6%

As indicated in Table 13 above, the very positive responses by the teacher participants may be a clear signal to curriculum developers that storytelling is a powerful resource if we want our children to love reading.

ii) Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills

Table 14 below shows that most teachers agreed with storytelling research and literature that storytelling could facilitate children's improvement in language skills in general. The data were analysed based on different aspects of language skills. The responses for the different language skills ranged from 50% to 85.3%. For instance, 85.3% of the teacher participants felt that it could help students with skills such as "listening for general meaning,

predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing” (Ellis and Brewster, 2002, p. 2), and “extend their knowledge of story schema” (Mallan, 1991, p. 13). About 76.5% agreed with Hamilton and Weiss (1990, p. 6) that storytelling could improve children’s vocabulary, comprehension, sequencing and story recall. The same number of participants (76.5%) endorsed Nelson’s (1989, p. 389) and Mallan’s (1991, p. 13) views about improvement in comprehension skills (literal, inferential, critical). About 73.5% affirmed Ellis and Brewster’s (2002, p. 2) claim that it could help children in their oral skills – “rhythm, intonation and pronunciation of the language” – as well as in learning “new vocabulary and sentence structures”. 70.6% agreed with McQuillan and Tse (1998, p. 21) that stories contained a “wide variety of natural language rich in vocabulary and grammatical complexity” and they “offer a major and constant source of language experience for children” (Wright, 1995, p. 6). 64.7% felt that it could help with children’s expressiveness and inventive thinking (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 15). About 50.0% to 61.8% highlighted other language benefits such as predictions of meaning and plot and sequence development (Nelson, 1989, p. 389), sequencing events in stories and recounting them in detail, and oral skills such as clarity of diction, precision of words, and organizing their speech according to the needs of listeners (Grugeon and Gardner, 2000, p. 6), and understanding texts through story schema (Mallan, 1991, p. 15).

Statements (2g), (2k), (2l), (2f), (2o) and (2m) elicited very positive responses (more than 70%) from the teacher participants, with (2g) garnering 85.3%. A possible reason might be that these statements focus on specific language skills, for example (2g) highlights skills such as “listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing”; (2k) foregrounds improvement in “vocabulary, comprehension, sequencing and story recall”; (2o) also focuses on improvement in “children’s vocabulary”; (2l) highlights improvement in “comprehension, both literal and inferential; oral discussion”; and (2f) refers to children’s awareness of the “rhythm, intonation and pronunciation of language”. My conjecture is that the participants would be more likely to identify with statements that present lucid descriptions of improvement in specific language skill areas.

In contrast, (2n), (2j) and (2e) received less than 60% of endorsement from the teacher participants. A possible reason could be that the three statements do not specify improvement in specific language skills. As such, they are rather broad in description and seem nebulous and might be perceived to lack clarity of focus. This could have contributed to the weak responses, especially (2e) which received only 50% of endorsement from the participants.

Table 14. Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills

(n=34) A=Agree D=Disagree

Q	Reason: Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills	A	D	
2g	“Storybooks develop children’s learning strategies such as listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing.” (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p.2). “Exposure to stories, heard or viewed, enables children to extend their knowledge of story schema; that is to establish expectations as to what will occur in the story.” (Mallan, 1991, p.13)	29	5	(2g)
2k	“Hearing stories improves many language skills, such as vocabulary, comprehension, sequencing and story recall.” (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p.6)	26	8	(2k)
2l	“The storytelling experience ... is a vehicle for enhancing comprehension, both literal and inferential; motivating oral discussion ...” (Nelson, 1989, p.389) “When storytelling is combined with judicious questioning and retelling strategies, comprehension skills at the literal, inferential and critical levels can be developed.” (Mallan, 1991, p.13)	26	8	(2l)
2f	“Listening to stories helps children become aware of the rhythm, intonation and pronunciation of language.” (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p.2)	25	9	(2f)
2o	Storytelling improves children’s vocabulary (Hamilton & Weiss, 1990). “Listening to stories allows the teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures by exposing the children to language in varied, memorable and familiar contexts, which will enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech.” (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p.2).	25	9	(2o)
2m	“Stories, which rely so much on words, offer a major and constant source of language experience for children.” (Wright, 1995, p.6). “... students will acquire over time the language necessary for communication as the stories will contain a wide variety of natural language rich in vocabulary and grammatical complexity .” (McQuillan & Tse, 1998, p. 21).	24	10	(2m)
2d	“Storytelling improves expressive language skills and stimulates inventive thinking.” (Hamilton & Weiss, 1990, p.15)	22	12	(2d)
2h	“The repetitious language patterns and cumulative story events of predictable books and stories ... can help children to make accurate predictions of meaning and to anticipate language patterns and plot and sequence development.” (Nelson, 1989, p.389) (Wright, 2002)	21	13	(2h)
2n	Storytelling “contributes to pupils’ written English”: pupils are required “to communicate meaning in narrative” and “sequence events, and recount them in appropriate detail”, “to use a language and style appropriate to the reader and to develop ideas into structured written texts”. (Grugeon & Gardner, 2000, p.6)	20	14	(2n)
2j	“ ...storytelling helps children to read and write because it gives them frameworks or schema for understanding text.” (Mallan, 1991, p.15)	19	15	(2j)
2e	“... the requirements to ‘speak clearly and confidently’ and to ‘listen, understand and respond to others’, will be met by hearing and telling stories where the need to speak with ‘clear diction, to choose words with precision, organize what they say and take into account the needs of their listeners is self-evident.” (Grugeon & Gardner, 2000, p.6)	17	17	(2e)

iii) **Stimulates Thinking**

As indicated in Table 15 below, more than 60% of the respondents were of the view that storytelling could stimulate students' thinking, especially the ability to be imaginative (73.5%) as propagated by Hamilton and Weiss (1990, p. 3), to discern a logical flow of ideas in the story (73.5%), and to think critically (67.6%).

Table 15. Stimulates Thinking

(n=34) A=Agree D=Disagree

	A	D
1g) Storytelling encourages children to see that there is a logical sequence in stories, and it is hoped that they may apply this knowledge to their own storytelling.	25	9
1h) Storytelling promotes critical and higher order thinking such as analysis and evaluation.	23	11
2b) "Hearing stories stimulates the imagination." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p.3)	25	9

Statement	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)
1g	73.5%	26.5%
1h	67.6%	32.4%
2b	73.5%	26.5%

This moderately positive perception of the cognitive value of storytelling was verified against the teacher interview responses and the outcome is reported later in this chapter.

iv) **Promotes Positive Socio-emotional Habits**

Most teachers (97.1%) agreed that storytelling could be a great way to captivate children's attention (See Table 16 below). This sentiment is supported by the findings of Klesius and Griffith's (1996) study on the value of interactive lapreading. In the interactive lapreading procedure Klesius and Griffith adopted, the researchers provided scaffolding activities to help children to read selected storybooks. Their study showed that the children's interest in books heightened and they became more attentive during the large-group story read-aloud sessions the researchers conducted during their survey.

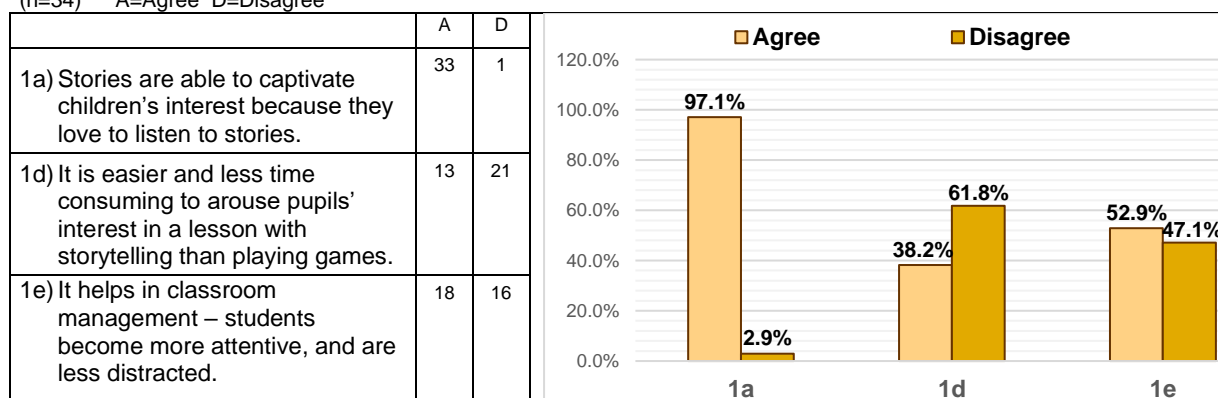
For question (1d), however, only 38.2% of the teacher participants agreed that it is easier and less time consuming to arouse pupils' interest in a lesson with storytelling than playing games. The majority (61.8%) of the teacher participants did not think so. Perhaps they might be thinking that much time would be required to select appropriate stories, prepare appropriate pre-, during- and post-activities and think about the link between the stories and the language skills the students would need to focus on. Indeed, preparation for a storytelling lesson could take up much of the teachers' time. Time spent in preparing the story-infused lesson (from conceptualizing to implementation) could vary with different

teachers. More experienced teachers may be relatively faster in this process. For a less experienced teacher, the process may be daunting.

Interestingly, 52.9% felt that storytelling might help with classroom management. Perhaps they might be thinking that if storytelling could captivate children's attention, then attentive, engaged children would be less likely to give discipline problems. In my analysis of the teacher interview data, a few teachers also mentioned this possible benefit. For instance, teacher Cara commented, "When I tell stories, I can see that my pupils are more attentive." A few other teacher participants (Han, Dora, Ivan) also endorsed this observation. More detailed discussion of this is reported in my analysis of the teacher interview data in sections 4.3 and 4.4 of this chapter.

Table 16. Promotes Positive Socio-emotional Habits

(n=34) A=Agree D=Disagree



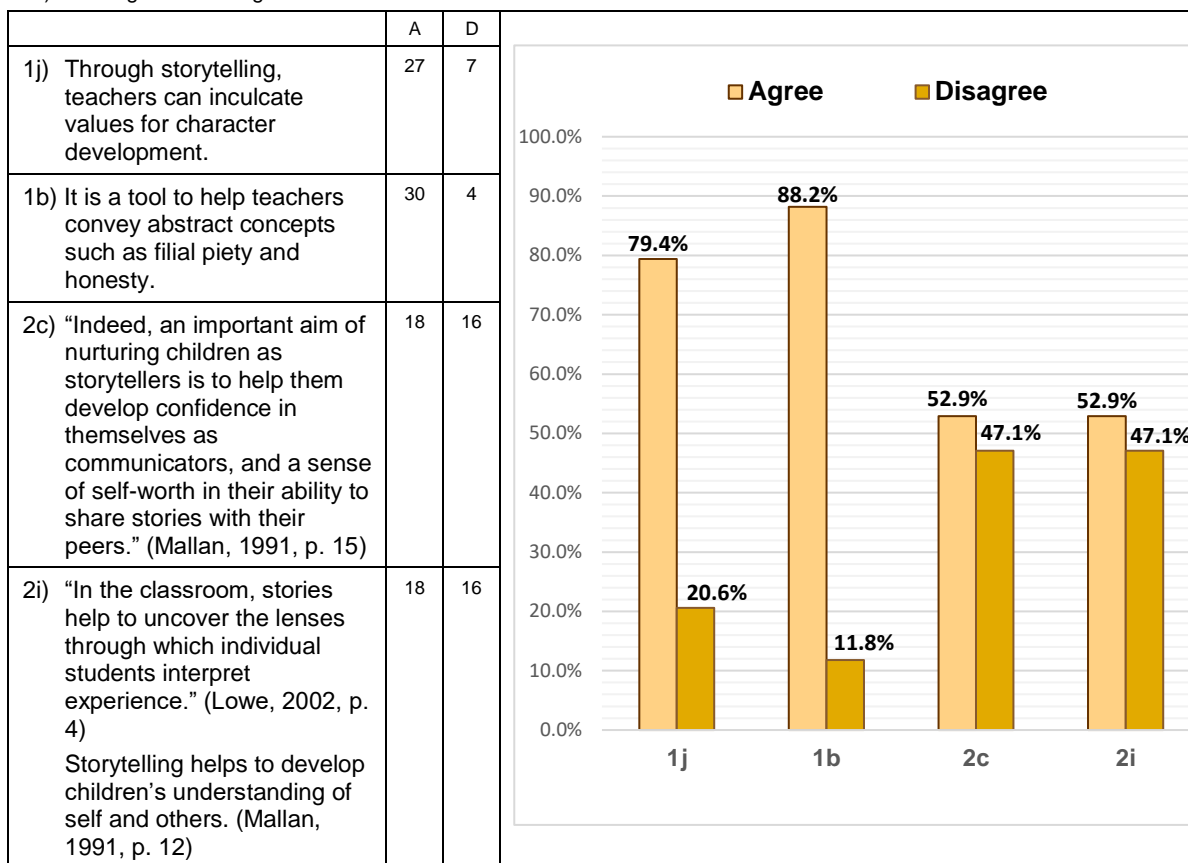
v) Builds Character

As indicated in Table 17 below, 79.4% of the teachers saw value in using stories to develop children's character. 88.2% felt that it could help to convey to students abstract concepts such as filial piety⁷ (being obedient and respectful towards parents) and honesty. They might be thinking of stories that contained a moral twist. 52.9% concurred with Mallan (1991) that it could develop children's confidence in communicating ideas. The same number of participants (52.9%) agreed with Lowe (2002, p. 4) that stories could help to "uncover the lenses through which individual students interpret experience". The analysis actually foregrounded the value of storytelling in facilitating social development as well. That being the case, storytelling might just be an approach even curriculum specialists overseeing social development programmes, or civics and moral education programmes might want to consider.

⁷ This is a Chinese ethical concept which considers reverence for parents as the prime virtue and basis of all right human relations. In Singaporean schools, students attend compulsory Civic and Moral Education lessons, which cover, amongst other social and moral values, filial piety.

Table 17. Builds Character

(n=34) A=Agree D=Disagree

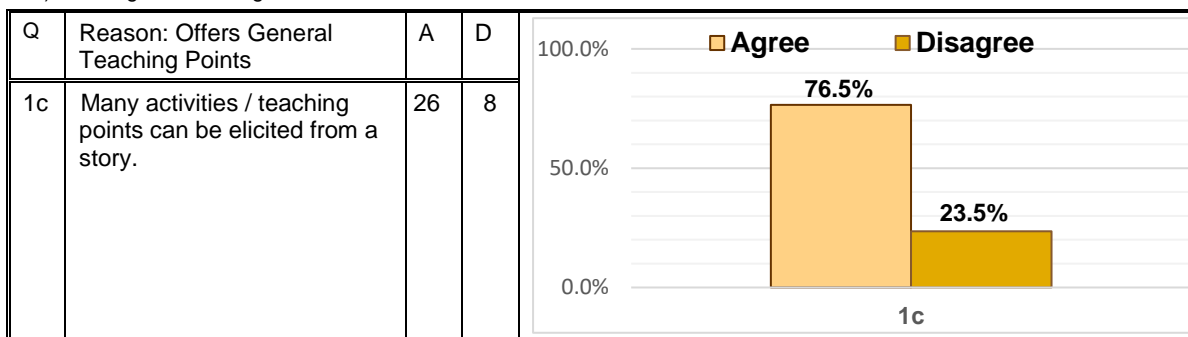


vi) Offers General Teaching Points

76.5% of the teachers felt that a story could generate many teaching points and form the basis for many language activities.

Table 18. Offers General Teaching Points

(n=34) A=Agree D=Disagree



vii) Other Reasons

To elicit further comments or reasons related to Teacher Questionnaire questions 1 and 2, an open-ended section was included. For Teacher Questionnaire question 1 about teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a teaching tool, three teacher participants offered reasons

(other than those listed) for storytelling. For instance, teacher Limin talked about the possibility of developing creativity in children's writing, while another teacher, Vaz, felt that storytelling could create opportunities for students and teachers to bond, and hence help with classroom management. Yet another teacher, Molly, thought that it was able to stimulate interest in the lesson, or arouse curiosity in children. The reasons given by the three teacher participants are as follows:

Limin: "Helps and guides pupils in creative writing."

Vaz: "If the teacher is able to relate personal experiences that tie in with the story, there is a greater bond with the teacher and it helps with classroom management and also language teaching."

Molly: "Stories make pupils interested and generate curiosity in pupils..."

But then, Molly, along with another teacher participant, Mel, also raised the issue of time constraint. For them, planning a lesson that incorporated an unconventional approach such as storytelling was time-consuming. This concern is real, given that teachers in Singaporean schools are expected to cover a stipulated set of language skills for each grade level as outlined in the national English language syllabus guide prepared by curriculum specialists appointed by the Singapore Ministry of Education. Their responses are as follows:

Mel: "No time to develop a proper package/lesson plan."

Molly: "However, it is time-consuming and when we get to the technical parts such as grammar and structure, pupils become less interested."

For Teacher Questionnaire question 2 about teachers' response to literature or research on storytelling as a language teaching tool, two teacher participants highlighted the need to be skilful in telling stories in order to bring about positive outcomes. Their comments are as follows:

Mel: "Storytelling, if it were to have any effect, must be carried out with good questioning techniques, explanations (of vocab) and regularly. Storytelling is also a skill, and not all teachers can elicit interest through their storytelling."

Vaz: "If the 'story-teller' is good, the child is normally more inclined to read the written version. Indirectly, it helps in developing the 4 language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing."

The underlying concern might be that for teachers to use storytelling effectively in the classroom, they would need to have certain prerequisite pedagogical competencies such as knowledge and application of effective questioning techniques. This sentiment expressed by the two teacher participants is relevant to my research question 5, "If storytelling were to be recommended as a strategy for teaching English language skills, what kind of implementation support would English language teachers like their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education to provide for them, and why?". The teacher participants' responses seemed to suggest that teachers needed some sort of training that would enable them to use storytelling as a language teaching tool efficaciously. This finding

supports my conceptual framework (chapter two, Literature Review, section 2.5, Figure 3, Framework for the Analysis of Teachers' Beliefs, Perceptions and Practice). In my conceptual framework, I show that school support – administrative support and professional support (courses, workshops, teaching resources) – can help teachers in their practice, which, in turn, will help with student learning and outcomes and increase teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

b) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Questions 3a and 3b

Questions (3a) and (3b) relate to my RQ4, “Do teachers' reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?”

i) Teacher Questionnaire Question 3a

Question 3a has two parts: (i) “I have been using storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills for the past ____ years.”; and (ii) “I have used the following storytelling activities and found them very helpful in teaching English language skills.”

The main objective of part (i) of this question is to get the teacher participants to state the number of years they had been using this tool as a way of verifying if their practices reflected their perception. Part (ii) is a way of getting them to confirm that they had indeed adopted this strategy in their teaching by identifying the activities they had used and found useful.

One teacher participant did not indicate the number of years she had used storytelling for language teaching although she indicated that she had used storytelling in her English language lessons. The total number of teachers who had used storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills was 25 (73.5% of the entire set of teacher participants). This moderately high percentage could be broadly taken as an indication of the teachers' positive perception of storytelling in the language classroom and it would seem to have addressed the concern about practice versus perception in my RQ4, “Do teachers' reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?”

Table 19. Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 3a

Part (i) “I have been using storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills for the past ____ years.”

n=25

Number of years	½	1	2	3	3½	4	6	10	11	16	20	25	30
No. of teachers*	1	2	3	6	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
%	4.2	8.3	12.5	25.0	4.2	12.5	4.2	8.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2

*Total number of teachers who indicated the number of years they have used storytelling for teaching English language skills: 24 (one teacher did not indicate the number years she had used storytelling)

The fact that the teacher participants could describe some storytelling activities they claimed that they had used seemed to suggest that the teachers' practice reflected their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching tool. From the data presented in Table 19 above, it seems that fewer experienced teachers used storytelling as an English language teaching tool – 7 (28%) of the teachers with 10 or more years of teaching experience – as compared to teachers with 6 or fewer years of teaching experience. Would it be the case that younger teachers are more experimental in their approach than older teachers? This could be another area for future research.

The storytelling activities the teachers had used and found very helpful in teaching English language skills are captured in Table 20 below. For instance, 96.0% of the teachers used questions to encourage their pupils to predict the development of stories or talk about their feelings to show their understanding, and 80.0% of the teachers used the covers of storybooks to promote predictive skills and to motivate their pupils. The same number of teachers, 80.0% of them, asked their pupils questions about the title of the story to arouse interest and focus meaning. This affective rationale (to arouse interest) is also advocated by storytelling advocates like Gee (1999) and Mallan (1991).

With reference to statements (e), (f), (g) and (h), the post-storytelling activities the teachers had conducted included getting pupils to retell the stories (52.0%), dramatize part of the story (64.0%), or engage in follow-up activities such as art and craft, music, poetry, book review, journal writing or visual mapping (64.0%). The retelling strategy is highly recommended by Grugeon and Gardner (2000), who believe that through the retelling, children will become aware of story structures, and how language varies according to context and purpose, and they will be better able to sequence events and recount them in an intelligible way (Grugeon and Gardner, 2000, p. 7).

It appeared that not all the teacher participants in my study perceived retelling stories as an effective method of teaching specific language skills – only 52.0% felt that getting students to retell stories might help with language development.

Table 20. Storytelling Activities Used by the 25 Teachers

(n=25) Y=Used activity N=Did not use activity

		Y	N																												
a.	I usually show my students the cover of a storybook to promote predictive skills and to motivate them.	20	5	<table border="1"> <caption>Stacked Bar Chart Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Activity</th> <th>Used activity (%)</th> <th>Did not use activity (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>80.0%</td> <td>20.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>80.0%</td> <td>20.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>96.0%</td> <td>4.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>96.0%</td> <td>4.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e</td> <td>52.0%</td> <td>48.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f</td> <td>64.0%</td> <td>36.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g</td> <td>64.0%</td> <td>36.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>h</td> <td>48.0%</td> <td>52.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Activity	Used activity (%)	Did not use activity (%)	a	80.0%	20.0%	b	80.0%	20.0%	c	96.0%	4.0%	d	96.0%	4.0%	e	52.0%	48.0%	f	64.0%	36.0%	g	64.0%	36.0%	h	48.0%	52.0%
Activity	Used activity (%)	Did not use activity (%)																													
a	80.0%	20.0%																													
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g	64.0%	36.0%																													
h	48.0%	52.0%																													
b.	I usually ask my students questions about the title (or subject) of the story to arouse their interest and focus meaning.	20	5																												
c.	During the storytelling, my students will respond to my questions regarding their feelings to show their understanding.	24	1																												
d.	During the storytelling, my students respond to my questions regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.	24	1																												
e.	I get my students to retell the stories they have read or heard because I believe that they will become aware of story structures and how to sequence the events and recount them in an intelligible way.	13	12																												
f.	I get my students to dramatize part of the story, or the whole story, to help them remember the story in a fun way and learn the language and vocabulary used in the story.	16	9																												
g.	I conduct meaningful follow-up activities such as art and craft, music, poetry, book review, journal writing or visual mapping.	16	9																												
h.	I get my students to create vocabulary maps to record the new vocabulary they have learnt from the stories.	12	13																												

Other Activities

In addition to the list of activities provided in the questionnaire, a few teacher participants actually detailed other storytelling activities they had conducted, for example using questions to test students' understanding and comprehension skills, promoting grammar learning through grammar games, and identifying elements of story plots.

Mary: "I use questioning techniques to test students' understanding of text and help clarify their thinking."

Sylvia: "[Conduct] grammar games as follow-up activities."

Limin: "I usually ask them questions about the story to teach them in answering comprehension questions."

Vaz: "I've tried encouraging pupils to recreate their version of a story by changing the characters, settings, endings, etc"

Elin: "[Get students to] analyse characters' personalities and relationships; [Get students to] identify the elements of the story plot: introduction, development, climax, resolution; [Get students to] identify themes and social issues in the story; [Get students to] look at different perspectives in relation to issues in the story"

The merits of storytelling mentioned by the teacher participants above are consistent with the broad sets of skills highlighted by the teacher participants in their responses to Teacher Questionnaire questions 1 and 2 (as shown in Table 12). In particular, the teachers' comments resonated with four of the broad sets of skills highlighted in Tables 14-17:

“facilitates improvement in language skills”, “stimulates thinking”, “promotes positive socio-emotional habits” and “builds character”.

Asking questions during or after the storytelling activity, according to one teacher, was one way to test students’ understanding of a story text and help clarify meaning. This belief is supported by Gee (1999) and McQuilan and Tse (1998) who view storytelling activities as effective strategies for teaching language and reading skills. The activity of ‘recreating’ a story conducted by a teacher participant has its support from Grugeon and Gardner (2000) who believe that through retelling of stories, children will learn about the structure of stories, the significance of the setting, the role of characterization, besides the power of the language (Grugeon and Gardner, 2000, p. 7).

ii) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 3b

If a teacher does not adopt storytelling as a language learning strategy, it may not necessarily mean that he or she has a negative perception of this strategy. He or she may have other reasons for not using it. Hence, question 3b attempts to find out why teachers did not use storytelling as a language teaching tool. Nine teachers indicated that they had not been using storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills. Their responses to the list of reasons provided in the questionnaire are captured in Table 21 below.

Table 21. Reasons Selected by the 9 Teachers for Not Using Storytelling

(n=9) N/T=number of teachers

		N/T															
a.	I am not sure how to use storytelling as a mode for teaching English language skills.	2	<p>Teachers who selected the activity</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Reason</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>22.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>22.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>11.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f</td> <td>66.7%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Reason	Percentage	a	22.2%	b	22.2%	c	0.0%	d	11.1%	e	0.0%	f	66.7%
Reason	Percentage																
a	22.2%																
b	22.2%																
c	0.0%																
d	11.1%																
e	0.0%																
f	66.7%																
b.	I have not received any training in storytelling.	2															
c.	I do not see the relevance of storytelling in learning English language skills.	0															
d.	I am not able to relate storytelling to the specific English language skills I want to teach.	1															
e.	I think telling stories to a large class will not be effective.	0															
f.	I am more concerned about covering the syllabus and the learning outcomes listed in the syllabus document or department scheme of work.	6															

None of the teacher participants responded to Reason (c), “I do not see the relevance of storytelling in learning English language skills.” This would seem to suggest that the teachers probably thought that storytelling was relevant in the learning of English language skills, but they might be bogged down with other preoccupations and concerns as suggested by their responses to the other statements. This was verified by the interview data. Four participants (Dora, Greg, Han and Jim), who did not use storytelling to teach language skills,

cited time constraints, syllabus coverage, lack of structure, and lack of confidence as their reasons during their interviews. More details of their reservations were captured in the interview data analysis which is discussed later on in this chapter in section, 4.3.2. The undue concern with syllabus coverage is also captured in Table 21 above; 66.7% were more concerned about covering the syllabus and specific learning outcomes delineated in the official syllabus document developed by the Singapore Ministry of Education.

Other Reasons

Besides those listed in the questionnaire, two teachers also offered other reasons (concerns) pertaining to pedagogy:

Greg: "There must be a structured approach towards storytelling as a pedagogy if it is to be implemented. Also, positive outcomes should be linked back to the pedagogy of storytelling to show a clear link between pedagogy and desired outcome."

Mel: "Pupils enjoy storytelling, but apart from enjoyment, I think there is a gap to bridge – from enjoyment, to seeing the results in pupils' reading and writing skills. Need to invest time."

Greg and Mel raised a very significant pedagogical concern: how to link storytelling to specific language skills. This concern is also indicated in Table 22 below. About 55.6% of the participants agreed with reason (e), "I would like to use storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills, but I would need some training on how to relate it to specific language skills." About 66.7% of the teacher participants agreed with reason (a), "I believe storytelling is a useful tool to teach English language skills." even though they had not used storytelling to teach English language skills. These findings seemed to suggest that they saw merits in using storytelling as a language teaching tool but needed help in infusing it into their English lessons.

Table 22. Reasons Selected by the 9 Teachers for Trying out Storytelling in Future
(n=9) N/T=number of teachers

		N/T																	
a.	I believe storytelling is a useful tool to teach English Language skills.	6	<p>Teachers who selected the reasons</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Reason</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>66.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>22.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c</td> <td>44.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d</td> <td>44.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e</td> <td>55.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f</td> <td>11.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Reason	Percentage	a	66.7%	b	22.2%	c	44.4%	d	44.4%	e	55.6%	f	11.1%	g	0.0%
Reason	Percentage																		
a	66.7%																		
b	22.2%																		
c	44.4%																		
d	44.4%																		
e	55.6%																		
f	11.1%																		
g	0.0%																		
b.	I believe it is a good tool I can draw on.	2																	
c.	Literature and research on storytelling have highlighted many benefits in terms of teaching English language skills.	4																	
d.	Children enjoy listening to stories and I want to learn to use this as a tool for teaching English language skills.	4																	
e.	I would like to use storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills, but I would need some training on how to relate it to specific language skills.	5																	
f.	I do not think it is the best way to teach English language skills.	1																	
g.	I prefer to use other means of teaching English language skills, e.g. multi-media resources, music, experiential learning, etc.	0																	

c) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 4

As indicated in Table 23 below, 82.4% (70.6% agreed and 11.8% strongly agreed) of the sample of 34 teacher participants expressed confidence about using storytelling to teach English language skills.

Table 23. Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 4

(n=34) SA=Strongly agree A=Agree D=Disagree SD=Strongly Disagree

	SA	A	D	SD
(4) "I am confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills."	4	24	6	0

The bar chart displays the percentage distribution of responses for Question 4. The y-axis represents the percentage from 0.0% to 80.0%. The x-axis is labeled '4'. The bars are: Strongly agree (11.8%), Agree (70.6%), and Disagree (17.6%).

Table 24 below presents the reasons which the teachers identified from a given list in the questionnaire. Strangely, two teachers (5.9%) who have been using storytelling to teach English indicated that they were not expressive enough to tell stories in an interesting manner. Two teachers (5.9%) also indicated that they did not know how to relate storytelling to specific language skills. This concern about linking storytelling to specific language skills was raised earlier in Table 23, too.

Table 24. Reasons for Using Storytelling to Teach English

(Each participant could select more than one fixed response.)

(n=34) N/T=number of teachers

		N/T
a.	I like to learn new strategies, and storytelling seems a useful strategy.	24
b.	I have attended workshops on storytelling.	12
c.	I can relate storytelling to specific English language skills.	18
d.	I am able to vary my tone and pitch to convey the different emotions in a story, and I will be a good model for my students' oral communication.	22
e.	I have not attended any formal courses on storytelling.	11
f.	I am not expressive enough to tell stories in an interesting manner.	2
g.	I don't know how to relate storytelling to specific English language skills.	2

The bar chart displays the percentage of teachers who selected each reason. The y-axis represents the percentage from 0.0% to 80.0%. The x-axis is labeled 'Teachers who selected the reasons'. The bars are: a (70.6%), b (35.3%), c (52.9%), d (64.7%), e (32.4%), f (5.9%), and g (5.9%).

d) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 5

Question 5 relates to my research question 5, “If storytelling were to be recommended as a strategy for teaching English language skills, what kind of implementation support would English language teachers like their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education to provide for them, and why?”. As shown in Table 25 below, all 34 teachers held the view that training in storytelling facilitation skills should be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers. It confirmed that they were all positive (29.4% strongly agreed and 70.6% agreed) about professional development. In my questionnaire, I did not ask if they belonged to any professional group or participated in any professional development activities within their school or beyond. On hindsight, I should have included this in my questionnaire. Nonetheless, it is heartening to know that all the teacher participants believed in some formal professional development that their respective schools or the Singapore National Institute of Education (which trains pre- service teachers) could support.

Table 25. Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 5

(n=34) SA=Strongly agree A=Agree

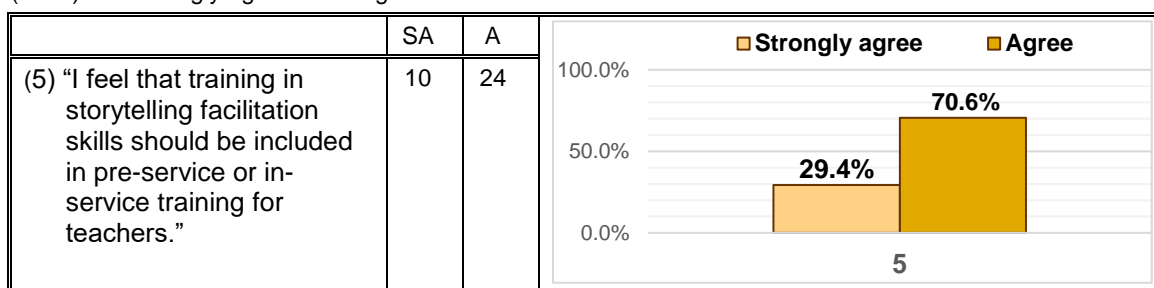


Figure 6 below forms part of the whole framework, Framework for the Analysis of Teachers’ Beliefs, Perceptions and Practice (Figure 3) in section 2.5, chapter 2, Literature Review. The main tenet of Figure 6 is that professional development supported by school administration could enhance teachers’ professional practice and improve student learning and outcomes. In turn, positive student learning and outcomes would increase teachers’ self-efficacy and job satisfaction. The positive findings of my study, vis-à-vis my teacher participants’ belief in the merits of professional development programmes and activities organised or financed by their respective school administration, will be useful information to school administrators in Singapore as well as the Singapore National Institute of Education. In fact, this finding should be of great use to the curriculum planning division of the Singapore Ministry of Education, which develops teaching syllabuses for schools, and the Academy of Singapore Teachers which mounts regular workshops and training programmes for teachers to support teaching and learning.

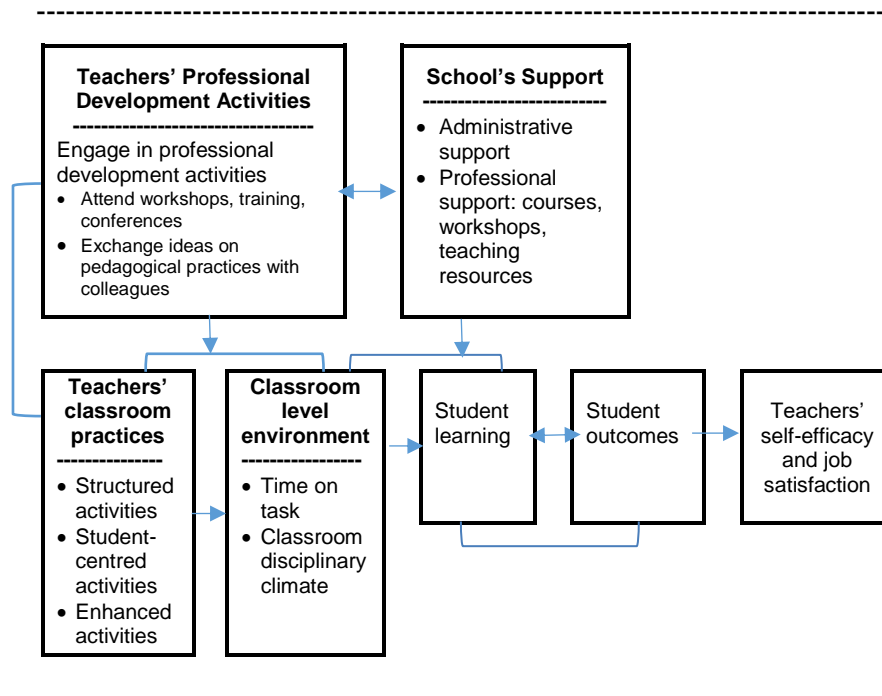


Figure 6. Professional Development, School Support and Teacher Efficacy

The reasons for training in storytelling facilitation skills that the teachers identified from the given list in the questionnaire are presented in Table 26 below.

Table 26. Reasons for Professional Training

(NB: The teacher participants could tick more than one fixed response)

(n=34) N/T=number of teachers

		N/T	
a	Such training in storytelling facilitation skills will help teachers to prepare for incorporating storytelling as a teaching tool.	32	<p>■ Teachers who selected the reasons</p> <p>a: 94.1% b: 79.4% c: 73.5% d: 58.8%</p>
b	With pre-service training, teachers will be trained right from the beginning, so they can apply the skills straightaway when they join the school.	27	
c	It is important to emphasize the relevance of storytelling at an earlier stage of teacher development.	25	
d	It is a useful tool not just for teaching English language skills but also for relating to adults/colleagues.	20	

The findings indicated that 94.1% of the teachers believed that formal training of storytelling facilitation skills would equip teachers with the skill to incorporate it in their teaching, and 73.5% believed that it was important to emphasize the relevance of storytelling at an early stage of teacher development. In fact, 79.4% believed in pre-service training so that the new teachers could apply the storytelling skills the moment they joined the schools. Two teacher participants, Cara and Eva offered further comments as shown below.

Cara: "Storytelling is very useful for teaching values."

Eva: "[know] How to link it to [the] syllabus"

Only slightly more than half of the participants (58.8%) thought that storytelling was a useful tool for teaching as well as relating to colleagues. It might be the case that the teachers, who did not agree with statement (d), did see some value in storytelling as a teaching tool but needed training to link storytelling to the learning objectives outlined in the English language syllabus for primary schools. This concern is quite similar to Li's (1998) findings about the inconsistency between the expectations of educational policy makers (in Singapore's case, the curriculum writers who design the official syllabuses for schools) and those of the practitioners (teachers).

e) Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 6

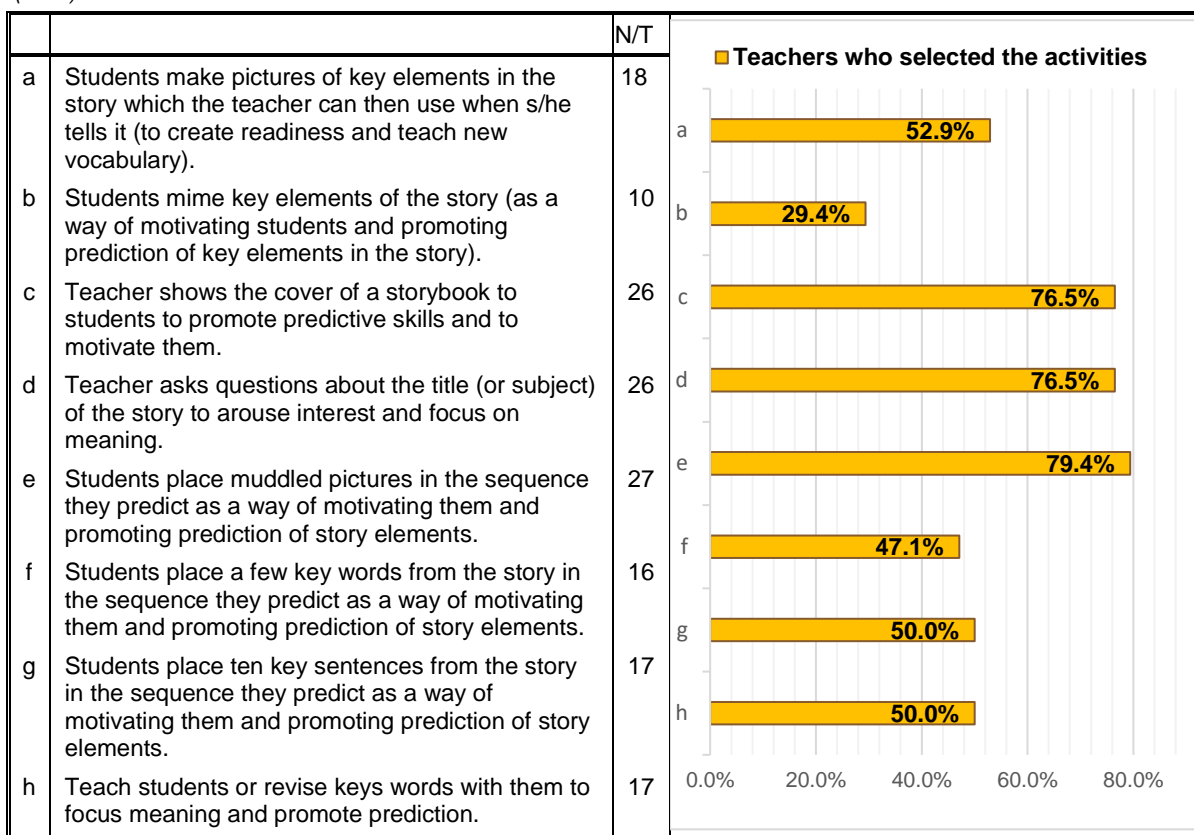
Teacher Questionnaire question 6 reads: "If storytelling activities were to be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers, which activities would you like to be included?" This question was meant to verify the teachers' responses to Teacher Questionnaire question 5, and to identify the specific kinds of support the teachers might need from their school management or the Singapore Ministry of Education. The three lists of activities for pre-service or in-service training of teachers were drawn from those suggested by Wright (2002, p. 4-5). All the suggested activities received some responses from the teacher participants.

As presented in Table 27 below, for pre-activities, 76.5% of the participants showed the cover of a storybook to students to promote predictive skills and to motivate them, and/or asked questions about the title (or subject) of the story to arouse interest and focus on meaning. Perhaps the most popular activity (79.4%) was the one in which the teacher got the students to place muddled up pictures in the sequence that they predicted, as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements. Whatever the pre-activity, the primary objective is to help children develop a positive attitude towards the story they listen to or read. Perhaps, like Gee (1999, p. 3), the teachers believed that there is "a vital relationship between affect and reading" or listening to a story.

Table 27. Before-Activities

(NB: The teacher participants could tick more than one fixed option)

(n=34) N/T=number of teachers



With reference to Table 28 below, the most popular activity (88.2%) is the activity in which the teacher asked questions during the narration about what might happen next so that the students could show their understanding of the story. About 82.4% of the teachers usually asked questions during the storytelling lesson about the students' feelings or the protagonists' feelings to gauge their students' understanding of the story. Perhaps the teachers were keen to find out if the students understood the story – the events, characters, issues, and other related matters. Their intention seems to underscore Nelson's (1989) belief that stories can "help children to make accurate predictions of meaning and to anticipate language patterns and plot and sequence development" (p. 389).

Table 28. During-Activities

(NB: The teacher participants could tick more than one fixed response)

(n=34) N/T=number of teachers

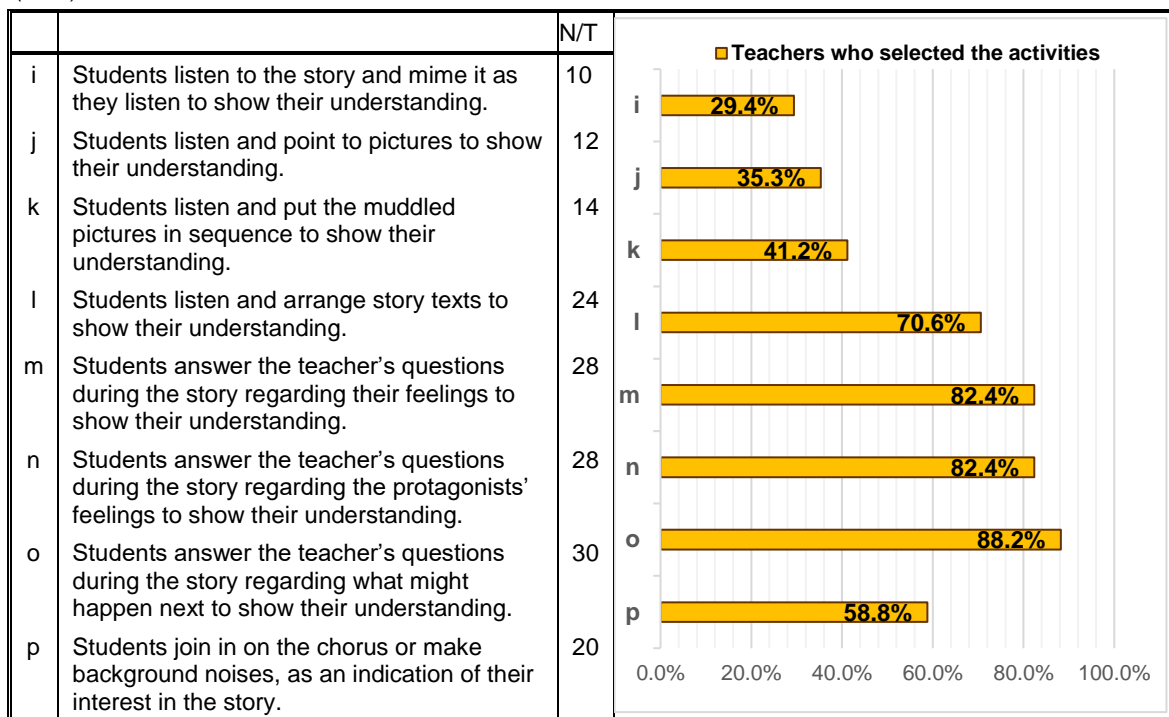
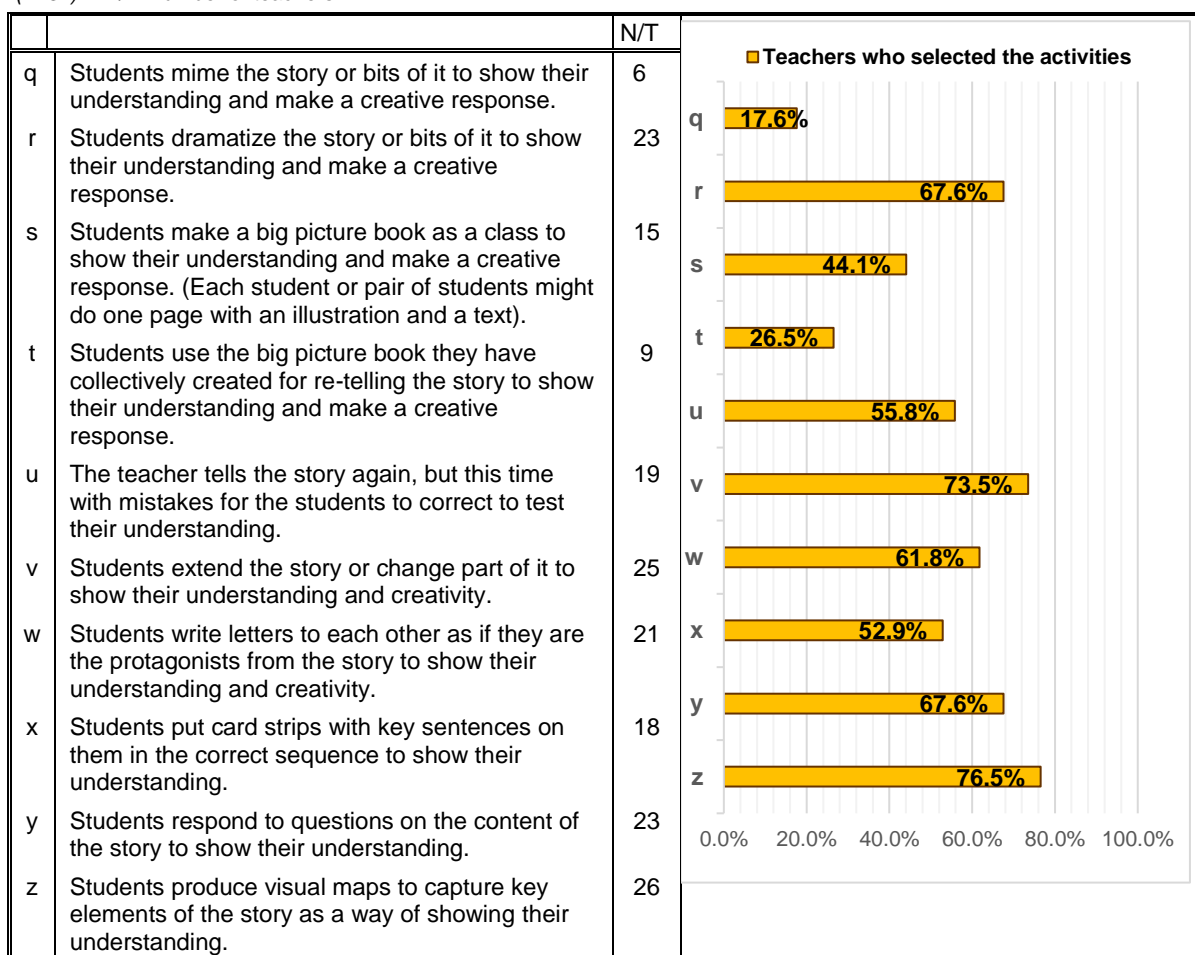


Table 29 below records the teacher participants' responses to the list of after- or post-storytelling activities, the most common of which were: "Students produce visual maps to capture key elements of the story as a way of showing their understanding" (76.5%), and "Students extend the story or change part of it to show their understanding and creativity" (73.5%). About 67.6% of the teachers got their students to respond to questions on the content of the story to show their understanding. This activity is also recommended by Ellis and Brewster (2002) who believe that as children listen to stories, they have the opportunity to engage in reading skills such as "listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing" (p. 2). Another popular activity (67.6%) was dramatization – students dramatized a story or bits of it to show their understanding and make a creative response. Dramatisation, as a follow-up activity, seems a powerful strategy, as attested by Trachtenburg and Ferruggia's (1989) study. The two researchers, through a shared book experience, read the original story to fourteen first graders several times, and conducted dramatisations and discussions to heighten the children's desire to read the book. At the end of their study, they observed that the children made improvements in all five areas they investigated: work attack, vocabulary, oral comprehension, total reading ability, and language expression.

Table 29. After-Activities

(NB: The teacher participants could tick more than one fixed response)

(n=34) N/T=number of teachers



4.2.2 Student Questionnaire Responses

a) Responses to Student Questionnaire Questions 1 and 2

Tables 30 to 34 capture information such as the students' storytelling experience, number of storytelling lessons the students had attended, when and where the storytelling lessons were conducted, and who conducted the storytelling lessons. The detailed information served to verify the students' responses. 46.6% of the students indicated that they had attended some storytelling lessons, the number of which varied from a few to more than 30. The lessons were mostly conducted in the children's school premises (85.2%) with the rest in other venues such as the local churches, public libraries, or commercial/drama centres.

Table 30. Storytelling Experience of Students

School	No. of pupils	Have attended storytelling lessons	Have not attended storytelling lessons
School A	21	10	11
School B	25	7	18
School C	23	13	10
School D	21	20	1
School E	10	3	7
School F	16	1	15
Total	116 (100.0%)	54 (46.6%)	62 (53.4%)

Table 31. Number of Storytelling Lessons Attended

School	Blank/Not sure	1 – 5	6 – 10	11 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 25	26 – 30	31 – 35	> 35
School A	1 1.9%	6 11.1%	2 3.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.9%
School B	0 0.0%	7 13.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
School C	1 1.9%	9 17.8%	1 1.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 3.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
School D	0 0.0%	4 7.4%	1 1.9%	5 8.9%	3 6.7%	1 1.9%	1 1.9%	4 7.4%	1 1.9%
School E	1 1.9%	1 1.9%	1 1.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
School F	0 0.0%	1 1.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Total	3 5.6%	28 51.9%	5 9.3%	5 9.3%	3 5.6%	3 5.6%	1 1.9%	4 7.4%	2 3.7%

Table 32. Venue of the Storytelling Lessons

School	School premises	Church	Public library	Commercial/ drama centres
School A	6 11.1%	1 1.9%	2 2.2%	1 1.9%
School B	6 11.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.9%
School C	12 22.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.9%
School D	18 37.7%	0 0.0%	2 3.7%	0 0.0%
School E	3 5.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
School F	1 1.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Total	46 85.2%	1 1.9%	4 7.4%	3 5.6%

Table 33. Who Conducted the English Storytelling Lessons

School	Not Sure/Blank	Teacher	School Librarian	Parent Volunteer	Storyteller/Drama Teacher
School A	2 3.7%	7 13.0%	1 2.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
School B	0 0.0%	2 3.7%	1 2.2%	0 0.0%	4 7.4%
School C	2 3.7%	4 7.4%	0 0.0%	5 9.3%	2 3.7%
School D	0 0.0%	16 29.6%	0 0.0%	3 5.6%	1 1.9%
School E	0 0.0%	2 3.7%	1 2.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
School F	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.9%

With reference to Table 34 below, the initial intent of the question on when the storytelling lessons were conducted was to find out whether the lessons were conducted during school hours. However, diverse responses (“during EL lessons”, “at pre-school”, “in Primary 1 or 2, or 3 and 4 classes”, “during school hours”, “after school”, “at weekends”) were received, suggesting that the question was not specific enough. Fourteen students (25.9%) indicated that the storytelling was conducted during EL lessons and another 25.9% indicated that the lessons were conducted during school hours.

Table 34. When the English Storytelling Lessons Were Conducted

School	Blank/ not sure	EL lesson	Pre-school	In Pr 1/ Pr 2	In Pr 3 / Pr 4	School hours*	After school	Weekend
School A	0 0.0%	1 2.2%	0 0.0%	1 2.2%	5 9.3%	1 2.2%	2 4.4%	0 0.0%
School B	0 0.0%	5 9.3%	0 0.0%	1 2.2%	1 2.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
School C	5 9.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 2.2%	1 2.2%	5 11.1%	0 0.0%	1 2.2%
School D	0 0.0%	8 14.8%	0 0.0%	2 4.4%	2 4.4%	7 13.0%	0 0.0%	1 2.2%
School E	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 4.4%	1 2.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
School F	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 2.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Total	5 9.3%	14 25.9%	0 0.0%	5 9.3%	12 22.2%	14 25.9%	2 3.7%	2 3.7%

*morning, afternoon, during recess

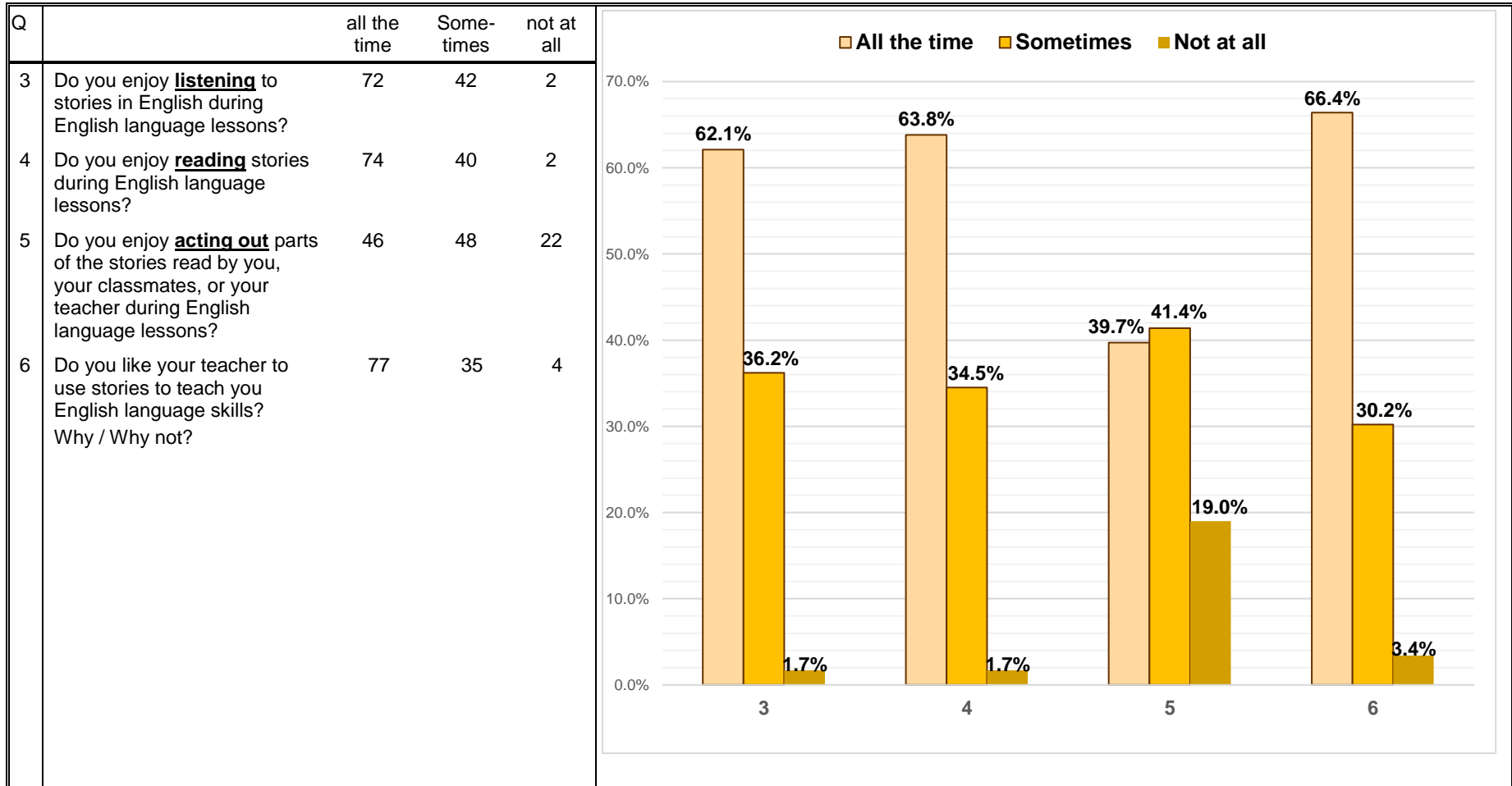
b) Responses to Student Questionnaire Questions 3 to 6

Questions 3 to 6 relate to my research question 2, “What are students’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”. Looking at Table 35 below, the students’ responses suggested that they were positive in their perception of storytelling as a language learning resource. Nearly all the students (98.3%) indicated that they enjoyed listening to stories during their English language lessons: 62.1% all the time, and 36.2% sometimes. Again about 98.3% of them indicated that they enjoyed reading stories: 63.8% all the time, and 34.5% sometimes. In comparison, slightly fewer students (81.0%) enjoyed acting out parts of the stories read to them: 39.7% all the time, and 41.4% sometimes. This socio-emotional value of enjoyment seems to validate Gee’s (1999), and McQuillan and Tse’s (1998) views about the relationship between positive attitude and reading improvement.

When asked if they would like their teachers to use stories to teach them English language skills, 96.6% responded in the affirmative – 66.4% all the time, 30.2% sometimes. When probed for reasons for this wish, they gave many reasons which I have grouped into broad categories: language (vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing and oral) and socio-emotional-moral values. The full lists of students’ responses for each category are at Appendix J. Some examples of each category are given below.

Table 35. Responses to Student Questionnaire Questions 3 to 6
 (RQ 2: "What are students' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?")

(n=116)



Promotes Positive Socio-emotional Habits

Many students cited fun or interest value as their reason for desiring their teacher to use stories to teach English language skills. Some examples of their comments are given below. This socio-emotional value of enjoyment seems to validate Nelson's (1989), Gee's (1999), and McQuillan and Tse's (1998) views about the relationship between positive attitude and reading improvement.

- May: "It make the lesson more interesting"
- Linyi: "If the teacher uses stories, the lesson will be much interesting and everyone will enjoy the lesson."
- Kok Beng: "It is fun and interesting."
- Lenny: "it will be more fun and interesting. It will also attract our attention."
- Rupert: "I like my teacher to use stories to teach English as I think it is more fun than going through (test) papers."
- Isaac: "It is fun and interesting to listen to stories, regardless of the topic."
- Jack: "Because it makes the lesson more interesting."
- Mohan: "Listening to English stories are found to be very interesting to me. It makes the lesson more exciting. In my personal feeling, I think storytelling makes the lesson more thrilling."
- Lucy: "Using the story telling for a part of learning English is more interesting than the normal lessons."
- Xiyen: "Because stories are interesting and I always look forward to them."
- Pei Pei: "It make the lesson more interesting, not that boring."
- Yvonne: "It is fun and quick learned."
- Mel: "It's interesting and it helps us to remember and learn new things at the same time."
- Zoe: "It is because having stories as part of the lesson is fun and interesting. Sometimes, lessons are very boring, so having stories told are very fun."
- Taufik: "I love storytelling and enjoy listening to it. I enjoy telling stories too."

A few students, however, did not think stories are always interesting. Take these two students' comments, for instance:

- Freddie: "Something (Sometimes) the story is boring."
- Evelyn: "Sometimes the story go (becomes) boring."

In her response to question 6, "Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language skills?" student Evelyn ticked "sometimes". This response seemed consistent with her comment, "Sometimes the story go (becomes) boring." However, student Freddie seemed to offer contradicting responses: he ticked "all the time" for the same question, which was not consistent with his comment, "Something (Sometimes) the story is boring." Unfortunately, Freddie was not one of the 26 students interviewed. Hence, it was not possible to check this inconsistency with him.

Promotes Moral Value

In terms of moral values, seven students articulated the moral value they had gleaned from stories. This finding was rather unexpected because the student participants were only ten years old.

- Jared: "I feel that some stories have morals in them..."
- Amos: "It is fun and it teaches us co-operation."

- Cavin: "The stories usually have a moral or some new phrases and it can improve our English."
 Ivy: "We can know more new stories, and act out as a play to know and understand the moral of the story."
 Rosa: "Acting out the parts of the stories help us to develop better friendship with our friends (if I am acting with my friends) and help us to understand more of the story by actions."
 Yara: "...I can learn many morals from the stories."
 Ximin: "It gives us an idea and model about what happened and let us realize our mistakes."

Facilitates Language Benefits

Some students mentioned the language value they were able to garner from the stories they listened to, read or acted out in class: vocabulary development (learn more new words), improvement in grammar and listening skills, writing and reading comprehension skills. The language benefits the students claimed that they had gained exemplify the claims about improvements in language skills by Grudgeon and Gardner (2000), Hamilton and Weiss (1990), Ellis and Brewster (2002), Wright (2002), Gee (1999), Mallan (1991), McQuillan and Tze (1998), and Nelson (1989). The full list is in Appendix J. Some examples are as follows:

Vocabulary

- Val: "...helps us with vocabulary"
 Samuel: "The students will get to learn more adjectives and have fun acting out parts of the stories."
 Zen Long: "To improve our vocabulary."
 Elsie: "I can learn new words from the stories."

Writing

- Yi Song: "To write better compo."
 Mei Mei: "I can improve my writing skills."

Reading

- Shao Min: "Yes, it teaches me on how to answer some questions in the exam paper
 Mark: "... As for acting out parts of the stories, if we do that, pupils would get the idea of what the characters demand and that would help pupils in their understanding of the question in the reading comprehension"

Vocabulary and grammar

- Kee Beng: "To improve my english grammar and vocabulary."

Grammar, listening and writing

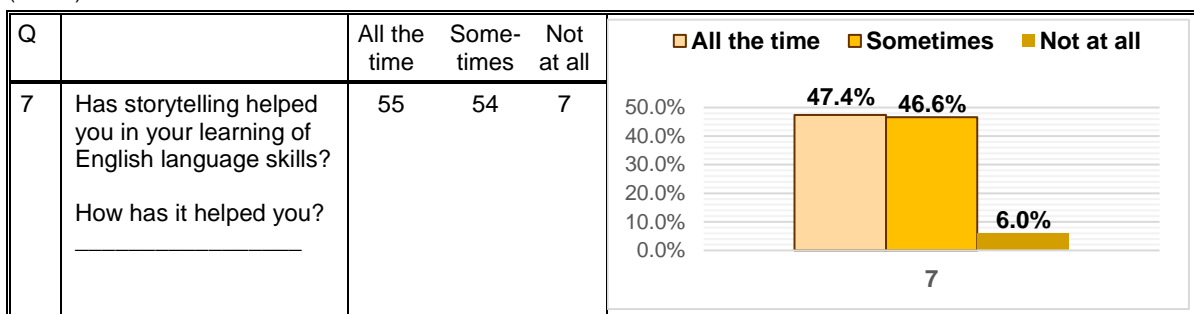
- Ashley: "As I enjoy listening to stories because they not only improve my grammar and listening skills but also give me an indepth experience on writing compositions."

(c) Responses to Student Questionnaire Question 7

The majority of the student participants claimed that storytelling had helped them in learning English language skills: 47.4% felt that it helped them all the time, and 46.6%, some of the time.

Table 36. Responses to Student Questionnaire Question 7

(n=116)



When asked to describe or explain how storytelling had helped them, the children cited grammar, vocabulary, composition writing, speaking, building confidence, listening, and other areas of language use. These are also the types of language benefits claimed by Grudgeon and Gardner (2000), Hamilton and Weiss (1990), Ellis and Brewster (2002), Wright (2002), Gee (1999), Mallan (1991), McQuillan and Tze (1998), and Nelson (1989). The full list of the students' responses for each of the areas (categories) is at Appendix J.

The student participants mentioned improvement in grammar and vocabulary quite a lot. This seems to affirm the findings about acquisition of vocabulary and syntax by Purcell-Gates et al. (1995), and vocabulary improvement by Beck and McKeown (2001) and Robbins and Ehri (1994). Some of the examples of vocabulary benefits cited by my student participants are as follows:

Grammar/Vocabulary:

- Umar: "It has helped me improve my vocabulary."
- Lissa: "It helps me with my vocabulary and grammar."
- Arina: "It can help me know more vocabularies."
- Sumiko: "I will learn the words that I am not sure."
- Zoe: "Yes, it improved my English vocabulary skills. I also learned new words."
- Jack: "It helps to explain certain words I am not sure of."
- Linyi: "It help us to use good grammar, learn new words and uses good sentences."
- Shao Min: "It helped me by having useful phrases in the book, letting me learn them."
- Boon Teck: "It teach us how to read bombastic words and how to read out a story."
- Nat: "It helped me with the tenses, vocabulary..."
- Xinmin: "It helps me by giving me more vocabulary and perfecting my grammar."

Elley and Mangubhai's study (1983) indicated improvement in written composition, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, structures and world knowledge. The student participants in this present study also claimed that storytelling helped them in their written compositions and reading comprehension. In the following comments, the student participants were also able to relate how vocabulary contributed to their improvement in written composition.

Writing

- Samuel: "It has helped my by learning more ways to write compositions, by including more adjectives and ways to begin with a story as well as end a story.
- Farid: "Storytelling helps me to improve on my compositions and I could use the words if nessery."
- Ivy: "in my exam, especially in composition, I can remind myself of some of the stories I heard and imagine out in the composition..."
- Yi Song: "To write better compo."

Writing and Vocabulary

- Ben: "It has helped me by learning new words and learning how to write a better story."
- Grace: "I can take out some phrase to use in my compos and language."

Writing and Reading

- Vicky: "I could do compositions and comprehension better and I could use difficult words to improve my compositions and comprehension."
- Aaron: "We can learn more new word and helps us to write our composition better."

Some students articulated improvement in oral skills and how that boosted their confidence in oral communication. This seems to affirm Hamilton and Weiss' (1990) view that storytelling can bring about improvement in children's expressive language skills.

Speaking (and confidence)

- Ping: "It helped me to build up my confidence."
- Janet: "They helped me by pronouncing the words properly."
- Jared: "It builds up my confidence in communicating and it also teaches me new facts. It also makes me want to read more and inquire further about some facts that I do not understand."
- Rupert: "For oral I have learned how to change my voice for different characters."
- Isaac: "It helped my oral as well as my pronunciation for long words."
- Ganesh: "It has helped the way I speak during the Oral English Examinations, and has improved the way I speak English."

Others (eg, Listening, general language use,...)

- May: "It helped me improved my listening skills".
- Gavin: "It help me to understand the story better."
- Kara: "Help me in my language"
- Derrick: "To improve my english."
- Mei: "It's easier to learn and remember the things we've learned and at the same time, the story will teach us something new."
- Sherie: "It helps me to understand better."

The findings above seem to validate the views of Grugeon and Gardner (2000) who feel that telling and presenting stories can help to build confidence, and raise awareness of story structures. They also feel that it can improve oral, writing and reading skills.

d) Responses to Student Questionnaire Question 8

Table 37 below shows that a high proportion of the students (91.4%) would like storytelling to be included in their Primary Four English language lessons. This is very close to the percentage of positive responses for Student Questionnaire question 7 ("Has storytelling

helped you in your learning of English language skills?”) – 94.0% indicated that it had helped them either all the time (47.4%) or sometimes (46.6%). The findings were consistent, i.e., the students’ perception was that storytelling had helped them in learning English language skills and they wanted it to be included in their primary four classes. The consistency in my student participants’ perception and attitude contrasts with the findings by some researchers like Aslan and Akbarov (2012), or Focho (2011). In Aslan and Akbarov’s study, 88% of the student participants responded positively to the question, “Do you think these (EFL) classes will be helpful to you in your future job?”. Yet, when asked, “Do you think these classes should be obligatory?”, only 36% responded in the affirmative. Disparity between perception and attitude was also apparent in Focho’s (2011) findings which were based on a mean scale of 1 to 4. The mean score for student perceptions of the importance of English for academic success was 2.69, and 2.38 for student perceptions of the importance of English in international communication, but only 1.52 for student perceptions of the contribution of English to global education.

In my study, the students’ responses to both student questionnaire questions 7 and 8 were positive and they quoted almost the same reasons for both questions. The responses to Student Questionnaire question 8 were grouped into broad categories, the full list of which is at Appendix J.

Table 37. Responses to Student Questionnaire Question 8

(n=116)

Q		Yes	No	
8	If storytelling has never been included in your English language lessons in primary one, two or three, would you like it to be included in your primary four English language lessons?	106	10	<p>A bar chart with a vertical axis from 0.0% to 100.0% in 20.0% increments. The horizontal axis is labeled '8'. There are two bars: a tall orange bar for 'Yes' at 91.4% and a short yellow bar for 'No' at 8.6%. A legend at the top shows an orange square for 'Yes' and a yellow square for 'No'.</p>

Some examples of the full list at Appendix J are highlighted below. The students seemed to refer to the fun element a lot. This is, I feel, something noteworthy for teachers as there is much correlation between affect and the learning of language skills, as indicated by the findings of Gee’s (1999, p. 3) research.

Socio-emotional Value

Ping: “Storytelling is interesting and it is never boring.”

Kenneth: “Lessons will be more fun and interesting.”

Dan: “Storytelling is fun, interesting and can help you in your studies.”

Rupert: “Storytelling is a more fun way to learn than looking through papers and going through papers.”

Ashley: “It is fun and encourages pupils to read and write through a fun and yet effective experience, I [It] also gives us more knowledge of the modern world!”

- Nathan: "The lessons will be more interesting and fun and we would not need to keep doing work."
- Yang Yu: "It is very fun to do and we can also learn some skills while doing storytelling. We can also interact with our friends while doing storytelling. So I would appreciate it very much if storytelling is included in P4 English language lessons."
- Brandon: "Makes the lesson more interesting and enjoyable. It also helps student to have more interaction with teacher."
- Warren: "They are fun to act out, there are a lot of activities and I can imagine that I am the person in the book."
- Qilin: "It will be fun and it will help us in our english even though it is a little waste of time but we learn something."
- Zoe: "Stories make the class more interesting. When listening to stories, we will not fall asleep."
- Suyanti: "Yes, because it will make the lesson more fun and exciting, when my teacher tells us an interesting story it makes me more curious and I will go home and tell my mother about it."

Encourages a Reading Habit

Some of the students recounted how they developed a reading habit through their interest in reading stories. Such behavior was also observed by Kelsius and Griffith (1996) in their research; the children's interest in books heightened and they became more attentive during the large group story read-alouds which they conducted.

- Huixin: "I am very interested in reading storybook. Once I started to read it, I will never let it off my hand because the stories are too amazing!"
- Chloe: "I like to read books and I want to read and read till I remember the story and I can tell my friend or sister the story."
- Xiwen: "At primary one, i cannot read. Now I know how to read"
- Darren: "Some students will learn faster and will remember better if story telling is included in my English language lessons. It can enable the students to learn faster and speak good English."
- Roslinda: "I like to read storybook."
- Paula: "I like to read stories"

Facilitates Language Improvement

The students' claims about their language improvement through their engagement in storytelling activities support the findings of Trachtenburg and Ferrugia's (1989) study. The two researchers, in their findings, reported that the children improved in five areas they examined: work attack, vocabulary, oral comprehension, total reading ability and language expression. In my study, some of the students also mentioned improvement in writing, speaking, and comprehension skills, as reported in the students' comments below:

- Vicky: "It can help me improve my compositions, comprehensions and projects that teacher give."
- Aaron: "How to speak better."
- Ronald: "Speak better, project our voice better."
- Xiwen: "It can teach me many things, vocab, grammar and morals."
- Derrick: "So that I can improve my grammar."
- Sherie: "It helps me to build up my vocabulary. It helps me to learn more new words from the story."
- Ganesh: "It will improve everyone's written and spoken English."
- Jack: "It will help me in my 'Oral' tests."
- Brandon: "It could help many students improve their english speaking skills."

Other Reasons

Some students gave reasons that had much to do with their personal interests, for example, student Meng Kwang liked storytelling because he liked acting out and reading stories, and

Eunice simply loved storytelling. Some responses were rather general and hence rather broad and sometimes rather vague, for example, responses by Lissa and Brian. Some students were very chatty, for example Rosa's long utterance. She had so much to share about the potential benefits she could reap from storytelling.

- Lissa: "It helps me understand the lesson better."
 Brian: "Because I like to explore new things."
 Joel: "It will make even more confident when I speak."
 Kok Beng: "Storytelling increases my scope of imagination."
 Rosa: "I love reading but there is no time to read as I have a lot of homework now in primary four. If storytelling is included in our primary four English lessons, I can listen to stories. In addition, I also like acting. In storytelling, we can also act the parts in the story. While acting, we can understand more about the story and build up good relationship with our friends while discussing how to act."
 Yara: "Many stories are interesting and may teach us morals that make us learn much more after reading the book."
 Meng Kwang: "It is because I like acting out and reading stories."
 Eunice: "I love story telling. If there is no storytelling, it won't help me improve in my English."

4.2.3 Comparison of Teachers' and Students' Questionnaire Responses

Table 38 below, which compares the teachers' and students' responses, addresses my Research Question 3, "Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?" On the whole, the similarity in perceptions is apparent. Both groups of student and teacher participants had very positive perceptions of storytelling as a tool to teach language skills: teachers, 100%; students, 98.3% (enjoyed listening to, or reading, stories). The teachers, as adults, were able to elaborate more on the various strands and think about pedagogical implications. For instance, they were able to articulate concerns about teachers' inadequacy vis-a-vis this specialized pedagogical practice, hence the issue of professional support such as training and development of related resources.

Table 38. Comparison of the Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Storytelling

SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree D=Disagree SD=Strongly Disagree

Teacher Questionnaire Response (n=34)					Student Questionnaire Response (n=116)																					
Q	SA	A	D	SD	Q	All the time	Sometimes	Not at all																		
(1) "My perception of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool."	10	34	0	0	1																					
							29.4%	70.6%																		
(2) "I agree with literature or research on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills."	7	27	0	0	2																					
							20.6%	79.4%																		
(3) "Do you enjoy listening to stories in English during English language lessons?"	72	42	2		3																					
							62.1%	36.2%	1.7%																	
							(4) "Do you enjoy reading stories during English language lessons?"	74	40		2		4													
															63.8%	34.5%	1.7%									
															(5) "Do you enjoy acting out parts of the stories read by you, your classmates, or your teacher during English language lessons?"	46	48		22		5					
																							39.7%	41.4%	19.0%	
(6) "Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language skills?"	46	48	22		6																					
							66.4%	30.2%	3.4%																	
(6) "Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language skills?"	77	35	4																							
							66.4%	30.2%	3.4%																	

Cross referencing these data to my Research Question 1 (“What are teachers’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”), and Research Question 2 (“What are students’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”), it would seem to suggest that the teacher and student participants in this research study had a positive perception of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource. Hence, the outcome of my Research Question 3 (“Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language learning tool?”) is that there was hardly any difference in the perceptions of both groups of teachers and students. The convergence in the students’ and teachers’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource in this study contradicts the findings of the research by Brown (2009), and Griffiths and Parr (2001). Brown’s (2009) study showed that students and teachers differed in their perceptions of ideal pedagogical approaches. The teacher participants seemed to value communicative approaches to L2 pedagogy more than discrete-point grammar teaching. The student participants, however, did not appreciate communicative approaches; they much preferred grammar teaching. In the research study by Griffiths and Parr (2001), there were discrepancies between student and teacher perceptions of the use of language learning strategies (LLS).

This clear convergence between the teacher and student participants’ perceptions of storytelling in my present study also runs counter to the mixed perceptions that are evident in Mcgee and Schickedanz’s (2007) review of research studies on the effect of language learning approaches. In their analyses, they noted that the research study by Meyer et al. (1994) registered a negative relationship between the amount of time teachers spent reading aloud to kindergarten children and the children’s decoding skills. In other words, the teachers’ reading to students correlated negatively with students’ achievements in reading comprehension. On the other hand, Mcgee and Schickedanz also found that there were research studies which reported positive findings. For instance, in their analysis of the value of reading aloud stories to improve children’s language skills, they cited research studies by Robbins and Ehri (1994), Whitehurst et al. (1999), Purcell-Gates et al. (1995), Morrow and Smith (1990), and Duke and Kays (1998) which validated language improvement in various areas (vocabulary development, literary syntax and vocabulary, story recall, and sensitivity to the linguistic and organizational structures of narratives and informational texts).

Coming back to the findings in my study, the similarity in the teachers’ and students’ perceptions of storytelling as a language learning resource as highlighted in Table 38 above is further reinforced in Table 39 below. Both teachers and students were of the view that

storytelling was enjoyable and interesting, able to offer moral or social and emotional benefits, and could facilitate the learning of specific language skills.

Table 39. Teachers' and Students' Broad Reasons for Storytelling

Argument for storytelling	Teachers	Students
Develops a love for reading	✓	
Stimulates thinking	✓	
Good pedagogical tool but need professional support (training, development of resources)	✓	
Enjoyment/interest value <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers: "arouses interest", "catches attention" • Students: "fun", "interesting" 	✓	✓
Moral/Social and Emotional benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers: "builds character" • Students: "becomes more confident" 	✓	✓
Facilitates improvement in language areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Grammar • Listening • Speaking • Reading • Writing 	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

The reasons articulated by the students were quite similar to those given by the teachers. In the teacher questionnaire, questions 1 and 2 also included two fairly long lists of possible reasons for the teachers to respond to, and a good number of them selected reasons such as "develops a love for reading", "stimulates thinking" and "good pedagogical tool but needs professional support". The same format was not used for the student questionnaire for fear that the students would have a lot to read and respond to.

4.3 Teachers' Interview Responses

4.3.1 Structure of Teachers' Interviews

As mentioned earlier in section, 4.1.3., "Rationale for the Order of the Data Analyses", the objective of the interviews is triangulation of the teacher questionnaire data with the teacher interview data.

When interviewing the teacher participants, the questionnaire with the teachers served as a reference point. Hence, for each of the teacher interviews, the opening remarks would often refer the teacher participant to his or her questionnaire responses which he or she had completed earlier on. The flow of the interview questions/prompts also paralleled that of the questionnaire. I call them questions but really they are prompts to encourage the teacher participants to communicate their views, ideas or concerns.

When interviewing teachers who had tried out storytelling in their English language lessons in the current or previous years, the first question usually started with a question/prompt to probe for evidence of their experience with storytelling, e.g., “Can you cite me a lesson where you used storytelling as a way of teaching language skills?” For teachers who had not used storytelling, the interview usually began with a preamble before a subtly probing question was asked about whether they would like to try using storytelling in their lessons one day, and why or why not.

Below are some examples of my opening remarks as the researcher:

Teacher Anne

<p>Researcher: We'll now look at the questionnaire that you've filled in. In the first question, you seem to agree a lot with whatever reasons we've listed down. <u>So, for you, storytelling is a good teaching tool?</u></p>	<p>Question to probe for value of storytelling as a teaching tool</p>
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Teacher Faith

<p>Researcher: Looking at the survey responses, I notice that you are very much into storytelling. <u>How have you used storytelling as a language tool?</u></p>	<p>Question to probe for evidence</p>
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Teacher Greg

<p>Researcher: Right, let's look at your responses. I notice that you seem to agree with the literature review about storytelling as a language learning tool. <u>But I notice also that in your years of teaching, you have not tried out storytelling...</u></p>	<p>Comments to provoke and direct teacher to think about reasons for not trying out storytelling</p>
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As each interview progressed, the teacher participants were prompted to discuss other related areas of focus. Some examples, relating to the surveys, are:

- reasons for using or not using storytelling as a teaching tool
- evidence/examples/illustrations of storytelling lessons
- language benefits from storytelling, with reference to specific language skills such as grammar, vocabulary, oral skills, reading and writing
- the issue of professional support (pre- or in-service training, resources)
- the issue of administrative support (e.g. time-tabled time)
- inclusion of storytelling in the curriculum as a formal teaching tool or approach

4.3.2. Teacher Participants' Reasons for Using or Not Using Storytelling

The individual annotated responses of the 13 teacher participants are at Appendix K. Table 40 below documents the reasons why teachers used or did not use storytelling in their classes.

Three teacher participants (Dora, Greg and Han) did not use storytelling in their English classes at all. The reasons they cited were: the perception that storytelling was only for socio-emotional value (arousing students' interest), time constraints, and inadequate skills of teachers.

Teacher Dora said that her "impression of storytelling is may be just to arouse students' interest. It is not really like a tool that I would use formally to teach a very...specific language skill." But when asked if we could use storytelling for writing, she said, "I think it is possible." Dora's response was quite similar to another teacher, Greg's response. Greg who did not try out storytelling commented that "...I do think that storytelling will be a useful tool in the classroom. But I don't think I have the skills to carry out an effective storytelling lesson because I am not so certain how the structure is. That is why I have not carried (it) out in my lessons." In fact, later in the interview, Dora affirmed that storytelling "can play a bigger role in the lesson. I feel it is possible to frame an entire lesson around a story also. It is possible." Even teacher Han who was initially apprehensive about storytelling felt that with storytelling, "it will be more interesting to arouse their (students') interest". He also affirmed the feasibility of storytelling in the English classes by saying, "Yes, I personally feel that it can be a useful tool for teaching certain part of the language learning skills ...Maybe in teaching the grammar part." Yet, at the start of the interview, he raised the concern about time constraints ("I would like. However, I feel that I do not have the time to try it.") and syllabus coverage ("Yes, because of the syllabus coverage").

Two teacher participants used storytelling but not for teaching English language skills. For instance, teacher participant, Maia, used it to arouse her students' curiosity so that they would be motivated to read. Another teacher participant, Jim, used it primarily as a trigger, for tuning in or to evoke students' interest in the topic he intended to cover for the lesson. When asked what stopped him from using storytelling in the main part of the lesson, he attributed it to a lack of a formal structure as a guide, and his diffidence: "I suppose there is a lack of structure and maybe also a lack of confidence. At least, if I know that there is a proper structure and something that I can fall back on or rely on...".

It might be possible that teachers Dora, Greg, Han, Jim and Maia could discern the value of storytelling as a teaching tool for language learning, but they might be hesitant to introduce it because they felt that they needed some formal guidance to help them use this approach effectively. For instance, Dora confessed, "I think we still need a bit of training because it may need different strategies and methods to carry this out. So, I think training is essential." Jim, who shared Dora's view, enthusiastically responded with "Definitely, whether it is in-

house, or in-service training...” Equally excited was Maia who commented that “Training will definitely help”. Even Han, who seemed hesitant to try out storytelling, agreed that training “should help to some extent”. In fact, the rest of the teacher participants interviewed also recommended training on storytelling. This finding is quite similar to what Bruns and Mogharreban (2007) found out in their study. They reported that both Head Start teachers and pre-kindergarten teachers claimed that teachers had the ability to support children’s needs by arranging their classroom environments, observing children, and having knowledge of individualised education plan goals and objectives, and the ability to implement positive guidance strategies. Yet, the Head Start teachers and pre-kindergarten teachers asked for training on behavioural issues, communication strategies, handling and position (p. 330).

The remaining eight teacher participants used storytelling for various purposes: for its socio-emotional value, for facilitating learning of particular language skills (vocabulary, grammar, writing, oral, reading), or as a prelude to the learning of particular language skills. All thirteen teacher participants were forthcoming in talking about their perceptions of storytelling as a teaching resource and in justifying their perceptions.

The teacher participants’ responses in Table 40 below related to my research question 4, “Do teachers’ reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?” In their questionnaire responses captured in Table 12, Responses to Teacher Questionnaire questions 1 and 2, in section 4.2.1 earlier on in this chapter, all 34 teacher participants were unanimous in their responses – 100% agreement with the statements, “My perception of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool.” and “I agree with literature or research on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills.” In the interviews, all the teachers (even Dora, Greg, Han, Maia and Jim) agreed that storytelling was or could be a useful language teaching resource. The snag is that only eight (61.5%) of the thirteen teacher participants interviewed actually infused storytelling or incorporated elements of storytelling into their English language lessons. It seemed then that the teacher participants’ perceptions did not match their practices somewhat. This finding of inconsistency between perception and practice might also prevail amongst the remaining 21 teacher participants who were not interviewed.

Table 40. Teacher Participants' Reasons for Using or Not Using Storytelling as a Teaching and Learning Resource

Reasons for Using Storytelling	Reasons for Not Using Storytelling
<p><u>Socio-emotional value</u> Anne: "...the children love it" Cara: "When I tell stories, I can see that my pupils are more attention. So, I think, it seemed quite effective." Jim: "Mainly I use storytelling as a trigger, tuning in activity just to <u>arouse their interest</u> to the subject I'm going to teach or the topic I'm going to introduce." Kim: "... Not to use it as a tool to teach concepts such as grammar Questions. I do use it to ...probably for <u>tuning in, to lead to another development...</u>" Maia: "I don't use storytelling to teach things like vocab or grammar. I use storytelling more to <u>generate interest of the students, just to get them to love reading.</u>"</p> <p><u>Facilitates improvement in language skills:</u> Anne: "Besides creativity, you get students to be more in tune with getting probably the <u>language development, the grammar portion, and building up their vocabulary...</u> Storytelling seems to be a good way of encouraging children to even to <u>express their views.</u>" Betty: "...I feel that even to read a story at the start of a lesson, or even a book or a chapter that you read consistently every day,...it will help them with their <u>listening</u>, and eventually learning how to <u>pronounce</u> some words. Learning <u>intonation</u> and things like that, it doesn't come by reading the text itself but by listening." Cara: "Let's say there are certain <u>vocabulary</u> words that the pupils don't understand. So, I try to weave some experience of mine into a story form and tell it to the pupils. Usually I try to write them on the board. I try to find some associations so that they can remember better." Elin: "we use literature texts to teach English...We look into ...the <u>story plot, content, character analysis...themes and social issues...perspectives of the different characters...</u>we also teach our <u>grammar</u> components like <u>vocabulary</u> and grammar through the use of these books." Faith: "After going through a series of lessons on storytelling, they (students) are able to do <u>group presentation</u> more effectively...even their <u>grammatical structures</u> are better, more accurate in that sense..." Ivan: "For that particular lesson, we focused more on the grammar part, on the use of past tense where after listening to the story using felt figures, the children themselves get to use the same set of felt figures to retell the story to their own group mates... We saw they are <u>able to recall and pick up the vocabulary</u> as well as <u>the use of past tense.</u>" Lily: "I ask them to see the <u>introduction</u> and the <u>development</u> of the events, and also the <u>paragraphing</u>. My pupils tend to write in chunks of paragraphs. They write in long paragraphs. I teach them how to break up (the paragraphs)."</p> <p><u>As a prelude to the learning of particular language skills</u> Kim: "Currently, I'm teaching the unit called "James and the Giant (()) for English...So, what I did was to tell them (students) a little bit about James, just the beginning bit...Actually, they were intensely listening and then after that they were asking for more. But I told them, "No, I'm not going to tell you the ending." So, I'm going to tell them to read (it) themselves... they will <u>read the story</u> and come back and <u>discuss the ending</u> and how we could <u>change the ending...</u>"</p>	<p><u>Parochial perception that storytelling was only for arousing interest of students</u> Dora: "My impression of storytelling is may be just to <u>arouse students' interest</u>. It is not really like a tool that I would use formally to teach a very specific language skill. My impression is that storytelling is just to engage pupils in the initial part of the lesson." Maia: "I don't use storytelling to teach things like vocab or grammar. I use storytelling more to <u>generate interest of the students</u>, just to get them to love reading."</p> <p><u>Time Constraints</u> Dora: "We are working on a very tight schedule. ...we have to cover two stories (two comprehension passages). So, they [the teachers] may find that they don't really have the time to factor in another story into the lesson... Basically time constraints." Han: "I feel that I do not have the time to try it out... Yes, because of the syllabus coverage."</p> <p><u>Inadequate skills</u> Greg: "I do think that storytelling will be a useful tool in the classroom. But I don't think I have the skills to carry out an effective storytelling lesson because I am not so certain how the structure is. That is why I have not carried (it) out in my lessons." Han: "I may not know now how to use it." Jim: "I suppose there is a lack of structure and maybe also a lack of confidence. At least, if I know that there is a proper structure and something that I can fall back on or rely on. And I also believe that storytelling, to me, is a skill. To be able to tell stories and engage your students, I think it is a skill, a gift. I would like to harness on that gift if I have the chance."</p>

This perception-practice disparity finding of my study is almost similar to the findings of Joseph's (2012) study. In his study, the teachers in their questionnaire responses indicated that they taught historical concepts to their students. However, when probed on this at their interviews, most of them admitted that they did not really set out to teach historical concepts. In actuality, they taught facts presented in the history texts. It is possible that some teachers in my study might have thought that they were teaching language skills via storytelling, when in reality, they merely used storytelling as a trigger to arouse students' interest. Take teacher Jim for instance. In his questionnaire response, he indicated that he had used storytelling in his English language classes. However, when probed at the interview, it seemed that he used storytelling as a tuning-in activity. He elaborated that he used stories to arouse his students' interest in the topic he wanted to teach for a particular lesson.

4.3.3 How Storytelling was Conducted by the Teachers Interviewed

The interviews also focused on how the teachers who liked storytelling as a pedagogical tool conducted storytelling lessons. The discussions gave some insight into their practice and it indirectly addressed my research question 4, "Do teachers' reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?"

The following are comments made by the teachers. Their comments related specifically to frequency of use, approaches they adopted or would adopt, and sources of stories.

a) Frequency of Use

The frequency of use varied with the teachers: once a week, or every English lesson throughout the year, or a period of 10 sessions.

Anne: "I use it quite often... for example, if it's an enrichment class for the better classes, I use it ..like...every once a week."

Elin: "It's throughout the year...Every English lesson."

"As I was mentioning to you earlier, we have this special programme for the high-ability pupils in Pr 4. So, what we do is that we use literature texts to teach English instead of the usual textbooks and activity books... So, for English lessons, we go into details. We look into the book, as in the story plot, content, character analysis. We look at themes and social issues and also perspectives of the different characters."

Faith: "I think, for every tool that you want to get the teacher to use, they need to see the value ultimately. If they see the value, even if it is not easy to learn, they will make the effort. So, in everything that we try to implement, it is for people to see the value. For me, I'm into it, I saw the value. [We have] ten sessions of it."

The frequency of use recounted by the three teacher participants above needs to be set in context. Anne was involved in an enrichment programme for students with high proficiency in the English language. The storytelling lessons were conducted once a week. In Elin's case, she was involved in her school's language arts programme for primary three and four

classes. That was why she said she used storytelling in every English lesson throughout the year. Faith, on the other hand, was referring to a ten-session storytelling course organized by the English department of her school for primary four students. Given these special contexts, it is not possible to conclude that the teachers conducted storytelling on a very regular basis. After the programme or courses, they might or might not continue with the use of storytelling.

b) Approaches Adopted

Varied approaches were mentioned. Teacher participant Anne claimed that she integrated storytelling into her English lessons to teach different skills: reading, writing and oral skills. Another teacher participant, Ivan, talked about how storytelling was part of his department project for Primary 3 classes. Other teachers used storytelling only as a tuning-in activity (Jim and Maia), or as a pre-activity that led to the teaching of particular language skills (Betty, Kim and Lily).

Integration of language skills through storytelling:

Anne: "I think I have this story of *The Three Little Pigs*, a fractured story and a Singlish version. In the beginning, we get the kids to talk about the story and even to retell the story into another version, and then translate that story into standard English version from the Singlish version. And that will be writing and oral skills at the same tie. When they present it, it is oral, speaking. When they write it down, it is also writing again. When they read the text, it is also reading skills. So, it is embedded in everything. In a play, if they write their own play, it is all three, four skills embedded inside."

Storytelling as a department project:

Ivan: "...it was actually a departmental project that we tried to tell a story to the children, to the class of P3 children and using felt figures, animals and ... They were very enthused by it, very interested. Very rarely do you see them so focused in the lesson."

Storytelling as a tuning-in activity:

Jim: "Mainly I use storytelling as a trigger, tuning in activity just to arouse their interest to the subject I'm going to teach or the topic I'm going to introduce."

Maia: "I don't use storytelling to teach things like vocab or grammar. I use storytelling more to generate interest of the students, just to get them to love reading...usually may be a short five minutes or so to tune in...After reading, I want them to be able to read the same way, may be, to just love reading..."

Storytelling as a preactivity that leads to the teaching of particular linguistic skills

Betty: "Sometimes I would (use) the title of the book that I'm going to share with them. I'll read it differently, stressing different words...I'll kind of get them to think [about] what kind of story they are going to read, arouse their curiosity in that way, other than getting them to talk about the cover and ask them to guess what kind of story it is."

Kim: "I do use it to... probably for tuning in, to lead to another development... Currently, I'm teaching the unit called 'James and the Giant Peach' for English. So when I asked them about the story, some of them have not read the book. Some of them do not know Roald Dahl. So what I did was to tell them a little bit about James, just the beginning bit about James and the Giant Peach. Actually, they were intensely listening and then after that they were asking for more. But I told them, 'No, I'm not going to tell you the ending.' So, I'm going to tell them to read themselves. This one involves, you know, the pupils so that they will read the story and come back and discuss the ending and how we could change the ending. If they don't like the ending, maybe we could change the ending. And that is one of the activities in the book – change the ending if they don't agree with the ending."

Lily: "Normally, I will tell the stories based on my family and my children, and see how they have gone through certain situations. They are very interested because it involved the form teacher."

c) Sources of Stories Used

Teacher participants, Betty, Cara and Faith, who infused storytelling into their English language classrooms commented on the sources of the stories they used with their students, e.g. online resources and personal stories.

Betty: "I think, for the kids nowadays, they are very visual. Perhaps audio books, or even good videos... can be included.

Cara: Some of the stories are my personal stories but I love to read. When I read, I usually try to remember interesting parts of the story and relate them."

Faith: "Online resources. There are so many out there, a lot of Youtube videos on the re-interpretations of different stories. We can do it as pre-activity and they can get to tell their own stories. They can even do those online comics to tell their stories (for) different presentations."

4.3.4 Benefits of Storytelling – Language and Socio-emotional Benefits

The language benefits highlighted by the teachers included improvement in vocabulary, grammar, oral and listening skills, writing and reading. The teachers' claims support the findings of Trachtenburg and Ferruggia (1989), Ghosn (2002), Klesius and Griffith (1996), Elley and Mangubhai (1983), Purcell-Gates et al. (1995), Morrow and Smith (1990), Beck and McKeown (2001), and Robbins and Ehri (1994).

a) Vocabulary

A number of teacher participants believed that children learned new words in context as they listened to, or read, stories. This finding validates the positive outcomes about vocabulary acquisition in the studies by Purcell-Gates et al. (1995) and Robbins and Ehri's (1994).

Anne: "Besides creativity, you get students to be more in tune with getting probably the language development, the grammar portion, and building up their vocabulary...In a storytelling session, children provide the answer, and in one way or another, they actually build on to their own vocabulary spontaneously."

Betty: "Even in different types of stories, there are certain types of vocabulary used... By the end of the story, the child can pick it up like if it is about an accident, there will be a lot of vocabulary."

Cara: "The other way is usually through teaching of vocabulary. Let's say there are certain vocabulary words that the pupils don't understand. So, I try to weave some experience of mine into a story form and tell it to the pupils. Usually I try to write them on the board. I try to find some associations so that they can remember better."

Elin: "Definitely, because they are exposed to a wide vocabulary in the books that we have selected for them. Definitely in terms of vocabulary. They do have an extensive vocabulary."

Faith: "So, I would most probably focus on the vocabulary because... like storytelling, they have to read it first, they have to understand what the words mean before they could retell it."

Ivan: "We saw they are able to recall and pick up the vocabulary as well as the use of past tense."

Lily: [R: Any other language skills that you have introduced through stories?] "Some of the vocab. [R: And do you see, in their composition writing, the new vocab they've learnt?] "Yeah, some do. The good ones."

Maia: "Yes. I think if you use storytelling to teach vocab, it will be a lot easier because of the contextual cues..."

b) Grammar

Teachers who believed in storytelling claimed that children learned grammar through the stories. For instance, teacher participant Anne felt that storytelling allowed her to teach past tense in an incidental way. Another teacher, Betty, maintained that storytelling enabled her to teach prepositions in a meaningful way. Yet another teacher (Lily) thought that she could teach children punctuation through dialogues in the stories. Others (Elin, Faith and Ivan) believed that children learned sentence structures through stories.

This finding about grammar benefits affirms Wright's (2009) opinion that children learn the use of simple past tense naturally from listening to or reading stories. It also endorses Ellis and Brewster's (2002) view that storybooks can improve children's basic language functions and structures. Some of the participants' comments are shown below:

- Anne: "Besides creativity, you get students to be more in tune with getting probably the language development, the grammar portion, and building up their vocabulary. ... (Researcher: Storytelling allows you to teach past tense in an incidental way.) Yeah."
- Betty: "...for my school, we had this unit...it was on Japan...As a learning package, we prepared folktales from Japan for them [the children] to enthuse the students... For example, they used the use of tenses because in stories,... it will be recount. So, they will be exposed to past tense."
- Betty: "So, I got a very simple book, *Rosie went for a walk*. Basically, it's just this chicken which went on a walk around the farm. So, you've got the prepositions like "over", "under", and it is really big. And I photocopied it. And I gave them a page of the story, and I read out the story. And the children are supposed to follow the chicken around the track. And throughout the story, they are exposed to various prepositions like "over", "under", "on ... the haystack", etc. so, At the end of the story, they kind of are exposed to prepositions, but not just writing them on the board."
- Elin: "We also teach our grammar components like vocabulary and grammar through the use of these books. A very good example would be,... we follow in line with the *In-Step* books that the other mainstream classes are doing. So, for example, the grammar component for that particular term is 'contractions'. I will develop my own worksheet on 'contractions'. Then I'll get the girls to write down sentences that they can find from a story that uses contractions, and even adverbial phrases to make sentences based on the story content, using adverbs of time, place, manner and so on."
- Faith: "They are able ...even their grammatical structures are better, more accurate in that sense."
- Faith: "...like I said their structures...especially the use of connectors. When they relate a sequence of events, they have to use connectors accurately and also the variation of the sentence structures...After the series of ten storytelling lessons, they are able to vary their sentence structures."
- Han: "Yes, I personally feel that it can be a useful tool for teaching certain part of the language learning skills...Maybe in teaching the grammar part."
- Ivan: "For that particular lesson, we focused more on the grammar part, on the use of past tense where after listening to the story using felt figures, the children themselves get to use the same set of felt figures to retell the story to their own group mates... We saw they are able to recall and pick up the vocabulary as well as the use of past tense."
- Lily: "I like to use the dialogue because they always get mixed up with the Chinese punctuation. Before the dialogue, "The teacher said" is followed by a comma, but in Chinese it is by a semi-colon."

c) Oral/Listening

Some of the teachers were of the view that storytelling could help students improve their listening and speaking skills such as intonation, pronunciation of words, variation of pitch and tone for expressiveness, expressing one's views, and speaking and presenting ideas with confidence. The findings validate Ghosn's (2002), and Klesius and Giffith's (1996)

findings. At the end of Klesius and Giffith's (1996) study, the children were able to use details of the illustrations in the storybook to retell some parts of the story. Ghosn (2002) observed that her young participants were able to use longer and syntactically more complex responses at the end of her study. The findings of this present study also affirm the views of Grugeon and Gardner (2002), and Hamilton and Weiss (1990) about improvement in oral skills.

- Anne: "Storytelling seems to be a good way of encouraging children to even to express their views...I think I have this story of the Three Little Pigs, a fractured story and a Singlish version. In the beginning, we get the kids to talk about the story and even to retell the story into another version, and then translate that story into standard English version from the Singlish version. And that will be writing and oral skills at the same time. When they present it, it is also oral skills. And at the same time when they act it out, it is oral, speaking."
- Betty: "I feel that even to read a story at the start of a lesson, or even a book or a chapter that you read every day consistently, it will help the child in not only understanding or appreciating the story, it will help them with their listening, and eventually learning how to pronounce some words. Learning intonation and things like that, it doesn't come by reading the text itself but by listening."
- Cara: "So, it can be turned into speech and drama ...from a story, after the pupils know the story, especially Reader's Theatre."
- Cara: "So, in fact, [in] P3, P4, we've done that. We'll share with them the story. Before that, we do the predictions like the picture – "What do you think the story is about?" After that, we'll go through with them, make sure that they understand so that they can express themselves better. After that, they do the Reader's Theatre and then their group compositions."
- Elin: "Definitely. In terms of their oral examination, they can just come up with ideas for, you know, the picture discussion. They are able to come up with ideas, descriptive words and all that. And also, I told them that they need to give a conclusion. So, they are able to say "in conclusion, ..." what did they learn from the picture, the moral values that are highlighted in the picture."
- Faith: "After going through a series of lessons on storytelling, they are able to do group presentation more effectively... They speak more confidently...it will be the oral presentation, the oral discussions. Like I said, in terms of the speaking skills, the vocabulary that they use."
- Faith: "They speak more confidently like I said their structures...especially the use of connectors. When they relate a sequence of events, they have to use connectors accurately and also the variation of the sentence structures."
- Ivan: "If we retell stories, they will give confidence to that part and also sharpen their oral skills."
- Kim: "Firstly, I think it definitely grabs their attention. And I can see the pupils looking around and straightaway they focus. It teach[es] them how to focus. I mean, bring their attention. And then after that, it also instills their listening skills.. In terms of probably intonation, pronunciation. I tell stories with expression. So, it means...they can mimic certain expressions and ...model it."
- Lily: "Oh, yes. Teach them the pitch and tone."
- Maia: "I can see that they really listened. I can see from the look in their eyes that they really like stories. I think even adults love to be read stories."

d) Writing

Some of the teacher participants felt that the new vocabulary that their students picked up from stories would come in handy in their writing assignments. Others were of the view that dramatisation of stories helped children to imagine and develop ideas, get a better sense of the sequencing of ideas, and work more effectively on characterisation and plots. These findings affirm the views of Hamilton and Weiss (1990) and Grugeon and Gardner (2000) about development in writing. Some examples from my present study are as follows:

- Anne: "I think I have this story of the Three Little Pigs, a fractured story and a Singlish version. In the beginning, we get the kids to talk about the story and even to retell the story into another version, and then translate that story into standard English version from the Singlish version. And that will be writing and oral skills at the same time....when they write it down, it is also writing.
- Betty: "Even the length of the sentences and it will help them in their writing skills."
- Elin: "Definitely. Now the girls do not read a book for the sake of reading from start to end. At least, now they are aware of things like genres, what kind of genres. They look into writers' styles because we look into styles of writing. Different writers have different styles. I let them do research on the writers because their lives have an impact on the books that they write, for example, Oscar Wilde. So, as they read, they will really think about these things, about the characters in the book, the issues that are highlighted in the book, and themes..."
- Lily: "I ask them to see the introduction and the development of the events, and also the paragraphing. My pupils tend to write in chunks of paragraphs. They write in long paragraphs. I teach them how to break up [the paragraphs]."
- Betty: "I think dramatisation is always very, very useful when you come to picture composition, where you have the freeze screen, where you get the kids to work in groups. And they come up with different, different possible situations and what follows after the picture. That's very applicable for my upper primary boys where they have only one single picture for their picture writing. Some of them can't seem to get enough ideas. When they learn to dramatize it and add dialogues to the characters, they tend to have better storylines."
- Cara: "Actually, I used storytelling in the pre-writing activities, but sometimes we have pictures. I tried to relate my own experience and then I share with my pupils because I tell them that in composition writing, they need to be original so that they can do better because their stories, if it's their own personal stories, there may not be so many people with that kind of experience. And then when I mark their compositions, I find that there are certain parts that are quite similar to what I've mentioned."
- Elin: "It has definitely helped the girls, especially in their composition writing. They are able to develop the plot of the story better. Usually, we see the girls trying to satisfy the guide points that are mentioned in the paper, and once they hit the 150 words, they are happy. But for these girls, they are able to develop their stories into greater details. And we also look at description of characters, which most of the girls don't go into in their composition writing. They will just introduce a character by giving a name. For them, they are able to describe how the character looks like, physical appearance, inner qualities of the character, and how that character plays a role in the development of that story."
- Faith: "I learn that there are explicit skills that we can teach them [students] like we give them cards to sequence the story."
- Ivan: "We saw that they were able to recall and pick up the vocabulary as well as the use of past tense...Yeah, after which the children also able to use that in in their writing."
- Kim: "...after listening to the story, they sequenced the story... After sequencing, they would try to change, probably, characterization...It really develops their creativity."

e) Reading

The benefits raised by the teachers were varied. Some believed storytelling promoted a love for reading. Other teacher participants thought it was useful in that it developed other reading skills, for example predictive skills. This perception validates Nelson's (1989) claim that storytelling can enhance literal and inferential comprehension (p. 386). There were also teachers who thought that it could help students to appreciate different types of genres and their characteristics.

- Cara: "I find that stories is [are] also very good to instil their love for reading. In the past, I was in charge of the library. So, I will show them a book and show them the cover. Sometimes I'll just tell and then stop short, ask them to go and find out."
- Dora: "I think you can use the cover of the story to promote predictive skills and to motivate them. I think that is easily manageable. Um...even asking about the title."
- Elin: "...we use literature texts to teach English... We look into ...the story plot, content, character analysis... themes and social issues... perspectives of the different characters..."
- Elin: "Now they are aware of things like genres, what kind of genres. They look into writers' styles...I let them do research on the writers because their lives have an impact on the books that they write, for example,

Oscar Wilde. So, as they read, they will really think about these things, about the characters in the book, the issues that are highlighted in the book, and themes, and not read a book for the sake of enjoyment."

Faith: "And it is interesting how they interpret the stories based on their own experience because we allow them the scope to look at the stories."

Faith: "After going through a series of lessons on storytelling,.. it also enhances their reading comprehension because they have to fully understand [before they can retell the story]."

Faith: "Show them the cover to promote predictive skills'

Ivan: "I've used 'Teacher used the cover and get the pupils to predict what the book, what the content will be about, who are the characters in the story.'"

Ivan: "During activities. The children will answer the questions during the story from time to time and also to make predictions. And at the same time, check whether their earlier predictions were right."

Lily: [R: "Since storytelling is so powerful, do you think we should recommend it?"] "For the high-ability group, yes. For the low-ability group, I would recommend short stories. Short stories just to cultivate their interest in reading, the beginning of reading. If you introduce a thick book like Harry Porter, I don't think they will continue reading it."

f) Socio-emotional

There were also teacher participants who, besides using storytelling for teaching English language skills, sometimes used it also as a tuning-in activity to capture students' attention, or to make the lesson more interesting, or simply to heighten their students' interest in the lesson. Nelson (1989) also observed that the children were very engaged during the narration of the story, *The Tailor*.

Jim: "Mainly, I use storytelling as a trigger, tuning-in activity just to arouse their interest to the subject I'm going to teach or the topic I'm going to introduce.

Cara: "When I tell stories, I can see that my pupils are more attentive. So, I think it seemed quite effective."

Maia: "...I use storytelling more to generate interest of the students, just to get them to love reading"

4.3.5 Professional and Administrative Support the Teachers Advocated

a) Training

From the interviews, it was quite clear that the teachers would like professional training – pre- or in-service – as well as help in resource development. This request for some form of professional assistance is not incongruent with the findings of other research studies. For instance, in Bruns and Mogharreban's (2007) study, both Head start teachers and pre-kindergarten teachers asked for training in handling behavioural issues, and communication strategies. Li's (1998) teacher participants, confessing their deficiencies, requested professional support in terms of training or retraining in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and teaching resources.

Table 41 below outlines the reasons given by the teachers in this study for professional training. Those who argued for pre-service training felt that preservice teachers, being new teachers, would be more enthusiastic and hence would welcome additional language teaching approaches and strategies. Teachers who preferred in-service training felt that

experienced teachers could build on their repertoire of language teaching approaches and strategies and explore the potential of storytelling. They elaborated that more experienced teachers would be better able to incorporate such unconventional approaches without feeling an overload of work. In sum, whether it is pre- or in-service training, the general sentiment was that storytelling could be a useful pedagogical approach to add on to their repertoire of teaching strategies.

Table 41. Professional Support: Pre- and In-service Training

Pre-service Training	In-service Training
<p><u>Enthusiasm of new teachers</u> Betty: “Pre-service training: because I think new teachers are generally more enthusiastic to try out new teaching strategies. And I believe it is one good way to equip them.”</p> <p><u>More strategies for new teachers</u> Lily: “I think it is better if it is at pre-service...so that the new beginning teachers know how to use storytelling” Greg: “Pre-service is good so that teachers come into schools with that knowledge...Pre-service, they are all very focused on learning. Once you are in-service, you are practitioners. Once you are practitioners, you take time to go to these workshops. Sometimes you are not able to make it. So, I think pre-service will be more effective.” Jim: “Pre-service training. I think that will definitely help tremendously.”</p>	<p><u>Refresher course to increase repertoire of teaching strategies</u> Faith: “In-service is more effective. I think an experienced language teacher would definitely benefit more, and able to carry out more effectively as they most probably have been teaching for quite a few some years. And they have already tried out different strategies already. So, this kind of add on to their repertoire. In-service training: a refresher course” Han: “I think, in-service so that maybe we have tried out other strategies. We may try out this strategy as well to see it as useful.” Lily: “[in-service] Yes, a refresher course”</p> <p><u>Incorporating new strategies without feeling an overload of work</u> Jim: “Ok. I think maybe in-service will be more helpful because if they were to do it in NIE, the teachers have not ... been exposed to the full scale, full load of a full fledged teacher yet so that they do not know maybe in their schools, there are other resources that can supplement storytelling in terms of teaching English. So, I think if they were to be exposed to different tools in NIE, it might be a bit too hectic.”</p>
<p><u>Both Pre- and In-service training:</u> Anne: “Should be a continuous one: pre- and in-service training” Cara: “I think it can [be] pre-service; it can be part of in-training [in-service]... in-service training. In fact, I attended one. ... one or two. And then the teachers, the trainer was fantastic. I mean they are so expressive. I wish I could be like that – the way they present the story and then they also use mini-props like little hand puppets, ...” Elin: “Both – pre and in –service... Pre-service because the new teachers, may be they are more receptive to this new approach. In-service for more experienced teachers who may be interested in trying out this new method of teaching English.” Ivan: “Yes, I’ll definitely recommend this for pre-service training so they will be more equipped when they are out teaching. Yes, in-service too. Teachers who have not been trained or who would like to pick up this new skill or even a refresher, it will appeal to them.” Kim: “I guess it could be both because if it is in-service, we can also learn...and the older generation of teachers can also pick up the skills as well...[pre-service] They would have skill-prepared activities.” Dora: “I think should be both because pre-service before you graduate, I think it is necessary to pick up all these skills. And then for in-service, along the years, things may have changed. So it is necessary to upgrade your skills.” Maia: “I think it should be for both. Pre-service will be for people who are going to graduate as teachers. They need to be equipped with the skills. For the experienced teachers, it is to bring back the love to read. I think all of us love to read one way or another.”</p>	

b) Teaching Resources

The teaching resources (from books to costumes, props, and audio-visual materials) that the teacher participants requested were diverse yet relevant. The fact that they asked for

storytelling resources seemed to give the impression that they would not mind trying out storytelling in their language classes. It seemed to also hint at their belief in the value of storytelling in the language classroom.

Anne: "Resources and I think we can provide puppets and clothes, and the...attire, props. Even getting kids to make their own props will be quite exciting. Each class should be equipped with a set and we can spend money on it."

Betty: "I think, for the kids nowadays, they are very visual. Perhaps audio books, or even good videos ... can be included... A variety of how stories can be told will be useful."

Cara: "...use mini-props like little hand puppets...they use their aprons to change their different characters."

Faith: "Resources such as the right kind of stories... Props might be a problem...because of the budget and the maintenance... Of course, with the props, it will be so much more fun... I think if we have a package on all the resources, a resource package, it will be easier for younger teachers."

Kim: "...May be it should be supplemented by other resources...[R: "You're talking about props, puppets, and may be costumes?"] ...Oh yeah...May be the scripts also."

Lily: "Resources... [R: "Do you think props would help? Costumes and props?"] Of course, of course."

Maia: "Yes, props, books, the storybooks being ready for us. So, it comes by topic."

c) Professional Development Support

The teacher participants also discussed professional development issues such as professional collaboration and curricular support. In terms of professional collaboration, teacher Anne suggested peer observation and collaboration. Betty and Elin recommended group preparation of teaching resources while Faith thought that focused professional development initiated by the teachers themselves might yield positive outcomes. Jim proposed a whole school approach so that teachers from the same level could consult and assist one another. All these professional development activities suggested by the teacher participants parallel the recommendations by OECD (2009) for teachers to engage in professional development activities such as "co-operating in teams, building professional learning communities, participating in school development, and evaluating and changing work conditions" (p. 90). According to OECD, such collegial activities "shape the learning environment on the school level" (p. 90).

Greg and Kim felt that there should be sufficient curricular support such as storytelling programmes formally structured into the teaching syllabus. This suggestion would mean involving the Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD) of the Singapore Ministry of Education as CPDD develops teaching syllabuses for schools. The request from my teacher participants for professional development and curricular support is similar to the findings of Joong et al.'s (2009) study. The teacher participants in their study also felt that there was a need for the provision of professional development training and teaching resources as well as curriculum development to help them implement student-centred pedagogies.

Professional Collaboration

peer observation and collaboration

Anne: "...enthusie them further by encouraging them to use certain tools, I mean, certain strategies in class using storytelling. And tell them that you have the available resources and then maybe even conduct a ...a... one class and teachers go there and pick up some skills in storytelling."

Group preparation of resources

Betty: "...For my primary school, we are not in STELLAR yet. For unit 2, it was on Japan. So, there were ... we prepared ... as a learning package, we prepared folk tales from Japan for them to enthuse the students. Also they are related to the topic. The stories are chosen for that topic..."

Elin: "Actually, we do have our own resources. We have comprehension cubes. They have different colours like red is for pre-reading before you read a book. The girls will throw a dice, and whatever questions there are, they have to answer. That's pre-reading activity. Then another colour, blue. It's during-reading. Questions that involve during-reading, and post-reading, after-reading... Actually my colleague and I and another teacher. We worked on this as a group."

Organising professional development workshop as a group

Faith: "But I see first they (teachers) must see the value, then coupled with the skills, then they can carry out effectively. So, they must experience some success. Maybe they themselves can organize like a workshop, and then work in groups to retell the story and when they experience it first hand, and it is fun..."

Professional advice and guidance by colleagues teaching in the same level

Jim: "Definitely, because if it is a full, a whole-school approach. Take for example, you teach a particular level where all the teachers use storytelling to teach a particular topic for example, if you encounter any problems, you can definitely seek help from your colleagues. So, for that part, from my point of view, it will be more helpful."

Curricular Support

Greg: "Yes, some kind of formal structure, training for me to effectively carry out storytelling lessons. And also like ... how will it result in achieving certain learning objectives and all that. So, if that link is clear in teachers' minds, they will be more enthusiastic about carrying out the lesson."

Kim: "...I feel that if there is storytelling, structured storytelling programme in the syllabus, if they were to outline the ... specific language skills, objectives and goals, maybe we can follow..."

d) Administrative support

Amongst the different kinds of administrative support the teacher participants requested, time seemed to be the primary concern. In the Singaporean education context, preoccupation with completion of the English language syllabus and preparation of students for their year-end assessment has always been of paramount importance to most teachers, as attested by the following teachers' comments:

Dora: "Unless they can work that into the syllabus. That means they have to give us time to actually carry it out."

Greg: "Yeah, the time plus a lot of other factors come in..."

Greg: "Yes, some kind of formal structure, training for me to effectively carry out storytelling lessons...It shouldn't be over and above what we are doing. So, if you add something, you have to take out something so that it is not overloading... Should achieve a nice balance, so that teachers are comfortable carrying out the lessons and they really see the value."

Han: "I would like. However, I feel that I do not have the time to try it out... Time. The most important thing is we must have the time."

Maia: "Yeah, some formal training will definitely help. But training should be non-threatening... I think sometimes you find that you are already not coping with the marking and the teaching load... Maybe allocation of more time"

4.4 Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses

The teacher questionnaire responses were very encouraging: all 34 teacher participants held a positive perception of storytelling as a useful tool for teaching English language skills. However, of the 13 teacher participants interviewed, three teachers (Dora, Greg and Han) stated that they had not tried out storytelling in their English lessons. Ten teacher participants had used storytelling in their English classes – two for socio-emotional purposes (Jim used it primarily as a trigger, for tuning in or arouse students' interest in the topic he intended to cover for the lesson; and Maia used it to arouse her students' curiosity about certain storybook in order to motivate them to read the book).

The interview data did offer insights and other details which the questionnaire data did not sufficiently capture. Take for instance the interviews with Kim and Lily. At the beginning of the interview, Kim commented that when she used storytelling, "it is probably not to use it as a tool to teach concepts such as grammar questions. I do use it to...probably for tuning in, to lead to another development." But when she was requested to elaborate on this tuning-in activity, she described how she read the introductory portion of a book by Roald Dahl just to enthuse her students so that they would be interested to read on. Then she sent them off to the library to read the book. In the lesson that followed, her students discussed how they could change the ending of the story. So, it was not just motivation to read but also providing her students with the context for learning writing skills (story development and structure). In fact, as the interview progressed, Kim went on to talk about language benefits her students had gained from that lesson: listening skills and oral skills such as pronunciation and intonation. She elaborated that her students also sequenced the story and worked on characterisation.

Similarly, although at the start of the interview, Lily said that storytelling was, to her, a means to motivate students to read, she went on to talk about language benefits that students could glean from storytelling. For instance, she commented that she used dialogue to teach punctuation (use of comma) and oral skills (tone and pitch). She also recounted how she used stories to develop her students' writing skills - paragraph development ("I ask them to see the introduction and the development of the events, and also the paragraphing...I teach them how to break up the paragraphs").

The other teacher participants, who alleged that they had used storytelling to teach English language skills, were able to offer very rich descriptions of how they infused storytelling into their English classes and the specific areas of benefits for their students. The benefits discussed were very similar to those highlighted in the questionnaire responses – socio-

emotional benefits, benefits in different linguistic domains such as vocabulary building, grammar, oral-listening, writing and reading.

Of the five major purposes of a mixed methods evaluation by Greene et al. (1989), triangulation (which examines the consistency of findings obtained through different instruments) was especially relevant to the purposes of my study. The findings of my study indicated that the teacher participants' interview responses amplified and complemented their questionnaire responses. Indeed, the teacher participants' interview responses triangulated very explicitly their questionnaire responses.

Tables 42 to 48 below give detailed illustrations of the different language domains to show how the interview data corroborated and amplified the questionnaire data. In Table 42, the teacher participants explained how storytelling could help students in vocabulary building. For instance, teacher Betty talked about vocabulary associated with a particular situation or context such as the vocabulary related to accidents. Another teacher participant, Faith, claimed that retelling of stories was an effective way of helping her students in vocabulary building. She explained that when her students came across new vocabulary, they had to understand what the words meant before they could retell the story. Maia, on the other hand, felt that it would be much easier to teach vocabulary through storytelling as there would be contextual clues.

Table 42. Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses - Vocabulary

Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills: Vocabulary		
Teacher Questionnaire Responses		Teacher Interview Responses
	Agree	
2k) "Hearing stories improves many language skills, such as <u>vocabulary</u> , <u>comprehension</u> , <u>sequencing and story recall</u> ." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990: 6)	26 76.5%	Anne: "Besides creativity, you get students to be more in tune with getting probably the language development, the grammar portion, and building up their <u>vocabulary</u> ...In a storytelling session, children provide the answer, and in one way or another, they actually build on to their own <u>vocabulary</u> spontaneously." Betty: "Even in different types of stories, there are certain types of <u>vocabulary</u> used. At the end of the story, the child can pick it up like, if it is about an accident, there will be a lot of vocabulary." Cara: "The other way is usually through teaching of <u>vocabulary</u> . Let's say there are certain vocabulary words that the pupils don't understand. So, I try to weave some experience of mine into a story form and tell it to the pupils. Usually I try to write them on the board. I try to find some associations so that they can remember better." Elin: "Definitely, because they are exposed to a wide <u>vocabulary</u> in the books that we have selected for them. Definitely in terms of vocabulary. They do have an extensive vocabulary." Faith: "So, I would most probably focus on the <u>vocabulary</u> because the more they have... like storytelling, they have to read it first, they have to understand what the words mean before they could retell it." Ivan: "We saw they are able to recall and pick up the <u>vocabulary</u> as well as the use of past tense." Lily: [R: Any other language skills that you have introduced through stories?] "Some of the <u>vocab</u> . [R: And do you see, in their composition writing, the new vocab they've learnt?] "Yeah, some do. The good ones." Maia: "Yes. I think if you use storytelling to teach <u>vocab</u> , it will be a lot easier because of the contextual cues."
2o) "Storytelling improves children's <u>vocabulary</u> " (Hamilton & Weiss, 1990). "Listening to stories allows the teacher to introduce or revise <u>new vocabulary and sentence structures</u> by exposing the children to language in varied, memorable and familiar contexts, which will enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech." (Ellis & Brewster, 2002: 2).	25 73.5%	

Table 43 below gives examples of improvements in grammar. For instance, Betty quoted specific details such as the teaching of prepositions and past tense in the context of a story. Elin recounted how she got her students to write down adverbs and sentences with contracted forms of words from a story. They had to create sentences using the adverbial phrases based on the story content, focusing specifically on adverbs of time, place and manner. Faith also taught the use of connectors and syntax through storytelling. She explained that when her students related a sequence of events, they had to use appropriate connectors and sentence structures. Ivan recounted his students' retelling experience to illustrate how they were able to use the past tense correctly as well as the vocabulary they had learnt from the stories in their retelling of the stories.

Table 43. Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses - Grammar

Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills: Grammar		
Teacher Questionnaire Responses		Teacher Interview Responses
	Agree	
2m) "Stories, which rely so much on words, offer a <u>major and constant source of language experience</u> for children." (Wright, 1995, p. 6). ".... students will acquire over time the language necessary for communication as the stories will contain a <u>wide variety of natural language rich in vocabulary and grammatical complexity</u> ." (McQuillan & Tse, 1998, p. 21).	24 70.6%	Anne: "Besides creativity, you get students to be more in tune with getting probably the language development, the <u>grammar</u> portion, and building up their vocabulary. (Storytelling allows you to teach <u>past tense</u> in an incidental way.)" Betty: "...for my school, we had this unit...it was on Japan...As a learning package, we prepared folktales from Japan for them [the children] to enthuse the students... For example, they used the use of tenses because in stories, it will be recount. So, they will be exposed to past tense." Betty: "So, I got a very simple book, <i>Rosie went for a walk</i> . Basically it's just this chicken which went on a walk around the farm. So, you've got the <u>prepositions</u> like "over", "under", and it is really big. And I photocopied it. And I gave them a page of the story, and I read out the story. And the kids are supposed to follow the chicken around the track. And throughout the story, they are exposed to various prepositions like "over", "under", "on ... the haystack", etc. so, At the end of the story, they kind of are exposed to prepositions, but not just writing them on the board." Elin: "We also teach our grammar components like vocabulary and <u>grammar</u> through the use of these books. A very good example would be, we follow in line with the <i>In-Step</i> books that the other mainstream classes are doing. So, for example, the grammar component for that particular term is ' <u>contractions</u> '. I will develop my own worksheet on 'contractions'. Then I'll get the girls to write down <u>sentences</u> that they can find from a <u>story that uses contractions</u> , and even <u>adverbial phrases</u> to make sentences based on the story content, using <u>adverbs of time, place, manner</u> and so on." Faith: "They are able ...even their <u>grammatical structures</u> are better, more accurate in that sense." Faith: "...like I said their structures...especially the use of <u>connectors</u> . When they relate a sequence of events, they have to use connectors accurately and also the variation of the sentence structures...After the series of ten storytelling lessons, they are able to vary their sentence structures." Han: "Yes, I personally feel that it can be a useful tool for teaching certain part of the language learning skills...Maybe in teaching the grammar part." Ivan: For that particular lesson, we focused more on the <u>grammar</u> part, on the <u>use of past tense</u> where after listening to the story using felt figures, the children ... get to use the same set of felt figures to <u>retell</u> the story to their own group mates... We saw they are able to recall and pick up the <u>vocabulary</u> as well as the <u>use of past tense</u> ." Jim: "Yes, definitely, because I do realize that students like to listen to stories. If there is a platform for me to teach like vocabulary or grammar Questions according to the syllabus, I'd love to try it out." Lily: "I like to use the dialogue because they always get mixed up with the Chinese punctuation. Before the dialogue, "The teacher said" is followed by a comma, but in Chinese it is by a semi-colon."
2d) "Storytelling improves <u>expressive language skills and stimulates inventive thinking</u> ." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 15)	22 64.7%	
2h) "The repetitious language patterns and cumulative story events of predictable books and stories ... can help children to <u>make accurate predictions of meaning</u> and to <u>anticipate language patterns and plot and sequence development</u> ." (Nelson, 1989, p. 389) (Wright, 2002)	21 61.8%	

In Table 44 below, the teachers were also able to explain how storytelling developed students' oral and listening skills. Anne drew on her teaching experience to show how her students were able to hone their oral skills when they retold *The Three Little Pigs* (which was

originally in Singlish) in standard English. Betty felt that reading a story to students every day would help them with their listening skill, and eventually they would learn how to pronounce some words correctly. She insisted that children could learn correct intonation through listening to stories being read out to them. Another teacher, Lily, also used storytelling to teach her students pitch and tone. Elin, on the other hand, recounted how her students were able to come up with ideas and descriptive words in their oral examination. Faith observed that after going through a series of lessons on storytelling, her students were able to do group presentation more effectively and confidently.

Table 44. Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses – Oral/Listening

Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills: Oral/Listening		
Teacher Questionnaire Responses		Teacher Interview Responses
	Agree	
2e) "... the requirements to 'speak clearly and confidently' and to 'listen, understand and respond to others', will be met by hearing and telling stories where the need to <u>spea</u> k with 'clear <u>dic</u> tion, to <u>cho</u> ose words with <u>prec</u> ision, <u>org</u> anize what they say and <u>take</u> into <u>acc</u> ount the <u>nee</u> ds of their <u>lis</u> teners is self-evident." (Gruegon and Gardner, 2000, p. 6)	17 50.0%	<p>Anne: "Storytelling seems to be a good way of encouraging children to even to <u>express their views</u>... I think I have this story of the Three Little Pigs, a fractured story and a Singlish version. In the beginning, we get the kids to talk about the story and even to retell the story into another version, and then translate that story into standard English version from the Singlish version. And that will be writing and <u>ora</u>l skills at the same time. When they present it, it is also oral skills. And at the same time when they act it out, it is <u>ora</u>l, <u>spea</u>king."</p> <p>Betty: "I feel that even to read a story at the start of a lesson, or even a book or a chapter that you read every day consistently, it will help the child in not only understanding or appreciating the story, it will help them with their <u>lis</u>tening, and eventually learning how to <u>pron</u>ounce some words. Learning intonation and things like that, it doesn't come by reading the text itself but by listening."</p> <p>Betty: "...it will help them with their listening, and eventually learning how to pronounce some words. Learning <u>int</u>onation and things like that, it doesn't come by reading the text itself but by listening."</p> <p>Cara: "So, it can be turned into <u>spee</u>ch and drama ...from a story, after the pupils know the story, especially Reader's Theatre."</p> <p>Cara: "So, in fact, [in] P3, P4, we've done that. We'll share with them the story. Before that, we do the predictions like the picture – "What do you think the story is about?" After that, we'll go through with them, make sure that they understand so that they can <u>express themselves better</u>. After that, they do the Reader's Theatre and then their group compositions."</p> <p>Elin: "Definitely. In terms of their <u>ora</u>l <u>exa</u>mination, they can just come up with ideas for, you know, the picture discussion. They are able to <u>come up with ideas, desc</u>riptive words and all that. And also, I told them that they need to give a conclusion. So, they are able to say "in conclusion, ..." what did they learn from the picture, the moral values that are highlighted in the picture."</p> <p>Faith: "After going through a series of lessons on storytelling, they are able to <u>do group presentation more effectively</u>... They <u>spea</u>k <u>more confidently</u>...it will be the oral presentation, the oral discussions. Like I said, in terms of the speaking skills, the vocabulary that they use."</p>
2f) "Listening to stories helps children become aware of the <u>rhy</u> thm, <u>int</u> onation and <u>pron</u> unciation of language." (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p. 2)	25 73.5%	<p>Faith: "They <u>spea</u>k <u>more confidently</u> like I said their structures...especially the use of connectors. When they relate a sequence of events, they have to use connectors accurately and also the variation of the sentence structures."</p> <p>Ivan: "If we retell stories, they will give <u>confi</u>dence to that part and also sharpen their <u>ora</u>l <u>ski</u>lls."</p> <p>Kim: "Firstly, I think it definitely grabs their attention. And I can see the pupils looking around and straightaway they focus. It teach[es] them how to focus. I mean, bring their attention. And then after that, it also instills their listening skills.. In terms of probably <u>int</u>onation, <u>pron</u>unciation. I tell stories with expression. So, it means...they can mimic certain expressions and ...model it."</p> <p>Lily: "Oh, yes. Teach them the <u>pitch and tone</u>."</p> <p>Maia: "I can see that they really <u>lis</u>tened. I can see from the look in their eyes that they really like stories. I think even adults love to be read stories."</p>

In terms of writing skills, the teacher interview responses were more detailed than the teacher questionnaire responses. In Table 45 below, Anne related how her students rewrote *The Three Little Pigs* from Singlish to standard English. She claimed that they honed their

writing skills in the process. Elin, referring to her department's language arts programme, observed that her students became aware of genres and writers' writing styles. Other teacher participants also detailed specific language skills that they focused on when they taught English language skills through storytelling. For instance, Cara used comic strips with a storyline. She scrambled the comic strips and got her students to put them in the right order, after which they would come up with their own stories in a very simple paragraph. That was her way of developing her students' writing skills. Elin was just as excited about improvements in her students' writing. She explained that her students were able to develop story plots and produce greater details of the characters in the stories. Lily asked her students to look at the introduction and the development of the events in the story and pay particular attention to the paragraphing of the story.

Table 45. Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses - Writing

Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills: Writing		
Teacher Questionnaire Responses		Teacher Interview Responses
	Agree	
2n) Storytelling "contributes to pupils' written English": pupils are required "to communicate meaning in narrative" and "sequence events, and recount them in appropriate detail", "to use a language and style appropriate to the reader and to develop ideas into structured written texts". (Gruegeon and Gardner, 2000, p. 6)	20 58.9%	<p>Anne: "I think I have this story of the Three Little Pigs, a fractured story and a Singlish version. In the beginning, we get the kids to talk about the story and even to retell the story into another version, and then translate that story into standard English version from the Singlish version. And that will be writing and oral skills at the same time....when they write it down, it is also <u>writing</u>."</p> <p>Betty: "Even the length of the sentences and it will help them in their <u>writing</u> skills."</p> <p>Elin: "Definitely....At least, now they are aware of things like <u>genres</u>, what kind of genres. They look into writers' <u>styles</u> because we look into styles of writing. Different writers have different styles. I let them do research on the writers because their lives have an impact on the books that they write, for example, Oscar Wilde. So, as they read, they will really think about these things, about the characters in the book, the issues that are highlighted in the book, and themes..."</p> <p>Betty: "I think dramatisation is always very, very useful when you come to picture <u>composition</u>, ... where you get the kids to work in groups. And they come up with different, different possible situations and what follows after the picture. That's very applicable for my upper primary boys where they have only one single picture for their <u>picture writing</u>. Some of them can't seem to get enough ideas. When they learn to dramatize it and add dialogues to the characters, they tend to have <u>better storylines</u>."</p> <p>Cara: "Actually, I used storytelling in the <u>pre-writing</u> activities, but sometimes we have pictures. I tried to relate my own experience and then I share with my pupils because I tell them that in <u>composition writing</u>, they need to be original so that they can do better because their stories, if it's their own personal stories, there may not be so many people with that kind of experience. And then when I mark their compositions, I find that there are certain parts that are quite similar to what I've mentioned."</p> <p>Cara: "Sometimes I actually use cartoons. And I cut it up and then I ask the pupils to [engage in activities] like scrambling. They put them in the right order and after that they can <u>come up with their stories - a very simple paragraph</u>...and their words."</p> <p>Elin: "It has definitely helped the girls, especially in their <u>composition writing</u>. They are able to <u>develop the plot of the story better</u>. ... they are able to develop their stories to <u>greater details</u>. And we also look at <u>description of characters</u>,....they are able to describe how the character looks like, physical appearance, inner qualities of the character, and how that character plays a role in the development of that story."</p> <p>Faith: "I learn that there are explicit skills that we can teach them [students] like we give them cards to <u>sequence the story</u>."</p> <p>Ivan: "We saw that they were able to recall and pick up the vocabulary as well as the use of past tense...Yeah, after which the children also able to use that in in their <u>writing</u>."</p> <p>Kim: "...after listening to the story, they <u>sequenced the story</u>... After sequencing, they would try to <u>change</u>, probably, <u>characterization</u>...It really <u>develops their creativity</u>."</p> <p>Lily: "I ask them to see the <u>introduction</u> and the <u>development</u> of the events, and also the paragraphing. My pupils tend to write in chunks of paragraphs. They write in long paragraphs. I teach them how to break up [the paragraphs]."</p>

In Table 46 below, the teacher participants highlighted specific benefits in terms of reading skills in their interviews. Dora, Faith and Ivan talked about using the cover of a storybook to promote predictive skills and motivate students to read. Elin foregrounded reading skills such as story plot, content, character analysis, themes, social issues and perspectives of the different characters. She elaborated that as her students read, they would think about the characters in the book, the issues that were highlighted in the book, and the themes of the story.

Table 46. Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses - Reading

Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills: Reading			
Teacher Questionnaire Responses			Teacher Interview Responses
		Agree	
2g	<p>“Storybooks develop children’s learning strategies such as <u>listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing.</u>” (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p. 2).</p> <p>“Exposure to stories, heard or viewed, enables children to extend their <u>knowledge of story schema</u>; that is to establish expectations as to what will occur in the story.” (Mallan, 1991, p.1 3)</p>	29 85.3%	<p>Cara: “I find that stories is [are] also very good to instil their <u>love for reading</u>. In the past, I was in charge of the library. So, I will show them a book and show them the cover. Sometimes I’ll just tell and then stop short, ask them to go and find out.”</p> <p>Dora: “I think you can use the cover of the story to promote <u>predictive skills</u> and to motivate them. I think that is easily manageable. Um...even asking about the title.”</p> <p>Elin: “...we use literature texts to teach English...We look into ...the story plot, content, <u>character analysis... themes and social issues... perspectives</u> of the different characters...”</p> <p>Elin: “Now they are aware of things like genres, what kind of genres. They look into writers’ styles...I let them do research on the writers because their lives have an impact on the books that they write, for example, Oscar Wilde. So, as they read, they will really <u>think about these things, about the characters</u> in the book, <u>the issues</u> that are highlighted in the book, and <u>themes</u>, and not read a book for the sake of enjoyment.”</p> <p>Faith: “... it also enhances their <u>reading comprehension</u> because they have to fully understand [before they can retell the story].”</p> <p>Faith: “Show them the cover to promote <u>predictive skills</u>”</p> <p>Ivan: “I’ve used “Teacher used the cover and get the pupils to <u>predict</u> what the book, what the content will be about, who are the characters in the story.”</p> <p>Ivan: “During activities. The children will <u>answer the questions</u> during the story from time to time and also to make <u>predictions</u>. And at the same time, check whether their earlier predictions were right.”</p> <p>Lily: [R: “Since storytelling is so powerful, do you think we should recommend it?”] “For the high-ability group, yes. For the low-ability group, I would recommend short stories. Short stories just to <u>cultivate their interest in reading</u>, the beginning of reading. If you introduce a thick book like <u>Harry Porter</u>, I don’t think they will continue reading it.”</p>
2l	<p>“The storytelling experience ... is a vehicle for enhancing <u>comprehension, both literal and inferential; motivating oral discussion ...</u>” (Nelson, 1989: 389)</p> <p>“When storytelling is combined with judicious questioning and retelling strategies, <u>comprehension skills at the literal, inferential and critical levels</u> can be developed.” (Mallan, 1991, p. 13)</p>	26 76.5%	
2j	<p>“...storytelling helps children to read and write because it <u>gives them frameworks or schema for understanding text.</u>” (Mallan, 1991, p. 15)</p>	19 55.9%	

Even in other areas, the teacher interview responses were richer and more detailed than the questionnaire responses. In Table 47 below, some of the teacher participants felt that stories had other benefits, for example as a pre-activity to arouse students’ interest or during a lesson to captivate students’ attention. Betty would get her students to examine the title of a storybook with the intent of arousing their curiosity and getting them to think about what kind of story the title suggested. Other teachers (Jim, Kim and Maia) used stories as a pre-activity – a trigger, a tuning-in activity. For Cara, Dora, Greg, Han and Ivan, stories could be an effective means of engaging students, getting them to be more attentive in class.

Table 47. Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses – Socio-emotional Habits

Promotes Positive Socio-Emotional Habits		
Teacher Questionnaire Responses		Teacher Interview Responses
		Agree
1a	Stories are able to <u>captivate children's interest</u> because they love to listen to stories.	33 97.1%
1d	It is easier and less time consuming to <u>arouse pupils' interest</u> in a lesson with storytelling than playing games.	13 38.2%
1e	It <u>helps in classroom management</u> – students become more attentive, and are less distracted.	18 52.9%

In Table 48 below, the teacher participants elaborated on other benefits such as using stories to develop students' love for reading, build character and stimulate thinking. Cara showed students the covers of books to arouse students' interest in the books so that they would want to read the books on their own. Lily modelled the good habit of reading by telling her students that she had read certain books and found them exciting. Her intention was to motivate her students to read those books, too. Maia also talked about using stories to generate students' interest in reading. Amazingly, Cara also used stories to inculcate moral values in her students. In their interviews, some teacher participants also alluded to the idea that stories or activities related to storytelling could enhance students' cognitive development. Kim, for instance, observed that getting students to modify characterisation developed their creativity. Faith also commented that it was interesting to see how her students interpret stories based on their own experiences. Believing in independent learning, Elin explicitly got her students to consider conducting research on the writers of the books they used for their English language lessons. Her prime objective in getting her students to conduct independent research was to encourage them to consider, in their research, genres, writers' styles, characterization, themes and issues in the books.

Table 48. Comparing Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Responses – Develops a Love for Reading, Develops Moral Values, and Stimulates Thinking

Teacher Questionnaire Responses			Teacher Interview Responses	
Develops a Love for Reading			Develops a Love for Reading	
		Agree	<p>Cara: "I find that stories is [are] also very good to ...instil their love for reading. In the past, I was in charge of the library. So, I will show them a book and show them the cover..."</p> <p>Lily: "Yes, especially if I introduce a storybook, for instance, the story, "Nip" about a mouse. It's a series. I think there are four books on it. So, I told them that I've read the story and it's very interesting. After that, a few students go to the library to search for the book."</p> <p>Maia: "I don't use storytelling to teach things like vocab or grammar. I use storytelling more to generate interest of the students, just to get them to love reading."</p>	
1i	Through storytelling, teachers can instil in pupils a love for reading.	30 88.2%		
1f	Listening to stories instils the love of language in students and motivates them to read.	30 88.2%		
2a	"Hearing stories instills love of language in children and motivates them to read." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 4)	28 82.4%		
Develops Moral Values (Builds Character)				
1j	Through storytelling, teachers can <u>inculcate values for character development.</u>	27 79.4%	<p>Cara: "...because I'm in charge of NE, National Education, so usually I do tell my department people... stories.. you can use to teach values."</p>	
1b	It is a tool to help teachers <u>convey abstract concepts such as filial piety and honesty.</u>	30 88.2%		
2c	"Indeed, an important aim of nurturing children as storytellers is to help them <u>develop confidence in themselves as communicators</u> , and a sense of self-worth in their ability to share stories with their peers." (Mallan, 1991, p. 15)	18 52.9%		
2i	"In the classroom, stories help to uncover the lenses through which individual students <u>interpret experience.</u> " (Lowe, 2002, p. 4) Storytelling helps to develop children's <u>understanding of self and others.</u> (Mallan, 1991, p. 12)	18 52.9%		
Stimulates Thinking				
1g	Storytelling encourages children to <u>see that there is a logical sequence in stories</u> , and it is hoped that they may apply this knowledge to their own storytelling.	25 73.5%	<p>Elin: "Now they are aware of things like genres, what kind of genres. They look into writers' styles...I let them do research on the writers because their lives have an impact on the books that they write, for example, Oscar Wilde. So, as they read, they will really think about these things, about the characters in the book, the issues that are highlighted in the book, and themes, and not read a book for the sake of enjoyment."</p> <p>Faith: "And it is interesting how they interpret the stories based on their own experience because we allow them the scope to look at the stories..."</p> <p>Kim: "...after listening to the story, they sequenced the story... After sequencing, they would try to change, probably, characterization...It really develops their creativity."</p>	
1h	Storytelling <u>promotes critical and higher order thinking such as analysis and evaluation.</u>	23 67.6%		
2b	"Hearing stories <u>stimulates the imagination.</u> " (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 3)	25 73.5%		

4.5 Structure of the Student Interview Responses

Taking into consideration the age of the children, the interviews were deliberately kept short.

Four main questions guided the interviews:

- Do you enjoy listening to stories? (followed by questions to probe for details, illustrations or reasons) How has it helped you, in terms of language skills?
- Do you enjoy reading stories/storybooks (followed by questions to probe for details, illustrations or reasons) How has it helped you, in terms of language skills?
- Do you enjoy acting out stories (followed by questions to probe for details, illustrations or reasons) How has it helped you, in terms of language skills?
- Would you like your teacher to introduce, or continue with, storytelling in your English language lessons? Why? Why not?

4.6 Rationale for the Order of the Analysis of the Student Interview Responses

In the student questionnaire, questions (1) and (2) are meant to elicit background information and the data collected were very comprehensive. Hence, the student interviews consciously avoided a repeat of questions (1) and (2) about the students' background information.

In the student questionnaire, questions (3) to (5) are “Do you enjoy listening to stories in English during English language lessons?”, “Do you enjoy reading stories during English language lessons?” and “Do you enjoy acting out parts of the stories read by you, your classmates, or your teacher during English language lessons?” respectively. For each of the three questions, the students were required to select one of the three options: “all the time”, “sometimes” and “not at all”. There was no provision for the student participants to elaborate on their responses. Hence, the interviews offered an opportunity for the student participants to elaborate on their reasons for their questionnaire responses.

At the interviews, the students were invited to elaborate on their questionnaire responses. Much greater emphasis was placed on their reasons and the possible language as well as other benefits the students might have garnered from listening to, reading, or acting out, stories. Sections 4.7.1 to 4.7.6 below discuss the students' interview responses in relation to their questionnaire responses for Student Questionnaire questions 3 to 8.

4.7 Analysing the Student Interview Responses in Relation to the Student Questionnaire Responses

4.7.1 Student Interview Responses: Listening to Stories

The student participants' responses to question 3 of the student questionnaire are as follows:

	<u>all the time</u>	<u>sometimes</u>	<u>not at all</u>
(3) Do you enjoy listening to stories in English during English language lessons?	72 62.1%	42 36.2%	2 1.7%

The responses were only in quantitative form. However, at the interviews, the students had the opportunity to elaborate. Their responses were analysed and categorised as language benefits (vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing and oral), and socio-emotional-moral values (See Table 49 below).

Table 49. Language Benefits from Listening to Stories

Language Area	Students' Responses
Vocabulary	<p>Cavin: "But it did help me with my vocabulary."</p> <p>Mel: "Yes, I think it helped me with my vocabulary also because sometimes she introduces new words for us. Of course, we will ask, "What does it mean?" and she will tell us and we will write it in our vocabulary book. Sometimes, in our textbook also. She will ask us to stand up and read. So, we can read loudly and also ...yeah."</p> <p>Pam: "<i>The Singing Donkey, The Tiger and the Bad Man</i>. It helped me because I can learn more hard words and I can learn more vocabulary from my teacher."</p> <p>Rosa: "...the words may help me build my vocabulary"</p> <p>Ximin: "There are glossaries behind the story(<i>Goldilocks and the Three Bears</i>) that explain the meanings about the difficult words."</p>
Grammar	Amos: " <i>Storm Breaker</i> because it is very exciting and has good grammar."
Reading	Gavin: "Wizard of Oz. When we are doing our work, the teacher will, like, make up a story and teach us how to answer more correctly and answer in a proper way like that."
Vocabulary and Writing	Tina: "It has helped me with my compo and vocabularies"
Grammar, spelling vocabulary and writing	John: "The grammar, the spelling and some of the words in my compositions..."
Vocabulary and Oral	<p>Kara: "...sometimes oral, we can use all the words."</p> <p>Olivia: "<i>The Singing Donkey</i>. To learn more <u>words</u> and you can read the book better. So you can <u>pronounce</u> the words properly."</p> <p>Qilin: "because sometimes the teacher allows us to read and let us volunteer to read. So, I do volunteer sometimes. So, it can allow me to read fluently and maybe know some new words."</p>
Vocabulary, Grammar and Writing	Kara: "Compo, we can also use some of the vocabulary and grammar"
Socio-emotional	<p>Amos: "very exciting"</p> <p>Dan: "Because a lot of the stories my teacher told us are very interesting..."</p> <p>Farid: "I enjoyed the story because it is kind of interesting."</p> <p>Ivy: "because there are many memories in the <i>Kampong Days</i> for my parents and all"</p> <p>Lucy: "because it is very interesting."</p> <p>Olivia: "very funny and it is nice..."</p> <p>Qilin: (learn) "When you work together, you will be stronger in terms like when you work together, then you'll help each other."</p> <p>Rosa: "It will help me build my confidence..."</p> <p>Val: "Interesting"</p>

4.7.2 Student Interview Responses: Reading Stories

As a recapitulation, the student participants' questionnaire responses are as follows:

	<u>all the time</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>not at all</u>
(4) Do you enjoy reading stories during English language lessons?	74 63.8%	40 34.5%	2 1.7%

The student participants' interview responses expanded on the above set of statistical data. The student participants talked about how they benefited from reading stories. The benefits highlighted in Table 50 below cover the same broad categories as those listed in section 4.7.1: language (vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, oral), and socio-emotional-moral value.

Table 50. Language Benefits from Reading Stories

Language Area	Students' Responses
Vocabulary	Ivy: "...inside the script, there are some words that we don't understand. When we ask the teacher, we can learn more words..." Pam: "Some of the stories are ... have hard <u>words</u> . If I don't understand, I ask my parents. They will tell me what's the meaning." Qilin: " <i>Diary of a Wimpy Kid</i> . Like I said, I learnt new <u>words</u> . So, when I learn new words, I may go check the dictionary or ask my parents." Val: "Yes, because some of the books, they have some words we have never learnt before" Wendy: "Improving my words and <u>vocabulary</u> . Improve my knowledge." Yara: "It helps me learn a lot more <u>words</u> that I have never know about."
Writing	Ximin: "It gives me more ideas in writing compositions."
Vocabulary and Oral	Lucy: " <u>Vocabulary</u> , <u>oral</u> reading and how to pronounce the words." Evan: Yes. My <u>fluent</u> reading. Fluency. It helps me to write better. <u>Vocabulary</u> ."
Vocabulary and Writing	Farid: " <i>Diary of a Wilful Kid</i> . It helped me by ... I tried to memorise some of the difficult words. <u>Vocabulary</u> . In <u>composition</u> , I try to use those new words." Dan: "They help me in my English language, in my spelling,... <u>vocabulary</u> . Helps with my <u>composition</u> writing - the storyline... I remember once I read a story and the next day, our teacher asked us to write a composition. I just followed the storyline in the book and my teacher said it was very good."
Vocabulary and Grammar	Umar: " <i>Romance of the Three Kingdoms</i>. ...It has helped me learn more <u>vocab</u> words and better English. I use <u>correct sentences</u> ."
Oral and Writing	Sara: "...my English speaking is much better than before...pronunciation of words...I used them (new words) a lot, sometimes in my compositions. When I do that, my composition increased from 20 to 22 to.."
Vocabulary, Oral and Writing	Olivia: "Sometimes when you don't know some words, you can check your dictionary. So, you'll know more words...maybe you can learn to write new words and you can speak fluently when you say your oral to the teacher...It's like some of the ideas, we can take it from the story and use it in our compositions."
Vocabulary, Spelling and Reading	Cavin: "I used to read books about mysteries. It helps me in my <u>vocabulary</u> , my <u>spelling</u> and <u>reading</u> skills."
Vocabulary, Writing and Grammar	Nat: "Yes, it has helped in the <u>grammar</u> , <u>vocab</u> and it even helped my <u>compo</u> to extend the story and make my story even more interesting." Zoe: "They let us learn more new <u>words</u> and I can use it in my <u>composition</u> . The <u>structure of the sentence</u> ."
Vocabulary, Oral and Grammar	Amos: "It helped me with grammar and talking and ...vocabulary" Gavin: "Adventure storybooks. <i>Bees' Quest</i>. ...To learn more words, <u>grammar</u> and <u>vocabulary</u> ...Like when you are saying your sentences, then use the right grammar...like using 'is', 'are', 'was', 'were'...)" Tina: " <u>Oral</u> , <u>vocabulary</u> and <u>grammar</u> "
Socio-Emotional	Mel: "It has helped me because sometimes it is more interesting, I learned more about the story...." Olivia: "Yeah, very nice to read...it's like sometimes when you are bored, you can read it..." Rosa: "Because they are funnier and interesting." Val: "...when I was in the upper primary, I started to read. I found it enjoyable..."

4.7.3 Student Interview Responses: Acting Out Stories

The student participants' responses to question 5 of the student questionnaire are as follows:

	all the time	Sometimes	not at all
(5) Do you enjoy acting out parts of the stories read by you, your classmates, or your teacher during English language lessons?	46 39.7%	48 41.4%	22 19.0%

At the interviews, the student participants talked about how they benefited or did not benefit from this activity and why. Their responses were analysed and categorised as language benefits (oral, grammar, vocabulary, reading), imagination, and socio-emotional-moral values or concerns.

Table 51. Language Benefits from Acting out Stories

Language Area	Students' Responses
Oral	Dan: "...and I can talk better." Farid: "It helped me by pronouncing the words correctly ..." Ivy: "Yes, it has helped me <u>speak</u> my English better." Pam: "It teach me to speak loudly..." Wendy: "Going by talking a lot, giving more ideas." Ximin: "Pronunciation" Wendy: "Going by talking a lot, giving more ideas"
Grammar	Ivy: "...I can read the words more better as my <u>grammar improved</u> ." John: "Grammar... Yes, it teach me more words and details." Olivia: "And you must know all the sentence, so you can really act out the whole scene"
Vocabulary	Ivy: "We have learned new things. And inside the script, there are some words that we don't understand. When we ask the teacher, we can <u>learn more words</u> "
Reading	Rosa: "It also helps us to understand more of the story by action"
Imagination	Qilin: "For your creativity" Mel: "more with my <u>creativity</u> ...Like sometimes she gets us to act out. Then we get to do our own actions. Like from our Social Studies book sometimes... We can pull up our collars when we are acting as a guy."
Socio-emotional-moral value	Farid: "yes (I <u>enjoy</u> acting)" Gavin: "yeah (<u>enjoy</u> that acting experience)" Olivia: "Yeah, because it's fun" John: " <u>happy</u> " Rosa: "Yes, I <u>love</u> to act them out ... " Mel: "Yes, sometimes she (teacher) does let us act out to make it more <u>fun</u> ..." Ximin: "It gives me more <u>self-confidence</u> ." Val: "It gave me more <u>confidence</u> ... I have more confidence in expressing myself and do bigger actions." Olivia: "We are supposed to be <u>confident</u> when we go on stage to act." Cavin: "I enjoyed it a lot <u>courage</u> and <u>confidence</u> " Dan: "it helped in my <u>discipline</u> ...I feel <u>confident</u> " Pam: "(It teaches me) ...to be <u>brave</u> ." Rosa: "Acting out the parts of the story helps us to develop <u>better friendship</u> with our friends. Only if I'm acting with my friends. It also helps us to <u>understand more of the story by action</u> ..."

A few student participants (Ben, Sara, Yara and Zoe) actually reported that they did not like the idea of acting out stories. Ben had participated in his class dramatisation activities but found the experience daunting. Sara, Yara and Zoe confessed they did not participate in any dramatisation activity at all.

Ben: "I get stage fright...I never overcome that. My legs feel like jelly"

Sara: "No, I didn't have the opportunity. I'm quite shy."

Yara: "Mm ... I feel very shy."

Zoe: "No."

4.7.4 Student Interview Responses: Continued Use of Storytelling in English Classes

In the student questionnaire, provision was made for students to elaborate on their perceptions, for example open-ended questions were included in questions 6 to 8:

- (6) Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language skills?
Why / Why not? _____
- (7) Has storytelling helped you in your learning of English language skills?
How has it helped you? _____
- (8) If storytelling has never been included in your English language lessons in primary one, two or three, would you like it to be included in your primary four English language lessons?
My reasons are: _____

The student participants responded with many comments for the open-ended sections of the Student Questionnaire questions (6) to (8); the full list of their comments is at Appendix J. Hence, at the student interviews, instead of revisiting questions (6) to (8), the student participants were asked if they would like their teachers to continue with storytelling in their English lessons, and why. The rationale is to offer student participants another opportunity to offer reasons for storytelling and how they had or would have benefited from storytelling.

The students' interview responses supported their questionnaire responses. They seemed to recognise the value of storytelling and were able to articulate specific areas of benefits. They offered fairly detailed comments which are captured in Table 52 below. In alignment with the earlier sections, (Listening to Stories and Benefits, Reading Stories and Benefits, Acting out Stories and Benefits), the benefits the students highlighted in this section were also categorised as language (vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, oral), and socio-emotional-moral benefits or concerns.

As in the earlier sections, most students highlighted the socio-emotional value of storytelling. Common descriptions the students used were "interesting" and "fun". Students Cavin, Hasek and Qilin were more specific, explaining that acting out the stories provided much fun for them. A couple of students alluded to other socio-emotional benefits. For instance, Sara commented that stories had a mitigating effect on a rowdy and noisy class – calming the students. The outcome Sara was envisaging could possibly be a less noisy class.

Although many of the student participants cited socio-emotional benefits, they also referred to language benefits, just as they did in their questionnaire responses. The language benefits they mentioned at their interviews covered the same domains as those quoted in the open-ended section of the student questionnaire – vocabulary, grammar, writing, reading and oral skills. Of the different language skill domains, vocabulary was most commonly and

extensively mentioned by the students – either just vocabulary alone, or vocabulary with one or even two of the other language domains (grammar, writing, reading, or oral). The constant reference to vocabulary by the students is understandable, as stories, “which rely so much on words” (Wright, 1995, p. 6) improve children’s vocabulary (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990). Indeed, stories offer young learners a lot of vocabulary and grammar experience as they are “rich in vocabulary and grammatical complexity” (McQuillan and Tse, 1998, p. 21). Some of the students were able to articulate the link between vocabulary development and improvement in writing, grammar and oral skills. For instance, Nat explained that stories “help in some of the good phrases ...making my composition have more good phrases, make my compo have good sentences...” Another student, Farid, seemed to share Nat’s sentiments. Farid commented that “Sometimes she (the teacher) will give us some words to memorise from the book (storybook)... And then you apply those words in your writing, in your speaking...” These language benefits affirm some of the linguistic advantages mentioned by Hamilton and Weiss (1990) who maintain that hearing stories “improves many language skills, such as vocabulary, comprehension, sequencing and story recall” (p. 8).

Table 52. Benefits from Continued Use of Storytelling in English Classes

Domains	Students' responses
Socio-emotional	Ben: "The stories are <u>interesting</u> ." Cavin: "I find it <u>very interesting</u> ... It is also <u>quite fun</u> when you get to act out the story." Hasek: "And you also get to have the <u>fun</u> part of the story such as acting in the story, and like doing some group work of attentiveness..." Lucy: "Because by teaching from the textbook is a little bit boring. But if you add some stories, it's like it can be <u>more interesting and entertaining</u> ." Olivia: "Because it is <u>very interesting</u> and we will know more stories." Ximin: "Because the stories are <u>very interesting</u> . And I love to listen to stories." Mel: "...It's <u>more interesting</u> ..." Nat: "Because the stories makes the class <u>more interesting</u> ..." Pam: "Because it is <u>very interesting</u> and we will know more stories." Val: "Because it is <u>fun</u> and ... <u>enjoy</u> the lessons." Qilin: "Because it is <u>interesting</u> , it's <u>very fun</u> ..." Ximin: "Because the stories are <u>very interesting</u> . And I love to listen to stories." Zoe: "Because it makes the class <u>more interesting</u> ..." Amos: "I might feel bored (if the teacher stops using the stories)." Evan: "I would feel ... a bit sad, ... a bit ... bored (if the teacher were to stop using stories)" Ivy: "Because it has interesting characters and we can <u>act out</u> in a play. Yes, because we can see the real life act, rather than inside the story." Sara: "Because sometimes if the class is all...mm...rowdy and noisy, the stories will help us <u>calm ourselves down</u> and maybe <u>relax a little</u> ." Dan: "Stories can <u>catch people's attention</u> . Better than just teaching."
Moral	Qilin: "You can learn a lot of things and <u>morals</u> "
Vocabulary	Dan: "It will help me to learn new <u>words</u> . The teacher will also explain the meaning." Farid: "Sometimes she will give us some <u>words</u> to memorise from the book." Tina: "So that it can give us more <u>vocabularies</u> and help us to learn more words ..." Olivia: "Yes, because we get to learn more <u>words</u> . Sometimes if the people don't know some words, you can ask the teacher. And the teacher can explain to you." Val: "...and we can learn more <u>new words</u> " Yara: "Yes. If they don't know the <u>word</u> , they can ask the teacher." Zoe: "...and we learn <u>new words</u> from another aspect."
Oral	Umar: "They will use the bad English by not <u>saying</u> the sentences correctly." Zoe: "How teacher <u>project his voice, talk loudly</u> , and where he <u>pause</u> ..."
Reading	Gavin: "...know how to read stories so that we can <u>understand</u> the...story better."
Writing	Lucy: "In the story, there is the <u>starting</u> and the <u>ending</u> , so can use in the <u>composition</u> ." Mel: "...like <u>compo</u> also. She (teacher) will see the pictures, and out of the four, she will tell us a bit about them. Sometimes she will tell us stories about her friends, or kidnappers – real kidnappers. So we can learn from that also ... sometimes our composition ...We like don't really get to understand the pictures... They know the picture. So we will ask them, "What is this? What is this?" So, they will help us understand what is the picture about, what's the story, what's happening."
Vocabulary and Writing	Cavin: "...it helps us a lot and our <u>vocabulary</u> and <u>writing</u> skill." Hasek: "In a way like <u>writing</u> composition. If we don't know, we can ask the teacher how to <u>spell</u> . And we will remember the <u>word</u> . So, next time when we have spelling of that word, we won't have trouble trying to remember it and how to spell it." Kara: "It will help us in our <u>vocabulary</u> and it will help us in our <u>compo</u> ." Nat: "Help in some of the good <u>phrases</u>. ...The <u>vocabulary</u> ...Yeah. She (teacher) will ask us to write inside our vocab book. And every time you go home you must learn the meaning ... Making my <u>composition</u> have more good phrases, make my compo have good sentences."
Vocabulary and Grammar	John: "Because I can learn words, <u>new words, idioms</u> and <u>grammar</u> ." Sara: "Yes. Good storybooks can teach language skills ... Like <u>grammar</u> and <u>vocabulary</u> . Can you learn these aspects of the English language through stories? Yes."
Vocabulary, Writing and Reading	Gavin: "Yes. I know it's creative... know how to <u>read</u> stories so that we can ...understand the story better. To speak better English and answer better in your work. <u>Composition</u> writing. More to write those <u>phrases</u> . Write longer compositions and get more ideas. And know how to spell the words."
Vocabulary, Oral and Writing;	Farid: "...Sometimes she will give us some <u>words</u> to memorise from the book...And then you apply those words in your <u>writing</u> , in your <u>speaking</u> ? Yes, primarily stories help you with your <u>vocabulary</u> and your <u>fluency</u> ." Kara: "It will help us in our <u>pronunciation, vocabulary</u> and <u>composition</u> ."
Vocabulary, Oral and Grammar	Hasek: "Because when she (the teacher) reads the stories, we get to learn more ... better <u>grammar</u> , better <u>oral</u> skills oral – <u>pronunciation</u> ...Yes. Because after a while, I realised that my oral skills improve a lot..."
Vocabulary, Grammar and Writing	Rosa: "...some stories helped me to develop better ideas in my <u>compo-writing</u> ... Because it will help me build up my <u>vocabulary</u> and <u>grammar</u> skills and my <u>compo-writing</u> ."

4.8 Comparison of Teachers' and Students' Interview Responses

Table 53 below compares the perceptions of the teachers and students in this research study. In general, there seemed to be parallels between the two sets of perceptions. With reference to research question 1 (“What are teachers’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”) and research question 2 (“What are students’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”), both groups were positive in their perceptions. Regarding my research question 3 (“Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”), there was hardly any difference. Both groups were positive in their perceptions and highlighted similar benefits from storytelling.

Table 53. Reasons for Arguing for Storytelling for Teaching and Learning English Language Skills

Argument for storytelling	Teachers	Students
Enjoyment/interest value	✓	✓
Moral/Social and Emotional (confidence) benefits	✓	✓
Language benefits from one or more of the following language areas:		
• Vocabulary	✓	✓
• Grammar	✓	✓
• Listening	✓	✓
• Speaking	✓	✓
• Reading	✓	✓
• Writing	✓	✓

4.9 Summing Up

Analysis of the teacher and student questionnaire and interview data showed that the interview responses complemented and expanded the questionnaire responses. As for my research questions, not all my five research questions were sufficiently addressed. The teacher participants were positive in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource. Like the teacher participants, the student participants were positive in their perceptions, thus affirming my research questions 1 and 2. This congruence in the teacher and student participants’ perceptions renders my research question 3 redundant.

As for my research question 4, there were mixed findings. Although all the 34 teachers acknowledged the merits of using storytelling as a pedagogical tool, there were some teachers who were hesitant to use it in their English language teaching. In fact, in their questionnaire and interview responses, all the teachers articulated the need for some kind of support (professional, financial, administrative) from their school management or the Singapore Ministry of Education. Thus, the response to my research question 5 is positive.

Table 54. How my Research Questions were Addressed

Research Questions (RQ)		Positive	Negative	Inconclusive
RQ1:	What are teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?	✓		
RQ2:	What are students' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?	✓		
RQ3:	Do teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?		✓	
RQ4:	Do teachers' reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?			✓
RQ5:	If storytelling were to be recommended as a strategy for teaching English language skills, what kind of implementation support would English language teachers like their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education to provide for them, and why?	✓		

The key findings of this research study will be discussed in greater depth in chapter five, Discussion and Conclusion.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Key Findings and Discussion of Findings

The teacher and student questionnaire and interview responses were analysed in relation to my research questions (RQ1 to RQ5). The teachers' questionnaire responses were compared with their interview responses. The aim of doing this was two-fold: (a) to ascertain if the two sets of responses supported each other, (b) to enable me to gather, through the one-on-one interviews, more detailed information which the questionnaire responses might not provide. The same aim and process applied to the students' questionnaire and interview responses.

The analyses of the teacher and student questionnaire and interview responses yielded useful key findings which are explicated in the ensuing sections, 5.2 to 5.6.

5.2 Key Finding 1 and Implications

Key finding 1 is based on my research question 1, "What are teachers' perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?"

5.2.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Storytelling

(a) Teacher Questionnaire Findings about Teachers' Perceptions of Storytelling

All the teacher participants in this study had a positive perception of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource: 29.4% strongly agreed and 70.6% agreed that storytelling is a useful tool for teaching English language skills. Again, all the teachers in this study concurred with literature or research on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills: 20.6% strongly agreed and 79.4% agreed.

(b) Teacher Interview Findings about Teachers' Perceptions of Storytelling

All thirteen teacher participants interviewed had a positive perception of storytelling, even though only eight of them used storytelling in their English classes. Of the remaining five, three (Dora, Greg and Han) did not conduct lessons using storytelling, and two (Jim and Maia) used storytelling for evoking students' interest or as a tuning in activity, but not to teach English language skills. Yet, these five teacher participants were positive about the application of storytelling in the English language classroom. When Dora was asked if storytelling could be used to teach English language skills, she responded with "I feel it is possible to frame an entire lesson around a story also. It is possible." Like her, Greg was just as positive about storytelling; he affirmed, "I do think that storytelling will be a useful tool in the classroom." Han also alleged that he personally felt that storytelling "can be a useful tool

for teaching certain part(s) of the language learning skills". Even though Maia used stories just to generate interest in reading in her students, she acknowledged that "if you use storytelling to teach vocab, it will be a lot easier because of the contextual cues". In a similar vein, Jim also asserted that "To be able to tell stories and engage your students, I think it is a skill, a gift. I would like to harness that gift if I have the chance."

The five teachers, who did not use storytelling to teach English language skills, cited reasons such as time constraints, diffidence, or inadequate skills to cope with this unconventional pedagogical approach (as Jim succinctly explained, "I suppose there is a lack of structure and maybe also a lack of confidence..."). These five teacher participants' lack of confidence in infusing storytelling into their English language lessons seems to resonate with Bruns and Mogharreban's (2007) research findings about the disparity between the Head Start teachers and pre-kindergarten teachers' perceptions of teachers' abilities to support children's needs and their own lack of the necessary behavioural support and implementation skills.

Eight teacher participants incorporated storytelling into their English language lessons, some more frequently and some less so. The benefits of storytelling that these teachers highlighted in their questionnaire responses were also apparent in their interview responses. Thus, the questionnaire data were strengthened by the interview data.

At their interviews, the teacher participants cited benefits similar to those indicated in their questionnaire responses (See Tables 42 to 48 in chapter four, Research Findings): (i) facilitates improvement in language skills, (ii) encourages positive socio-emotional habits, (iii) develops a love for reading, develops moral values, and stimulates thinking.

Tables 42-46:	(i) facilitates improvement in language skills (vocabulary, grammar, oral/listening, writing, reading)
Table 47:	(ii) encourages positive socio-emotional habits
Table 48:	(iii) develops a love for reading, develops moral values (builds character), and stimulates thinking

5.2.2 Implications

(a) Develops a Love for Reading

The teacher questionnaire findings indicated that most of the teacher participants felt that storytelling could help students to develop a love for reading: 88.2% felt that through storytelling, teachers could instil in pupils a love for reading; and at least 82.4% agreed with

Hamilton and Weiss (1990) that listening to stories could instil in pupils a love for the language and motivate them to read.

This finding should be an encouragement to educators in Singapore and elsewhere in the world. The Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD) of the Singapore Ministry of Education designs the English Language curriculum for lower primary levels based on the principle that a love for reading is instrumental in helping pupils develop a strong foundation in the English language. The teacher participants' responses seem to support CPDD's belief in inculcating in young children a good reading habit.

(b) Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills

At the interviews, the teachers elaborated on specific language skills that they felt would benefit students, for example, possible improvement in vocabulary, grammar, oral and listening skills, writing and reading (Examples of these language skills are recorded in chapter four, Research Findings, section 4.3.4). This finding should be of interest to educational personnel who guide teachers in schools in improving their craft. Hopefully, the findings on language benefits could cause a mindset change in teachers about storytelling so that they would be motivated to include storytelling in their instructional practice. Teachers' perceptions and beliefs can have a tremendous influence on the pedagogical strategies that they adopt (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007).

In general, most of the teachers agreed with Ellis and Brewster (2002), Mallan (1991), Hamilton and Weiss (1990), Nelson (1989), McQuillan and Tse (1998), Wright (2002), and Grugeon and Gardner (2000) that storytelling could facilitate improvement in language skills. Responses to the varied language skills by the aforementioned storytelling advocates ranged from 50% to 85.3% as indicated in Table 14, Facilitates Improvement in Language Skills, in section 4.2.1 in chapter 4, Research Findings. The language improvement possibilities endorsed by the teacher participants included improvement in comprehension skills (Nelson, 1989; Mallan, 1991); listening and oral skills (Ellis and Brewster, 2002; Grugeon and Gardner, 2000); development in vocabulary and grammar complexity (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990; McQuillan and Tse, 1998; Ellis and Brewster, 2002); heightened knowledge of story schema, plot and sequence (Mallan, 1991; Nelson, 1989; Wright, 2002; Hamilton and Weiss, 1990); and development of expressive language skills (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990).

From the aforementioned findings, it was evident that the teacher participants had faith in the language values that could be garnered from storytelling activities. These findings should

encourage teachers to adopt less conventional pedagogical approaches such as using storytelling activities to teach or strengthen students' English language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing).

In the lower primary classes in Singapore, students were exposed to some 29 fictional stories through the Shared Book Approach (SBA) programme. The fact that the teacher participants were positive about the value of storytelling as a pedagogical tool would suggest that they were willing to embrace the SBA programme.

(c) Stimulates Thinking

More than 60% of the teacher participants were of the view that storytelling or stories could stimulate students' thinking, "discern a logical flow of ideas in a narrative, think critically, or provoke imaginative thinking" (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 3). This finding should be able to reinforce the objectives of the SBA (Shared-Book Approach) programme for the lower primary classes in Singapore.

(d) Encourages Positive Socio-emotional Habits

The teacher participants in my study also acknowledged the socio-emotional value of storytelling. Almost all the teachers (97.1%) were of the view that storytelling had the ability to captivate students' interest. A good number of them also believed storytelling could develop children's confidence and character, with positive responses ranging from 52.9% to 88.2%.

These findings were supported by the teacher interview findings. For instance, teacher Anne claimed that "The children love it (storytelling)"; Cara commented that "When I tell stories, I can see that my pupils are more attentive."; and Ivan affirmed, "They (students) were very enthused by it (storytelling activity), very interested. Very seldom do you see them so focused in the lesson."

Motivating students in their learning is always a concern. If storytelling can be a powerful resource in this respect, then the findings should be of interest to teachers in the school as well as professional personnel involved in guiding teachers in the schools. These findings could also be of much relevance to professional development institutions which train pre-service teachers.

(e) Develops Moral Values

In the teacher questionnaire responses, about 79.4% of the teacher participants agreed that through storytelling, teachers could inculcate values for character development in students. At the interviews, a teacher participant, Cara, commented that “....because I’m in charge of NE, National Education,⁸ so usually I do tell my department people ... stories... you can use to teach values.” In the context of national education, the moral values that Cara was referring to were most probably those that contained some nationalistic significance. Cara used her school’s contact time (staff meetings) to share such short stories with her colleagues. But actually, students in Singapore attend compulsory weekly Civics and Moral Education (CME) lessons⁹ and when the student participants mentioned moral values, they were likely to be referring to those they had learnt in their Civics and Moral Education lessons.

Curriculum specialists in charge of developing social studies and national education syllabuses and programmes for schools might find these findings useful. Moral, or nationalistic, values are best illustrated through stories; in the classroom, “stories help to uncover the lenses through which individual students interpret experience” (Lowe, 2002, p. 4). The moral and social development benefits are not to be ignored, for storytelling helps to “develop children’s understanding of self and others” (Mallan, 1991, p. 12). Furthermore, stories are a genre with which children are very familiar.

5.3 Key Finding 2 and Implications

Key finding 2 is based on my research question 2, “What are students’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”

⁸ National Education was initiated in 1996 by the Singapore Ministry of Education to foster national cohesion and instil a sense of identity among students and younger Singaporeans. It is infused into the primary school curriculum. Examples of NE include the daily flag-raising ceremony (the Singaporean flag is raised at the school’s morning assembly) and oath of allegiance (students say the national pledge after the flag is raised), and visits to key state institutions. Core annual NE events include Total Defence Day, International Friendship Day, Racial Harmony Day and National Day.

⁹ The Civics and Moral Education was introduced in 1991 by the Singapore Ministry of Education. Its syllabus has been designed to strengthen inter-ethnic and inter-religious tolerance, instil a deeper sense of civic and social responsibility, and foster stronger commitment and loyalty to the nation. A core area that the syllabus covers is the five principles of Singapore’s national ideology, known as Shared Values: placing society before self; upholding the family as the basic building block of society; respecting the rights of individual and offering community support; resolving issues through consensus, not conflict; and racial and religious harmony.

5.3.1 Student Participants' Perceptions of Storytelling

(a) Student Questionnaire Findings about Students' Perceptions of Storytelling

Like the teacher participants, almost all the student participants in this study had a positive perception of storytelling as a language learning resource. 98.3% of these students claimed that they enjoyed listening to stories during English language lessons either all the time (62.1%) or sometimes (36.2%). The same percentage (98.3%) of the students enjoyed reading stories during English language lessons either all the time (63.8%) or sometimes (34.5%). The findings indicated that there was a clear link between affect and storytelling. This finding is quite akin to the close relationship between affect and reading that Gee (1999) subscribed to when he offered suggestions to elementary and middle school teachers to help their ESL students develop a positive attitude towards reading. Hence, it is not surprising that 96.6% of the student participants would like their teachers to use stories to teach English language skills (66.4% all the time; and 30.2% sometimes). Indeed, affect can be a strong motivation to encourage children to learn.

(b) Student Interview Findings about Students' Perceptions of Storytelling

This positive perception of storytelling as a language teaching resource was supported by the students' interview responses. In their interviews, almost all students interviewed commented that they enjoyed listening to or reading stories. Besides enjoyment, a good number of the student participants made reference to other socio-emotional benefits such as interest value, moral values, and confidence. Quite a number of the student participants also highlighted language benefits (vocabulary, grammar, oral, writing and reading) derived from listening to or reading stories. This finding affirms the views of Hamilton and Weiss (1990), and Grugeon and Gardner (2000) that hearing stories improves children's language skills such as vocabulary building, comprehension, sequencing and story recall.

5.3.2 Implications

Despaigne (2010), Arslan and Akbarov (2012), and Focho (2011) are of the view that a learner's perception may not reflect his or her attitude. My findings seem to suggest that the student participants' positive perceptions of storytelling might reflect a positive attitude towards storytelling because when asked if they would like their teachers to continue using storytelling in their classes, the student participants responded just as positively, citing socio-emotional as well as language benefits.

The student participants were ten-year-olds. Understandably, they focused a lot on the fun element of storytelling and its related activities. However, the participants, young as they

were, made much reference to linguistic improvements in their questionnaire as well as interview responses. Their responses about improvements in vocabulary, writing, reading, grammar and oral might seem terse and but they were often concise and specific. For instance, student Samuel said, “The students will get to learn more adjectives...” and student Boon Teck commented, “It (storytelling) teach(es) us how to read bombastic words and how to read out a story”.

In a broad sense, the findings could signal to English language teachers that storytelling could be a tremendously powerful resource for their English classes. However, whether storytelling is adopted as a strategy for English language teaching and learning will depend very much on the perceptions of teachers about storytelling. Teachers’ theoretical beliefs and perceptions of teaching and learning are a strong influence on their instructional practice (Lee and Bathmaker, 2007; and Prabhu, 1988). What teachers bring to the classroom and the strategies they employ in the classroom will ultimately “shape students’ learning environment and influence student motivation and achievement” (OECD, 2009, p. 89).

5.4 Key Finding 3 and Implications

Key finding 3 is based on my research question 3, “Do the teachers and students differ in their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching and learning resource?”

5.4.1 Comparing Student and Teacher Participants’ Perceptions of Storytelling

a) Student and Teacher Questionnaire Findings about Perceptions of Storytelling

The teacher and student questionnaires showed that there was hardly any difference in the teacher and student participants’ perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching tool. Both groups of participants were positive about storytelling as a language teaching resource. 100% of the teachers perceived storytelling as a good tool for teaching English language skills, and agreed with literature or research on storytelling that it was a useful language teaching tool. Almost all the students (98.3%) articulated their pleasure from listening to and reading stories.

My findings seem to parallel those of Parker’s (2007) study. The students in Parker’s study perceived computer-assisted language learning (CALL) resources to be useful generally – “very useful” (27.4%); and “useful” (40.3%). In comparison, the teachers’ perceptions in that study were slightly more positive – “very useful” (55.6%); and “useful” (27.8%). Perhaps as

adults, the teachers were better able to see the potential of computer-assisted language learning.

While the two sets of perceptions data (teachers' and students') in my study endorse the findings of Parker's (2007) study, they undermine the reports of mixed perceptions of the value of storytelling that Mcgee and Schickedanz (2007) reported in their analyses of storytelling research studies. The congruence between my teacher and student participants' perceptions runs counter to studies by Ferris and Tagg (1996), Joseph (2012), Li (1998) and Hawkey (2006). Their studies indicated inconsistency between teachers' and students' perceptions.

b) Student and Teacher Interview Findings about Perceptions of Storytelling

The teacher and student interview responses seemed to corroborate the teacher and student questionnaire responses in terms of their perceptions of storytelling as a language teaching resource. Almost all the 26 students interviewed claimed that they enjoyed listening to or reading stories and would like their teachers to continue using storytelling in their English language classes. While not all the teachers interviewed had used or were confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills, all the teacher participants interviewed acknowledged the value of storytelling in helping students improve their socio-emotional well-being and certain English language skills (vocabulary, grammar, oral, reading, writing skills). The teacher participants who were reluctant to try out storytelling cited time constraints, personality, or inadequate skills as reasons.

The findings of my study are quite similar to the findings of Karakoyun and Kuzu's (2016) study of pre-service teachers' and sixth-grade students' perceptions of digital storytelling. Both the students and pre-service teachers believed that digital storytelling activities could help students make improvements in the students' 21st century skills (learning and innovation, information, media and technology, and life and career). When asked to identify their perceived problems about implementing digital storytelling, the teachers complained about lack of time, which was also one of the problems identified by the teacher participants in my study who were hesitant about conducting storytelling lessons.

5.4.2 Implications

In my study, both groups (teachers and students) agreed that storytelling could yield socio-emotional value as well as language benefits. The teachers' positive perception of storytelling as a pedagogical tool does mean that they have heeded the Singapore Ministry of Education's exhortations to teachers to use engaging and sometimes less conventional

pedagogies to enthuse students and make their teaching of English relevant to changing times and learners' changing needs and mindsets.

The consistency in the teacher and student participants' positive perceptions of storytelling would seem to suggest that should storytelling be included in the repertoire of instructional strategies in the primary level classes in Singapore, there would be less likelihood of resistance from both students and teachers.

5.5 Key Finding 4 and Implications

Key finding 4 is based on my research question 4, "Do teachers' reported practices reflect their perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills?"

5.5.1 Comparing Teacher Participants' Perceptions and Reported Practices

Underlying my RQ4 is the issue of perception versus practice. My conjecture was that the teacher participants' perceptions of storytelling would be reflected in their reported classroom practices. Was my conjecture affirmed? From the teacher questionnaire and interview responses, it was "yes" for some of the teacher participants and "no" for the others.

(a) Teacher Questionnaire Findings about Teacher Participants' Reported Practices

The responses to teacher questionnaire questions (1) and (2) showed that 100% of the teacher participants were in favour of storytelling as a pedagogical approach to teach English language skills. However, responses to subsequent questionnaire questions (questions 3 – 6) showed that not all the teacher participants used storytelling to teach English language skills.

(i) Consistency between Perception and Practice

In the Teacher Questionnaire, questions 3a and 3b asked the teacher participants whether they had conducted storytelling activities and why or why not. Of the 34 teachers in the study, 25 (73.5%) of them indicated that they had used storytelling activities for different pedagogical purposes besides teaching English language skills. The fact that they were able to describe other activities, which they claimed they had conducted, in addition to those listed for them to respond to, suggested that they had indeed conducted storytelling in their lessons. For these 25 teachers, their positive perceptions of storytelling did translate into practice.

(ii) Inconsistency between Perception and Practice

Of the 34 teacher participants in my study, nine (26.5%) did not use storytelling to teach English language skills. It was evident that perceptions did not always translate into practice for some of the teacher participants. This finding seems similar to the research findings of Minor et al. (2002), Bruns and Mogharreban (2007) and Joseph (2012), which indicated a mismatch between teachers' beliefs and practices.

Interestingly, when given a list of possible reasons for not using storytelling, none of these nine teacher participants selected the option, "I do not see the relevance of storytelling in learning English language skills" (Table 21, section 4.2.1, chapter four, Research Findings). This meant none of them was averse to the idea of using storytelling to teach English language skills. In fact, they were also not unreceptive to the idea of incorporating storytelling in their English language lessons in future, as indicated in Table 22 (section 4.2.1, chapter four, Research Findings) which showed that most of these nine teacher participants endorsed the statements, "I believe storytelling is a useful tool to teach English language skills." (66.7% of them) and "I would like to use storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills, but I would need some training on how to relate it to specific language skills." (55.6% of them).

In the last question (question 6) of the Teacher Questionnaire, three lists of storytelling activities (pre-activities, during-activities and after-activities), adapted from those advocated by Wright (2002), were provided to find out if the teacher participants had conducted any of the activities listed. Of the eight pre-activities listed, the following activities were the most popular: showing the cover of a storybook to students to promote predictive skills and to motivate them (76.5%); asking questions about the title or subject of the story to arouse interest and focus on meaning (76.5%); placing muddled up pictures in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements (79.4%).

The first two activities (showing the storybook cover and asking questions) were also pre-activities identified by the teachers for Teacher Questionnaire questions 3a and 3b, which asked whether they had conducted storytelling activities and their reasons.

The common during-activities listed in Teacher Questionnaire question 6 were: "Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding what might happen next to show their understanding" (88.2%); "Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding their feelings to show their understanding" (82.4%); and "Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding the protagonists' feelings to show their

understanding” (82.4%). The teacher participants seemed to place emphasis on comprehension and development of stories.

Of the ten after-activities listed in Teacher Questionnaire question 6, the most popular responses were: “Students produce visual maps to capture key elements of the story as a way of showing their understanding” (76.5%); “Students extend the story or change part of it to show understanding and creativity” (73.5%) and “Students dramatize the story or bits of it to show their understanding and make a creative response” (67.6%). The teacher participants seemed keen to have their students produce an artifact or some product (a piece of written work, or reenactment of the story) as evidence of their comprehension of the story.

The post-storytelling dramatization activity was also highlighted by the teachers in their responses to Teacher Questionnaire questions 3a and 3b. A teacher participant suggested getting students to “dramatize part of the story, or the whole story, to help them remember the story in a fun way and learn the language and vocabulary used in the story”. In fact, for Teacher Questionnaire questions 3a and 3b, the teachers identified other post-activities not listed in Teacher Questionnaire question 6. For instance, they suggested that the children could play grammar games, or adapt the original version of a story by changing the characters, setting and ending.

- retell the stories they have read or heard so that they will become aware of story structures and how to sequence the events and recount them in an intelligible way
- do art and craft, music, poetry, book review, journal writing, or visual mapping.
- create vocabulary maps to record the new vocabulary they have learnt from the stories
- play grammar games as follow-up activities
- recreate their version of a story by changing the characters, settings, endings, etc
- analyse characters' personalities and relationships
- identify the elements of the story plot: introduction, development, climax, resolution
- identify themes and social issues in the story
- look at different perspectives in relation to issues in the story

The interest in the aforementioned activities seemed to suggest that the teachers used storytelling as a stimulus for their students to hone their thinking and writing skills. The fact that all the activities in the three lists in Teacher Questionnaire question 6 received at least some responses could suggest that the teachers did put into practice an approach which they perceived positively. In other words, for many of the teacher participants, their perception was confirmed by their reported classroom practice, and it might be assumed that their classroom practices suggested that they believed in the value of storytelling and story-related activities.

(b) Teacher Interview Findings about Teacher Participants' Reported Practices

As indicated in Table 55 below, the concerns raised by the teacher participants in their interviews were similar to those in their questionnaire responses. For instance, in their responses to Teacher Questionnaire question 3b, 22.2% agreed with the statements, "I am not sure how to use storytelling as a mode for teaching English language skills." and "I have not received any training in storytelling." About 11.1% agreed with the statement, "I am not able to relate storytelling to the specific English language skills I want to teach." This acknowledgement of inadequacy and diffidence in conducting storytelling to teach English language skills were also raised by teachers Greg, Han and Jim in their interviews. Greg and Han felt the need for assistance in terms of structuring lessons based on storytelling.

In addition, 66.7% of the nine teacher participants who did not try out storytelling agreed with statement (f), "I am more concerned about covering the syllabus and the learning outcomes listed in the syllabus document or department scheme of work." This obsession with coverage of the English language syllabus, and the concern about time constraints were also mentioned by teachers, Dora and Han, in their interviews.

Table 55. Comparison of Teacher Interview Responses with Responses to Some Statements in Teacher Questionnaire Question 3b

N/T= number of teachers

The 9 Teacher Participants' Responses to Teacher Questionnaire Question 3b		N/T	Teacher Interview Responses
Inadequate skills			
a	I am not sure how to use storytelling as a mode for teaching English language skills.	2 22.2%	Greg: "I do think that storytelling will be a useful tool in the classroom. But <u>I don't think I have the skills</u> to carry out an effective storytelling lesson because <u>I am not so certain how the structure is</u> . That is why I have not carried (it) out in my lessons." Han: "I may <u>not know now how to use it</u> ." Jim: "I suppose there is a <u>lack of structure</u> and maybe also a <u>lack of confidence</u> . At least, if I know that there is a proper structure and something that I can fall back on or rely on. And I also believe that storytelling, to me, is a skill. To be able to tell stories and engage your students, I think it is a skill, a gift. I would like to harness on that gift if I have the chance."
b	I have not received any training in storytelling.	2 22.2%	
d	I am not able to relate storytelling to the specific English language skills I want to teach.	1 11.1%	
Concern with syllabus coverage			
f	I am more concerned about covering the syllabus and the learning outcomes listed in the syllabus document or department scheme of work	6 66.7%	<u>Time Constraints and Syllabus Coverage</u> Dora: "We are working on a <u>very tight schedule</u>. ...we have to cover two stories (two comprehension passages). So, they [the teachers] may find that they <u>don't really have the time</u> to factor in another story into the lesson... Basically <u>time constraints</u> ." Han: "I feel that I do not have the time to try it out... Yes, because of the syllabus coverage."

The teachers who did not use storytelling in their English classes were not averse to the idea of using storytelling as a pedagogical resource because none agreed with statement (c), "I do not see the relevance of storytelling in learning English language skills." Perhaps it was not so much a reluctance to try out storytelling but the lack of time and the appropriate skills to explore alternative pedagogies.

In their questionnaire responses documented in Table 12, Responses to Teacher Questionnaire questions 1 and 2 (section 4.2.1, chapter four, Research Findings), all 34 teacher participants were unanimous in their responses – 100% agreement with the statements, "My perception of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool." and "I agree with literature or research on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills." This finding was endorsed by their interview responses, as all the teachers (including those who did not use storytelling) acknowledged that storytelling was or could be a useful language teaching resource.

However, the reality is that only eight (61.5%) of the thirteen teacher participants interviewed alleged that they infused storytelling or incorporated elements of storytelling into their English language lessons. This finding confirmed that the teacher participants' perceptions did not match their reported practices. It is highly probable that this disparity between perception and practice could possibly occur amongst the remaining 21 teacher participants who were not interviewed.

5.5.2 Implications

The findings about the teacher participants' lack of the prerequisite skills to implement storytelling as a pedagogical tool suggest that there is a need to provide teachers with relevant administrative and professional support such as structured training and teaching resources.

The mismatch between the teacher participants' perceptions and practice in my study is also seen in other research. For instance, similar mismatch between perceptions and practice was found in the studies by Wilcox-Herzog (2002); Joseph (2012) and Charlesworth et al. (1993). Wilcox-Herzog's (2002) study showed there was no significant relationship between her participants' (47 early childhood educators) beliefs and their teaching behaviour (teacher sensitivity, teacher play styles, teacher verbalisations/verbal responsibility, and teacher involvement).

Joseph (2012) found inconsistency between his teacher participants' beliefs and their practice. The teacher participants indicated in their questionnaire responses that they taught historical concepts to their students. However, in their interview responses, majority of the teachers admitted that they taught facts presented in history texts, and that historical concepts, if taught at all, were "taught incidentally" (Joseph, 2012, p. 86).

Charlesworth et al.'s (1993) study showed very modest relationship between beliefs/perceptions and practice. They observed that the kindergarten teachers' reported developmentally appropriate beliefs were only "moderately correlated" (p. 272) with their reported appropriate practices. In other words, in terms of appropriate practices, the kindergarten teachers were less likely to teach in line with their beliefs.

In my study, all the teacher participants believed that storytelling was a useful tool for teaching English language skills. However, not all teacher participants used it in their English language classroom; only 25 of them (73.5%) did. Hence, I could only conclude that the match between perceptions and practice held true for only 73.5% of the teacher participants in my study.

Nonetheless, the concerns raised by the teacher participants should be useful to English Department Heads who guide teachers in schools, curriculum designers who develop syllabuses for teachers, as well as teacher training institutions which plan and conduct pre-service teacher training programmes.

5.6 Key Finding 5 and Implications

Key finding 5 is based on my research question 5, "If storytelling were to be recommended as a strategy for teaching English language skills, what kind of implementation support would English language teachers like their school management and the Singapore Ministry of Education to provide for them, and why?"

5.6.1 Teacher Questionnaire Findings on Professional Support for Storytelling

In my teacher questionnaire, question 5 is a statement, "I feel that training in storytelling facilitation skills should be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers." All the teachers in this study agreed (29.4% strongly agreed and 70.6% agreed) with this statement.

Those who had not used storytelling as a teaching tool seemed cognizant of the potential benefits of storytelling. They indicated their interest in infusing storytelling into their English

lessons, if sufficient professional support could be provided, for example formal training in incorporating storytelling in their lesson planning and in conducting the lessons. Other professional support raised by the teacher participants included resource building and professional development.

The provision of professional and administrative support is critical to the effectiveness of any storytelling programme that is to be introduced in the schools. Take the case of Joong et al's (2009) investigation of the perceptions of students, parents and teachers about China's educational reforms in grades 7 and 8. Joong et al. (2009) commented that the teachers (especially those in the rural parts of China) in their study indicated that there was inadequate support in terms of resources and professional development, especially in teaching methods and curriculum development. As a consequence, the teachers struggled with the curriculum transitioning.

Li's (1998) participants, 18 South Korean secondary school English teachers, also cited absence of professional, administrative and collegial support as major constraints. They complained about not getting support from their Principal and colleagues. Other related concerns included insufficient funding for purchase of books and materials on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and lack of opportunities for training on the implementation of the CLT approach.

The professional and administrative constraints raised by Joong et al. (2009) and Li (1998) underscore a very important criterion for success when new teaching and learning approaches are introduced: any revision in curriculum or pedagogical methods would necessitate some form of teacher training. This is to ensure that teachers could be equipped with essential implementation skills such as curriculum redesigning, teaching methods, classroom management and use of appropriate resources (including technology) to support learning.

In my study, the teacher participants, who argued for pre-service training of this teaching approach, believed that it was important to emphasize the relevance of storytelling at an earlier stage of teacher development. They felt that with pre-service training, teachers would be trained from the start of their teaching career so that they could apply these skills in the schools they were posted to. Those who proposed in-service training felt that experienced teachers would be better able to incorporate storytelling into their English language lessons. There were also participants who were ambivalent about this teaching approach. However, they saw the relevance of formal training, be it pre- or in-service, as they felt that there was a

need to train teachers to link it to the learning outcomes outlined in the English language syllabus for primary schools.

5.6.2 Teacher Interview Findings on Professional Support for Storytelling

During the interviews, those teacher participants who were reluctant to try out storytelling reiterated the point they made in their questionnaire responses – the need to be equipped with appropriate skills to conduct storytelling. The teacher participants who were hesitant to try out storytelling were very candid about their lack of confidence and competence in conducting storytelling lessons. For instance, teacher Greg was upfront about his inadequacy in conducting storytelling lessons, “....I don’t think I have the skills to carry out an effective storytelling lesson because I am not so certain how the structure is.” Jim shared Greg’s anxiety, “I suppose there is a lack of structure and maybe also a lack of confidence.”

This finding is quite similar to that of Bruns and Mogharreban’s (2007) study. The Head Start and pre-kindergarten teachers felt that they were able to implement effective guidance approaches and strategies to bring about positive behavior in children with or without disabilities. However, they asked for training (especially on behavioural issues, communication strategies, managing and positioning). This finding about teachers’ lack of confidence in particular instructional approaches is also found in Li’s (1998) study. His participants (trainee teachers) admitted their own lack of competence in using the Communicative Language Teaching approach and requested for training in CLT implementation.

In my study, those teachers who had used storytelling as a language teaching tool indicated that they were confident that they were able to use storytelling to help their students in different aspects of the English language. Despite their confidence, this latter group of teachers also felt that formal training, be it pre- or in-service, would be helpful for professional development.

The reasons for either pre- or in-service training were fairly similar to those highlighted in the Teacher Questionnaire responses. Teachers who argued for pre-service training elaborated that newly-trained teachers were generally more enthusiastic about new teaching approaches, and that storytelling would add to their repertoire of pedagogical approaches. On the other hand, some teachers emphasized that in-service training might be more effective. Their reasoning was that a more experienced teacher would be more adept at incorporating this new strategy without feeling undue stress.

There were also a small group of teachers who argued for both pre- and in-service training on storytelling techniques. They saw relevance and merit in both approaches. They were of the view that some kind of formal structure or training would go a long way to help teachers (novice or experienced) use this new approach efficaciously.

OECD (2009) suggests two kinds of staff co-operation: “exchange and coordination for teaching (e.g. exchanging instructional material or discussing learning problems of individual students) versus more general and more innovative kinds of professional collaboration (e.g. observing other teachers’ classes and giving feedback)” (p. 90). In my study, the teacher participants also suggested professional collaboration activities such as learning from their fellow teachers through peer observation of a lesson which utilized the storytelling technique. However, in terms of exchange and coordination for teaching activities, my teacher participants would like to have support from their school management in terms of resources (puppets, costumes, props, books and videos). They also asked for administrative support from their school management (make provision for teachers to structure their own storytelling schedule, and allocate time for them to incorporate this new approach into their teaching plan).

5.6.3 Implications

The questionnaire and interview responses foregrounded very salient concerns, one of which was the gap between perceptions and practice. Believing in the value of storytelling is one thing but translating that belief into practice requires skill, and acquiring the necessary skill takes time and effort. This time constraint came up again and again in the interviews with the teacher participants.

The teacher participants’ concern with time was not without justification, too. True, a teacher’s instructional practice is very much contingent upon what he or she brings to the classroom – his or her professional competence and prior knowledge and experience. However, the crux of the matter is that professional competence is not innate; it needs to be developed and nurtured. Hence, professional development is important if we want teachers to be competent and effective in the classroom.

At the interviews, a few teacher participants raised the notion of professional collaboration: peer observation and pooling of resources:

Anne: “...tell them that you have the available resources and then maybe even conduct a...class and teachers go there and pick up some skills in storytelling.”

Jim: “Definitely, because it is a full, a whole school approach. Take for example, you teach a particular level where all the teachers use storytelling to teach a particular topic for example. If you encounter any problems, you can definitely seek help from your colleagues.”

Faith: “...Maybe they themselves can organize like a workshop, and then work in groups to retell the story...”

Jim broached the idea of adopting a whole school approach, which makes sense, I feel, because for any instructional programme to be successful, the whole school needs to be involved and school support is very crucial. This means the senior management of a school (the Principal, or Vice-Principal or English department Head) have to take the lead in such professional collaboration initiative. The authoritative stamp is so critical and instrumental in determining the success of a project. Yet, getting senior management to take the lead is always a challenge because they need to see the value of the project before they are willing to commit. That was why I modified the OECD’s framework as I was only confident of informal professional exchanges between colleagues – “exchange ideas on pedagogical practices with colleagues”. I modified OECD’s framework in the aspect of teachers’ professional development activities based on my understanding of the local context and the teachers in my country. In Singapore, for peer collaboration to be sustained or to happen on a regular basis, it usually requires that authoritative stamp, that is, it is often initiated by the English Department Head, Vice-Principal, or Principal of the school. Informal, irregular peer collaboration is often not sustainable, given the teachers’ concern about lack of time to complete their daily teaching routine.

Nevertheless, I hope that this finding about the value of peer collaboration would prompt senior management of schools to take on this challenge so that teachers who wish to try out less conventional pedagogical approaches would have the necessary support to do so.

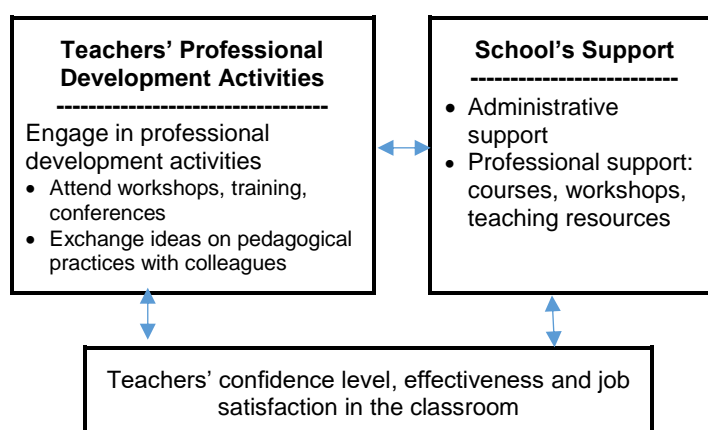


Figure 7. Professional Development Activities and School Support to Enhance Teacher Efficacy

5.7 Contribution to Knowledge in the Field

There is a plethora of research on different strategies or pedagogical approaches that relate to improvement in different aspects of language, for example, read-aloud strategies to improve children's language skills (Hargrave and Senechal, 2000; Dickinson and Smith, 1994); lapreading (Klesius and Griffith, 1996); shared book experience (Trachtenburg and Ferruggia, 1989); story-based lessons (Ghosn, 2002); and listening to stories to improve vocabulary (Robbins and Ehri, 1994). However, there is hardly any study done on perceptions of storytelling from either the practitioner or learner's vantage point. I hope that my study will evoke interest in this regard amongst storytelling researchers and advocates as a learner's belief or perception about learning will influence his or her behavioural attitudes (Despaigne, 2010, p. 58). Similarly, a teacher's belief or perception affects his or her attitude, which, in turn, influences his or her practice. One cannot dismiss the effect of teacher power in student learning (McCroskey and Richmond, 1983) as teacher power can impact student learning.

From my discussion of the key findings, it is apparent that the teacher participants deemed storytelling to be a valuable resource for teaching English language skills. Even the ten-year-old students in the study seemed to welcome this approach to teaching and learning. Both groups of teachers and students spoke of socio-emotional as well as language benefits of storytelling. This emphasis on the socio-emotional value of storytelling seems to underscore the view that there is a strong connection between affect and reading (Gee, 1999; Nelson, 1989). The affective benefits should argue for storytelling to be considered by Ministry of Education officials in their syllabus review. In particular, curriculum specialists who develop syllabuses for use by school teachers, and educational staff who provide pedagogical guidance and advice to teachers may want to consider this pedagogical tool in their respective reviews and programmes for effective teaching and learning.

The potential language benefits gleaned from storytelling as a pedagogical approach should be able to address the concern about language proficiency at all critical grade levels (Primary School Leaving Examination, General School Certificate at the Ordinary and Advanced levels, as well as entry into tertiary institutions) in Singapore. Using storytelling as an approach for teaching English makes learning language skills meaningful as the story forms the context for building vocabulary. Ellis and Brewster (2002), Hamilton and Weiss (1990), and Wright (2002) highly recommend storytelling as they believe it has the potential to raise linguistic awareness and competence in children and can be used to enhance the teaching of a variety of language functions and skills (grammar, oral, reading and writing). It also forms a useful platform for developing cognitive skills such as inventive thinking,

drawing connections between characters and events in a story, and evaluating morals of stories and viewpoints.

A number of research studies on storytelling or the use of stories or reading of stories have reported positive outcomes, too – studies on the value of interactive lapreading procedure on kindergarten children by Klesius and Griffith (1996); Beck and McKeown's (2001) technique of 'Text Talk' to help kindergarten and primary-grade children expand vocabulary; Trachtenburg and Ferruggia's (1989) study of story read-aloud through shared book experience; Ghosn's (2002) study of the communicative approach for ELT (English Language Teaching) lessons; and Robbins and Ehri's (1994) research on kindergarteners' vocabulary improvement from listening to stories.

The young student participants in my study raised the issue of moral values derived from listening to, reading or acting out stories. This is especially relevant in view of the fact that in the Singaporean education system, Civics and Moral Education is deemed necessary to help inculcate citizenship and social values in a racially and culturally pluralistic society like Singapore.

My study also foregrounds the need to provide teachers with the necessary professional and administrative support, especially formal training in using storytelling in the classroom. In my findings, teachers who indicated reluctance to explore storytelling as a teaching resource attributed it to their lack of appropriate skills to use this strategy effectively. Some sort of formal training on how to use this approach, coupled with administrative support, would, they feel, help them find the time and space as well as the essential competencies to use this strategy to effectively teach specific language skills.

In my discussion of Key Finding 5, I highlighted the findings that teachers' confidence level and efficacy in the classroom could possibly increase with sufficient support (financial, administrative and professional) from their school management. While financial and other administrative support is important, teachers' professional development will yield long-lasting long-term returns to teaching and learning. When school management plans their programmes for the students and their staff, professional development of teachers must take priority. This is because a teacher's practice, besides his or her beliefs, perceptions and attitude, can "shape students' learning environment and influence student motivation and achievement" (OECE, 2009, p. 89).

The findings of my study surfaced many issues pertaining to curriculum designing, teaching practices, and evaluation. The issues can be grouped into two primary areas: (a) translating perception to practice; and (b) evaluating the new methodologies vis-à-vis student learning and desired learning outcomes.

5.7.1 Translating Perception into Practice

For teachers to embrace and implement storytelling and other student-centred teaching practices, they must see the value in these pedagogical approaches. Yet, just seeing the need for change is not enough (Butler and McMunn, 2006). The common conception is that teachers are change agents in the classroom, and being practitioners, they should be able to successfully execute pedagogical changes in their classroom, given their experiences. The truth is that transiting from current teaching approaches to new approaches requires skill (Joong et al., 2009, p. 142), and we cannot assume that all practitioners have the competence to execute the transition successfully. Designing a storytelling lesson involves more than planning engaging learning activities. As the teacher participants in my study rightfully pointed out, there is a need to link the storytelling activities to specific learning outcomes delineated in the teaching syllabus. Curriculum modification requires the involvement of syllabus writers with their expertise and knowledge in syllabus designing and redesigning.

When introducing changes in curriculum designing and classroom practices, teachers should not be left to their own devices – some may succeed on their own, but most teachers need some help in terms of formal training, workshops, consultation and collegial arrangements (peer observation and feedback, professional collaboration on teaching methods and student issues, and sharing of teaching resources, and assessment guide and resources). In implementing pedagogical initiatives, teachers need time to plan, reflect and evaluate teaching methods, student progress and learning issues, and assessment issues. Joong et al. (2009, p. 152) suggested that Ministry of Education officials and school leaders take the lead in professional development. In fact, student voices should also be heard. Other stakeholders such as parents and teacher training institutions need to have a say, too.

5.7.2 Evaluating New Methodologies vis-a-vis Student Learning and Desired Learning Outcomes

Curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation form a tripartite partnership in education. The teacher and student participants in my study claimed that storytelling yielded improvements in vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing and oral skills. What is the basis of their claims? Curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation are irrevocably linked. We need some form of

measurement to assess the improvements, and as Butler and McMun (2006) succinctly put it, the purpose of assessment is two-fold: “to provide feedback to students and to serve as a diagnostic and monitoring tool for instruction” (p. 2).

In sum, any educational reform, or any change to teaching and learning approaches inevitably entails the involvement of all stakeholders – school management, practitioners, curriculum developers, assessment specialists, students and parents, and teacher-training institutions. In fact, very often educational reforms necessitate governmental involvement via the Ministry of Education. Li (1998, p. 691) identified four major constraints of the South Korean education system – large class size, grammar-based examination, insufficient funding, and lack of support – some of which resonate with the Singaporean education system. To implement storytelling and other student-centred pedagogical strategies, large class size (40 or more) is a real impediment. The high premium Singaporean society places on examination results is another major setback; teachers fear trying out novel teaching and learning approaches lest results suffer. Such problems require the Ministry of Education to address, and, if need be, review its educational policies.

5.8 Limitations and Constraints

5.8.1 Positionality Issues

Because of the intersubjective nature of social life, the researcher and the participants have shared meanings (England, 1994, p. 82), and research, thus, represents a “shared space, shaped by the researcher and participants” (Bourke, 2014, p. 1). Besides identities, our biases, perspectives in life and the lenses through which we perceive reality can all have the potential to impact the research process.

Throughout the research process (from conceptualisation of the research study to designing the research methodology, data collection process, data analysis and interpretation, to finally presentation of the data analysis), I was constantly reminded of the issue of positionality. I worked very closely with the Superintendent of the cluster of six primary and six secondary schools to guide teachers in the teaching and learning of English in that cluster. While I strove to establish a solidarity relationship with the teachers so that they could be receptive to my suggestions and advice, I could not obliterate the imminent threat of power relationship (even if it was unconscious) lurking in the background. I tried to adopt an attitude of reflexivity throughout the research process. It involved being self-critical and introspective as a researcher (Bourke, 2014, p. 1; England, 1994, p. 82). In section 3.4.3, Ethical Issues of this Research Study, chapter three, Methodology and Procedures, of this

thesis, I discussed some measures I put in place to mitigate the impact of this positionality problem. However, regardless of the measures I took, I have to admit that reflexivity alone could not completely, or even adequately, resolve this positionality issue. As England (1994) aptly explains the issue: “Reflexivity can make us more aware of asymmetrical or exploitative relationships, but it cannot remove them.” (p. 86).

5.8.2 Sample Size and Sampling Issues

The positionality concern was a major consideration in determining my sample. As I did not want the teachers or students to feel that they were coerced into participating in my research, ethical letters of consent were sent to all potential primary four teacher participants in the six primary schools in my cluster. Similar ethical letters of consent were also sent to the parents of potential student participants through their teachers. Voluntary participation in the research meant it was difficult to select equal number of male and female teacher or student participants. In the case of the teacher participants, it was also not possible to specify age range or teaching experience. It was also not easy to specify a particular sample size, as a consequence. The findings, thus, could only hold for the small group of teacher participants and their 116 students. In short, the sample was not representative of the larger population of primary four teachers and students in Singapore. As such, the sample was not random in the strict sense, and it was not possible for me to make generalisations about my observations (Cohen et al, 2001, p. 93).

5.8.3 Administrative Issues

One of the administrative constraints was that it was not easy to go back to the same schools to conduct follow-up surveys or related discussions as Singaporean teachers generally do not like their curriculum time to be disrupted.

The student participants were about ten years old at the time the questionnaire was administered. The participating teacher participants volunteered to help their students by going through the survey form with them. The teacher participants had been instructed not to help with their students' responses; they were requested to only explain or clarify, where necessary. As the student participants were young children, they were not able to provide detailed explanations for the open-ended sections of the questionnaire. At the interviews, not all of them were forthcoming in amplifying their opinions; many required much prompting. Even then, their responses were often short and terse.

The teacher participants were generally more forthcoming in their responses, but occasionally there would be one who might be less so. Take teacher Han for instance. I had to prompt him now and then during the interview, and in my eagerness to help him, I unwittingly used leading questions on a few occasions. Below are a few examples from his interview:

Researcher: You said you may not have the time. Is it because of the syllabus coverage?

Han: Yes, because of the syllabus coverage.

Researcher: Other teachers also seem to be saying the same thing. Has it got to do with training?

Han: Yes, I think so.

5.8.4 Self-report Limitations

One of the limitations of questionnaires is that there is “no check on whether the respondents are telling the truth” (Cohen et al. 2001: 254). The other problem with self-reports is that “people often respond in such a way that presents them in a more favourable light, even if these responses do not reflect how they actually think or behave” (McDonald, 2008, p. 78). Even interviews have their constraints – the teacher participants might feel obliged to say positive things about storytelling as a teaching and learning resource. Hence, there might be the possibility that what the teachers reported in their interviews that they did in their classrooms might not be consistent with their actual practice.

5.9 Recommendations and Directions for Further Research

In my analysis of the teacher participants’ use of storytelling, I observed that fewer experienced teachers (with 10 or more years of teaching experience) used storytelling to teach English language skills than less experienced teachers (with 6 or fewer years of teaching experience). Could it be possible that younger teachers are more inclined to experiment and try out new pedagogical approaches and strategies? In fact, a teacher participant (Betty), in recommending storytelling facilitation training for pre-service teachers offered this reason, “....because I think new teachers are generally more enthusiastic to try out new teaching strategies...”.

In my study, I did not make provision to compare experienced and novice teachers’ perceptions of storytelling. Perhaps this could be an area for further research because the research findings might be valuable to educational institutions which train pre-service teachers. If indeed novice teachers are enthusiastic and experimental in their pedagogical approaches, then storytelling and other novel student-centred activities could be included in pre-service training packages so that the pre-service teachers will have a wider repertoire of pedagogical strategies to tap on when they commence actual practice.

Of the thirteen teacher participants I interviewed in my research, four were male teachers. And out of the four, only one had conducted storytelling lessons; the other three were hesitant to try out this approach, citing lack of structure, diffidence, misconception of the uses of storytelling, or time constraint as their reasons. Gender differences was not a focus in my study. However, it might be worthwhile conducting a research to find out which gender is more likely to try out storytelling or other unconventional language teaching pedagogies and which gender is less inclined to experiment, and why. This could be another interesting area for further research.

Tunnell and Jacobs (1989), in reviewing studies that advocated basal readers and those that experimented with trade books or literature texts, reported that those that used “literature based reading instruction... boast stunning levels of success with all types of students and particularly with disabled and uninterested readers” (p. 470). In my study, Elin, one of the teachers interviewed, endorsed this observation. During her interview, Elin recounted, with much enthusiasm and passion, her school’s language arts programme, and how the use of literature-based reading instructions had helped her students in making immense improvements in language skills. Some examples of language improvements Elin observed are given below.

- “Definitely, because they (students) are exposed to a wide vocabulary in the books that we have selected for them...”;
- “...in terms of their oral examination, ...they are able to come up with ideas, descriptive words...”; “...now they are aware of things like genres... they look into writers’ styles...characters in the book, the issues that are highlighted in the book...”; and
- “It has definitely helped the girls (students), especially in their composition writing. They are able to develop the plot of the story better...”

The language improvements Elin claimed her students made are very compelling and impressive and that should prompt further research on the effects of the use of novels, storybooks, or literature texts in reading programmes for primary and secondary school students.

Responses to question 5 of my student questionnaire, “Do you enjoy acting out parts of the stories read by you, your classmates, or your teacher during English language lessons?” showed that 81% of the students either enjoyed it all the time (39.7%) or sometimes (41.4%) At their interviews, the students could link this enjoyment derived from acting out stories to improvements in specific language skills such as oral, grammar, vocabulary and reading (Table 51, section 4.7.3, chapter four, Research Findings). This finding reinforces the findings by Martinez’s (1993) study which examined the role of emergent readings in kindergarteners’ literacy development. Martinez observed that in one particular teacher’s (Ms Garrett’s) classroom, the children dramatized stories with “unbridled enthusiasm” (p.

683) and to a significant degree. In such dramatic story reenactments (DSR), the children “informally re-create or ‘play’ familiar stories by using puppets to act one out” (p. 682). Martinez maintains that DSRs are “potentially powerful tools for fostering young children’s narrative competence” (p. 682). As children reenact stories, they develop a sense of how stories are organized, and this helps them in processing and recalling stories.

The advantages highlighted by Martinez (1993) and the findings of my study need to be validated by further research along the same or similar focus. One follow-up research, for instance, could centre on the use of dramatic reenactment of stories and its potential language benefits.

To improve educational processes and outcomes, OECD (2009) recommends that teachers work together in groups or teams to “create opportunities for social and emotional support, exchange of ideas and practical advice” (p. 101). Teachers may exchange instructional materials, meet regularly for discussions about individual students, participate in collective learning activities such as peer observation and feedback, and engage in professional development activities. Some of my teacher participants also referred to some of these activities. For instance, teacher Anne suggested peer observation (“...conduct a...class and teachers go there and pick up some skills in storytelling”). Betty informed me that she and her colleagues prepared “a learning package” on storytelling. Elin also talked about her school’s collaboration on development of their own resources. One of the focuses of my research study was on teachers’ response to professional development initiatives. A further study could be conducted with school management (Principals, Vice-Principals and English department Heads) to investigate their perceptions of professional development efforts and activities and the reasons for their perceptions. While the teachers desire support from their school management, their requests could only be met if their school leaders are able to discern the value of storytelling in language learning and teaching. This certainly merits a research study as both school leaders and teachers need to have shared goals in promoting teaching and learning.

In their interviews, two teacher participants, Betty and Faith, referred to digital sources of stories – audio books, videos and other online resources. Research studies on the use of digital stories or storytelling reported improvement in listening comprehension (Verdugo and Belmonte, 2007), writing efficacy (Xu et al., 2011) and students’ motivation to learn (Yuksel-Arslan et al., 2016; Hung et al., 2012). These positive findings should serve as an impetus for further research on the use of digital stories or storytelling in learning specific English language skills, e.g. oral communication, and reading comprehension skills.

In her interview, teacher Cara referred to personal stories:

“I tried to relate my own experience and then I share with my pupils because I tell them that in composition writing, they need to be original so that they can do better because ... if it's their own personal stories, there may not be so many people with that kind of experience”.

Cara shared personal stories with her students, as she wanted to encourage them to use their own personal stories to enhance their writing competence. This idea of encouraging children to tell their own stories is also recommended by Cremin et al. (2016) who made explicit reference to Vivian Gussin Paley's “advocated practices in the early childhood classroom: teachers scribing children's stories (storytelling) and children enacting these later on the same day (story acting)” (p. 29). This book which Cremin et al. edited includes chapters by different advocates and researchers who drew on Paley's storytelling and story-acting approach to illustrate how this unique approach supports young children's oral language, narrative and cognitive development, and it can contribute to “cohesion and a common culture in the classroom, and help to prepare young children for elementary education” (p. 32).

Although Paley's storytelling and story-acting approach is targeted at early childhood, this instructional practice could be applied to elementary levels, too. This could form a possible focus for future research on the effects of storytelling and story-acting on the linguistic, cognitive and social development of children in the elementary classes.

5.10 Concluding Remarks

Literature and research on storytelling has much to recommend about its impact on language achievements. As such, there is really no need to implore teachers to infuse storytelling into their language teaching. Why the reluctance then? There is a need to talk to the teachers to find out what is holding them back.

Why is there a need to focus on teachers' and students' perceptions of storytelling? This focus seems justified, given the reluctance of Singaporean teachers to formally adopt this rich resource in their classroom teaching even though there is a plethora of storytelling resources and literature that seem to argue for this approach. My research study could be the start of many conversations on the teachers' reservation about the use of storytelling. It is hoped that the findings from this study could serve as an impetus for practitioners to include storytelling in their pedagogical repertoire so as to enhance the teaching and learning of English in the primary school classroom.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Speech By RAdm (NS) Lui Tuck Yew at the 2007 Official Launch of the Speak Good English Movement (SGEM) on Tuesday 31 July 2007, 5.30pm, at Timbre Music Bistro

Good evening

Prof Koh Tai Ann, Chairman, Speak Good English Council,
Parliamentary colleagues

Mr Hri Kumar Nair, Member of Parliament, Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC

Dr Lam Pin Min, Member of Parliament, Ang Mo Kio GRC

Mrs Josephine Teo, Member of Parliament, Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC

Mr Zaqy Mohamad, Member of Parliament, Hong Kah GRC

Dr N Varaprasad, Chief Executive, National Library Board,

Members of the Speak Good English Council

Ladies and gentlemen

1 I am pleased to be here this evening for the official launch of the 2007 Speak Good English Movement, or SGEM, as it has been known affectionately for the last six years. Time flies. It seemed not too long ago that I launched the 2006 SGEM at the National Library.

2 The Speak Good English Movement's key message remains a very simple one – speak good English so that we can be understood, locally and internationally. Our objective is to enable every Singaporean to speak a standard of English that is intelligible to English speakers all over the world; that is grammatically correct and uses standard sentence structure.

3 SGEM was conceived because it was deemed significant and necessary that Singaporeans speak good English to access international networks and markets. It was considered important for our children and youth to possess the ability to speak and write good English as this is an advantage for them in a global setting. Because of these reasons, some may view the ability to speak good English primarily as a pragmatic skill that will confer us an advantage in transactions and dealings, prized for its functional or utilitarian value. This is a perception that we ought to change and I will touch more on this later.

4 SGEM started with the objective of 'encouraging Singaporeans to speak good English' and the target audience was every citizen in Singapore. The message was that you did not need a powerful vocabulary, or technical knowledge on the intricacies of the English language. You just needed to be able to speak clearly and be understood, wherever you may be, in Singapore or outside of Singapore. *Speak simple English and be clearly understood*, was, in gist, the slogan of SGEM then.

5 And I must say that SGEM has been successful. More people than ever before recognize the importance of good English and are making an effort to speak good English; in schools, taxis, buses, supermarkets and other public places. There have been daily enquiries on the rules of the English language on Stomp!, SPH's online platform. "English As It is Broken", a column in the Gen Y page of the Sunday Times is so well received that it has been compiled into a book to be launched this evening. But despite making some headway in our efforts, we cannot afford to be complacent. This was brought home to me when on several occasions in my conversations with residents in the constituency this past year, they lamented the standard of their English and expressed sorrowfully a desire to speak better English. I therefore applaud the WDA's efforts in putting together the Retailer's Guide to Good English as it will help a segment of our workforce improve on their use of the

language in their daily transactions. Interestingly enough, in all my dealings, I've not had anyone, not even an expatriate, come up to me and express a wish to speak better Singlish.

6 The focus of the 2007 SGEM is our youth. We continue to reach out to all Singaporeans, especially teachers, parents and frontline staff, but we want to focus especially on our youth. The reason is two-fold. Firstly, to help them understand the need and develop the habit of speaking good English from young. And secondly, to give them the tools to express their emotions, to articulate how they feel, to build and strengthen relationships and establish deeper and more meaningful bonds. To sink deep roots, the English language needs to mean much more to our youth than just a necessity for their education, a skill to help them navigate business and work or to convey instructions to get a job done.

7 So this year, the SGEM has decided to move into the realm of **the language of the heart**. I have come across many youth today, who speak good English and can give any debater a run for their money anytime. In fact, less than a month ago, our national debating team was placed second after a grueling competition at the World Schools Debating Championship held in Seoul. They are to be commended for out-ranking teams such as Australia, Canada, the United States and England.

8 But ask our youth how they feel and the answers many are prone to give will range from 'so-so', 'ok', 'good' to 'bored'. Probe a little deeper and they may tell you how they are analysing an issue. They do not really give answers as to how they feel. It is not easy but I am convinced that there is some value in trying to access the language of the heart. Giving our youth the ability to use good English to build relationships becomes an important element in their development and growth as happy, well-adjusted, enthusiastic and expressive adults.

9 What is the language of the heart? Since we are in Timbre today, let me illustrate from the history of songs.

10 Some of the most powerful songs over the decades have been those that express simple but powerful emotions, those that capture a strong sense of purpose. Their meaningful lyrics express the hopes of a generation and yet have a timeless beauty that spans generations. The words linger in our minds and resonate in our hearts. You may not agree that there's no heaven or religion but the lyrics of John Lennon's "Imagine" is still haunting, especially lines such as "*you may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope some day you'll join us, and the world will live as one*". It was a plea for unity and world peace at a time when the world was divided by the Cold War. It helped many express the fears, hopes and longing deep inside them, even when they knew not how to find the words to do so themselves.

11 As for what thrills the youth and the Timbre crowd in this era, I will leave you to educate me.

12 When you hear music which brings a lump to your throat or tears to your eyes, poetry that moves you and causes you to reflect or inspires you to hope for a better world, you are touched by the language of the heart. There's a power in words and language that cannot be fully explained. I've heard of how poems and songs have kept people alive during times of atrocities, when they have been tortured or locked away in solitary confinement. For them, their spirits were buoyed by the poems and songs, painstaking accumulated in their earlier years, each with its own special meaning, which accompanied them through their darkest moments. With these gems, they are never lonely even when they are alone. Take them away and they would feel lonely even when they are not alone.

13 If you take a look at this year's graphic for the 2007 SGEM, it says, 'Rock Your World! Express Yourself. Speak Good English.' Let's bring our youth back to the reason for using language – communication between people. I am happy that this year, the series of events and activities accompanying the launch of SGEM will be held in Timbre. There will be music and lyrics, songs, banter and theatre – acts of expression. Our main partners this year, besides Stomp! and Timbre will include 98.7. I would like to thank all for their contributions and their partnership with us on this effort to uncover the language of the heart.

14 Thank you all and have an enjoyable evening.

Appendix B

Entry Requirements for 2-Year Junior College and 3-Year Centralised Institute Pre-University Courses

Subject	Requirement
<u>English Language</u>	A1 to C6
<u>Mother Tongue Language</u>	
Chinese Language (CL), Malay Language (ML), or Tamil Language (TL). Non-Tamil Indian Languages (viz. Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu) and Asian/Foreign Languages (viz. Arabic, Burmese, French, German, Japanese and Thai) approved by MOE in lieu of an Official MTL could also be considered as Mother Tongue Language in deciding admission eligibility. OR	A1 to D7
Higher Chinese Language (HCL), Higher Malay Language (HML), Higher Tamil Language (HTL) OR	A1 to E8
Chinese Language 'B' Syllabus (CLB), Malay Language 'B' Syllabus (MLB) or Tamil Language 'B' Syllabus (TLB)	Merit or Pass
<u>Maths</u>	
Maths OR	A1 to D7
Additional Maths	A1 to D7

Applicants have to attain at least a C6 for the relevant subjects as shown in the table below:

L1R5: For 2-Year Pre-U Course		
L1	First Language	English/Higher MT
R5	Relevant Subject 1	Humanities/Higher Art/Higher Music
	Relevant Subject 2	Mathematics/Science
	Relevant Subject 3	Humanities/Higher Art/Higher Music/Mathematics/Science
	Relevant Subject 4	Any GCE O Level subjects (excluding Religious Knowledge and CCA)
	Relevant Subject 5	Any GCE O Level subjects (excluding Religious Knowledge and CCA)

Art and Higher Art can be used as one of the relevant subjects.

Legend:

L1 – First Language

R5 – Relevant Five Subjects

Ethical Approval Letter from Sheffield University

FAO Connie Seng

Head of School
Professor Peter HannonDepartment of Educational Studies
The Education Building
388 Glossop Road
Sheffield S10 2JA

30 June 2008

Telephone: +44 (0114) 222 8083
Fax: +44 (0114) 279 6236
Email: c.m.gaffney@sheffield.ac.uk

Dear Connie

Phd Research Proposal:

Thank you for your application for ethical review for the above project. The reviewers have now considered this and have agreed that you can go ahead with your research project, with the following conditions:

.....None

This is subject to receipt of a signed hard copy of Part B (Declaration) of the School of Education Research Ethics application form which is available at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/education/ethics>. This hard copy is then held on file. This ensures that we comply with university requirements about signatures.

Yours sincerely

Chris Gaffney
Research Degrees Administrative Secretary

PP

Dr David Hyatt (Chair of Ethical Review Board) – signed 31st October 2016

Appendix D

Pre-Survey Pilot Study :
Perceptions Questionnaire for Teachers

<u>Instructions:</u>				
Please tick the relevant boxes, according to this legend:				
SA = Strongly Agree	A = Agree	D = Disagree	SD = Strongly Disagree	

		SA	A	D	SD
1	My perception of storytelling as a mode of teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool.				
	My reasons are :				
		SA	A	D	SD
2	I agree with literature on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills.				
	My reasons are :				

Please respond to **either** (3a) **or** (3b).

(3a) I have been using storytelling as a mode of teaching English language skills for the past ____ year(s). My reasons are:					
	I have used the following storytelling activities and found them very helpful in teaching English language skills.	SA	A	D	SD
i	Teacher shows the book cover to students to promote predictive skills and to motivate them.				
ii	Teacher asks questions on the title (or subject) of the story to arouse interest and focus meaning.				
iii	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding their feelings to show their understanding.				
iv	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.				
v	Students respond to questions on the content of the story to show their understanding.				
(3b) I have <u>not</u> been using storytelling as a mode of teaching English language skills. (i) My reasons are: (ii) Would you like to try using storytelling to teach English language skills? My reasons are:					
		SA	A	D	SD
4	I am confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills.				
	My reasons are:				

		SA	A	D	SD
5	I feel that storytelling facilitation skills training should be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers.				
	My reasons are:				

- 6 If storytelling activities were to be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers, which activities would you like to be included?

Before-Activities:*(You may tick as many as you like.)*

a	Students make pictures of key elements in the story which the teacher can then use when s/he tells it (to create readiness and teach new vocabulary).	
b	Students mime key elements of the story (as a way of motivating students and promoting prediction of key elements in the story).	
c	Teacher shows the book cover to students to promote predictive skills and to motivate them.	
d	Teacher asks questions on the title (or subject) of the story to arouse interest and focus meaning.	
e	Students place muddled pictures in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements.	
f	Students place a few key words from the story in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements.	
g	Students place ten key sentences from the story in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements.	
h	Teach or revise keys words to focus meaning and promote prediction	




During-Activities:*(You may tick as many as you like.)*

i	Listen to the story and mime it as they listen to show their understanding.	
j	Listen and point to pictures to show their understanding.	
k	Listen and put the pictures in sequence to show their understanding.	
l	Listen and arrange texts to show their understanding.	
m	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding their feelings to show their understanding.	
n	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding the protagonists' feelings to show their understanding.	
o	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.	
p	Students join in on the chorus or make background noises, as an indication of their interest in the story.	


















After-Activities:*(You may tick as many as you like.)*

q	Students mime the story or bits of it to show their understanding and make a creative response.	
r	Students dramatize the story or bits of it to show their understanding and make a creative response.	
s	Students make a big picture book as a class (Each student or pair of students might do one page with an illustration and a text) to show their understanding and make a creative response.	
t	Students use the big picture book they have collectively created for re-telling the story to show their understanding and make a creative response.	
u	The teacher tells the story again, but this time with mistakes for the students to correct to test their understanding.	
v	Students extend the story or change part of it to show their understanding and creativity.	
w	Students write letters to each other as if they are the protagonists from the story to show their understanding and creativity.	
x	Students put card strips with key sentences on them in the correct sequence to show their understanding.	
y	Students respond to questions on the content of the story to show their understanding.	
z	Students produce visual maps to capture key elements of the story as a way of showing their understanding.	

Pre-Survey Pilot Study:
Perceptions Questionnaire for Students

		 Yes	 No
1	I have attended English storytelling lessons before.		
2	If your answer is “ yes ”, please let us know the following: a) the number of English storytelling lessons you have attended: _____ b) where the English storytelling lessons were conducted: _____ c) who conducted the English storytelling lessons: _____ d) when the English storytelling lessons were conducted: _____		

Please tick (✓) only one response for each of the following questions.

3	Do you enjoy listening to stories in English during English language lessons?	 all the time	 sometimes	 not at all
4	Do you enjoy reading stories during English language lessons?	 all the time	 sometimes	 not at all
5	Do you enjoy acting out parts of the stories read by you, your classmates, or your teacher during English language lessons?	 all the time	 sometimes	 not at all
6	Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language?	 all the time	 sometimes	 not at all
	Why/Why not? _____ _____ _____			
7	How has storytelling helped you in your learning of English language skills?	 all the time	 sometimes	 not at all
	How has it helped you? _____ _____ _____			
8		 Yes	 No	
	If storytelling has never been included in your English language lessons in primary one, two or three, would you like it to be included in your primary four English language lessons? My reasons are:			

**Pre-Survey Pilot Study Teacher and Student Questionnaires:
Ethical Consent Letters to Teachers and Parents**

Sample Letter to Primary Four Teachers

Dear Teacher

Storytelling Perceptions Research: Pilot Study of Questionnaires

As part of the requirements of my postgraduate research on Primary Four teachers' and students' perceptions of storytelling as a mode for teaching and learning English language skills, I will be conducting a survey with teachers and students. To enable me to design comprehensive questionnaires for eliciting teachers' and students' perceptions, I am conducting this questionnaire pre-test on a small sample of Primary Four teachers.

I am pleased to inform you that your Principal has recommended you for this pre-testing of the questionnaires. Your input will be invaluable in my design of the final set of questionnaires. Hence, I will very much value your detailed input.

If you need further clarification, please call me at 96164313.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
Connie Seng

Sample Consent Form to Parents of Primary Four Pupils

Dear Parent

Storytelling Perceptions Research: Pilot Study of Questionnaires

As part of the requirements of my postgraduate research on Primary Four teachers' and students' perceptions of storytelling as a mode for teaching and learning English language skills, I will be conducting a survey with teachers and students. To enable me to design comprehensive questionnaires for eliciting teachers' and students' perceptions, I am conducting this questionnaire pre-test on a small sample of Primary Four students.

I am pleased to inform you that your child's teacher has recommended your child for this pre-testing of the questionnaire. His/her input will be invaluable in my design of the final questionnaire.

I hope that you will give your consent to your child's participation in this questionnaire pre-test. I look forward to hearing favourably from you. If you need further clarification, please call me at 96164313.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully
Connie Seng

Main Study Teacher and Student Questionnaires:
Ethical Consent Letters to Teachers and Parents

Sample Letter to Primary Four Teachers

<p>Dear Teacher</p> <p><u>Storytelling Perceptions Survey</u></p> <p>As part of the requirements of my postgraduate research on Primary Four teachers' and students' perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching and learning English language skills, I am conducting a survey with Primary Four teachers and students. The objective of the survey is to find out how teachers and students view storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills. Hence, I would be very grateful if you could assist me in this survey.</p> <p>As your input may have an impact on how English language curriculum may be conceived, it would be very helpful if you could give detailed responses. Also, as a follow-up of the survey, I might need to conduct a short interview with a small group of teachers. I hope you would oblige when approached.</p> <p>Finally, I would like to assure you that all responses will be kept <u>confidential</u> as there is no requirement for me to mention any names in my data analysis and discussion. However, I would be happy to share my findings with you after my study. If you need further clarification, please call me at 96164313.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Yours sincerely Ms Connie Seng</p>	<p>Date: _____</p>
<p><u>Teacher's Reply</u></p> <p>(Please tick the relevant box.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I <u>agree</u> to participate in this Storytelling Perceptions Survey.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I <u>do not agree</u> to participate in this Storytelling Perceptions Survey.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p>Name/Signature of Teacher</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>

Sample Consent Form to Parents of Primary Four Pupils

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian

Storytelling Perceptions Research: Questionnaire

As part of the requirements of my postgraduate research on Primary Four teachers' and pupils' perceptions of storytelling as a tool for teaching and learning English language skills, I am conducting a survey with Primary Four teachers and pupils. The objective of the survey is to find out how teachers and pupils view storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills.

I am pleased to inform you that your child's form teacher has recommended your child for this survey. His/her inputs will be invaluable to my research, which may have an impact on how English language curriculum may be conceived. Hence, I would be very grateful if you could allow your child to participate in this survey. The Student Questionnaire is attached for your perusal.

Also, as a follow-up of the survey, I may need to conduct a short interview with a small group of pupils. If need be, I may conduct a brief interview with your child.

Finally, I would like to assure you that all responses will be kept confidential as there is no requirement for me to mention any names in my data analysis and discussion. However, I would be happy to share my findings with you after my study.

I look forward to hearing favourably from you. If you need further clarification, please call me at 96164313.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Ms Connie Seng

Parent's Reply

(Please tick the relevant box.)

I **allow** my child/ward to participate in this survey.

I **do not allow** my child/ward to participate in this survey.

Name/Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Appendix H

Main Study Perceptions Questionnaire for Primary Four Teachers**Instructions:**

Please tick the relevant boxes, according to this legend:

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

		SA	A	D	SD
1	My perception of storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills is that it is a good teaching tool.				
My reasons are <i>(Please tick relevant boxes)</i> :					
A	Stories are able to captivate children's interest because they love to listen to stories.				
B	It is a tool to help teachers convey abstract concepts such as filial piety and honesty.				
C	Many activities / teaching points can be elicited from a story.				
D	It is easier and less time consuming to arouse pupils' interest in a lesson with storytelling than playing games.				
E	It helps in classroom management – students become more attentive, and are less distracted.				
F	Listening to stories instills the love of language in students and motivates them to read.				
g	Storytelling encourages children to see that there is a logical sequence in stories, and it is hoped that they may apply this knowledge to their own storytelling.				
H	Storytelling promotes critical and higher order thinking such as analysis and evaluation.				
I	Through storytelling, teachers can instil in pupils a love for reading.				
j	Through storytelling, teachers can inculcate values for character development.				
k	It is very time consuming to tell stories.				
L	It is difficult to teach English language skills through storytelling.				
M	Storytelling can only serve as a pre-activity to generate interest.				
N	Literature or research on storytelling only focuses on successful cases.				
p	Literature or research on storytelling in English language very often focuses on children who are native speakers of the English language.				
<u>Other reasons:</u>					

		SA	A	D	SD
2	I agree with <u>literature or research</u> on storytelling that it is a useful tool for teaching English language skills.				
Below are some claims made by storytelling advocates. Please tick the statements you <u>agree</u> with (<i>You may tick more than one box</i>):					
a	"Hearing stories instills love of language in children and motivates them to read." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 4)				
b	"Hearing stories stimulates the imagination." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 3)				
c	"Indeed, an important aim of nurturing children as storytellers is to help them develop confidence in themselves as communicators, and a sense of self-worth in their ability to share stories with their peers." (Mallan, 1991, p. 15)				
d	"Storytelling improves expressive language skills and stimulates inventive thinking." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 15)				
e	"... the requirements to 'speak clearly and confidently' and to 'listen, understand and respond to others', will be met by hearing and telling stories where the need to speak with 'clear diction, to choose words with precision, organize what they say and take into account the needs of their listeners is self-evident." (Grugeon and Gardner, 2000, p. 6)				
f	"Listening to stories helps children become aware of the rhythm, intonation and pronunciation of language." (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p. 2)				
g	"Storybooks develop children's learning strategies such as listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing." (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p. 2). "Exposure to stories, heard or viewed, enables children to extend their knowledge of story schema; that is to establish expectations as to what will occur in the story." (Mallan, 1991, p. 13)				
h	"The repetitious language patterns and cumulative story events of predictable books and stories ... can help children to make accurate predictions of meaning and to anticipate language patterns and plot and sequence development." (Nelson, 1989, p. 389) (Wright, 2002)				
i	"In the classroom, stories help to uncover the lenses through which individual students interpret experience." (Lowe, 2002, p. 4) Storytelling helps to develop children's understanding of self and others. (Mallan, 1991, p. 12)				
j	"...storytelling helps children to read and write because it gives them frameworks or schema for understanding text." (Mallan, 1991, p. 15)				
k	"Hearing stories improves many language skills, such as vocabulary, comprehension, sequencing and story recall." (Hamilton and Weiss, 1990, p. 6)				
l	"The storytelling experience ... is a vehicle for enhancing comprehension, both literal and inferential; motivating oral discussion ..." (Nelson, 1989, p. 389) "When storytelling is combined with judicious questioning and retelling strategies, comprehension skills at the literal, inferential and critical levels can be developed." (Mallan, 1991, p. 13)				
m	"Stories, which rely so much on words, offer a major and constant source of language experience for children." (Wright, 1995: 6). ".... students will acquire over time the language necessary for communication as the stories will contain a wide variety of natural language rich in vocabulary and grammatical complexity ." (McQuillan & Tse, 1998, p. 21).				
n	Storytelling "contributes to pupils' written English": pupils are required "to communicate meaning in narrative" and "sequence events, and recount them in appropriate detail", "to use a language and style appropriate to the reader and to develop ideas into structured written texts". (Grugeon and Gardner, 2000, p. 6)				
o	Storytelling improves children's vocabulary (Hamilton & Weiss, 1990). "Listening to stories allows the teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures by exposing the children to language in varied, memorable and familiar contexts, which will enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech." (Ellis & Brewster, 2002, p. 2).				
<u>Comments, if any:</u>					

Please respond to **either** (3a) **or** (3b) only.

(3a) (i) I have been using storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills for the past _____ year(s).	
(ii) I have used the following storytelling activities and found them very helpful in teaching English language skills.	
a	I usually show my students the cover of a storybook to promote predictive skills and to motivate them.
b	I usually ask my students questions about the title (or subject) of the story to arouse their interest and focus meaning.
c	During the storytelling, my students will respond to my questions regarding their feelings to show their understanding.
d	During the storytelling, my students respond to my questions regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.
e	I get my students to retell the stories they have read or heard because I believe that they will become aware of story structures and how to sequence the events and recount them in an intelligible way.
f	I get my students to dramatize part of the story, or the whole story, to help them remember the story in a fun way and learn the language and vocabulary used in the story.
g	I conduct meaningful follow-up activities such as art and craft, music, poetry, book review, journal writing or visual mapping.
h	I get my students to create vocabulary maps to record the new vocabulary they have learnt from the stories.
<u>Other activities:</u>	

(3b)	
(i) I have not been using storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills.	
My reasons are (<i>Please tick relevant boxes</i>) :	
a	I am not sure how to use storytelling as a mode for teaching English language skills.
b	I have not received any training in storytelling.
c	I do not see the relevance of storytelling in learning English language skills.
d	I am not able to relate storytelling to the specific English language skills I want to teach.
e	I think telling stories to a large class will not be effective.
f	I am more concerned about covering the syllabus and the learning outcomes listed in the syllabus document or department scheme of work.
<u>Other reasons:</u>	

(ii) Would you like to try using storytelling to teach English language skills?					
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>			No <input type="checkbox"/>		
My reasons are (<i>Please tick relevant boxes</i>) :					
a	I believe storytelling is a useful tool to teach English Language skills.				
b	I believe it is a good tool I can draw on.				
c	Literature and research on storytelling have highlighted many benefits in terms of teaching English language skills.				
d	Children enjoy listening to stories and I want to learn to use this as a tool for teaching English language skills.				
e	I would like to use storytelling as a tool for teaching English language skills, but I would need some training on how to relate it to specific language skills.				
f	I do not think it is the best way to teach English language skills.				
g	I prefer to use other means of teaching English language skills, e.g. multi-media resources, music, experiential learning, etc.				
Other reasons:					

			SA	A	D
4	I am confident about using storytelling to teach English language skills.				
My reasons are (<i>Please tick relevant boxes</i>) :					
a	I like to learn new strategies, and storytelling seems a useful strategy.				
b	I have attended workshops on storytelling.				
c	I can relate storytelling to specific English language skills.				
d	I am able to vary my tone and pitch to convey the different emotions in a story, and I will be a good model for my students' oral communication.				
e	I have not attended any formal courses on storytelling.				
f	I am not expressive enough to tell stories in an interesting manner.				
g	I don't know how to relate storytelling to specific English language skills.				
Other reasons:					

		SA	A	D	SD
5	I feel that training in storytelling facilitation skills should be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers.				
My reasons are (<i>Please tick relevant boxes</i>) :					
A	Such training in storytelling facilitation skills will help teachers to prepare for incorporating storytelling as a teaching tool.				
B	With pre-service training, teachers will be trained right from the beginning, so they can apply the skills straightaway when they join the school.				
C	It is important to emphasize the relevance of storytelling at an earlier stage of teacher development.				
D	It is a useful tool not just for teaching English language skills but also for relating to adults/colleagues.				
Other reasons: _____ _____					

- 6 If storytelling activities were to be included in pre-service or in-service training for teachers, which activities would you like to be included? (*Activities adapted from Wright, 2002: 4-5*)

Before-Activities:

(*You may tick as many as you like.*)

a	Students make pictures of key elements in the story which the teacher can then use when s/he tells it (to create readiness and teach new vocabulary).	
b	Students mime key elements of the story (as a way of motivating students and promoting prediction of key elements in the story).	
c	Teacher shows the cover of a storybook to students to promote predictive skills and to motivate them.	
d	Teacher asks questions about the title (or subject) of the story to arouse interest and focus on meaning.	
e	Students place muddled pictures in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements.	
f	Students place a few key words from the story in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements.	
g	Students place ten key sentences from the story in the sequence they predict as a way of motivating them and promoting prediction of story elements.	
h	Teach students or revise keys words with them to focus meaning and promote prediction.	

During-Activities:

(*You may tick as many as you like.*)




i	Students listen to the story and mime it as they listen to show their understanding.	
j	Students listen and point to pictures to show their understanding.	
k	Students listen and put the muddled pictures in sequence to show their understanding.	
l	Students listen and arrange story texts to show their understanding.	
m	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding their feelings to show their understanding.	
n	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding the protagonists' feelings to show their understanding.	
o	Students answer the teacher's questions during the story regarding what might happen next to show their understanding.	
p	Students join in on the chorus or make background noises, as an indication of their interest in the story.	

After-Activities:*(You may tick as many as you like.)*













q	Students <u>mime</u> the story or bits of it to show their understanding and make a creative response.	
r	Students <u>dramatize</u> the story or bits of it to show their understanding and make a creative response.	
s	Students make a big picture book as a class to show their understanding and make a creative response. (Each student or pair of students might do one page with an illustration and a text).	
t	Students use the big picture book they have collectively created for re-telling the story to show their understanding and make a creative response.	
u	The teacher tells the story again, but this time with mistakes for the students to correct to test their understanding.	
v	Students extend the story or change part of it to show their understanding and creativity.	
w	Students write letters to each other as if they are the protagonists from the story to show their understanding and creativity.	
x	Students put card strips with key sentences on them in the correct sequence to show their understanding.	
y	Students respond to questions on the content of the story to show their understanding.	
z	Students produce visual maps to capture key elements of the story as a way of showing their understanding.	

Appendix I

Main Study Perceptions Questionnaire for Primary Four Students

		 Yes	 No
1	I have attended English storytelling lessons before.		
2	If your answer is “ yes ”, please let us know the following: e) the number of English storytelling lessons you have attended: _____ f) where the English storytelling lessons were conducted: _____ _____ g) who conducted the English storytelling lessons: _____ h) when the English storytelling lessons were conducted: _____		

Please tick (✓) only **one** response for each of the following questions.

3	Do you enjoy listening to stories in English during English language lessons?	 <input type="checkbox"/> all the time	 <input type="checkbox"/> sometimes	 <input type="checkbox"/> not at all
4	Do you enjoy reading stories during English language lessons?	 <input type="checkbox"/> all the time	 <input type="checkbox"/> sometimes	 <input type="checkbox"/> not at all
5	Do you enjoy acting out parts of the stories read by you, your classmates, or your teacher during English language lessons?	 <input type="checkbox"/> all the time	 <input type="checkbox"/> sometimes	 <input type="checkbox"/> not at all
6	Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language skills?	 <input type="checkbox"/> all the time	 <input type="checkbox"/> sometimes	 <input type="checkbox"/> not at all
Why / Why not? _____ _____ _____				

**Collated Reasons Given by the Student Participants for Student Questionnaire
Questions 6 to 8**

Substantive statements (key ideas) = highlighted in bold and underlined

Question 6: Do you like your teacher to use stories to teach you English language skills? Why / Why not?

	Socio-emotional	Language value	Moral value	Others
School A	<p>Umar: "As it will make the lessons <u>interesting</u> and we will learn new things."</p> <p>Val: "It is <u>fun</u> and interesting and..."</p> <p>Ping: "Because the lesson will be <u>fun</u> and <u>interesting</u>."</p> <p>Huixin: "I like only those <u>interesting</u> stories."</p> <p>May: "It make the lesson <u>more interesting</u>."</p> <p>Joel: "It is <u>more interesting</u>."</p> <p>Linyi: "If the teacher uses stories, the lesson will be much <u>interesting</u> and everyone will <u>enjoy</u> the lesson."</p>	<p>Suzanne: "I love reading and listening to stories because they <u>build up my English</u>."</p> <p>Vicky: "Because it will not be boring to study and besides that, we can even learn <u>difficult words</u>."</p> <p>Val: "...helps us with <u>vocabulary</u>"</p>		<p>Sara: "It <u>help me a lot</u>."</p> <p>Xiwen: "Yes, because I can <u>learn a lot of thing</u>"</p> <p>Arina: "It <u>won't make me feel bored</u>."</p> <p>Kenneth: "It <u>helps me with my learning</u>."</p> <p>Lissa: "Yes, because it <u>helps us to learn better</u>."</p> <p>Asna: "...I keep thinking of the story."</p> <p>Tina: "It's <u>good to use stories</u> in English lesson."</p> <p>Edward: "I <u>want to hear stories</u>."</p> <p>Chloe: "It because I <u>want half for my teacher to use stories</u> to teach me and half for my teacher to teach some other English language."</p> <p>Brian: "Because I don't like stories"</p>
School B	<p>Ronald: "Because It is <u>fun</u> and <u>interesting</u>."</p> <p>Aaron: "t is fun and teach us how to act better."</p> <p>Eddie: "Because stories are <u>fun</u> to read..."</p> <p>Kok Beng: "It is <u>fun</u> and <u>interesting</u>."</p> <p>Lenny: "It will be more <u>fun</u> and <u>interesting</u>. It will also attract our attention."</p> <p>Ben: "Stories are <u>interesting</u>."</p> <p>Dan: "<u>Sometimes</u>, the skills that we learn are <u>interesting</u>, the rest, however, is not."</p> <p>Rupert: "I like my teacher to use stories to teach English as I think it is more <u>fun</u> than going through papers."</p> <p>Martin: "It is very <u>fun</u> and ..."</p> <p>Nathan: "I enjoyed listening stories as they may be <u>interesting</u>."</p> <p>Yang Yu: "I like listening to stories as it is very <u>funny</u>. I only <u>enjoy</u> reading stories and acting out sometimes as it is boring. I would appreciate it a lot if my teacher use</p>	<p>Jared: "... and when we read some stories aloud, it will <u>enhance our communication skills</u>."</p> <p>Eddie: "... and its helps me to <u>learn more vocabulary</u>."</p> <p>Ashley: "As I enjoy listening to stories because they not only improve my <u>grammar</u> and <u>listening</u> skills but also give me an indepth experience on <u>writing</u> compositions."</p> <p>SamuelThe students will get to learn more <u>adjectives</u> and have fun, acting out parts of the stories.</p> <p>Shao Min: "Yes, it teaches me on <u>how to answer some questions in the exam paper</u>."</p> <p>Martin: "... and it can help me to build up my storytelling skills."</p> <p>Paul: "If the story is <u>interesting</u>, I would use some good words to improve my vocabulary skills further...."</p>	<p>Jared: "I feel that some stories have <u>morals</u> in them..."</p> <p>Amos: "It is <u>fun</u> and it teaches us <u>co-operation</u>."</p> <p>Cavin: "The stories usually have a <u>moral</u> or <u>some new phrases</u> and it can improve our English."</p>	<p>Ray: "It <u>doesn't teach anything</u>."</p> <p>Yipong: "I <u>don't like to read and act</u>."</p> <p>James: "I <u>like English</u>."</p>

	<p>stories to teach me English Language skills.”</p> <p>Brandon: “Interesting and easier to understand the lesson.”</p> <p>Isaac: “It’s fun and interesting to listen to stories, regardless of the topic.”</p> <p>Max: “To make learning interesting.”</p>	<p>Mark: “If we keep on reading books it could enhance our vocabulary skills. As for acting out parts of the stories, if we do that, pupils would get the idea of what the characters did and that would help pupils in their understanding of the question in the reading comprehension.”</p>		
School C	<p>Muthu: “If only writing is done during English language lessons, the lesson gets boring and I have the feeling of hating English.”</p> <p>Ganesh: “I like English stories.”</p> <p>Jack: “Because it makes the lesson more interesting.”</p> <p>Jonathan: “As it will be more interest.”</p> <p>Darren: “We can learn more things as it is more entertaining and it will interest many young readers.”</p> <p>Mohan: “Listening to english stories are found to be very interesting by me. it makes the lessons more exciting. In my personal feeling, I think storytelling makes the lesson more thrilling.”</p>	<p>Vasu: “Why because we can improve our English and listening skills. Why not? Some story’s very boaring.”</p> <p>Zen Long: “To improve our vocabulary”</p>		<p>Evan: “So we will learn more.”</p> <p>Hasek: “I like it because we learn a lot of things during the story Mrs Lau told us.”</p> <p>Rai: “It helps us to understand english language.”</p> <p>Bryan: “I do not want because maybe I can get a little confused.”</p> <p>Melvin: “I would rather read a story myself than having someone tell it to me.”</p> <p>Farid: “I do not go to the library so much. I like to read stories all the time. I join english club to act and I like my teacher’s skills.”</p> <p>Boon Teck: “Because she use a very good story to teach us English.”</p>
School D	<p>Lucy: “Using the story telling for a part of learning English is more interesting than the normal lessons.”</p> <p>Yang Yew: “I enjoy it as I am a bookworm and also the stories are very interesting.”</p> <p>Glenda: “It makes the lessons interesting and I can understand better.”</p> <p>Xiyan: “Because stories are interesting and I always look forward to them.”</p> <p>Cheryl: “My favourite hobby is reading books, therefore, I enjoy reading stories during English lessons.”</p> <p>Jessie: “Listening to stories captures my interest.”</p> <p>Yen Lin: “I like to listen to stories because it is very interesting.”</p> <p>Elaine: “I like reading and acting out parts all the time to let me know more about English.”</p> <p>Pei Pei: “It make the lesson more interesting not that boring.”</p> <p>Maverick: “Make the lesson more interesting.”</p>	<p>John: “It is interesting and can learn new words and phrases.”</p> <p>Kee Beng: “To improve my english grammar and vocabulary”</p> <p>Elsie: “I can learn new words from the stories.”</p> <p>Mei Mei: “I can improve my writing skills.”</p>	Ivy: “We can know more new stories, and act out as a play to know and understand the moral of the story.”	<p>Kara: “Sometime we cannot use it to help us during sometime on lesson.”</p> <p>Yi Song: “It is easier to understand”</p>

	<p>Derrick: "To make the lesson much more interesting."</p> <p>Peter: "Make the lesson more interesting, won't be so boring."</p> <p>Warren: "I enjoy because english is fun when you learn using it correctly. Acting it is fun too when you read it out and get what the story tells you."</p> <p>Grace: "They are interesting and easy to let me understand the language."</p>			
School E	<p>Yvonne: "It is fun and quick learned"</p> <p>Mel: "t's interesting and it helps us to remember and learn new things at the same time."</p> <p>Nat: "Interesting, fun, good method ("stories")"</p> <p>Olivia: "It is very fun to act, read and listen to stories."</p> <p>Jill: "It is because it is very interesting."</p> <p>Sherie: "...It is also more interesting and lively"</p>	<p>Qilin: "I feel that listening to stories during lesson will make english lessons more fun and by acting out will make me understand the story or passage better."</p>	<p>Rosa: "Acting out the parts of the stories help us to develop better friendship with our friends (if I am acting with my friends) and help us to understand more of the story by actions."</p>	<p>Sumiko: "So that I can learn"</p> <p>Pam: "So that she can teach us better"</p> <p>Sherie: "Storytelling can help us understand the language better..."</p>
School F	<p>Zoe: "It is because having stories as part of the lesson is fun and interesting. Sometimes, lessons are very boring so having stories told are very fun."</p> <p>Avriel: "Sometimes, the book my teacher is teaching does not have any new words for me to learn. Story books are so exciting especially the horror books. Acting out parts of the stories read by you is so fun. I will improve."</p> <p>Sidek: "It is fun."</p> <p>Eunice: "I like stories because it is interesting."</p> <p>Taufik: "I love storytelling and enjoy listening to it. I enjoy telling stories too."</p> <p>Rosita: "It is really exciting and fun about non-fiction book and fiction books."</p> <p>Suyanti: "It is fun and I have enjoyed reading since young."</p> <p>Yara: "It is because listening to stories is very interesting and..."</p> <p>Freddie: "Something the story is boring."</p> <p>Evelyn: "Sometimes the story go boring."</p>		<p>Yara: "...and I can learn many morals from the stories."</p> <p>Ximin: "it gives us an idea and model about what happened and let us realize our mistakes."</p>	<p>Wendy: "so that the class will improve in their english."</p> <p>Roslinda: "I like my teacher to use stories to teach so that my English will get better."</p> <p>Roland: "t is alright to have my teacher to teach EL language skills occasionally, but if it is too frequent I would not like that because we still need to revise our home work and work sheets."</p>

Question 7: Has storytelling helped you in your learning of English language skills? How has it helped you?

	Grammar/vocabulary	Composition writing	Speaking (and confidence)	Others
School A	<p>Umar: "It has helped me improve my vocabulary."</p> <p>Val: "It built up my vocabulary and help me during my composition."</p> <p>Lissa: "It helps me with my vocabulary and grammar."</p> <p>Suzanne: "Improve my grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation."</p> <p>Arina: "It can help me to know more vocabularies."</p> <p>Linyi: "It help us to use good grammar, learn new words and uses good sentences."</p> <p>Huixin: "Some of the books have many vocabulary words. The vocabulary words can help me in writing composition. That's why I like to read storybooks!"</p>	<p>Vicky: "I could do compositions and comprehension better and I could use difficult words to improve my compositions and comprehension."</p> <p>Tina: "It help me with my compo and the way I speak."</p> <p>Edward: "by using the words and use it for composition"</p>	<p>Joel: "It makes me more confident when I speak."</p> <p>Ping: "It helped me to build up my confidence."</p> <p>Kenneth: "I can pronounce word more clearly."</p> <p>Janet: "They helped me by pronouncing the words properly."</p>	<p>Asna: "It make me use the good english when I am talking to my relatives. And it improved my english."</p> <p>Chloe: "By helping me to understand better."</p> <p>Xiwen: "to read."</p> <p>May: "It helped me improved my listening skills."</p>
School B	<p>Cavin: "It helps us improve on our English gives us ideas of how to write our compositions."</p> <p>Kok Beng: "It has helped me in my vocabulary."</p> <p>Lenny: "By checking the dictionary and to find out the meaning of the words that I'm not familiar with. It helped me to also learn some good phrases."</p> <p>Dan: "It has helped me in my spelling, and grammar."</p> <p>Eddie: "It helps me improve my compositions and to learn more vocabulary."</p> <p>Rupert: "It has helped me in my oral, vocabulary and grammar."</p> <p>Paul: "It has helped me to improve my vocabulary, grammar and composition writing ability skills sometimes."</p> <p>Nathan: "It helps me to learn new words from the teacher when the teacher is telling the story."</p> <p>Shao Min: "It helped me by having useful phrases in the book, letting me learn them."</p> <p>Mark: "It helped me build up my vocabulary skills and to learn to ask our parents for help when I come across words never seen or heard."</p>	<p>Amos: "Learn new words and teaches us write our composition better."</p> <p>Ronald: "It helps us improve our english skills and write composition."</p> <p>Aaron: "We can learn more new word, helps us to write our composition better."</p> <p>Ben: "It has helped me by learning new words and learning how to write a better story."</p> <p>Ashley: "It has helped me understand than English in a universal language with an infinite number of possibilities for compositions of all kinds and has helped me developed my own style in composition writing."</p> <p>Samuel: "It has helped me by learning more ways to write compositions, by including more adjectives and ways to begin with a story as well as end a story."</p>	<p>Jared: "It builds up my confidence in communicating and it also teaches me new facts. It also makes me want to read more and inquire further about some facts that I do not understand."</p> <p>Isaac: "It helped my oral as well as my pronunciation for long words."</p> <p>Rupert: "For oral I have learned how to change my voice for different characters."</p>	<p>Brandon: "Easier to speak to others."</p> <p>Martin: "I can memorise some of the storytelling morals and apply it into my work."</p>
School C	<p>Hasek: "The story contains new grammar for us to learn."</p> <p>Jack: "It helps to explain certain words I am not sure of."</p> <p>Bryan: "It help me improve my English speaking skills."</p> <p>Boon Teck: "It teach us how to read bombastic words and</p>	<p>Muthu: "It has helped me how to write better compositions and taught me how to speak better english."</p> <p>Vasu: "To learn new words and to write my composition."</p>	<p>Rai: "It has helped me improve my language and my confidence."</p>	<p>Gavin: "It help me to understand the story better."</p> <p>Jonathan: "It help me score well in English examinalt"</p> <p>Gopinan: "I can</p>

	<p>how to read out a story.</p> <p>Don: "It helped me to improve my grammar and vocabulary."</p> <p>Darren: "It has helped me to improve my vocabulary and spelling. It has also helped me with my oral, composition, and the way I speak."</p> <p>Mohan: "In most stories, very good vocabulary will be used. So, by reading them, it will improve our word bank a lot and by improving my word bank, it will be very useful in our composition writing."</p>	<p>Farid: "Storytelling helps me to improve on my compositions and I could use the words if nessery."</p> <p>Ganesh: "It has helped the way I speak during the oral English Examinations, and has improved the way I speak English."</p>		<p>understand more about english."</p> <p>Zen Long: "Get more idea."</p>
School D	<p>John: "It has help me in my vocabulary and grammar."</p> <p>Lucy: "It helps me in the grammar and vocabulary in examinations like compositions and paper 2 exam, and I find my results getting better."</p> <p>Warren: "In my grammar and vocabulary and also my compositions."</p> <p>Peter: "Grammar and vocabulary."</p> <p>Maverick: "Grammar and vocabulary"</p> <p>Pei Pei: "Grammar and vocabulary"</p> <p>Elaine: "It has helped me in my English like Grammar and Vocabulary."</p> <p>Jessie: "It helps me to improve my vocabulary."</p> <p>Cheryl: "It helps me to learn new words."</p> <p>Kee Beng: "It helped me to learn more words that I had not learn before."</p> <p>Xiyen: "It teaches me vocabulary and grammar."</p>	<p>Ivy: "In my exam, especially in composition, I can remind myself of some of the stories I heard and imagine out in the composition. I could use new grammar that I have not learned from the stories."</p> <p>Yi Song: "To write better compo"</p> <p>Mei Mei: "It helps me in writing stories."</p> <p>Yen Lin: "It improves my writing skills."</p> <p>Elsie: "It helps me in writing compositions."</p> <p>Yang Yew: "It has helped my compo to get higher marks and improve my sense of English."</p> <p>Grace: "I can take out some phrase to use in my compos, and language."</p>		<p>Kara: "Help me in my language"</p> <p>Derrick: "To improve my english."</p> <p>Glenda: "Through story telling, I am able to understand better."</p>
School E	<p>Rosa: "It helps us to gain more knowledge and boost up our vocabulary. If we act out some parts of the story, we will understand by actions if we don't understand the words in the stories. It also develops creative ideas for us if we are writing a composition or having discussions in groups."</p> <p>Yvonne: "It help me with some of the word which I don't know."</p> <p>Sumiko: "I will learn the words that I am not sure."</p> <p>Nat: "It helped me with the tenses, vocabulary. But I still not creative in my writing."</p> <p>Olivia: "I had learned more english words and to understand english activities."</p> <p>Qilin: "We will listen to our friends telling stories, sometimes our friends have grammar mistakes, so we can help them. By helping them we are also learning from our friends."</p>			<p>Mel: "It's easier to learn and remember the things we've learned and at the same time, the story will teach us something new."</p> <p>Pam: "Better command of English"</p> <p>Sherie: "It helps me to understand better."</p>

	Jill: "I have learnt some new words."			
School F	<p>Yara: "It has helped me by the glossary in the book that explains the meaning of the difficult words in the book and it also builds up my vocabulary."</p> <p>Wendy: "It helped me in my vocabulary and pronunciation."</p> <p>Ximin: "It helps me by giving me more vocabulary and perfecting my grammar."</p> <p>Zoe: "Yes. It improved my english vocabulary skills. I also learned new words."</p> <p>Avriel: "It helped me by teaching me more better words that I can learn."</p> <p>Taufik: "It helped me by knowing more words."</p> <p>Roslinda: "It has helped me by knowing what is the meaning of a word or a phrase that I do not know."</p> <p>Suyanti: "Sometimes the storytelling contains words that are new to me, and the storyline help me to understand it more better."</p> <p>Rosita: "The new words from the book."</p> <p>Freddie: "It can teach me many different words."</p> <p>Sidek: "To improve my english."</p> <p>Paula: "It helps me to spell word and learn grammar."</p>		<p>Eunice: "The storytelling helps me to improve my English and increase my confidence in speaking English."</p> <p>Meng Kwang: "It has helped me by improving skills at oral."</p>	Evelyn: "It helped me by improving well in my studies ."

Question 8: If storytelling has never been included in your English language lessons in primary one, two or three, would you like it to be included in your primary four English language lessons?

My reasons are: _____.

	Socio-emotional value	Encourage reading habit	Language improvement	Others
School A	<p>Val: "It is fun and interesting."</p> <p>Ping: "Storytelling is interesting and it is never boring."</p> <p>Kenneth: "Lessons will be more fun and interesting."</p> <p>Arina: "I think the English lesson would be more interesting."</p> <p>Tina: "It's fun to read stories or listen to them."</p> <p>Linyi: "It is fun and interesting to learn more."</p> <p>Shawn: "It is fun."</p> <p>Edward: "I want the teachers to read stories for me."</p> <p>May: "They make the lessons more interesting."</p>	<p>Suzanne: "I enjoy reading."</p> <p>Huixin: "I am very interested in reading storybook. Once I started to read it, I will never let it off my hand because the stories are too amazing!"</p> <p>Chloe: "I like to read books and I want to read and read till I remember the story and I can tell my friend or sister the story."</p> <p>Xiwen: "At primary one, i cannot read. Now i know how to read."</p>	<p>Umar: "I can learn more new things and improve my vocabulary."</p> <p>Vicky: "It can help me improve my compositions, comprehension s and projects that teacher give."</p> <p>Joel: "It will make me even more confident when I speak."</p>	<p>Asna: "It is because I can use when I am going to primary five and six. And I will be able to go good secondary school."</p> <p>Lissa: "It helps me understand the lesson better."</p> <p>Brian: "Because I like to explore new things."</p> <p>Janet: "Because they helped me to improve my English."</p>

School B	<p>Ben: "Storytelling is like reading a story and is fun and interesting."</p> <p>Dan: "Storytelling is fun, interesting and can help you in your studies."</p> <p>Eddie: "It is interesting to read and sometimes fun."</p> <p>Rupert: "Storytelling is a more fun way to learn than looking through papers and going through papers."</p> <p>Ashley: "It is fun and encourages pupils to read and write through a fun and yet effective experience. I also gives us more knowledge of the modern world!"</p> <p>Martin: "It can help to build up my storytelling skills and it's also very interesting."</p> <p>Nathan: "The lessons will be more interesting and fun and we would not need to keep doing work."</p> <p>Yipong: "I like to listen to stories."</p> <p>Yang Yu: "It is very fun to do and we can also learn some skills while doing storytelling. We can also interact with our friends while doing storytelling. So I would appreciate it very much if storytelling is included in P4 English language lessons."</p> <p>James: "I do not really like to tell stories, I prefer to read on my own." (student's response to question 8 is "no")</p> <p>Brandon: "Makes the lesson more interesting and enjoyable. It also helps student to have more interaction with teacher."</p> <p>Max: "It would be fun."</p>	<p>Samuel: "Storytelling will be a fun period of time for pupils to interact with each other, it will also continue to teach and guide us new ways on how to write better composition."</p> <p>Shao Min: "They help me to pick up vocabulary skills."</p> <p>Mark: "Since we are primary 4, the vocabulary cloze consists of many words we can put in, but some primary 4 students are weak in vocabulary and tend to lose marks there. So, if we put storytelling in primary 4 that would benefit many primary 4 students who are weak in vocabulary."</p> <p>Isaac: "Storytelling is interesting and can also help with oral."</p>	<p>Aaron: "How to speak better."</p> <p>Cavin: "It helps us to improve our English."</p> <p>Ronald: "Speak better, project our voice better."</p> <p>Amos: "How to speak better."</p>	<p>Kok Beng: "Storytelling increases my scope of imagination."</p> <p>Lenny: "I would like to try it."</p> <p>Jared: "It would be preparing me for more challenges next year and would be interesting to know about more stories that I have never heard before."</p> <p>Paul: "I prefer my teacher to conduct her lessons as per normal. I prefer the way I am learning now more than storytelling and speech and drama. In my opinion, I think storytelling activities are a little bit childish." (student's response to question 8 is "no")</p> <p>Ray: "Its boring" (student's response to question 8 is "no")</p>
School C	<p>Vasu: "I like listening to story which can motivate me and improve better then this."</p> <p>Jonathan: "It will be fun."</p> <p>Mohan: "Storytelling makes the lessons very interesting and fun. It will be also very useful for composition writing and stuff. That is why I would like storytelling to be included in our english language lessons."</p>	<p>Melvin: "I am used to reading a book myself."</p> <p>Farid: "I need to improve my english, compositions, and I could use the words"</p> <p>Darren: "Some students will learn faster and will remember better if story telling is included in my English language lessons. It can enable the students to learn faster and speak good English."</p> <p>Zen Long: "To get more idea and learn more words."</p>	<p>Ganesh: "It will improve everyone's written and spoken English."</p> <p>Jack: "It will help me in my 'Oral tests'"</p> <p>Bryan: "It could help many students improve their english speaking skills."</p>	<p>Hasek: "It is because the story telling lessons helped me in improvement for my english a lot."</p> <p>Rai: "It helps to concentrate in our exam."</p> <p>Muhu: "I can learn the subject better and enjoy learn it."</p> <p>Boon Teck: "Because I can learn more in primary four and pass my exams."</p> <p>Don: "I do not like to read out aloud as I will get nervous and my palms will get sweaty."</p> <p>Gopinan: "I want to improve in English."</p>
School D	<p>Ivy: "If storytelling can help me improve my english, why not share my interest with everyone and let them know</p>	<p>Xiyen: "It can teach me many things, vocab, grammar and morals too."</p>		<p>John: "It will help us in our exams"</p> <p>Kara: "We have no time and there is no</p>

	<p>how <u>exciting and interesting</u> story-telling is all really about? If I can do it, I am also sure that others can do it and even better than me.”</p> <p>Lucy: “It would be <u>fun</u> and <u>more interesting.</u>”</p> <p>Yang Yew: “It can help us in our English and the stories are <u>very interesting.</u>”</p> <p>Glenda: “It will make the lessons <u>more lively</u> and not dull and boring.”</p> <p>Kee Beng: “Storytelling is <u>interesting and fun</u> to learn.”</p> <p>Yen Lin: “The English lessons will be more <u>interesting and fun.</u>”</p> <p>Jessie: “The English lessons will be more <u>interesting and fun.</u>”</p> <p>Elsie: “It will be more <u>interesting and fun.</u>”</p> <p>Cheryl: “The English lessons will be more <u>interesting and fun.</u>”</p> <p>Mei Mei: “The English Lessons will be <u>more interesting.</u>”</p> <p>Yi Song: “I <u>like to read and listen to story.</u>”</p> <p>Pei Pei: “so that we no need to read storybooks”.</p> <p>Peter: “So we no need to read storybooks.”</p> <p>Maverick: “So we no need to read storybooks”.</p> <p>Warren: “They are <u>fun</u> to act out, there are a lot of activities and <u>I can imagine that I am the person in the book.</u>”</p> <p>Grace: “They would be <u>more interesting</u> compared to dull and boring leons read from the textbooks. And I think it should be more effective.”</p>	<p>a) Derrick: “So that I can improve my <u>grammar.</u>”</p>		<p><u>storybook for P4</u>” (Kara gave a negative response to question 8).</p> <p>Elaine: “It will <u>be more exciting to act out</u> the story and children will know more about English.”</p>
School E	<p>Nat: “I <u>love</u> storytelling, it is <u>very interesting.</u>”</p> <p>Qilin: “It will be <u>fun</u> and it will help us in our english eventhough it is a little waste of time but we learn something.”</p> <p>Jill: “It can be very interesting.”</p> <p>Sherie: “Storytelling makes the lesson more interesting.”</p>	<p>Olivia: “I can learn <u>more words</u> and sometimes the stories maybe nice to listen.”</p> <p>Sherie: “It helps me to build up my <u>vocabulary.</u> It helps me to learn more new words from the story.”</p>	<p>Pam: “To built my <u>confidence</u> and to <u>express myself better.</u> I can <u>sharper my memory.</u> I get to know more interesting stories. Because I like acting.”</p>	<p>Rosa: “I love reading but there is <u>no time to read</u> as I have a lot of homework now in primary four. If storytelling is included in our primary four English lessons, I can listen to stories. In addition, I also like acting. In storytelling, we <u>can also act the parts in the story.</u> While acting, we <u>can understand more about the story and build up good relationship with our friends while discussing how to act.</u>”</p> <p>Yvonne: “When we grow up we must read more storybook so that we <u>can learn more</u>”</p>

				<p><u>interesting words</u></p> <p>Sumiko: "I am not good at speaking aloud in front of my classmates."</p> <p>Mel: "It helps to <u>improve my English.</u>"</p>
School F	<p>Zoe: "Stories make the class <u>more interesting.</u> When listening to stories, we will not fall asleep."</p> <p>Sidek: "I <u>like to listen</u> in stories."</p> <p>Evelyn: "So, I would have <u>a chance to tell storytelling</u> or maybe <u>heard it.</u>"</p> <p>Rosita: "Yes because it will <u>help me to get more marks</u> on exam or test paper."</p> <p>Suyanti: "Yes, because it will make the lesson <u>more fun and exciting.</u> when my teacher tells us an <u>interesting story it makes me more curious</u> and I will go home and tell my mother about it."</p>	<p>Roslinda: "I like to read storybook."</p> <p>Paula: "I <u>like to read</u> stories."</p>		<p>Yara: "Many stories are <u>interesting</u> and may teach us <u>morals</u> that make us learn much more after reading the book."</p> <p>Wendy: "I <u>enjoy</u> storytelling and I will like to improve my english."</p> <p>Avriel: "I will <u>improve</u> my <u>english words</u> and I will be excellent in english."</p> <p>Taufik: "I like english lessons."</p> <p>Meng Kwang: "It is because <u>I like acting out and reading stories.</u>"</p> <p>Eunice: "I <u>love story telling.</u> If there is no storytelling, it won't help me <u>improve in my English.</u>"</p> <p>Freddie: "I don't know how to do."</p> <p>Roland: "I <u>like</u> the ways my teacher teaches me."</p>

Interview Responses of Teachers

Transcription Symbols	
adapted from Wooffitt (2005, p. 211-212)	
R:	Researcher
...	indicates a pause
—	underlined word(s) indicates speaker's emphasis
(xxx)	indicates omitted word(s)
()	empty brackets indicate the presence of unclear fragment on the tape
(())	a description enclosed in a double bracket indicates a non-verbal activity, e.g. laughter
[]	Square brackets between adjacent lines of concurrent speech indicate the onset (and end) of a spate of overlapping speeches (e.g. when a speaker interrupts another speaker and the speeches overlap at this point)
SS	Substantive Statement

Teacher Anne – female – used storytelling to teach language skills

1	R	We'll now look at the questionnaire that you've filled in. Maybe we look at question 1, one question at a time. In the first question, you seem to agree a lot with whatever reasons we've listed down. <i>So, for you, storytelling is a good teaching tool?</i>	Question to <i>probe for value of storytelling as a teaching tool</i>
2	Anne	Yeeeah. In fact, <i>I use it in class quite often.</i> ^{SS1} But erm...due to, <i>but they have to do quite a fair bit of preparation into it. And then, it is not like eh... one or two lessons.</i> ^{SS2} <i>You have to expand the whole teaching...</i> what you call it... <i>repertoire in order for children to learn, you know, better.</i> ^{SS3} So... <i>It has been quite an effective tool in my class and the children love it.</i> ^{SS4}	SS1: frequent use of storytelling Conjunction "but" suggests reservation, setback SS2: Much efforts in preparing lessons (could be more than two lessons) SS3: storytelling to expand repertoire of teaching approaches SS4: efforts paid off as children love it Matter-of-fact tone
3	R	I notice that you did not tick <i>d</i> and <i>e</i> . You don't think it is any easier to arouse [the] interest of the students with storytelling, or any less time-consuming. In other words, <i>you think it is very time-consuming, yeah?</i>	Question to <i>probe for reasons</i>
4	Anne	<i>Relatively, yes.</i> ^{SS5} Depending on ...I mean... <i>because of the curriculum, you know we have to fulfil our teaching and then finish up our syllabus. So I think it's challenging in a way.</i> ^{SS6} <i>You don't call it really time consuming, because it is quite an effective tool, yeah.</i> ^{SS7}	SS5: preparing/doing storytelling is relatively time-consuming SS6: Using storytelling is a challenge because of the need to complete the syllabus SS7: Storytelling is not really time-consuming because it is an effective tool. <u>"Relatively"; "in a way"; "You don't call it really time consuming"</u> – suggest that Anne is being polite
5	R	Do you use it very regularly?	Question to probe for evidence
6	Anne	<i>If I can use it, I will use it as in...if I could finish whatever I've done for the ...</i>]	SS8: conduct storytelling only when the syllabus is covered
7	R	Syllabus coverage	

8	Anne	syllabus ^{SS8} ...]	
9	R	Can you gauge .. how many times ?	Question to probe for evidence
10	Anne	For example if it's an enrichment class for the better classes, I use it... like... every once a week, ^{SS9} because enrichment class will [...	SS9: Once a week as enrichment lesson for better classes (<u>pauses – suggest uncertainty?</u>)
11	R	It's not the regular time, ...]	
12	Anne	The regular time... For the normal, usual class, I try to implant into it ...after I have finished whatever I need to teach ..., ^{SS10} [	Ss10: affirmation of regular lessons; infuse ("implant") storytelling into lesson for normal classes only after completion of syllabus
13	R	integrate into it?] ... You don't think it will help with classroom management?	Question to probe for benefits
14	Anne	I think my intent is not to use it to get the kids to sit down and pay attention. ^{SS11} I think it is for them to <u>really</u> appreciate it ... ^{SS12}	SS11: Not her intent to use storytelling as a classroom management tool SS12: intent is for students ("them") to appreciate storytelling; emphasis on "really"
15	R	You think it goes beyond using that as a tool for discipline?	Question to probe for benefits
16	Anne	I don't think it is an appropriate rationale ... ^{SS11}	Repeats point captured in SS11 – emphasis
17	R	Good. Maybe we move on to 2. Question 2 actually focuses on research and literature review and you seem to agree with what is said in the literature.	
18	Anne	Mm...mm. Besides creativity, ^{SS13} you get students to be more in tune with getting probably the language development, the grammar portion, and building up their vocabulary. ^{SS14} In fact, I think there is no fast rule to teach grammar and vocabulary. But this seems to be ... Storytelling seems to be a good way of encouraging children to even to express their views, ^{SS15} Which, unlike traditional grammar lessons whereby you have to probably tell them what to do. In a storytelling session, children provide the answer, and in one way or another, they actually build on to their own vocabulary spontaneously. ^{SS16}	SS13: implies that Anne thinks storytelling is a creative pedagogy SS14: elaboration on language development – grammar, vocabulary, SS15: elaboration on language development – for expressing viewpoints SS16: elaboration on language development – vocabulary building
19	R	Storytelling allows you to teach past tense in an incidental way	Benefit: grammar
20	Anne	Yeah... ^{SS17}	SS17: <i>agrees that storytelling permits the teaching of pass tense in an incidental way (benefit: grammar)</i>
21	R	But if literature is so strong about the value of storytelling, I wonder why our curriculum doesn't include that as a formal mode of teaching.	Comment to <i>probe reasons</i>
22	Anne	In our context, the teachers, probably some teachers are not comfortable with storytelling because it entails quite a fair bit of skills. ^{SS18} And you need to be very much more proactive in the way you gather the kids, get the kids. . ^{SS19} And then if you are the type who is not into expressing yourselves, you may feel uncomfortable. You need to get very comfortable with the audience and in this case it is the children. The children need to see that in you ... ^{SS20}	SS18: <i>reasons</i> why some teachers are not comfortable with storytelling SS19: need for teachers to be proactive SS20: Teachers need to be able to express themselves; otherwise, they may feel uncomfortable
23	R	Is it because there isn't enough training?	Confident tone Question to probe for reasons

- 24 Anne ***I think it boils down to personality. Likewise not all people, teachers are storytellers. If people are not comfortable with what they have, even though you may equip them with the skills and provide them with the in-service courses ...*** ^{SS21}
- 25 R Talking about training, do you think it should be a pre- and in-service kind of training that we should give to teachers?
- 26 Anne ***Should be a continuous one – pre- and post-service training*** ^{SS22}
- 27 R Pre- and in-service training. So, what's the value? If it is pre- and also in-service, teachers will say, 'Oh, I have done that already.'
- 28 Anne ***I think you really need to engage more people, I mean... as in the vendors. When you attend courses, you'll know that certain vendors are quite good in certain areas, and explore that further*** ^{SS23} ...yeah.
- 29 R Maybe different set of skills ...
- 30 Anne Yeah, ***at the same time provide that avenue for teachers to sign up for certain courses also.*** ^{SS24}
And enthuse them further by encouraging them to use certain tools, I mean, certain strategies in class using storytelling. ^{SS25}
And tell them that you have the available resources and then maybe even conduct a ... a... sit into it in one class and teachers go there and pick up some skills in storytelling. ^{SS26}
- 31 R So you believe in peer observation. What about training? Besides training, what kind of support do you think schools can provide?
- 32 Anne ***Resources, resources, I think... and I think we can provide puppets and clothes, and the ... attire, props. Even getting kids to make their own props will be quite exciting. Each class should be equipped with a set and we can spend money on it.*** ^{SS27}
- 33 R If the principal allows some kind of *structured timetabled time* for storytelling, will that help?
- 34 Anne ***I think it should be done with the... according to what the teacher feels, like you know, putting it into the lesson rather than a structured way. I think we can put in place certain structures but not that kind of timetabled time for teachers to carry out the lessons.*** ^{SS28}
- 35 R If you were to propose this, I mean, would you propose this to the syllabus writers?
- 36 Anne ***Why not? I mean now STELLAR is into books and texts, I think why not. Since storytelling is in P1, P2 and P3, I don't see why storytelling should not be in the upper primaries.*** ^{SS29}
- 37 R If the teachers were to turn around and say there is the national exam, *how do I ensure that I teach the language skills through storytelling?*
- 38 Anne ***It's very important to know that what is the real intent of teaching language. If the real intent is to equip them with skills that is beyond grades and is lifelong, and is not just about meeting the exam, or even to have this thing about grades and getting all the high scores*** ^{SS30} [
- SS21: thinks personality is the main reason why some teachers are not comfortable with storytelling despite having the right skills or having attended in-service courses
- Question to probe for response to professional support
- SS22: both *pre- and in-service training*
- Probe reasons for pre- or in-service training
- SS23: Anne thinks that when many vendors are engaged, the choices increase, in terms of the quality courses they can offer.
- SS24: Anne thinks it will be good to have in-service training as an avenue for teachers to sign up for certain courses (she might be thinking of professional development for teachers)
- SS25: Anne thinks teachers need to be encouraged to use storytelling
- SS26: Anne's suggestion: **peer observation**
- Enthusiastic tone**
- Question to *probe for response to professional support*
- SS27: examples of resources to support teachers – puppets, costumes, props. Anne suggests students could be help make the props.
- Question to *probe for response to administrative support*
- SS28: agreement about *putting in structures but not timetabled time*
- Question to *probe for response to professional support* provided by STELLAR team
- SS29: *agreement about storytelling being in the upper primaries, since it is included in primary one, two and three classes.*
- Question to *probe for response to the need to balance the demands of national exam and teaching English through storytelling*
- SS30: Anne thinks that teaching life-long skills is more important than getting good grades and high scores at the exam.

39	R	[mm...mm	R interrupts Anne to affirm what she has just said.
40	Anne	<i>It's about getting them to talk orally, for example, and to speak effectively because these are skills that are going to be much more functional and more important in the future. Even parents, and teachers, and the schools and stakeholders feel that if they see beyond grades, they will realize the intent, how important it is to have pupils equipped with all these oral skills</i> ^{SS31} ...]	SS31: Anne spells out what she means by life-long skills: importance of helping students to speak effectively to prepare them for the future. Gets a bit emotional when she brings in the last bit about getting parents, teachers, schools and other stakeholders to realise the intent of learning, which is preparation for the future
41	R	Oracy skills	
42	Anne	Yes	
43	R	How else can they help in terms of the four language skills – oral, listening, reading and writing? Can you illustrate with at least one story?	Question to <i>probe for language benefits</i>
44	Anne	<i>I think I have this story of the Three Little Pigs, a fractured story and a Singlish version. In the beginning, we get the kids to talk about the story and even to retell the story into another version, and then translate that story into standard English version from the Singlish version. And that will be writing and oral skills at the same time. When they present it, it is also oral skills. And at the same time when they act it out, it is oral, speaking. When they write it down, it is also writing again. When they read the text, it is also reading skills. So, it is embedded in everything. In a play, if they write their own play, it is also all the three, four skills embedded inside.</i> ^{SS32}	SS32: Illustration of how language skills (writing, oral and reading) are integrated in a single performance task
45	R	So, it is integration of skills.	Affirmation of SS22
46	Anne	Yes	Confirmation of R's comment
47	R	So, <i>looks like you would want it in the syllabus?</i>	Question to probe for response to inclusion of storytelling in the curriculum
48	Anne	<u>Yes.</u> ^{SS33}	SS33: agrees that storytelling should be included in the English syllabus
49	R	Thank you.	

Teacher Betty: female – used storytelling to teach language skills

1	R	In your survey response, you seem to be for storytelling. <i>Can you cite me a lesson where you used storytelling as a way of teaching language skills?</i>	Question to <i>probe for evidence</i>
2	Betty	<i>....Actually, I infused it in my teaching of English, even for grammar items, eg, there's this unit that teaches prepositions.</i> ^{SS1} <i>So, I got a very simple book, Rosie went for a walk. Basically it's just this chicken which went on a walk around the farm. So, you've got the prepositions like "over", "under",</i> ^{SS2} ... and it is really big. <i>And I photocopied it. And I gave them a page of the story, and I read out the story.</i> ^{SS3} <i>And the kids are supposed to follow the chicken around the track. And throughout the story, they are exposed to various prepositions like "over", "under", "on ... the haystack", etc. So, ...at the end of the story, they kind of are exposed to prepositions, but not just writing them on the board but understand ...</i> ^{SS4}	SS1: infuses storytelling into English lesson on prepositions SS2: gives the title of a storybook as evidence to teach prepositions SS3: verbs "photocopied", "gave", "read out" – to denote activities related to teaching through a story SS4: Betty explains how she makes the learning of prepositions meaningful and memorable Enthusiastic tone
3	R	In context?	
4	Betty	<i>Yeah, there is a context to it.</i> ^{SS5}	SS5: emphasizes value of teaching preposition in the context

			of a storybook
5	R	So, did you find that they were more enthusiastic in that lesson?	Question to probe for benefits
6	Betty	Certainly, I mean they are very engaged because it's reading. They don't get distracted as they have something to follow too. ^{SS6}	SS6: example of a socio-emotional benefit: engagement of pupils
7	R	So, storytelling is one of the helpful modes of getting children to be interested. What about language skills? They learned prepositions. <i>Did you see them really improve in the use of prepositions after that?</i>	Question to <i>probe for evidence</i>
8	Betty	I think by storytelling, and giving them something visual, they can relate to. I mean prepositions is something ... they can know it. But when it is coupled with the visual aid in the story, it makes them remember the story better. Sometimes when they forget, "Do you remember the story, Rosie went for a walk? And they'll say, "Yes, yes. It's Rosie went for a walk. ^{SS7}	SS7: Using a story and the visual aid in the story help students to remember what they have learnt, e.g. learning prepositions through the story, <i>Rosie went for a walk.</i>
9	R	Very useful. <i>So, any other lessons where you use storytelling to teach certain language skills, like listening, speaking, writing, reading?</i> [	Question to <i>probe for evidence</i>
10	Betty	[mm..	Overlapping utterances
11	R	Any pre-activity for any of the four language skills?]	Interruption by Betty (affirmation)
12	Betty	Writing ...I think dramatisation is always very, very useful when you come to picture composition, yeah, where you have the freeze screen, where you get the kids up to work in groups. And they come up (with) different, different possible situations and what follows after the picture. That's very applicable for my upper primary boys where they have only one single picture for their picture writing. Some of them can't seem to get enough ideas. When they learn to dramatize it and add dialogues to the characters, they tend to have better storylines. ^{SS8}	SS8: examples of language benefits (illustration of how writing skills can be taught through dramatization , e.g. children learn to dramatize a situation and add their own dialogues for the characters, resulting in better storylines)
13	R	Yeah, yes. That's interesting. So, if you look at page 3. The second question talks about literature review of storytelling. I notice that you ticked quite a lot of those statements. So, you are a believer of storytelling? But, our syllabus does not advocate that as a formal language teaching tool. <i>How do you feel about it?</i>	Question to probe for evidence
14	Betty	I think it is something that should be included because it holds a lot ... I see a lot of values, a lot of enrichment that can be...not enrichment but it ...It can enhance the learning of the language ^{SS9} because stories are very close to one's heart and they are naturally receptive to it. And it just um ... and yeah	SS9: storytelling can enhance the learning of the language and should be included in the syllabus because it has a lot of values and children are naturally receptive to stories since they are very familiar with them.
15	R	But let's say...mm... Are there reasons why it is not included in the syllabus? Is it the fear that people may not be able to use it effectively or ...?	Question to probe for reasons
16	Betty	Mm... Maybe some teachers may find it a bit time consuming [
17	R	Mm	
18	Betty	...to always start a	SS10: <i>some teachers may find it time-consuming to always start every topic with a story</i>
19	R	a story	
20	Betty	a story with every topic ^{SS10} ...]	
21	R	What about <i>teaching aid</i> ? If the school gives enough <i>support</i> to the teacher, will that help?	Question to <i>probe for response to professional support</i>
22	Betty	I think it will be very helpful. ^{SS11} because to me, I feel that even to read a story at the start of a lesson, or even a book or a chapter that you read consistently every day, it will help the child in not only understanding or appreciating the story, it will help them	SS11: thinks that it will be very helpful if the school provides teaching aid as a form of support ("I think" seems low in degree of confidence, though)

- with their listening, and eventually learning how to pronounce some words, learning intonation and things like that. It doesn't come by reading the text itself but by listening.* ^{SS12}
- 23 R So, it is a language model, in other words. Stories need not be told by the teacher alone. You can also use *videotapes, audiotapes of stories*. What about *support*? I was thinking of support like providing *training*, for instance, or even buying *resources, materials* for the teachers?
- 24 Betty ***Those will be very helpful.*** ^{SS13}
- 25 R *What materials can we buy for the teachers?*
- 26 Betty ***I think, for the kids nowadays, they are very visual. Perhaps audio books, or even good videos ... can be included*** ^{SS14}, other than...
- 27 R Audio-tapes ..
- 28 Betty ***Yeah, Other than just the teachers themselves being the main source, and the only person telling the story. A variety of how stories can be told will be useful.*** ^{SS15}
- 29 R I notice that you did not tick, on page 5, the statement about the value of 'retelling', 'getting students to retell stories'. Do you believe that...*How do you feel about students listening to your stories and after that retelling the stories on their own? Do you think there is value in it? Or you think it is absolutely impossible?*
- 30 Betty ***There is certainly value in it. When they can, are able to retell, it tells me that they actually understand. And when students are able to retell, they would show some, ... that means they would have understood the value, the reason why I wanted to tell them the stories*** ^{SS16}
- 31 R If they hear the language that they hear you using and they repeat the language, it might be another way of teaching language skills?
- 32 Betty ***Yeah***
- 33 R Talking about pre-service and in-service training, *which do you think we should focus on – in-service or pre-service, if we want to include storytelling?*
- 34 Betty ***Pre-service?*** ^{SS18}
- 35 R Uh-huh... *Why?*
- 36 Betty ***Because I think younger teachers are generally more enthusiastic to try out new teaching strategies. And I think it is one good way to equip them. .*** ^{SS19}
- SS12: gives reasons (conjunction "because") for her agreement by highlighting the benefits children get from listening to stories read to them every day – it will help them with their listening skill and pronunciation of words and intonation.
(NB: Betty's emphasis in the last sentence – the benefits come from listening to stories)
- Question to *probe for response to professional support*
- SS13: agrees with idea of professional support; and her reason is that it will be very helpful
- Question to *probe for response to specific professional support*
- SS14: suggests buying audio books and videos as children these days are very visual
- SS15: thinks it is useful to have a variety of ways to tell stories, instead of just depending on the teacher
- Question to *probe for response to retelling of stories by students*
- SS16: agrees that being able to retell a story implies that the students understand the story
- Question to *probe for language benefits*
- SS17: Betty agrees that when children hear the language their teachers are using, they will repeat the language, which is another way of teaching the language
- Question to *probe for response to professional support*
- SS18: Betty opts for pre-service training
- Question to *probe for reasons*
- SS19: Betty agrees that it should be pre-service training because she thinks younger teachers are generally more enthusiastic about trying out new teaching strategies. So, pre-service training will be a

37	R	Offer them ...another strategy	
38	Betty	If i were to be in NIE now, I would have [
39	R	They should include it for pre-service	Overlapping utterances
40	Betty	Yes, I would have chosen that module.]	
41	R	There is this whole list of "before" activities ...things that people would do. Besides these strategies, <i>have you tried out other ways of getting students interested in the lessons?</i>	Question to <i>probe for evidence</i>
42	Betty	In the lessons?	
43	R	<i>Do you use stories in different ways? Are there activities that you want to introduce, besides this list?</i>	Question to <i>probe for evidence</i>
44	Betty	Sometimes I would ... the title of the book that I'm going to share with them. I'll read it differently, stressing different words, [	SS20: suggests some pre-activities to arouse interest, e.g. reading the title of a book in different ways, stressing different words in the title; get students to think about what kind stories they are going to read, besides getting them to talk about the cover and guess what kind of story it is.
45	R	oh, ...ok.	
46	Betty	and I'll get them to ... I'll kind of get them to think what kind of story they are going to read, arouse their curiosity in that way other than getting them to talk about the cover and ask them to guess what kind of story this is. . SS20	
47	R	So, it looks like if we were to introduce storytelling in the primary school, (we already have it in STELLAR to some extent), <i>what about the upper levels? How would you want it to be, If you have your way and you think storytelling is good? How would you want to promote that?</i>	Question to <i>probe for response to including storytelling in the upper primary classes</i>
48	Betty	I think it should be tied ... like primary one to primary three in STELLAR, every unit has got a book and they learn language features from it. SS21 I think it should be brought to even the upper primaries for them not to enjoy just the technical part of it but the text itself, like the literature. SS22 So, erm ...	SS21: refers to the STELLAR programme in Singapore, which recommends a book for every unit of lesson, and from which students learn language points ("features") SS22: Thinks the STELLAR programme should be escalated to the upper primary classes to appreciate the literary value of the texts
49	R	When you said, "literature" What do you mean by that?	Question to <i>seek clarification</i>
50	Betty	To enjoy the story rather than when they move from lower to upper primary, they tend to be exam oriented, SS23 so ...	SS23: Clarifies what she means by "literature" – for enjoyment
51	R	So, you are saying "teaching the language through integrating it into the stories". How would that look like?	Question to <i>probe for details</i>
52	Betty	I think for example for my school. We had this unit on ... For my primary school, we are not in STELLAR yet for my school. For unit 2, it was on Japan. So there were ...we prepared ... As a learning package, we prepared folk tales from Japan [	SS24: explains how stories are chosen for a particular topic or theme in her school, and how they prepared a learning package on folk tales from Japan to enthuse the students.
53	R	Ok...	
54	Betty	for them to enthuse the students. Also they are related to the topic. The stories are chosen for that topic related ... SS24	
55	R	<i>So, it's more about generating interest. What about language? What about vocabulary? What about spelling? What about grammar? Can it be introduced through stories?</i>	Question to <i>probe for language benefits</i>
56	Betty	Very sound, because some of the stories that they get from the internet that we get randomly sometimes may not be...	Betty attempts to explain but not clear
57	R	So, Just now, we were talking about using storytelling or stories to teach language skills. <i>Can you cite some examples?</i>	Question to <i>probe for evidence</i>

58	Betty	<p>Ok. For example, they use the use of tenses because in stories, it would be excellent, it will be recount. So, they will be exposed to past tense. ^{SS25}</p> <p>Even the length of the sentences – they vary. Why did the writer do that? And it will help them in their writing skills. Is it to create suspense or climax or powerful words and so on. ^{SS26}</p> <p>Even in different types of stories, there are certain types of vocabulary used. And the child can pick it up. By the end of the story, the child can pick it up like if it is about an accident, there will be a lot of vocabulary ... ^{SS27}</p>	<p>SS25: Betty explains that stories are excellent ways of teaching the use of tenses in context, e.g. past tense for recounts</p> <p>SS26: stories also facilitate the learning of varied sentences and why and how writers use varied sentences for effect (create suspense, climax, and this will help in children's writing skills.</p>
59	R	Technical words	
60	Betty	.... that has been used in the story itself. It will help them build up a list of words for such topics. ^{SS27 elaborated}	
61	R	Even the use of expressiveness by varying the tone and pitch. Excellent. Thank you so much.	SS27: Thinks that children pick up vocabulary from stories. This helps with vocabulary building

Teacher Cara: female – used storytelling to teach language skills

1	R	Right. We'll look at your survey form. I notice that you have been teaching for about 11 years and you seem to have tried out storytelling quite a bit. And you also agree quite a lot with the statements in the survey. How have you used storytelling as a language tool?	Question to probe for evidence
2	Cara	<p>Usually, I use storytelling in the pre-writing activities, ^{SS1}</p> <p>but sometimes we have pictures and all that ...</p> <p>I tried to relate my own experience and then I share with my pupils ^{SS2}</p> <p>because I tell them that in composition writing, they need to be original so that they can do better because their stories, if it's their own <u>personal stories</u>, there may not be so many people with that kind of experience. ^{SS3}</p> <p>When I tell stories, I can see that my pupils are more attentive. So, I think it seemed quite effective. ^{SS4}</p> <p>And then when I mark their compositions, I find that there are certain parts that are quite similar to what I've mentioned. ^{SS5}</p>	<p>SS1: uses storytelling as a pre-writing activity</p> <p>SS2: tells stories that are based on her own experience;</p> <p>SS3: her reason is that in composition writing, the ideas need to be original, so if they write their personal stories, not many people will have the same kind of experience. (emphasis on personal stories by Cara)</p> <p>SS4: Storytelling seems quite effective because her pupils are more attentive when she tells stories.</p> <p>SS5: when she marks her students' compositions, she finds that her students remember some parts of her personal stories and use them in their compositions.</p> <p>Matter-of-fact, yet friendly tone</p>
3	R	Ok. That's good. So, that's ...	
4	Cara	<p>That's one way.</p> <p>The other way is usually through teaching of <u>vocabulary</u>. Let's say there are certain vocabulary words that the pupils don't understand. So, I try to weave some experience of mine into a story form and tell it to the pupils. Usually I try to write them on the board. I try to find some associations so that they can remember better. ^{SS6}</p>	<p>SS6: uses personal stories ("weave some experience of mine into a story form) to help students learn vocabulary through associations – thinks they remember better that way</p> <p>(Benefit of storytelling: vocabulary building)</p>
5	R	So, so far it has been very successful with the girls?	Question to probe for language benefits
6	Cara	Yeah. And in fact, when I was teaching in Nanyang Girls', the teachers were saying that they were quite amazed. They said, "How come this teacher can tell so many stories?" [	Teacher's response: examples
7	R	((laughs))]	R interrupts with light laughter, amused with Cara's comments;
8	Cara	Some of the stories are my personal stories but I love to read. When I read, I try to remember interesting parts of	

		the story. Usually, I'll try to remember and relate them.	
9	R	Ok. Can you turn over to page 3? The literature review – you seem to agree with quite a bit of that. As for the activities that you have conducted, are there specific activities that you would want to recommend to teachers?	Question to probe for evidence
10	Cara	Erm...specific ...?	Cara's response: slightly confused; sought clarification
11	R	Related to language, whether it's oral, reading, writing, ... <u>Are there specific areas that you've used?</u>	Question to probe for evidence
12	Cara	<i>Just now I mentioned about vocabulary,</i> ^{SS6 repeated} <i>the other one is writing.</i> ^{SS5 repeated} <i>I find that stories is also very good to ... instil their love for reading. Sometimes, I will ... In the past, I was in charge of the library. So, I will show them a book and show them the cover. Sometimes I'll just tell and then stop short, ask them to go and find out.</i> ^{SS7} Sometimes I give them a ...	Repeats the writing benefits captured in SS4 earlier on Repeats the vocabulary benefits captured in SS6 earlier on SS7: finds stories very good for instilling love for reading in children; she enthuses them with the cover of a book, or tells part of the story to generate interest in them
13	R	Sort of generate interest in them ...?	
14	Cara	... fiction ... (?) ...	
15	R	Yes...How do you...erm...but in the syllabus...If you look at our new syllabus, they are not recommending storytelling; they have speech and drama. So, how would you argue for storytelling?	Question to <i>probe for response to inclusion of storytelling in the curriculum</i>
16	Cara	Storytelling ...?	Unsure, thinking
17	R	Do you think it should be part of the syllabus?	
18	Cara	<i>I think it is a different kind of approach, right?</i> ^{SS8} Storytelling ... um ... someone with something to tell, to share ...	SS8: Cara does not answer the Researcher's question. Instead she uses an interrogative question that functions like a declarative statement, "it (storytelling) is a different kind of approach", and hence she is not sure if it should be part of the syllabus.
19	R	Or just stories ... using stories ...	
20	Cara	Right, <i>sometimes you use stories, and based on the stories, after that you get the pupils to role-play. So...it's actually...</i>[	SS9: Cara tries to show how stories offer opportunities for students to go into speech and drama (role-play) – implying benefits in oral skills
21	R	Erm, it can be a very useful tool...	
22	Cara	<i>Like sometimes we have stories...</i>	
23	R	just wonder why they don't include it.	(Each Reader's Theatre book is a story or play for a group of participants to read out the parts according to the character they assume)
24	Cara	<i>So, it can be turned into speech and drama because from a story, after the pupils know the story, especially Reader's Theatre</i> ^{SS9} and all that, they have the ...]	
25	R	So, it's the resource you are thinking of ...?	Question to seek clarification
26	Cara	Yeah. So, they can carry on with that. So, in fact, <i>P3, P4, we've done that. We'll share with them the stories. Before that, we do the predictions like the picture – "What do you think the story is about?" After that, we'll go through with them, make sure that they understand so that they can express themselves better. After that, they do the Reader's Theatre and then their group compositions,</i> ^{SS10} and all that.	SS10: Cara clarifies how students are involved in pre-activities (<i>predicting what the story is about, going through the Reader's Theatre book</i>) before they participate in the Reader's Theatre reading and subsequently group composition writing. (benefits: oral and writing skills)
27	R	Because you are so comfortable using stories that you are able to bring out a lot from your students. A younger teacher may not. So, do you think it is useful to include storytelling as a language tool? Do you think we should include that in the pre-service training of teachers?	Question to probe for response to professional training

28	Cara	<i>I think it can pre-service; it can be part of in-training</i> SS11 [	SS11: <u>pre-and in-service training</u> Overlapping utterances
29	R	In-service training?]	Question to <i>seek clarification</i>
30	Cara	<i>In fact, I attended one. ... one or two. And then the teachers, the trainer was fantastic. I mean they are so expressive. I wish I could be like that – the way they present the story and then they also use mini-props like little hand puppets, ...</i>[	SS12: Recounts her experience and learning at a in-service training workshop – trainers were expressive and effective, using mini-props such as little hand puppets, and innovative costumes to depict their characters.
31	R	Those are the resources.]	
32	Cara	<i>And sometimes they dress up. Sometimes they use their aprons to change their different</i> [
33	R	their roles	
34	Cara	<i>characters.</i> SS12]	
		Yeah. Then, wow, I am very impressed. [
35	R	((laughter))	To affirm Cara
36	Cara	<i>So I think it is very good if more teachers attend this kind of training</i> ... SS13]	SS13: Recommends training for teachers
37	R	Some formal training ...	Teacher's response: agreement
38	Cara	<i>Yeah</i>	Overlapping utterances: both utterances simultaneously spoken
39	R	Get some help?	
40	Cara	<i>I think it's very good.</i> SS14	SS14: Thinks some sort of formal training is very good.
41	R	If that's the case, if schools were to support the teachers in terms of resources like <u>training</u> , plus <u>materials</u> , do you think that will help?	Question to probe for response to <u>professional support</u>
42	Cara	<i>That will be fantastic.</i> SS15	SS15: thinks it is a fantastic idea for schools to provide teachers with professional support: training and resources
43	R	That can be something to think about. So, that's pre-service and in-service. Do you mentor other younger teachers?	Question to probe for evidence
44	Cara	<i>No...this is storytelling</i> SS16 ? Ur ... because I'm in charge of NE, National Education, so usually <i>I do tell my department people stories you can use to teach values.</i> SS17 And sometimes during Contact Time, once or twice, I shared stories like, you know, the importance of making Singapore a home just like a builder need to make sure. So, I shared a story once that this man was working very, very hard. Then on his day of retirement, he told the boss, "I'm going to retire." And the boss said, "Ok. Before you retire, I'll give you one last job." So, the boss gave him his last job. But this person was saying, "Ah, I actually want to retire. Why give me another job?" So, he was very reluctant. So, he did a very poor job. But then, on the actual day when he retired, this boss said, "This house is yours." So, he got a shock of his life. [	SS16: Cara responds to R's question with a "no". Her statement, "this is storytelling" seems to suggest that she does not think storytelling is part of the mentoring process SS17: benefit of storytelling – to teach values
44	R	((small laugh))	Laughter to indicate appreciation of Cara's illustration
45	Cara	He was so sad that he didn't ... you know ... do a very good job. So, it's just like Singapore. If you want Singapore to be a good place for everybody, so we should all do a good job of building up ...because you never know. You are actually doing it for yourself.]	
46	R	And the future, right ?	

47	Cara	Yeah	
48	R	Very good. From the lists, (the three lists of activities that I listed here). Actually, I took them from a book – these three lists. You have ticked most of them. Have you tried out some of them? [	Question <i>to probe for evidence</i>
49	Cara	Yeah, a couple of them. ^{SS18}	SS18: affirms that she has tried out a few of the activities in the given lists in the teacher questionnaire.
50	R	Are these activities you have tried out already?]	
51	Cara	Sometimes I also use cartoons. And I cut it up and then I ask the pupils to ... like scrambling, they put them in the right order and after that they can come up with their own stories - a very simple paragraph ...and (in) their (own) words. ^{SS19} | ...	SS19: Describes an activity (scrambling of pictures from a story) to help her students to think of their own stories and write them in their own words
52	R	Have you tried getting your pupils to retell stories with your students from the stories that you have told them?	Question to probe for evidence
53	Cara	Not yet. Maybe I should try that. ^{SS20}	SS20: admits she has not tried getting her students to retell stories.
54	R	Your girls have the language facility to do that.	Comment to evoke further details
55	Cara	Yeah, some of my girls are quite good. ^{SS21} In fact, that day we were doing a role play like four reporters interviewing Sir Stamford Raffles. So, they turned up their collars [	SS21: agrees that her students have the language facility to retell stories
56	R	Oh, wow...	SS22: Illustrates SS21 with an <i>example of her students role-playing characters from a story</i>
57	Cara	to look like Sir Stamford Raffles. And the girls were quite sporting. They were able to lower their voice	
58	R	for expressiveness	
59	Cara	for the male act. ^{SS22}]	
60	R	They were quite expressive ...	
61	Cara	Everybody enjoyed themselves. ^{SS23}	SS23: socio-emotional value - <i>enjoyment</i> derived from role-play
62	R	Ok. Thank you so much.	

Teacher Dora: - female – did **not** use storytelling at all

1	R	Now, let's look at your survey form. I noticed that you have been teaching for a few years now. How many years ...?	
2	Dora	Yes, nine years.	
3	R	Ninth year. So far you have not really tried out storytelling in a very formal way.	
4	Dora	No. ^{SS1}	SS1: Dora admits she has not tried out storytelling in her English class
5	R	What's stopping you from doing it?	Question to probe for reasons for not using storytelling
6	Dora	Ok, because my impression of storytelling is may be just to arouse students' interest. It is <u>not</u> really like a tool that I used formally to teach a very...[	SS2: Her impression of storytelling is that it is for arousing students' interest, to engage them in the initial part of a lesson; not a tool to teach a language skill
7	R	Specific language?	
8	Dora	Specific language skill.] My impression is that storytelling is just to engage pupils in the initial part of the lesson. ^{SS2}	
9	R	Oh, so it's more for <i>entertainment</i> rather than for teaching language skills	

10	Dora	Yes.	
11	R	But if I were to tell you to use it to teach oracy skills, like, do you think that's doable?	Question to explore language teaching possibilities
12	Dora	Yes, definitely. ^{SS3}	SS3: thinks it is possible to use storytelling to teach oral skills
13	R	You might want to try it out? Ok. If you look at ... some of the comments that the research and the teachers who write about storytelling have made, do you agree with some of the statements?	Question to probe response to literature on storytelling
14	Dora	Yes.	Teacher response: agreement
15	R	The statements. Which are those that you think are not applicable to our context?	Question to probe for response to literature on storytelling
16	Dora	....
17	R	Like this one for instance. You don't think you could use storytelling to get students to speak ... clearly or to build confidence?	Question to explore possibilities for speech and confidence development
18	Dora	<i>I think it depends on individual pupils. Some are actually... By nature, they are quite shy. So, even if the opportunity is given to these kids to speak clearly and confidently, they may not be able to get it on the first or two tries. It may be a long process.</i> ^{SS4}	SS4: does not answer R's question directly about using storytelling to get students to speak clearly or to build their confidence – suggests she does not agree but she does not say so outright. Dora thinks much depends on individual students – with shy students, even if they are given the opportunity to speak clearly and confidently, they might not achieve that in the first two tries; it's a long process, she thinks.
19	R	So, you think the claims are not quite justifiable?	Question to probe for response to literature on storytelling
20	Dora	<i>I think it depends on individuals.</i> ^{SS5}	SS5: again avoids answering R's question directly; gives a neutral response: "it depends on individuals" "I think" suggests low degree of commitment
21	R	((small laugh)) Ok, I see. Ok ... because some of them claim that storytelling can help children to build, for instance, vocabulary, help them with sequencing of ideas. So, what is your take on it? ... You don't think it is possible? [	<i>Question to explore for possibilities for vocabulary and writing development</i>
22	Dora	()	
23	R	You can? Ok... you agree with it? Sorry. You agree with it.	
24	Dora	Yes. ^{SS6}	SS6: agrees with some of the claims that that storytelling can help children to build vocabulary, and with the sequencing of ideas.
25	R	But to get them to ... Can we use storytelling for writing, for instance? Get them to listen to stories and after that to rewrite.]	
26	Dora	<i>I think it is possible.</i> ^{SS7}	SS7: thinks that we can use storytelling for writing – get children to listen to listen to a story and after that to re-write the story. "I think" and "possible" suggest tentativeness
27	R	Oh possible. Even to change some parts of the story ... So, there is a possibility. [	Question to probe for reasons for teachers' reluctance to use storytelling in class
28	Dora	<i>Probably the ending</i> ^{SS8}	SS8: thinks it is possible to get children to change some parts of the story

29	R	But what ...what do you think is stopping teachers from doing that? Is it because they feel that ... they don't have the confidence? Or is it they feel that it is something that is not worked into the syllabus?]	Benefits: writing skills "Probably" suggests tentativeness
30	Dora	<i>I think it is not worked into the syllabus.</i> ^{SS9} <i>We are working on quite a tight schedule. In the textbook itself, we have to cover two stories, two comprehension passages.</i> [	SS8: thinks the reason why teachers are not using storytelling is because this approach is not worked into the syllabus
31	R	Ok	
32	Dora	<i>So, they may find that they don't really have the <u>time to factor in another story into the lesson.</u></i> ^{SS9}]	SS9: comments that there are also administrative reasons (<u>work schedule and time constraints</u>) "they" instead of "we" – detaches herself from the rest of the teachers
33	R	Just now, you mentioned that there are actually two stories.	
34	Dora	Yeah.	
35	R	Two passages?	
36	Dora	Yeah, two passages	
37	R	Oh, two comprehension passages, not stories. It's just a comprehension passage. [
38	Dora	Short stories, yeah.	
39	R	Oh, ok. But the syllabus itself does not include storytelling ...	Repeats SS8
40	Dora	<i>No, it doesn't.</i> ^{SS8 repeated}]	
41	R	It focuses on ... drama and also speech. So, you don't think there is a place for storytelling?	
42	Dora	<i>Unless they can work that into the syllabus.</i> ^{SS8 repeated} <i>That means they have to give <u>us</u> time to actually carry it out.</i> ^{SS9 repeated}	Repeats SS8 and SS9 for emphasis "us" (inclusive pronoun) – Dora identifies with other teachers who find planning and conducting storytelling lessons time-consuming but would like to try this pedagogy if they (the syllabus writers) could work storytelling into the syllabus for her and the other teachers.
43	R	When you said, "worked into the syllabus, are you talking about more formal structuring of lessons associated with storytelling?	
44	Dora	Yes. ^{SS10}	SS10: agrees that more formal structuring of storytelling lessons should be worked into the syllabus.
45	R	Or are you talking ... Do you think if schools give enough support to the teachers, storytelling can be successful? Like if schools provide training, <i>formal training</i> , or <i>resources or materials, props, puppets</i> and so on, will that be .. ?	Question to explore possibilities of providing professional support to teachers
46	Dora	<i>That will be very helpful.</i> ^{SS11}	SS11: it will be very helpful if schools provide professional support to teachers – training, resources (props, puppets, etc)
47	R	That will be helpful? And you think teachers will do it?	
48	Dora	Yes. ^{SS12}	SS12 : agrees that teachers will try out storytelling (if professional support is given)
49	R	When we talk about teachers, how prepared are teachers? Personally, do you think you are prepared?	Question to probe teacher readiness to teach storytelling

		Do you have the skills to teach storytelling, using storytelling to teach certain language skills like prepositions, grammar points?	
50	Dora	<i>I think we still need [</i>	
51	R	Erm..	
52	Dora	<i>I think we still need a bit of training^{SS13} because it may need different strategies and methods to carry this out. .^{SS14} So, I think training is essential.^{SS13 repeated}</i>	SS13: thinks training is essential SS14: causal relation (reason) to SS13 – (signalled by the conjunction, “because”) – she and the teachers (inclusive pronoun, “we”) may need different strategies and methods to carry out storytelling SS13 repeated for emphasis
53	R	So, storytelling is not just... With storytelling, we are not talking about entertainment. But we are talking about children, as they listen to stories, they can improve in their language skills. So, if that is the case, is it in pre-service or in-service training that we should include storytelling?	Question to explore possibilities of providing pre- or in-service storytelling training
54	Dora	<i>I think should be both^{SS15} because pre-service before you graduate,bl think it is necessary to pick up all these skills.^{SS16} And then for in-service, along the years, things may have changed. So it is necessary to upgrade your skills.^{SS17}</i>	SS15: both pre- and in-service training SS16 : pre-service training – pick up skills before one graduates SS17 : in-service training – along the years, things may have changed, so, it is necessary to upgrade one’s skills
55	R	Ok. So, there is a place for both...(()) Have you watched some of your teachers doing storytelling? [	Question to draw attention to possible activities to try out in class
56	Dora	Not really.	
57	R	Not really? Ok.] If you turn to the back of the survey form, there are three lists of activities I have identified from a book that I've read. Do you think some of the activities ... You have ticked some of the activities, right? [
58	Dora	Yes.	
59	R	What are those activities you think you would want to try out?]	
60	Dora	...[silence]	
	R	The pre-activities are those you want to use for tuning in?	
61	Dora	<i>I think you can use the cover of the story to promote predictive skills and to motivate them. I think that is easily manageable. Um... even asking about the title.^{SS18}</i>	SS18: agrees with some of the activities and suggests <i>using story cover to promote predictive skills and to motivate students</i> “I think” suggests tentativeness
62	R	So, those are possibilities?	
63	Dora	Yes.	
64	R	And there are others as well, which you have not ticked. That means you feel that it is not possible? You feel that it is challenging?	Question to explore possibilities for speech and confidence development
65	Dora	Erm ...	
66	R	... scrambling sentences that actually depict a whole story...	
67	Dora	...	
68	R	You think it is not doable?	
69	Dora	<i>I think before we are exposed to stories ... before we actually introduce stories, the children may not know ...[</i>	SS19: thinks that before introducing stories, we should introduce (the key words) as they may not know (the key words in the story); she thinks scrambling
70	R	The key words?]	

71	Dora	So, I thought it should be during or after the activity SS19 [	sentences to depict the story should be a during- or after-activity
72	R	Ok.	
73	Dora	Talk about key words]	
74	R	Ok, I see. So, you think there are a lot of during-activities that are doable, which you may want to try out. So far, you have not tried them out. What stopped you from trying them out?	Question to probe for reasons for not trying out the possibilities the teacher has identified
75	Dora	Basically time constraints. SS9repeated	Repeats SS9 : Cites <i>time constraints</i>
76	R	You think it is very time-consuming ?	
77	Dora	Yes. SS20	SS20: agrees that storytelling is time-consuming
78	R	What is your conception of stories? When you think of stories, are you thinking of a full story or ...?	Question to clarify possible misconceptions
79	Dora	I'm thinking of a full story, from beginning to the end. Must have a proper introduction and conclusion.	Teacher response: clarification
80	R	If you ever try out stories, what kind of stories would you want to try out?	
81	Dora	Mm ... I think I'm fine with any story as long as it is engaging and interesting. So I don't mind fairytales or just any stories ... SS21	SS21: would like to try out any story that is engaging and interesting, fairytales, or just any story
82	R	So the story need not be in print form. [	Question to explore possibilities
83	Dora	Yeah] It can even be non-print. SS22 Yeah. It can even be folktale. SS23	SS22: stories can be in non-print form SS23: expresses that stories can be folktale.
84	R	Hope you'll try out storytelling one day. Thank you so much.	

Teacher Elin: female – used storytelling to teach language skills

1	R	I notice that you have three years of teaching experience only. Yet you've tried storytelling in those three years.	
2	Elin	Teaching experience is not three years. I've used storytelling for three years.	
3	R	Oh. I see, I see. So your teaching experience – how long is it...?	
4	Elin	About nine years now because. I took three years of no-pay leave. So they don't include the three years,	
5	R	So, it's six years.	
6	Elin	No, actually it'll be 12. So, it's nine years	
7	R	You look very, very young.	
8	Elin	Thank you.	
9	R	So, ok, in those three years when you tried storytelling, what have you tried out?	Question to probe for evidence
10	Elin	Actually, because.. As I was mentioning to you earlier, we have this programme especially for the high-ability pupils in Pr 4. So, what we do is that we use literature texts to teach English instead of the usual textbooks and activity books. SS1 Initially we focused on four books. But this year, we decided to cut down to three because for the past two years, we found that we were not able to finish the fourth book. So, for English lessons, we go into details. We look into the book, as in the story plot, content, character analysis. We look at themes and social issues and also perspectives of the different characters. SS2 [	SS1: informs R of language arts programme using literature texts to teach English (stories from literature texts) SS2: literary appreciation of different features of the texts
11	R	Ok...ok]	

- 12 Elin On top of that, ***we also teach our grammar components like vocabulary and grammar through the use of these books.*** ^{SS3} [
- 13 R Mm...mm]
- 14 Elin A very good example would be ... we follow in line with the *In-Step* books that the other mainstream classes are doing.
So, for example, the grammar component for that particular term is 'contractions'. I will develop my own worksheet on 'contractions'. Then I'll get the girls to write down sentences that they can find from a story that uses contractions, and even adverbial phrases to make sentences based on the story content, using adverbs of time, place, manner and so on. So, we actually infuse literature into the teaching of English language. ^{SS4}
- 15 R And that has been effective? You see...[
- 16 Elin ***Yes. It has definitely helped the girls, especially in their composition writing. They are able to develop the plot of the story better. Usually, we see the girls trying to satisfy the guide points that are mentioned in the paper, and once they hit the 150 words, they are happy. But for these girls, they are able to develop their stories into greater details.*** ^{SS5}
- 17 R That's good.
- 18 Elin ***And we also look at description of characters, which most of the girls don't go into in their composition writing. They will just introduce a character by giving a name. For them, they are able to describe how the character looks like, physical appearance, inner qualities of the character, and how that character plays a role in the development of that story.*** ^{SS6}]
- 19 R So, we see very rich outcomes. That's good. What about vocab and grammar? Do you see improvement in those areas?
- 20 Elin ***Definitely, because they are exposed to a wide vocabulary in the books that we have selected for them. Definitely in terms of vocabulary, they do have an extensive vocabulary.*** ^{SS7}
- 21 R That's good. The literature review talks about how storytelling can generate interest in students' reading.
- 22 Elin ***Definitely, because now the girls do not read a book for the sake of reading from start to end. At least, now they are aware of things like genres, what kind of genres they are reading.*** ^{SS8}
They look into writers' styles because we look into writers' styles of writing. Different writers have different styles. ^{SS9}
I let them do research on the writers because their lives have an impact on the books that they write, for example, Oscar Wilde. ^{SS10}
So, as they read, they will really think about these things, they think about the characters in the book, the issues that are highlighted in the book, and themes, ^{SS11} and not just read a book for the sake of enjoyment, you know.
- 23 R That's good. So you brought them to a higher level of understanding.
- SS3: uses those literature books to teach grammar and vocabulary
- SS4: Illustrates how grammar is taught (contractions, adverbs) – infuses the teaching of English language into literature texts
- Question to probe for further evidence
- Confident tone; loudness & emphasis: “definitely”
SS5: programme helps students in their composition writing – able to develop plot better and provide greater details
- SS6: helps with description of characters (physical appearance, inner qualities, role in the story)
Enthusiastic tone, supported by detailed description of students' ability
- Question to probe for particular language outcomes
- SS7: example of benefit (vocabulary building)
Tone: confident, very self-assured
Loudness and emphasis: said fairly loudly and with emphasis “definitely”, “wide vocabulary”, “extensive” – suggesting that Elin indeed saw improvement in her students' vocabulary
- Question to probe for response to literature on storytelling
- SS8: cites desirable outcomes – her students are now aware of types of genres of books
Tone: very self-assured; emphasis – “definitely”
SS9: cites students' awareness of writers' styles
SS10: cites students' awareness of how writers' lives impact the books they write
SS11: as students read, they consider characters, issues in the book, and themes
- Question to probe for evidence

		What are the titles of those books?	
24	Elin	<i>Formerly we did <u>The Young King</u> by Oscar Wilde, <u>The Cantilla Ghost</u>, also by Oscar Wilde, <u>The Hound of Basterville</u> is by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and the other one is <u>Charlotte's Web</u> by Evie White.</i> ^{SS12}	SS12: cites examples of books used in the language arts programme in the previous year
25	R	Those are fantastic books.	
26	Elin	<i>But this year, because <u>The Young King</u> is out of publication, we focused only on the other three.</i> ^{SS13}	SS13: cites examples of books used in the language arts programme in the current year
27	R	Those three are very rich literature texts. I'm glad. The girls enjoyed the books?	
28	Elin	<i>Yes. For the three batches that I've taught, this is the third batch, they've all enjoyed the programme.</i> ^{SS14}	SS14 : claims her students in the three batches she has taught all enjoyed the programme
29	R	Do you see them improve in their oracy skills as well?	Question to probe for evidence of oral skills improvement
30	Elin	<i>Definitely. In terms of their <u>oral</u> examination, they can just come up with ideas, you know, for the picture discussion. They are able to come up with ideas, descriptive words and all that. And also, I told them that they need to give a conclusion. So, they are able to say "in conclusion, ..." what did they learn from the picture with storytelling, the moral values that are highlighted in the picture.</i> ^{SS15}	SS15: helps students in their oral exam (picture discussion component) – students able to come up with ideas, descriptive words, summing up skills (oral skills)
31	R	So they are applying what they have learnt to their oracy skills. That's very good. So, you would recommend storytelling [	Question to probe for response to recommending storytelling
32	Elin	<i>Yes, definitely.</i> ^{SS16}	SS16: affirms that she would recommend storytelling
33	R	as a mode, right?	
34	Elin	Yes.]	
35	R	But in the syllabus, it is not stated that storytelling can be a mode but speech and drama have been emphasized. So, how do you feel about that?	
36	Elin	<i>Actually, I really think that even for the other classes – not the HA class – I think we are looking at introducing at least one book as an enrichment even though they cannot do it like what the high-ability girls are doing. I think it will be good to expose them to at least what we see in the context of a book.</i> ^{SS17}	SS17: feels that storytelling should be introduced to the students, other than the high-ability (HA) group
37	R	So, what do you think is stopping teachers from using stories or storytelling in the class?	Question to probe for reasons
38	Elin	<i>I think, currently, because we are confined to the textbook and workbook, the teachers are still using the textbook. So we are confined to finish all the syllabus there. Also, the Teachers' Guide for the In-Step books, they don't really have much resources or give ideas about using storytelling as a tool to teach English language. We are just following the rhythm of what we need to cover in the textbook and workbook</i> ^{SS18} ...yeah.	SS18: speculates on reasons why some teachers are not using storytelling – teachers are constrained by the need to complete the syllabus (to complete the assigned textbook and workbook and teachers' guide)
39	R	You are saying that possibly they don't realise the potential of storytelling. [
40	Elin	<i>Yeah, because they are not given the opportunity to use it in their English lessons.</i> ^{SS19}]	SS19 : thinks that teachers are not given the opportunity to use storytelling in their English lessons
41	R	What if the schools give support to the teachers in terms of training, or resources?	Question to probe for response to providing professional support to teachers
42	Elin	I believe that it will definitely help the girls in terms of improvement in	SS20: agreement (<i>storytelling</i>)

		their English language. But also, on the teachers' side, we have to see because depending on how receptive the teacher is towards this new approach to teaching. Maybe not all teachers believe in just using storybooks to teach English language. Initially when we started this programme, the parents were also very apprehensive. It's like what about the exam? [	<i>can improve language) and explanation (depending on how receptive the teacher is to this approach to teaching language)</i>
43	R	Yeah, it's something new.	
44	Elin	At the end of the year, they are still doing the same exam. So, we have to assure them,	
45	R	Convince them.	
46	Elin	and tell them that we are still following, in line with the In- Step books that the other girls are doing. ^{SS20}]	
47	R	You still teach the language skills; it's just that you use a different mode. So, would you recommend it for in-service training or ...[	Question to explore possibilities of providing pre- or in-service storytelling training
48	Elin	<u>Definitely.</u> ^{SS21}]	Tone: firm, confident SS21: affirms pre-service training
49	R	Or even pre-service training?	
50	Elin	Yeah. I mean we can introduce that as a module. I'm not sure if we are able to it on a wide scale, as in the whole of Singapore using that. ^{SS22}	SS22: affirms in-service training, but has reservations about escalating it to a larger scale
51	R	Are you thinking of pre- or ...?	
52	Elin	<u>Both – pre and in -service.</u> ^{SS23}	SS23: affirms both pre- and in-service training
53	R	Why both?	Question to probe reasons
54	Elin	<u>Pre-service because the younger teachers, maybe they are more receptive to this new approach.</u> ^{SS24} <u>In-service for those teachers who are interested in trying out this new method of teaching English.</u> ^{SS25}	SS24: reason for pre-service - new teachers are more receptive to this new approach of storytelling SS25: reason for in-service – for teachers interested in trying out this new method of teaching English
55	R	So, it looks like storytelling is something you believe in. Good. The activities that are recommended in this survey which I have highlighted from Wright. Have you tried out some of them? [	Question to probe for evidence
56	Elin	Which page is it?]	
57	R	Towards the end. Have you tried (out) some of them? ... But not all...	
58	Elin	Because some, I found out that they are for lower primary and all that. It is for lower primary – big picture book – the STELLAR, SEED, ^{SS26} and ...	SS26: tries to justify that she has not tried some of the activities listed in the questionnaire; she associates the activities with lower primary classes (grades 1 and 2)
59	R	So, what have you tried, besides those we've highlighted?	Question to probe for evidence
60	Elin	Ok. Actually, we do have our own resources. We have comprehension cubes. They have different colours like red is for pre-reading, so, before you read a book. The girls will throw a dice, and whatever questions there are, they have to answer. That's pre-reading activity. Then another colour, blue. It's during-reading. [	SS27: explains why she has not tried out some of the activities listed in the questionnaire – she uses her school's resources (examples of school's resources)

61	R	Oh, I see.	
62	Elin	Questions that involve during-reading, and post-reading, after reading. ^{SS27} [
63	R	So it is a structured programme which you developed ...?	
64	Elin	Actually, my colleague and I and another teacher. We worked on this as a group. ^{SS28} [	SS28 : talks about the professional collaboration of her and her colleague
65	R	As a group? How regularly do you use this storytelling mode?]	
66	Elin	It's throughout the whole year. ^{SS29}	SS29: <i>throughout the year</i> Tone: firm, confident
67	R	So, it's structured into your English language programme. How regular is that? Once a week, or every lesson?	Question to probe evidence
68	Elin	Every English lesson. ^{SS30}	SS30: illustration (Frequency of storytelling: <i>Every English lesson</i>) Tone: firm, confident
69	R	So, how long has it been going on?	
70	Elin	Third year. This is the third year.	
71	R	This is the third year already. Have you done any survey to find out how	
72	Elin	In the first year, we ... my colleague, she is the Research Activist. We did the pre- and post-survey and the results were very gratifying. ^{SS31}	SS31: Professional development efforts (Research outcome : the results were very gratifying.) Tone: confident
73	R	Must see your results one day.	
74	Elin	She's our Research Activist, Sky.	
75	R	Thank you so much for that rich sharing.	
76	Elin	((small laugh))	Laughter from Elin (relief?)

Teacher Faith: female – used storytelling to teach language skills

1	R	Looking at the survey responses, I notice that you are very much into storytelling. How have you used storytelling as a language tool?	Question to probe for evidence
2	Faith	Basically, I believe that storytelling helps the students to in competency. ^{SS1} And at the same time, they are able to listen, understand and respond to...I mean as an audience as well. I'm talking about audience and presenter... ^{SS2} so, I actually did it before ...no. After going through a series of lessons on storytelling, they are able to do group presentation more effectively ^{SS3} and ...um ... They are able ... even their grammatical structures are better, more accurate in that sense. ^{SS4}	SS1: storytelling helps to develop competency SS2: helps with listening, understanding, presentation SS3: more effective group presentation SS4: more accurate grammar
3	R	What do you mean by more effective?	Question to probe for benefits of storytelling
4	Faith	You mean um..	
5	R	Presentation ... in terms of group presentation	
6	Faith	They speak more confidently ^{SS5} like I said their structures...especially the use of connectors. When they relate a sequence of events, they have to use connectors accurately ^{SS6} and also the variation of the sentence structures. ^{SS7}	SS5: confidence in speech SS6: use varied connectors appropriately SS7: ability to vary sentence structures

7	R	...so ...?	Question to probe for further evidence
8	Faith	Our students like always start with pronouns – “She’s like that” ...”Mary is like that”, “she is” ... after the series of ten storytelling lessons, they are able to vary their sentence structures. ^{SS7 repeated}	Repeats SS7 (ability to vary sentence structures)
9	R	That’s very good. So, you believe, ... so you agree with the statements in the section where literature review and research on storytelling is ...?	Question to probe for response to literature on storytelling
10	Faith	And it is interesting how they interpret the stories based on their own experience because we allow them the scope to look at the stories.... ^{SS8} They might be the same story but they somehow retell it different, every child. So, they bring in their personal experience, what they understand out of it. ^{SS9} I think that’s also a very good way to understand each child so that we can effectively help them as educators.	SS8: ability to interpret stories based on own experience SS9: drawing on personal experience and understanding of story, able to retell stories in own way
11	R	Besides sentence structures, besides confidence, how have they benefited?	Question to probe for benefits
12	Faith	Um, I think obviously, most obviously, it will be the oral presentation, the oral discussions. Like I said, in terms of the speaking skills, ^{SS10} the vocabulary that they use. ^{SS11} And also, it also enhances their reading comprehension because they have to fully understand ... ^{SS12}	SS10: helps with oral presentation/ speaking skills SS11: builds vocabulary SS12: reading skills
13	R	Before they can retell?	Question to probe for benefits
14	Faith	Yeah, ... they kind of yeah, within inverted commas, “memorise”, “internalize” before they retell and reinterpret in their own way. ^{SS13}	SS13: aids in cognitive skills
15	R	I notice that you have a lot of confidence in using storytelling as a language tool, but some of your colleagues may not. How do you think you could help them?	Question to probe for reasons for not trying out storytelling
16	Faith	For me, I did not start with lots of confidence. I also had my reservations, because as I was telling ... telling stories, I can’t do it. It was only after that, through the process of teaching the students, where I learn with them that I learn that there are explicit skills that we can teach them like we give them cards to sequence the story. ^{SS14} Yeah, it is also the confidence that I see, the end product when they end their stories. Even the very, so called ... introverts are able to ...	SS14: Faith’s confession about how she overcame her initial fear through attending the storytelling course SS15: scaffolding activities help students to retell stories and gain confidence
17	R	Retell a story	
18	Faith	to retell a story ^{SS15}	
19	R	....Teachers are not using storytelling as a language tool, is it their lack of confidence, or lack of skills ...?	Question to probe for reasons for not trying out storytelling
20	Faith	I think, for every tool that you want to get the teacher to use, they need to see the value ultimately. If they see the value, even if it is not easy to learn, they will make the effort. So, in everything that we try to implement, it is for people to see the value. ^{SS16} For me, I’m into it, I saw the value, ten sessions of it.	SS16: thoughts about teachers’ readiness to use storytelling (they need to see the value of this activity)
21	R	But some people ... in the responses ... see the value of it but they still do not have the confidence to do it. So, how can we help them? Some formal training?	Question to probe for possibilities of providing professional support
22	Faith	Formal training ^{SS17} and ...yeah, I think formal training will ...	SS17: agrees that teachers should be given formal training
23	R	So, when should we introduce the formal training – during pre-service or in-service?	Question to probe for possibilities of providing pre- and in-service training
24	Faith	I think using this tool is not easy. I think an experienced language teacher would definitely benefit more, and able to carry out more effectively as they most probably have been teaching for quite a few some years. And they have already	SS18: Gives reasons for in-service training - experienced language teacher would be able to carry out storytelling more

		tried out different strategies already. So, this kind of add on to their repertoire. ^{SS18}	effectively; does not answer R directly
25	R	So, in-service is more effective?	Question to probe for benefits
26	Faith	In-service is more effective. ^{SS19}	SS19: agreement (In-service training is more effective.)
27	R	I think so ...	
28	Faith	Pre-service has quite a lot to pick up, the pedagogy.. ^{SS20}	SS20: feels that pre-service trainee teachers have a lot of pedagogical skills to pick up (implying that pre-service storytelling is not appropriate for pre-service teachers)
29	R	Besides training, what other support can the schools give so that they will feel that it is easier to switch to storytelling instead of the usual pen and paper activities?	Question to probe for possibilities of providing professional support
30	Faith	But I see first they must see the value. Then coupled with the skills, then they can carry out effectively. So, they must experience some success. ^{SS21} Maybe they themselves can organize like a workshop, and then work in groups to retell the story and when they experience it first hand, and it is fun, it's fun. I think learning should be fun. ^{SS22}	SS21: thinks that teachers must see the value of storytelling. With proper skills, they can carry out storytelling lessons effectively; they must experience some success in conducting storytelling lessons SS22: suggests professional collaboration – organize workshop, work in groups to retell stories, and make learning fun
31	R	What about resources?	Question to probe for possibilities of providing resources support
32	Faith	Resources such as the right kind of stories. ^{SS23} I think as teachers, not much of problem with resources.	SS23: suggests providing the right kind of stories
33	R	Props	
34	Faith	Props might be a problem ... because of the budget and the maintenance ^{SS24}	SS24: feels that props might be a problem because of the cost (budget) and maintenance
35	R	But if the school is willing to invest ...	
36	Faith	Of course, with the props, it will be so much more fun. ^{SS25}	SS25: agrees that props will help; fun element of props
37	R	...it might just help	
38	Faith	And props can be made. It will be an experience itself. The children can also help ... ^{SS26}	SS26: thinks props can be made with the students
39	R	Mm ... get the children to do it like part of art, as a post activity ...?	Question to probe ways of integrating storytelling into EL lessons
40	Faith	Yeah, as part of art ^{SS27}	SS27: agrees that making props can be a post-activity by children as a post-activity – integration with art work
41	R	Looking at the list of pre, during and post activities, you seem to have checked quite a number. ... Some of them are activities that you might want to try out?	Question to probe relevance of activities
42	Faith	Actually, I have already tried out quite a few like reading a ... reading a ... books to the students and then interpreting it my own way. So they get a modeling kind of before-activity. ^{SS28} And also... I think we do this all the time – like show them the cover to promote predictive skills ^{SS29}	SS28: Reads to students, interpreting it in her own way – modelling method for the children – as a pre-activity SS29: storytelling as a pre-activity to promote predictive skills

43	R	To enthuse them	
44	Faith	Yeah, to arouse interest and finding the meaning^{SS30} ... the sequencing of the stories also – that one is quite effective. It's quite visual. You get them to sequence it visually ...^{SS31}	SS30: Elaboration of objectives of storytelling as a pre-activity: to arouse interest and finding the meaning ... SS31: sequencing of the stories Q: Promoting storytelling
45	R	So, it's a viable language tool. You would want to recommend to younger teachers...?	
46	Faith	I think if we have a package on all the resources, a resource package, it will be easier for younger teachers, like these before-activities, what are some of the suggestions, you know...^{SS32}	SS32: (will recommend storytelling to younger teachers) only if there is a package of resources that will be useful to younger teachers.
47	R	And the syllabus document itself, the new syllabus document does not include storytelling as a formal language teaching approach, what is your sense of it? [
48	Faith		Not even STELLAR?
49	R		Only for STELLAR...
50	Faith		I guess it will be effective for STELLAR...
51	R		Not for the other levels. How do you feel about it? Why won't they ...
52	Faith		I think it's quite a pity to do that, to not include ...
53	R		Why do you say that?]
54	Faith	Because if you make it optional and it is so time consuming and sometimes the benefits are not very obvious, people will not have a less likelihood to do it.^{SS33} If the focus is still the PSLE, the upper primaries will be less likely to do it. They will think "Ok, that's very pre-school or lower primary^{SS34} when actually that is a misconception of course because this can be done at all levels, even pre-school, lower primary. But the upper primary will have a different level of vocabulary already ...^{SS35}	agreement and illustration of why there is reservation about using storytelling - SS33: if perceived to be time-consuming & benefits not obvious, then less likely to be used by teachers SS34: If focus is on the PSLE (primary school leaving exam), then the upper primary classes will be less likely to engage in storytelling activities; SS35: misconception by upper primary classes because storytelling can be done at all levels – from pre-school to primary six.
55	R	So you would recommend it to the upper level?	Question to probe for response to extending storytelling to upper primary levels
56	Faith	Of course. Of course.^{SS36}	SS36: affirms that she will recommend storytelling to the upper primary classes
57	R	How would you do it for, say, P5?	Q: ways of teaching storytelling
58	Faith	The stories will be slightly different. Because P5 they are quite exposed to the internet. They can actually read the stories on the internet.^{SS37}	SS37: feels that for Primary five students, the stories will have to be slightly different because they are quite exposed to the internet and are actually reading stories on the internet
59	R	Ok ...Online resources	Question to probe for possibilities
60	Faith	Online resources. There are so many out there, a lot of Youtube videos on the re-interpretations of different stories. We can do it as pre-activity and they can get to tell their own	SS38: many online resources for use as pre-activities; can get students to view the online

		stories. They can even do those online comics to tell their stories (for) different presentations ^{SS38}	resources and then get them to tell their own stories, and use online comics to tell their stories for different presentations.
61	R	To tell a story for entertainment is quite different from to tell or to use stories to teach specific language points	
62	Faith	Mm ... mm ... naturally	
63	R	So ...so ...	
64	Faith	That one will be up to the teacher, how the teacher wants ...	
65	R	...	
66	Faith	If I have to do it for a primary 5, I will most probably focus on the vocabulary. ^{SS39}	SS39: if given a chance to conduct storytelling in a primary five class, she will most probably focus on vocabulary building
67	R	Oh ...	
68	Faith	Choose a good book, the very interesting, descriptive words and phrases , which a lot of ... a lot of weak ability classes, the lower end, they tend to be lacking and that's what we notice when we mark comprehension, and composition during PSLE. They kind of lack the vocab to describe certain things. So, I would most probably focus on the vocabulary because the more they have... like storytelling, they have to read it first, they have to understand what the words mean before they could retell it. ^{SS40}	SS40: details how she would conduct that storytelling session, focusing on vocabulary building (Benefit of storytelling: vocabulary)
69	R	Yeah ... so, storytelling is a powerful reading tool as well?	Question to probe for benefits
70	Faith	Definitely. ^{SS41}	SS41: agrees that storytelling is a powerful reading tool as well
71	R	Ok. So, you have shared a lot. Thank you so much.	
72	Faith	You're welcome.	

Teacher Greg: male – did **not** use storytelling at all

1	R	Right, let's look at your responses. I notice that you seem to agree with the literature review about storytelling as a language learning tool. But I notice also that in your years of teaching, you have not tried out storytelling.	Question to probe reasons for not trying out storytelling
2	Greg	Yeah, ... yeah	
3	R	So, what's your reservation?	
4	Greg	Um ... for me, I do think that storytelling will be a useful tool in the classroom. ^{SS1} But I don't think I have the skills to carry out an effective storytelling lesson because I am not so certain how the structure is. That is why I have not carried [it] out in my lessons. ^{SS2}	SS1: thinks storytelling will be a useful tool in the classroom (GREG has not tried out storytelling; he thinks it is something possible in the future for him?) SS2: admits he does not have the skills necessary for conducting an effective storytelling lesson because he is not sure about story lesson structure and how to conduct it.
5	R	So, if the school provides formal training for you, would you go for it?	Question to probe for response to professional support
6	Greg	Mm ...	Hesitation – suggesting reluctance?
7	R	Give it a try?	
8	Greg	Yeah, I think I wouldn't mind giving it a try because I think it will make the lessons more interesting for the pupils. ^{SS3}	SS3: does not mind giving storytelling a try, the reason being that he thinks it will make the lessons more interesting for the students ("I think" is repeated, suggesting Greg's degree of commitment is not high; he is

9	R	Oh, in what way ...?	tentative about trying out storytelling)
10	Greg	Yeah, because I think everyone is interested in stories, not only children. Adults also like stories. Even when the public figures use stories, people are engaged. ^{SS4}	Question to probe further details SS4: elaborates on SS3, to include appeal of stories to adults, public figures
11	R	More engaging.	
12	Greg	Yeah... Rather than just teaching. If we use it as a tool, I think it is more interesting. ^{SS5}	SS5: agrees that storytelling is engaging; thinks that if it is used as a tool, it is more interesting
13	R	So, you think it is more a tool to stimulate interest. What about a tool to teach particular language skills, whether it is reading, or writing skills ...?	Question to probe for specific language applications
14	Greg	I think it is possible also. If the appropriate stories are chosen, and training is given to us on how to use that story to teach particular skills, so the particular learning outcomes are achieved. ^{SS6}	SS6: Greg thinks that it is possible to use storytelling as a teaching tool on two conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the appropriate stories are chosen • If training is provided to show how to use stories to teach particular skills so that particular learning outcomes are achieved. ("I think" suggests Greg is not that confident about teaching language skills through storytelling)
15	R	So far, you have not observed any lessons on storytelling?	
16	Greg	No.	
17	R	But given a chance, you would want to try it.	Question to probe for response to storytelling
18	Greg	Yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: agrees that if given a chance, he would like to try using storytelling
19	R	Then, if you are going to try out storytelling, would you recommend it for pre-service or in-service training?	Question to probe for response to professional support
20	Greg	Pre-service is good so that teachers come into schools with that knowledge. ^{SS8} Sometimes, once you are in the service ^{SS9} ... um ...	SS8: pre-service training is good so that the (fresh graduates) come into the schools with that knowledge (skill). SS9: (does not think it should be in-service training)
21	R	The time ...	Question to probe for further administrative support
22	Greg	Yeah, the time plus a lot of other factors come in. ^{SS9 cont'd} Pre-service, they are all very focused on learning. ^{SS8 cont'd} Once you are in-service, you are practitioners. Once you are practitioners, you take time to go to these workshops. Sometimes you are not able to make it. ^{SS9 cont'd} So, I think pre-service will be more effective. ^{SS8 cont'd}	SS9 cont'd: time constraints and other factors (may not favour in-service training) SS8 cont'd: Pre-service trainee teachers are all very focused on learning. SS9 cont'd: (seems to suggest that once a teacher in the service, he/she may not be able to find the time to attend workshops) SS8 cont'd: thinks pre-service training will be more effective
23	R	You are talking about using stories as a trigger ...	Question to probe for further application
24	Greg	I think not only a trigger. It can play a bigger role in the lesson. I feel it is possible to frame an entire lesson around a story also. It is possible. ^{SS10}	Teacher's response: thinks storytelling is not just used as a trigger, but is able to play a bigger role in a lesson - possible to frame an entire lesson around a story.
25	R	People have done it.	
26	Greg	Yeah.	
27	R	So it can be a story-based lesson, but in there, you draw	Question to probe for benefits

		a lot of learning points.	
28	Greg	Yes, a lot, a lot. ^{SS11}	SS11: agrees that one can draw a lot of learning points from a story-based lesson
29	R	So the stories need not be from print.	
30	Greg	Yeah, exactly. ^{SS12}	SS12: agrees that stories need not in print form
31	R	It can be read out by you. It can be ... commercial kind of tapes that you use.	
32	Greg	Yes. ^{SS12 cont'd}	SS12 cont'd: (elaborates on earlier SS12) agrees that stories can be read out or from tapes
33	R	What about students telling stories?	Question to probe for evidence of storytelling by students
34	Greg	It's possible also. It's possible if we guide them along, if we scaffold them in an appropriate manner, I think they will be able to do it. ^{SS13}	SS13: thinks it is possible to scaffold activities for students to tell stories
35	R	I think some years ago, Melanie and a couple of teachers actually tried out	
36	Greg	...	
37	R	We got the vendors to come in. Then the students learned the stories and re-told the stories.	
38	Greg	I think it is possible.	
39	R	The reason why you didn't try is because you feel there is a need for some formal training.	Question to probe response to professional support
40	Greg	Yes, some kind of formal structure, training for me to effectively carry out storytelling lessons. ^{SS14} And also like ... how will it result in achieving certain learning objectives and all that. So, if that link is clear in teachers' minds, they will be more enthusiastic about carrying out the lesson. ^{SS15}	SS14: agrees that formal training is necessary so that there is a formal structure that will help teachers to effectively carry out storytelling lessons, and how t SS15: formal training is also need to help teachers to link the learning outcomes to the storytelling lesson, so that they will be more enthusiastic about conducting story-based lessons
41	R	If the schools are able to give teachers enough support, besides training, buying them resources, props and all that, do you think it will help?	Question to probe response to professional and administrative support
42	Greg	Yeah, I think it will definitely help. ^{SS16} It just shouldn't be over and above what we are doing. So, if you add something, you have to take out something so that it is not overloading. ^{SS17}	SS16: agrees that besides training, resources will also be helpful SS17: raises concern that work load must not increase when storytelling is introduced (concern about work load)
43	R	It should not be.	
44	Greg	Yeah, it cannot be something ...	
45	R	Should be part of the curriculum?	Question to probe response to administrative support
46	Greg	Yeah, correct, correct ...Because if it is over and above, I'm concerned that teachers will just take it as another thing to do, you know. Then they'll just do it for the sake of doing. And that shouldn't be the case. Should achieve a nice balance, so that teachers are comfortable carrying out the lessons ^{SS18} and they really see the value. ^{SS19}	SS17: agrees that storytelling should be part of the curriculum. Reasons that if it is an add-on, teachers will just conduct storytelling just for the sake of doing it. Suggests striking a nice balance. SS19: thinks teachers must really see value (in storytelling)
47	R	So, we start with the value. They must see the value.	Question to probe for benefits
48	Greg	They must have some personal meaning in conducting the lesson so that they can convince themselves that what I am doing is useful and then they are willing to carry out the lesson. Not because	SS19 cont'd: elaborates that teachers must see personal meaning in conducting storytelling lessons so that they are convinced that what they are doing is

		somebody tells them to do it, then they do it, you know. SS19 cont'd	useful (and then they'll be motivated to conduct storytelling lessons)
49	R	...	
50	Greg	I think that bit is very important. Once they buy into the whole idea, they themselves will want to do it. SS20	SS20: (emphasies point made in SS19) thinks it is very important that teachers should have the buy-in so that they will want to conduct (storytelling lessons).
51	R	They'll make the effort. Thank you for your insightful sharing.	
52	Greg	No worries.	
53	R	Thank you.	

Teacher Han: male – did **not** use storytelling at all

1	R	From your responses, you seem to agree with many of the statements for Q1. So, would you want to try out storytelling one day?	Question to probe for reasons
2	Han	I would like. However, I feel that I do not have the time to try it out. SS1	SS1: would like to try out storytelling but feels he does not have the time to do that (time constraint)
3	R	You said you may not have the time. Is it because of the syllabus coverage?	Question to probe specific reasons
4	Han	Yes, because of the syllabus coverage. SS2	SS2: agrees that the time constraint is a result of the need to cover the syllabus (syllabus coverage)
5	R	Yet, research on storytelling seems to talk a great deal about the power of storytelling, how you can use it to teach language skills? How do you feel about that?	Question to probe for specific language applications
6	Han	Yes, I personally feel that it can be a useful tool for teaching certain part of the language learning skills. SS3	SS3: feels that storytelling can be a useful tool for teaching certain language learning skills
7	R	So, which part, in particular, do you think we can use to introduce storytelling?	Question to probe for specific language applications
8	Han	Maybe in teaching the grammar part. SS4	SS4: can use storytelling to teach grammar
9	R	The Grammar part. So it will be more interesting.	
10	Han	It will be more interesting, to arouse their interest. SS5	SS5: teach grammar through storytelling is more interesting
11	R	So far, your other colleagues...-have tried out storytelling. What have they said about storytelling?	Question to probe specific reasons
12	Han	Oh, I have no idea because I have not got any feedback from them.	Teacher's response: negative
13	R	Ok. So, you don't see the possibility of using storytelling as a way of introducing a lesson, or as a trigger activity?	Question to probe for specific reasons
14	Han	I may not know now how to use it. SS6	SS6: concern about lack of skills – using storytelling as a way of introducing a lesson, a trigger activity
15	R	Other teachers also seem to be saying the same thing. Has it got to do with training?	Question to probe specific reasons
16	Han	Yes, I think so. SS7	SS7: agrees that other teachers may have the same concern about lack of skill in using storytelling to introduce a lesson or as a trigger
17	R	You think so. Would training help, to some extent?	Question to probe specific reasons
18	Han	I think it should help to some extent. SS8	SS8: agrees that training would help to some extent

19	R	So, if we were to provide training, should we provide training at the pre-service or in-service stage?	Question to probe for possibility of professional support
20	Han	<i>I think, in-service so that maybe we have tried out other strategies. We may try out this strategy as well to see if it as useful.</i> ^{SS9}	SS9: suggests in-service so that teachers may try out other strategies.
21	R	Ok. Towards the end of the questionnaire, there are a number of activities that I have listed out. I've listed quite a few activities – pre-activities, post activities and so on. Do you find them useful? I notice that you ticked some of them.	Question to probe for specific benefits
22	Han	Yes. ^{SS10}	SS10: affirms that he finds some of the listed pre-, during- and post-activities in the questionnaire useful
23	R	So there is a possibility of using storytelling for ...	Question to probe for possibilities
24	Han	Yes, at least we have some ideas of how to make use of the storytelling.	Teacher's response: agreement and reason
25	R	So, if your school were to provide support for you and colleagues like you who may not have the training, what kind of support do you think your school should provide?	Question to probe for response to professional support
26	Han	Training. ^{SS11}	SS11: suggests training as a form of professional support
27	R	Training. What other things besides training?	Question to probe for other possibilities
28	Han	Time. The most important thing is we must have the time. ^{SS12}	SS11: Not directly relevant to R's question; brings up his earlier concern about time constraint (SS1)
29	R	So we must build in time as well. What about resources? In storytelling, we use props and all that. Will that help?	Question to probe for other possibilities
30	Han	Yes. ^{SS13}	SS13: agrees that professional support in the form of resources (e.g.props) should help.
31	R	Thank you.	

Teacher Ivan: male – used storytelling to teach language skills

1	R	You have been teaching for four years only. You said in the form that you have tried out storytelling in your English language lessons. Can you cite one instance when you used storytelling?	Question to probe for evidence
2	Ivan	<i>I remember about two or three years ago, it was actually a departmental project that we tried to tell a story to the children, to the class of P3 children and using felt figures, animals and ...yeah.</i> ^{SS1}	SS1: recalls a department project on storytelling with primary three students in which he was involved
3	R	Were the children very interested?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Ivan	<i>Oh yes. They were very enthused by it, very interested. Very rarely do you see them so focused in the lesson.</i> ^{SS2}	SS2: recalled the children being very enthused and interested, very focused in the storytelling lesson
5	R	Let's come back to the second question about what researchers say about storytelling. You seem to agree with many of the comments there.	
6	Ivan	Yes. As for researchers, they do establish very strong relationships with children, particularly young children in lower primary or middle primary. They'll ... prefer something more pictorial, or animation even in words, or audio form of animation.	
7	R	How have you used it to teach language skills? Which language skills have you particularly focused on?	Question to probe for specific language use
8	Ivan	<i>For that particular lesson, we focused more on the grammar part, on the use of past tense</i> ^{SS3} <i>where after listening to the story using felt figures, the</i>	SS3: A storytelling lesson on the use of past tense SS4: the students retold stories to

		children themselves get to use the same set of felt figures to retell the story to their own group mates. ^{SS4} So, in a way, they are able to ... We saw they are able to recall and pick up the vocabulary as well as the use of past tense. ^{SS5}	their group mates SS5: the students picked up vocabulary in the lesson too
9	R	Oh	
10	Ivan	Yeah, after which the children also able to use that in their writing. ^{SS6}	SS6: Evidence of the children using the vocab in their writing
11	R	So, do you see the words and phrases being used in their writing?	Question to probe for evidence
12	Ivan	Yeah, we saw that in their writing. ^{SS6 repeated}	SS6 repeated: affirms that he saw the students using the newly learnt vocabulary words in their writing
13	R	So, um... so you would try out storytelling again, I suppose.	
14	Ivan	Oh yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms that he will try out storytelling lesson again
15	R	You have the confidence to try it out. What gave you the confidence?	Question to probe for evidence
16	Ivan	I suppose the training gave me a lot of confidence. We attended a workshop, a storytelling workshop prior to that. And that sort of built up my skills and confidence ... ^{SS8}	SS8: explains he gained confidence from the training he received – the workshop he attended which developed his skills and confidence
17	R	Confidence level as well... So would you recommend this for pre-service training?	Question to probe for possible professional support
18	Ivan	Yes, I'll definitely recommend this for pre-service training so they will be more equipped when they are out teaching. ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms he will recommend storytelling for pre-service training (for pre-service teachers) so that they will be better equipped
19	R	What about in-service? Would you also recommend it for in-service training?	Question to probe for possible professional support
20	Ivan	Yes. Teachers who have not been trained or who would like to pick up this new skill or even a refresher, it will appeal to them. ^{SS10}	SS10: agrees that in-service training should be offered to other teachers as a refresher course or to learn new skills
21	R	Add on to their repertoire of teaching strategies.	
22	Ivan	Storytelling ... from experience, we've seen it usually appeal to the younger children more. ^{SS11}	SS11: thinks storytelling appeals more to younger children
23	R	Why do you think so?	Question to probe for reasons
24	Ivan	I suppose because of their experience, the fantasy world they grow up in, the storybooks, and things like that, ...the fairy tales ... ^{SS12}	SS12: explains SS11 – because of younger children's experience, the fantasy world they grow up in
25	R	Stories are very familiar to younger children.	
26	Ivan	Yes. ^{SS12 cont'd}	SS12 cont'd: agrees that stories are very familiar to younger children
27	R	Towards the end of the questionnaire, there are three lists of activities that we could use for pre, during and post-activities. Which activities have you introduced in your English language classes?	Question to probe for evidence
28	Ivan	I've used "Teacher used the cover and get the pupils to predict what the book, what the content will be about, who are the characters in the story ..." ^{SS13}	SS13: example of pre-activity and purpose (cover to get the pupils to predict what the book is about and who the characters are in the story)
29	R	As a way of leading them into the story.	
30	Ivan	Yes, preparing them for it. ^{SS13 cont'd}	SS13 cont'd: also to prepare them for the story (tuning in)

31	R	What about the during-activities?	Question to probe for evidence
32	Ivan	<i>During activities. The children will answer the questions during the story from time to time and also to make predictions. And at the same time, check whether their earlier predictions were right.</i> ^{SS14}	SS14: example of post-activity and purpose (answer the questions during the story from time to time and also to make predictions; check whether their earlier predictions were right).
33	R	So, it looks like it is possible to use storytelling for different language skills – for promoting writing, grammar, or vocab, ...	SS15: affirms that storytelling can be used to promote writing, grammar or vocabulary skills
34	Ivan	<i>Yeah.</i> ^{SS15}	
35	R	What about oral skills?	Question to probe for further evidence
36	Ivan	<i>Yeah. If we retell stories, they will give confidence to that part and also sharpen their oral skills.</i> ^{SS16}	SS16: agrees that storytelling can help develop children's oral skills and confidence. examples of benefits of retelling of stories: confidence, sharpen oral skills)
37	R	Thank you.	

Teacher Jim: male, did **not** use storytelling to teach language skills (used it for **tuning in**)

1	R	We'll now look at the responses in this survey. From the survey, even though you indicated that you have not tried out storytelling, you seem to agree with many of the statements for Q1, for instance. So, would you want to explore storytelling as a teaching tool one day?	Question to probe reasons
2	Jim	<i>Yes, definitely, because I do realise that students like to listen to stories. If there is a platform for me to teach like vocab or grammar items according to the syllabus, I'd love to try it out.</i> ^{SS1}	SS1: Affirms that she would like to try out storytelling some day to teach vocab and grammar items. Reason: students like listening to stories
3	R	So far, have you used it as a pre-activity or ...?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Jim	<i>Mainly I use storytelling as a <u>trigger</u>, tuning in activity just to arouse their interest to the subject I'm going to teach or the topic I'm going to introduce.</i> ^{SS2}	SS1: Uses storytelling as a trigger, tuning in activity just to arouse students' interest (ANNE0 does use storytelling but not to teach language skills)
5	R	Ok. So, you do use storytelling. It's just that you don't use it for the main part of the lesson. What stops you from using it as the main part of the lesson?	Question to probe for reasons
6	Jim	<i>I suppose there is a lack of structure and maybe also a lack of confidence. At least, if I know that there is a proper structure and something that I can fall back on or rely on.</i> ^{SS3} <i>And I also believe that storytelling, to me, is a skill. To be able to tell stories and engage your students, I think it is a skill, a gift. I would like to harness on that gift if I have the chance.</i> ^{SS4}	SS3: reasons for not using storytelling for the main part of the lesson – a lack of structure; not confident SS4: believes storytelling is a skill; telling stories to engage students requires skills; expresses desire to try that, if given the chance to do so
7	R	So, if teachers like you were to go for professional training, would that help?	Question to probe for response to professional support
8	Jim	<i>Yes, definitely. Whether is it in-house, or in-service training, or I have to go to NIE or ...</i> ^{SS5}	SS5: affirms desire to go for in-service training
9	R	Pre-service training?	
10	Jim	<i>Pre-service training. I think that will definitely help tremendously.</i> ^{SS6}	SS6: agrees that pre-service training will definitely help too.
11	R	So if it is pre-service training and in-service training, which	

		would you prefer?	
12	Jim	Ok. I think maybe in-service will be more helpful because if they were to do it in NIE, the teachers have not ... been exposed to the full scale, full load of a full fledged teacher yet so that they do not know maybe in their schools, there are other resources that can supplement storytelling in terms of teaching English. So, I think if they were to be exposed to different tools in NIE, it might be a bit too hectic. ^{SS7}	SS7: prefers in-service training – thinks it is more helpful; Feels that pre-service teachers not given full load yet and may find additional storytelling training more hectic
13	R	Oh, I see. So, you feel that maybe after they have taught for a few years, they can explore storytelling as an additional tool, in other words?	Question to probe for further reasons
14	Jim	It is like after you teach, then you will know whether ... “I think I want to explore other tools”. Then you know what you need. That will be more helpful. ^{SS8}	SS8: feels that (experienced) teachers would know whether they need to explore other pedagogical tools after teaching for a while
15	R	The syllabus document does not really recommend storytelling in a formal way. So, would you think it should be recommended?	
16	Jim	I would recommend storytelling to supplement whatever I am teaching. That means it is one of the tools that I can explore, that I can use to teach, ^{SS9} but maybe not the main part of it. If not, ... ^{SS10}	SS9: recommends storytelling be another pedagogical tool to supplement whatever pedagogical strategies she already has SS10: feels that storytelling may not form the main thrust of a lesson
17	R	Why not? Why are you so worried about that...?	Question to probe for reasons
18	Jim	I may run out of stories to tell. ^{SS11}	SS11: worries about running out of stories to tell
19	R	Earlier on, you talked about structures. Are you worried that if there isn't a structure to fall back on, you may not know specifically what language skills to teach?	Question to probe for reasons
20	Jim	Yes, definitely. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms that if there is no formal structure for a storytelling lesson, she may not know what specific language skills to teach
21	R	So, the formal training could be more focused, in that case.	
22	Jim	Yes. ^{SS13}	SS13: agreement (formal training will be more focused in terms of specific needs, e.g. storytelling structure)
23	R	What about support? If the schools give the teachers enough support, in terms of lesson resources like props, will that help?	Question to probe for response to professional support
24	Jim	Definitely, ^{SS14} because if it is a full, a whole-school approach. Take for example, you teach a particular level where all the teachers use storytelling to teach a particular topic for example, if you encounter any problems, you can definitely seek help from your colleagues. So for that part, from my point of view, it will be more helpful. ^{SS15}	SS14: agrees that if schools provide professional support such as resources, it will help SS15: feels that professional support such as professional collaboration (colleagues helping one another) is more helpful, i.e. storytelling as a whole-school approach so that teachers can help one another
25	R	Any other comments you want to make?	
26	Jim	No. I think that's fine.	
27	R	Thank you very much.	

Teacher Kim: female – used storytelling to lead to the teaching of particular language skills

1	R	We'll now look at the responses in your form. How long have you been teaching?	
2	Kim	Six years.	
3	R	Six years. And I notice that you indicated in your survey form that you have tried out storytelling.	
4	Kim	Yes, but not explicitly.	
5	R	Not explicitly. Can you explain that?	Question to probe for reasons
6	Kim	It is probably not to use it as a tool to teach concepts such as grammar items. I do use it to ... probably for tuning in, to lead to another development ^{SS1}	SS1: does not use storytelling to teach language skills; use if for tuning in, to lead to another development
7	R	Can you cite one story that you have tried out as a tuning in activity?	Question to probe for evidence
8	Kim	Currently, I'm teaching the unit called "James and the Giant Peach" for English. So when I asked them about the story, some of them have not read the book. Some of them do not know Roald Dahl. So what I did was to tell them a little bit about James, just the beginning bit about James and the Giant Peach. Actually, they were intensely listening and then after that they were asking for more. But I told them, "No, I'm not going to tell you the ending." So, I'm going to tell them to read (it) themselves. This one involves, you know, the pupils so that they will read the story and come back and discuss the ending and how we could change the ending. If they don't like the ending, maybe we could change the ending. And that is one of the activities in the book – change the ending if they don't agree with the ending.	SS2: explains how the teacher tells the beginning of a story to enthuse pupils to read on on their own; to provide context for pupils to be creative by changing the ending of the story
9	R	So, I can see two significant benefits. One is to motivate them to read. The other one would be to give them the context for writing as well.	Question to probe for language benefits (motivate students to read; give them the context for writing)
10	Kim	It's true. I feel that if there is storytelling, structured storytelling programme in the syllabus, if they were to outline the ... ^{SS3}	SS3: feels that there is a need for storytelling as a structured programme
11	R	Specific language skills.	
12	Kim	Yeah, specific language skills, objectives and goals, maybe we can follow ... ^{SS3 cont'd}	SS3 cont'd: specific areas of the structured programme (specific language skills, objectives and goals)
13	R	I see. Use it as a kind of example?	Question to probe for evidence
14	Kim	A tool to teach vocab in English skills... ^{SS3 cont'd}	SS3 cont'd: example (stories to teach vocab)
15	R	So, the particular guide will help. What about formal training?	Question to probe for response to professional support
16	Kim	Yes. Think um ...	Teacher's response: agreement (formal training)
17	R	Formal training in the teaching of English language through storytelling.	
18	Kim	Right. ^{SS4} Storytelling – I'm not sure whether it is enough. Maybe it should be supplemented by other resources ^{SS5}	SS4: agrees that there is a need for formal training SS5: feels there is a need to supplement formal training with other resources
19	R	In particular, what resources have you in mind?	Question to probe for details
20	Kim	Um .. probably ...um ...	
21	R	You're talking about props, puppets, and maybe costumes?	

22	Kim	Oh yeah. ^{SS6}	SS6: agrees there is a need for specific resources: props, puppets, and costumes
23	R	And others?	Question to probe for details
24	Kim	Maybe the scripts also. ^{SS6 cont'd}	SS6 cont'd: example of other resources (scripts)
25	R	So that will help?	
26	Kim	That will <u>definitely</u> help. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms that specific resources will definitely help Stress "definitely"
27	R	Those are resources. You are talking about training. If your school supports you in this way, I suppose more teachers would want to try it out. Would you recommend pre-service or in-service training?	Question to probe for response to professional support
28	Kim	I guess it could be both ^{SS8} because if it is in-service, we can also learn. ....and the older generation of teachers can also pick up the skills as well. ^{SS9}	SS8: pre- and in-service training SS9: in-service training enables older (more experienced) teachers to learn the skills
29	R	So, for pre-service, do you think it should be introduced?	
30	Kim	They can. They would have skill-prepared activities. ^{SS10}	SS10: pre-service activities allow pre-service trainees to learn skill-prepared activities)
31	R	It's like a bigger pool of resources for them.	
32	Kim	Yeah, correct.	
33	R	Ok, you have tried out storytelling. How do you think your students have benefited from it?	Question to probe for benefits
34	Kim	Firstly, I think it definitely grabs their attention. And I can see the pupils looking around and straightaway they focus. It teach[es] them how to focus. I mean, bring their attention. And then after that, it also instills their listening skills. ^{SS11}	SS11: examples of benefits of storytelling – it can grab students' attention, teach them to focus, and help to develop their listening skills
35	R	But in what aspect do you think they have improved?	
36	Kim	In terms of probably intonation, pronunciation. ^{SS12} I tell stories with expression. So, it means ... they can mimic certain expressions and ^{SS13}	SS12: Oral skills benefits - intonation, pronunciation, expression SS13: helps with expressiveness (teacher models expressiveness by telling stories with expression)
37	R	Model it?	
38	Kim	Yeah, model it. ^{SS13 cont'd} It helps in their background, to support their background knowledge.	SS13 cont'd: expressiveness
39	R	Oh, I see. It generates lots of interest as well? Ok, we've got three lists of activities – pre, during and post. Can you identify one or two activities that you particularly like and have tried out?	Question to probe for evidence
40	Kim	There is actually ... Quite a long time ago, after listening to the story, they sequenced the story. ^{SS14}	SS14: refers to a storytelling activity she has conducted – sequencing parts of the story after listening to the story
41	R	Oh, yes.	
42	Kim	After sequencing, they would try to change, probably, characterization. ^{SS15}	SS15: another activity - change in characters
43	R	So they substitute the characters, substitute the ending as well. Interesting.	
44	Kim	Yeah, interesting. It really develops their creativity, in that sense. ^{SS16}	SS16: benefit – develops their creativity
45	R	Do you see that in the compositions that they write?	Question to probe for evidence

46	Kim	So far, I've not seen. ^{SS17} Probably if it were, if it were ...	SS17: has not seen evidence of creativity in her students
47	R	More sustained?	
48	Kim	Yeah, more sustained. For a ..	
49	R	Longer period of time.	
50	Kim	Yeah, longer period of time, maybe they will. ^{SS18}	SS18: feels that with the passage of time, the benefits will be apparent.
51	R	You might want to try out storytelling more?	
52	Kim	Yeah.	
53	R	Thank you.	

Teacher Lily: Female – used storytelling to teach language skills and promote interest in books

1	R	We'll now look at the survey form. Let's look at question 1 – general comments about the value of storytelling. And I notice that you agree with some of them, like the first one, "Stories are able to captivate pupils' interest [in reading]." You agree with this statement. Can you cite some instances in your class ...	Question to probe for evidence
2	Lily	Normally, I will tell the stories based on my family and my children, and see how they have gone through certain situations. They are very interested because it involved the form teacher. ^{SS1}	SS1: Uses personal stories and reason to captivate her students' interest
3	R	Oh, ok. Yes, Yes. They are stories they can relate to, relevant to them.	
4	Lily	Yes. They are very inquisitive about my life, my personal life.	
5	R	The second question is actually based on researchers' comments about storytelling. Researchers have a lot to say about the value of storytelling. In your own experience, do you find that some of these comments bear out in your lessons?	Question to probe for evidence
6	Lily	.... (silence)	
7	R	For instance, do you find your students are more motivated to go and read up on their own?	Question to probe for reasons
8	Lily	Yes, especially if I introduce a storybook, for instance, the story, "Nip" about a mouse. It's a series. I think there are four books on it. So, I told them that I've read the story and it's very interesting. After that, a few students go to the library to search for the book. ^{SS2}	SS2: tells her students that she has read a particular book and likes it very much so that her students will be enthused and will go off to read the book
9	R	Very good. So, it generates a lot of interest in reading.	
10	Lily	Yeah. ^{SS3}	SS3: agrees that it generates a lot of interest in reading
11	R	Since storytelling is so powerful, do you think we should recommend it?	Question to probe for reasons
12	Lily	For the high-ability group, yes. ^{SS4} For the low-ability group, I would recommend short stories. Short stories just to cultivate their interest in reading, the beginning of reading. If you introduce a thick book like Harry Potter, I don't think they will continue reading it. ^{SS5}	SS4: agrees that we should recommend storytelling to the high-ability students SS5: feels we could also recommend storytelling to low-ability students, but the stories have to be short as the objective is to cultivate their interest in reading.
13	R	So it depends on the age of the students and their reading ability?	
14	Lily	Yes. ^{SS6}	SS6: agrees that much depends on the age and reading ability of the students

15	R	But how can we teach language skills through storytelling? Are there specific language skills that you've taught through storytelling – in the area of vocabulary, grammar or writing?	Question to probe for language benefits
16	Lily	<i>I like to use the dialogue because they always get mixed up with the Chinese punctuation. Before the dialogue, "The teacher said" is followed by a comma, but in Chinese it is by a semi-colon.</i> ^{SS7}	SS7: example of benefit (uses dialogue to teach punctuation)
17	R	So, use dialogues to teach punctuation marks.	
18	Lily	Yes. There's this confusion.	
19	R	Do you also use storytelling to help them with oral skills?	Question to probe for language benefits
20	Lily	<i>Oh, yes. Teach them the pitch and tone.</i> ^{SS8}	SS8: uses storytelling to teach oral skills (pitch and tone)
21	R	For expressiveness and emotions?	
22	Lily	Yes. ^{SS9}	SS9: agrees that storytelling can help with expressiveness (to denote different emotions)
23	R	Do you find your students learning and practising it in their oral work?	Question to probe for language benefits
24	Lily	<i>They do, they try.</i> ^{SS10}	SS10: affirms that her students are learning oral skills and are trying to practise those skills
25	R	What about writing?	
26	Lily	Writing...	
27	R	How does it help with writing, when you use stories in the class?	Question to probe for language benefit (writing)
28	Lily	<i>I ask them to see the introduction and the development of the events, and also the paragraphing. My pupils tend to write in chunks of paragraphs. They write in long paragraphs. I teach them how to break up [the paragraphs].</i> ^{SS11}	SS11: gets her students to look at how ideas are organized in stories – introduction, development of events, paragraphing
29	R	Any other language skills that you have introduced through stories?	Question to probe for language benefits
30	Lily	<i>Some of the vocab.</i> ^{SS12}	SS12: other language skills introduced through stories – vocab
31	R	And do you see, in their composition writing, the new vocab that they've learnt?	Question to probe for language benefits
32	Lily	<i>Yeah, some do. The good ones.</i> ^{SS13}	SS13: affirms that her students, especially the better students, use the new vocab they have learnt from stories in their composition writing
33	R	So, it looks like it might be good to recommend it for formal language teaching? Do you think training would help?	Question to probe for response to professional support
34	Lily	The teachers?	
35	R	Yes, if you train the teachers.	
36	Lily	<i>Yes. They will be more aware that a book can have lots of resources and they break up into different components of the language.</i> ^{SS14}	SS14: agrees that formal training will help teachers to become aware of the potential of books (storybooks) in language learning
37	R	So, if it is training, do you think we should introduce it at the pre-service or ...?	Question to probe for response to professional support
38	Lily	<i>I think it is better if it is at pre-service.</i> ^{SS15}	SS15: better to have pre-service training
39	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
40	Lily	<i>So that the new beginning teachers know how to use storytelling ...</i> ^{SS16}	SS16: reason (new beginning teachers know how to use

41	R	As a tool? So they have a repertoire of strategies?	storytelling)
42	Lily	Yes, correct. ^{SS17}	Question to probe for reasons SS17: agrees that new beginning teachers will have a repertoire of strategies to draw on
43	R	You won't recommend it for in-service?	Question to probe for response to professional support
44	Lily	Yes, a refresher course. ^{SS18}	SS18: agrees that in-service training can be a refresher course
45	R	Yes. Besides training, we also talk about how to support teachers. How do we support teachers in terms of resources? What kind of resources do you think schools should provide?	Question to probe for response to professional support
46	Lily	Resources ...	Teacher's response: example of professional support (resources)
47	R	Do you think props would help? Costumes and props?	
48	Lily	Of course, of course. ^{SS19}	SS19: agrees that professional support (costumes and props) would be helpful
49	R	In the form of puppets ...?	Teacher's response: agreement of examples of professional support (puppets)
50	Lily	Yes, yes. ^{SS19 cont'd}	SS19 cont'd: puppets as well
51	R	If a book is recommended for a particular level, costumes can change the whole ambience of the classroom. Thank you very much.	

Teacher Maia: female – did **not** use storytelling to teach English language skills; **used** storytelling as a trigger/ to arouse interest

1	R	Now we'll look at the survey. Questions 1 and 2 refer to comments made by people as well as researchers about the value of storytelling. I notice that you indicated that you didn't try out storytelling as a language teaching tool.	Question to probe for reasons
2	Maia	I don't use storytelling to teach things like vocab or grammar. I use storytelling more to generate interest of the students, just to get them to love reading. ^{SS1}	SS1: does not use storytelling to teach vocab or grammar; uses it to generate interest and instil a love for reading
3	R	Do you do it at the beginning of a lesson, or for the entire period?	Question to seek clarification
4	Maia	No, usually maybe a short five minutes or so to tune in. ^{SS2}	SS2: explains that she used only short five minutes or so to tune in
5	R	So, do you find your students generally very interested in storytelling?	Question to probe for evidence
6	Maia	Yes. I can see that they really listened. I can see from the look in their eyes that they really like stories. I think even adults love to be read stories. ^{SS3}	SS3: affirms that her students really listened to the stories – shows they are really interested in stories
7	R	So, what outcomes do you see your storytelling ...	
8	Maia	After reading, I want them to be able to read the same way, maybe, to just love reading, and being read at. ^{SS4}	SS4: the outcome she wants to see – students able to read in the same way she reads the story, and to love reading or being read to
9	R	So, you would want to use storytelling to teach certain language skills. Just now you mention vocabulary. Do you think we can teach certain vocabulary using stories?	Question to probe for language benefits
10	Maia	Yes. I think if you use storytelling to teach vocab, it will be a lot easier because of the contextual cues and things like that. ^{SS5}	SS5: thinks it is easier to use storytelling to teach vocab because stories have contextual clues.

		Stories will be something refreshing to the boys	
11	R	The teachers who are a bit reluctant to try out storytelling. Do you know why, or can you speculate why they are reluctant to try out ...?	Question to probe for reasons
12	Maia	Not everybody can read stories. Sometimes they might be very conscious of themselves reading, expressing. They find that if they try to be too expressive, they lose control of themselves. I think it is a skill that you really need to have. ^{SS6}	SS6: speculates why some teachers are reluctant to try storytelling - not everybody can read stories; they may be overly conscious of themselves
13	R	Talking about skills. Will training help?	Question to probe for response to professional support
14	Maia	Training will definitely help. ^{SS7}	SS7: feels that training will definitely help teachers
15	R	Formal training?	Question to probe for response to professional support
16	Maia	Yeah, some formal training will definitely help. But training should be non-threatening. ^{SS8}	SS8: feels that formal training should be non-threatening professional support (formal training)
17	R	I see. Training as in getting some professionals to come in to coach the teachers? Why should that be threatening?	Question to probe for reasons
18	Maia	I think sometimes you find that you are already not coping with the marking and the teaching load. ^{SS9}	SS9: explains why she says that training should be non-threatening – her concern is that if teachers are already not coping with the marking and the teaching load, (they may not be able to take on training workshops/course as well?)
19	R	I see. You mean the ability to manage?	Question to seek clarification
20	Maia	Yeah, ^{SS10} sometimes some trainers are not really equipped to teach the teachers the skills. Then when you go, they are not really able to make you feel comfortable and be equipped with the skills. So, you go there with question marks and you leave with more question marks. ^{SS11}	SS10: agrees that she means teachers' ability to manage their marking and teaching load as well the additional load of attending training SS11: her other concern – some training facilitators are not equipped to teach the teachers storytelling skills, (and will not be able to help teachers acquire the necessary storytelling skills)
21	R	Ok, so they must be qualified ...	
22	Maia	And you must want to go for it and not being asked to go. ^{SS12}	SS12: (following the argument in SS11) teachers may not want to attend storytelling training.
23	R	So you start with the teachers' interest first ...	
24	Maia	Yes ^{SS13}	SS13: agrees that we need to start with the teachers' interest first
25	R	Besides training, what other support can schools give?	Question to probe for response to professional support
26	Maia	.... [silence]	Teacher's response: reason
27	R	What about things like resources or ...?	
28	Maia	Yes, it'll be good. ^{SS14}	SS14: agrees that it will be good to provide teachers with resources
29	R	For instance, props?	
30	Maia	Yes, props, books, the storybooks being ready for us. So it comes by topic. ^{SS15}	SS15: agrees that resources (props, books) that are based on topics should be provided
31	R	Stories can be in print form. It can be in non-print form as well?	

32	Maia	Maybe allocation of more time ^{SS16}	SS16: did not answer R's question; instead talks about time constraint
33	R	So support comes in the form of administrative support? You recommended training. Do you recommend pre- or in-service training?	Question to probefor response to professional support
34	Maia	I think it should be for both. ^{SS17}	SS17: pre- and in-service training
35	R	For both. Ok.	
36	Maia	Pre-service will be for people who are going to graduate as teachers. They need to be equipped with the skills. ^{SS18} For the experienced teachers, it is to bring back the love to read. I think all of us love to read one way or another. ^{SS19}	SS18: reasons for pre-service training – equipped with the skills SS19: in-service training – experienced teachers to bring back the love for reading
37	R	So it is like giving them another chance to try out new strategies.	
38	Maia	Yes. I think we should bring storytelling back. ^{SS20} I will always remember a time in NIE when my lecturer reads me a story before she starts her lesson. Till today, I can still remember some of the titles she has read to us. Now I read to my own child.	SS20: agrees that teachers should be given another chance to try out new strategies
39	R	Oh, so you want to do that with your students as well?	Question to probefor possibilities (future actions)
40	Maia	I think it will be good, really. But of course, support must be given. ^{SS21}	SS21: reiterates the need to provide support (to teachers)
41	R	I see. Any other comments?	
42	Maia	No.	
43	R	Thank you.	

Interview Responses of Students

Transcription Symbols

adapted from Wooffitt (2005, p. 211-212)

R:	Researcher
...	indicates a pause
—	underlined word(s) indicates speaker's emphasis
(xxx)	indicates omitted word(s)
()	empty brackets indicate the presence of unclear fragment on the tape
(())	a description enclosed in a double bracket indicates a non-verbal activity, e.g. laughter
[]]	Square brackets between adjacent lines of concurrent speech indicate the onset (and end) of a spate of overlapping speeches (e.g. when a speaker interrupts another speaker and the speeches overlap at this point)
SS	Substantive Statement

Student Amos – Male

1	R	In this questionnaire, you said that you enjoy listening to stories. Can you remember one story that you like to listen to?	Question about listening to stories – probing for evidence
2	Amos	<i>I like to listen to Storm Breaker.</i> ^{SS1}	SS1: likes listening to stories
3	R	Storm Breaker? Yes?	
4	Amos	<i>Storm Breaker</i> because it is <i>very exciting</i> and <i>has good grammar.</i> ^{SS2}	SS2: exciting and good grammar
5	R	Oh, ok. Besides listening to stories, you also <i>like to read storybooks.</i>	
6	Amos	Yes. ^{SS3}	SS3: agrees that he likes to read storybooks
7	R	Do you read a lot?	
8	Amos	I used to but now ...	
9	R	Can you remember some stories you have read?	Question about reading storybooks
10	Amos	<i>I remember reading the story (()) It's about a teenager who goes on different adventures and (())...</i> ^{SS4}	SS4: example of story
11	R	How has that story helped you?	Question to probe for evidence of benefit
12	Amos	<i>It has helped me with grammar and talking</i> ^{SS 5} and	SS5: grammar and oral benefit
13	R	In your oral skills.	
14	Amos	And also in ...um	
15	R	What about vocabulary? Do you learn new words?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
16	Amos	Yes. ^{SS6} During my ... (())	SS6: vocabulary (learns new words)
17	R	Ok. So, do you use those <i>new words in your composition writing?</i>	
18	Amos	<i>If I can remember.</i> ^{SS7}	SS7: uses new words in composition writing (when he remembers)

19	R	Your teachers also use stories to teach some English language skills. Do you enjoy that?	Question about teacher's use of stories
20	Amos	I enjoy that because sometimes the stories may be nice to listen to and you'll want to hear more. ^{SS8}	SS8: agrees – enjoys listening to teacher's stories
21	R	Ok. So, this is more for interest. But do you find yourself learning new things from the stories?	Question to probe further English language benefits
22	Amos	Yes, because at the end of the story, the teacher might ask us questions. ^{SS9}	SS9: after listening to the story – teacher asks questions to elicit responses from students – learn new things
23	R	Ok. So, the questions help you to understand the stories?	Question to probe further English language benefits
24	Amos	Yes. ^{SS10}	SS10: agrees – understands the stories through answering questions
25	R	Ok. You seem to enjoy listening to stories. If your teachers stop using the stories, how would you feel?	Question about continuation of storytelling in the class
26	Amos	I might feel bored ^{SS11} and	SS11: student might feel bored if teacher stops telling stories
27	R	So, you would like the stories to continue. Ok. Thank you.	

Student Be - Male

1	R	Look at your questionnaire now. You said that you enjoy listening to stories. Can you recall some stories that you enjoy listening to?	Question about listening to stories
2	Ben	During class?	
3	R	Yes.	
4	Ben	Sometimes the teacher will tell stories. I don't remember what their names are. But they are interesting stories. ^{SS1}	SS1: example (student finds teacher's stories interesting, suggesting that he likes listening to those stories)
5	R	And what are they about?	Question to probe further details
6	Ben	...	
7	R	Can't quite recall. Ok, you said that you enjoy reading a lot. Can you recall some stories you've read?	Question to probe for further details
8	Ben	Famous Five series. ^{SS2}	SS2: example of stories read by student
9	R	Yes. Can you tell me more about them?	Question to probe further details
10	Ben	Adventures. I prefer more adventures stories. ^{SS3}	SS3: example of stories student enjoys reading
11	R	So, you enjoy reading adventure stories. Very good. And do you sometimes act them out in class?	Question about acting out stories
12	Ben	Sometimes I act them out. ^{SS4} But they are not my favourite choice. ^{SS5}	SS4: sometimes acts out stories SS5: not his favourite choice
13	R	Do you find yourself learning anything from acting out ...?	Question to probe for benefits
14	Ben	Sometimes. ^{SS6}	SS6: learns (socio-emotional value) sometimes
15	R	Like what? What do you learn from that?	Question about benefit from acting out stories
16	Ben	Like courage. ^{SS7}	SS7: socio-emotional benefits – courage
17	R	Ok. Courage. Courage or fear of standing in front of the class?	Question to probe for further details
18	Ben	Yes. ^{SS7cont'd}	SS7cont'd: agreement (benefit: courage/confidence)
19	R	Do you find yourself speaking better?	Question to probe English language benefits
20	Ben	I get stage fright. ^{SS8}	SS8: negative response about speaking benefit – stage fright
21	R	Stage fright. How do you overcome that?	
22	Ben	I never overcome that. My legs feel like jelly. ^{SS8cont'd}	SS8cont'd: elaboration

23	R	You'll still try it out.	
24	Ben	Yes, I'll still try it out. <i>SS8cont'd</i>	SS8cont'd: will still participate in dramatization
25	R	Your teacher does tell stories in the class, or she uses stories in the class. Do you enjoy listening to those stories? So, you find them interesting. Do you find yourself learning language skills from them?	Question about learning language skills from stories
26	Ben	A little. <i>SS9</i>	SS9: learns a little language skills
27	R	Like what?	Question to probe for further details
28	Ben	Like composition. Like different adjectives to use. <i>SS9cont'd</i>	SS9cont'd: about language benefits – adjectives in composition writing
29	R	Good. Different adjectives to use.	
30	Ben	Some punctuation.	SS9cont'd: about language benefits – composition writing (punctuation skills)
31	R	Which punctuation marks?	Question to probe for further details
32	Ben	Like dialogue <i>SS9cont'd</i>	SS9cont'd: about language benefits – composition writing (punctuation skills for dialogues)
33	R	Dialogue. Anymore? Does it help you to write better in your composition?	Question to probe for further details
34	Ben	It helps me to get adjectives but I don't know how to put them in. <i>SS10</i>	SS10: learns new vocabulary (adjectives) but unable to use them (appropriately)
35	R	You learn the adjectives. What about new words?	Question to probe for further language benefits
36	Ben	Adjectives. <i>SS10cont'd</i>	SS10 cont'd: language benefits – vocab building
37	R	What about the storyline?	Question to probe for further language benefits
38	Ben	Storyline. Sometimes I'll try to put it in my composition. <i>SS11</i>	SS11: writing benefit – storyline
39	R	So, that does help you. Would you like your teacher to continue with the storytelling in the class?	Question about storytelling in the class
40	Ben	Yes. <i>SS12</i>	SS12: affirms he likes his teacher to continue with storytelling in class
41	R	Why?	
42	Ben	The stories are interesting <i>SS12cont'd</i> and help me in my ... (()).	SS12cont'd: reason for teacher to continue telling stories – the stories are interesting
43	R	Thank you.	

Student Cavin - Male

1	R	In the questionnaire, you said that you attended storytelling lessons. How many lessons did you attend?	Question about storytelling lessons attended
2	Cavin	Two.	Student's response
3	R	Two lessons. And did you enjoy the lessons?	Question about enjoyment from the lessons
4	Cavin	Yes, I enjoyed it very much. <i>SS1</i>	SS1: enjoyed storytelling lessons
5	R	Now we'll look at the listening to stories bit. You said that you listen to a lot of stories and you enjoy listening to them. Can you recall one story that you've listened to?	Question about listening to stories
6	Cavin	There's this story about this boy. He was actually with his father. His father was a little bit crazy. So, he had trouble communicating with him. So, they were in a boat at sea. So, they didn't know what to do and they rowed continuously somewhere. <i>SS2</i>	SS2: brief narration of a story he enjoyed listening
7	R	Ok.	
8	Cavin	And when they went to an island which was uninhabited. <i>SS2cont'd</i>	SS2cont'd
9	R	So, what did you learn from that story?	Question about learning gleaned from that listening experience

10	Cavin	<i>I learned that you have to work together to get some ...</i> ^{SS3}	SS3: socio-emotional benefit from story (teamwork)
11	R	Does it help you with your oral skills like pronunciation?	Question to probe for language learning points
12	Cavin	<i>Not really.</i> ^{SS4} <i>But it did help me with my vocabulary.</i> ^{SS5}	SS4: negative benefit – oral SS5: language benefit - vocab building
13	R	What about reading? You said that you enjoy reading storybooks a lot. How often do you read?	Question about reading storybooks
14	Cavin	<i>I read a lot.</i> ^{SS6} <i>I used to read books about mysteries.</i> ^{SS7}	SS6: reads a lot SS7: reading storybooks on mysteries)
15	R	Do you see that being very beneficial in your writing skills? How has it helped you?	Question to probe for language learning points
16	Cavin	<i>It helps me in my vocabulary</i> ^{SS4repeated} , <i>my spelling</i> ^{SS8} <i>and reading skills</i> ^{SS9} .	SS8: benefits – spelling SS9: benefits – reading skills
17	R	You also said that you enjoy acting out the stories. Was there an occasion when you acted out a story?	Question about acting out a story
18	Cavin	<i>Last year when I was in primary four (three), my teacher, Mrs Yeo, had a story that was supposed to be acted out by certain pupils. So, I volunteered myself.</i> ^{SS10}	SS10: volunteered to act out a story
19	R	Did you enjoy yourself?	Question to probe for benefits
20	Cavin	<i>I enjoyed it a lot.</i> ^{SS11}	SS11: enjoyed acting out stories
21	R	Do you think you have benefited from that acting?	Question to probe benefits
22	Cavin	<i>Not a lot.</i> ^{SS12}	SS12: did not benefit a lot from acting out stories
23	R	In terms of courage? In terms of confidence?	Question to probe for benefits
24	Cavin	<i>Courage and confidence.</i> ^{SS13} <i>And I also learned that I need to add some points in.</i> ^{SS14}	SS13: socio-emotional benefits – courage, confidence SS14: benefits – learn to add story details (development of story) – (oral and writing?)
25	R	Elaboration. Oh, that's very good. So, you enjoy storytelling a lot. Would you want your teacher to continue with the storytelling?	Question about continuation of the storytelling mode
26	Cavin	<i>Yes.</i> ^{SS15}	SS15: desires teacher to continue telling stories
27	R	Yes? Now why?	Question to probe for reasons
28	Cavin	<i>I find it very interesting.</i> ^{SS16} <i>It helps us a lot and our vocabulary</i> ^{SS5repeated} <i>and writing skill.</i> ^{SS17} <i>It is also quite fun when you get to act out the story.</i> ^{SS10&11 repeated}	SS15: finds storytelling interesting SS5 repeated: vocabulary building SS17: language benefits – writing skill SS10 & 11 repeated (fun acting out stories)
29	R	Ok, thank you very much.	

Student Dan - Male

1	R	We'll now look at the survey form. You said that you sometimes enjoy listening to stories in your English language classes. Why do you enjoy listening to those stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Dan	<i>(yes)</i> ^{SS1} <i>Because a lot of the stories my teacher told us are very interesting.</i> ^{SS2} <i>But then some, I find it quite boring.</i> ^{SS3}	SS1: affirms SS2: details (teacher's stories are very interesting) SS3:
3	R	So, you like to listen because they are interesting. And you also said you read a lot of stories. So, how have those stories helped you?	Question about reading stories
4	Dan	<i>They help me in my English language, in my spelling</i> ^{SS4} , ...	SS4: benefit – spelling
5	R	Vocabulary?	Question to probe for further language benefits
6	Dan	<i>Vocabulary.</i> ^{SS5}	SS5: benefit: vocabulary
7	R	And what else?	Question to probe for further language benefits

8	Dan	And also, I will learn more words ^{SS5cont'd}	SS5 cont'd: elaboration
9	R	Will that help with your composition writing ?	Question to probe for further language benefits
10	Dan	Yes. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms benefit (writing)
11	R	What about the storyline in the composition? Will that help you as well?	Question to probe for further language benefits
12	Dan	Yes. ^{SS6cont'd}	SS6 cont'd: benefit – writing (storyline)
13	R	Can you cite one instance when it helped you a lot?	Question to probe for evidence
14	Dan	I remember once I read a story and the next day, our teacher asked us to write a composition. I just followed the storyline in the book and my teacher said it was very good. ^{SS6cont'd}	SS6 cont'd: benefit – writing (storyline – example)
15	R	So, you made use of the storyline . That's good. Did you act out some stories as well?	Question about acting out stories
16	Dan	Yes, but not many times. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms acting out stories, but not a lot
17	R	When you acted out the stories, did you enjoy doing that? Do you think it has helped you in any way?	Question to probe for language benefits
18	Dan	It helped in my discipline. ^{SS8}	SS8: benefit of acting out stories – socio-emotional benefit (self-discipline)
19	R	What about confidence? Do you feel more confident?	Question to probe for further language benefits
20	Dan	Yes, I feel confident ^{SS9} and I can talk better ^{SS10} .	SS9: socio-emotional benefits – build confidence SS10: language benefit – oral skills)
21	R	Oh, that's good. It builds your confidence. Good. So, would you want your teacher to continue telling stories in your English language lessons?	Question about continuation of storytelling in the English language lessons
22	Dan	Yes. ^{SS11}	SS11: affirms he wants the teacher to continue telling stories
23	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
24	Dan	It will help me to learn new words. The teacher will also explain the meaning. ^{SS12}	SS12: reasons for SS11 – benefit in vocabulary building
25	R	But why stories? Can the teacher not do that in any other ways?	Question to probe for explanation
26	Dan	Stories can catch people's attention. ^{SS13}	SS13: answers R's question obliquely (benefit of storytelling - get people's (students') attention)
27	R	Can catch students' attention.	
28	Dan	Better than just teaching. ^{SS13cont'd}	SS13cont'd: better than just teaching
29	R	Oh, all right. Thank you.	

Student Evan - Male

1	R	We'll look at your survey form. You enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Evan	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms he enjoys listening to stories
3	R	So, can you recall a story that you enjoy listening to?	
4	Evan	I enjoyed ... listening ^{SS1repeated} to ... my book when I was young. My mum used to read me stories.	SS1 repeated: elaboration (enjoys listening to stories)
5	R	Good. What about reading storybooks . Do you enjoy doing that?	Question about reading stories
6	Evan	Yes. ^{SS2}	SS2: affirms he enjoys reading storybooks
7	R	Can you also recall a story that you really enjoy reading?	Question to probe for details
8	Evan	I enjoy Hardy Boys. ^{SS3}	SS3: example of story he enjoys reading
9	R	Can you tell me a little bit more about Hardy Boys?	Question to probe for details

10	Evan	They are ... <i>they are ... something like spies.</i>	Student response: elaboration
11	R	Do you learn anything from those stories? What particularly do you learn from those stories?	Question to probe for language learning points
12	Evan	... (silence)	
13	R	You can't remember. Do you see yourself improving in language skills?	Question to probe for language learning points
14	Evan	Yes. ^{SS4}	SS4 : affirms language improvement
15	R	In which language skills, in particular?	Question to probe for language learning points
16	Evan	My fluent reading. ^{SS5}	SS5: benefit – fluency in reading
17	R	Fluency. Or is it your vocabulary?	Question to probe for language learning points
18	Evan	Fluency. ^{SSrepeated}	SS5 repeated
19	R	What about writing? Does it help you with your writing ?	Question to probe for language learning points
20	Evan	Yes. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms benefit – writing
21	R	How does it help you with your writing?	Question to probe for language learning points
22	Evan	It helps me to write better. ^{SS6cont'd}	SS6 cont'd: benefit (writing) – write better
23	R	Write better. That's good. And in what way does it help you to write better?	Question to probe for language learning points
24	Evan	Vocabulary. ^{SS7}	SS7: benefit to writing – vocabulary
25	R	Yes.	
26	Evan	My teacher gave me a vocabulary list. ^{SS7cont'd}	SS7cont'd
27	R	Does it help you with your storyline when you write your compositions?	Question to probe for language learning points
28	Evan	Yeah, sometimes. ^{SS8}	SS8: benefit – storyline
29	R	Your teacher also uses stories to teach English language skills. Do you enjoy listening to stories by your teacher?	Question about storytelling in the class
30	Evan	Yes ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms he enjoys listening to stories by his teacher
31	R	If your teacher were to stop using stories in the class, how would you feel?	Question about continuing with storytelling in the class
32	Evan	I would feel ... a bit sad, ... a bit ... bored ^{SS10}	SS10: if his teacher were to stop storytelling in the class, he would feel a bit sad, and bored
33	R	A bit bored. So, you think stories are interesting. And you want your teacher to continue with that storytelling mode?	Reiteration of question about continuing with storytelling in the class
34	Evan	Yes ^{SS11}	SS11: affirms that he would like the teacher to continue with storytelling
35	R	Oh, all right. Thank you.	

Student Farid - Male

1	R	You indicated that you enjoy listening to stories. Can you recall one particular story that you enjoyed listening to?	Question about listening to stories
2	Farid	Jack and the Beanstalk. ^{SS1}	SS1: example of a story student enjoys listening to
3	R	Can you tell me a little bit more why that's the story you enjoyed very much?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Farid	I enjoyed the story because it is kind of interesting. ^{SS2}	SS2: reason why he enjoys listening to stories – interesting
5	R	Which part of the story is interesting?	Question to probe for evidence
6	Farid	Almost the whole part of the story.	Student response: details
7	R	The whole story. And do you read a lot ?	Question about reading stories
8	Farid	Yeah. ^{SS3} When I am going to sleep at night. ^{SS4}	SS3: affirms he reads a lot SS4: reads before going to bed

9	R	Ok. Before you go to bed. What stories in particular do you enjoy reading?	Question to probe for evidence
10	Farid	Diary of a Wilful Kid (?) ^{SS5}	SS5: example of story he enjoys reading
11	R	Would you like to tell me a bit more about this story?	Question to probe for evidence
12	Farid	This story is about a boy called Gregory who lives with his family, and he writes a diary about his life. ^{SS6}	SS6: description of story as evidence that he has read the book
13	R	Do you think that story has helped you in any particular language skills? How has it helped you?	Question to probe for language learning points
14	Farid	It helped me by ... I tried to memorise some of the difficult words. ^{SS7}	SS7: language benefit – vocabulary (memorise difficult words)
15	R	Vocabulary?	Question to probe for further details
16	Farid	Vocabulary. ^{SS7repeated} In composition, I try to use those new words. ^{SS8}	SS7 repeated SS8: Language benefit – writing (use new vocab in writing)
17	R	Very good. You also said that you enjoyed acting some parts of the stories all the time. Can you remember one instance when you acted out a particular story?	Question about acting out stories
18	Farid	Sorry. I don't understand what you are saying.	
19	R	You said that you acted out one particular story in class. Can you recall one particular example?	Question to probe for evidence
20	Farid	I ... act ... as ...um ...	
21	R	Which story did your teacher ask you to act out in the class? Was it in class?	Question about acting out stories
22	Farid	No ^{SS9} , during my CCA. ^{SS10}	SS9: did not act out story in class SS10: acted out story in his CCA (Co-Curricular Activity) session
23	R	Oh, I see. So, it's storytelling as a CCA.	
24	Farid	Yes.	
25	R	Did you enjoy doing that?	Question to probe for outcomes gleaned
26	Farid	Yes. ^{SS11}	SS11: affirms he enjoys acting out the story
27	R	Do you think that has helped you in your oral skills ?	Question to probe for benefits (oral skills)
28	Farid	Yes. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms acting out stories has helped in his oral skills
29	R	How has it helped you?	Question to probe for benefits
30	Farid	It helped me by pronouncing the words correctly ^{SS13} and being focused.	SS13: Language benefit – oral skills (pronunciation)
31	R	Being focused. Does it help you in your confidence level? Do you feel more confident after that?	Question to probe for benefits
32	Farid	((student shook his head)) ^{SS14}	SS14: student indicates that acting out stories does not make him feel more confident
33	R	You don't? What about expressiveness? When you act out a certain part, you have to play that role. Does it help you to be more expressive ?	Question to probe for benefits (improve expressiveness)
34	Farid	Yes. ^{SS15} It does.	SS15: affirms that acting out stories helps him to be more expressive
35	R	Does your teacher use stories during your English language lessons?	Question about storytelling in class
36	Farid	(shook his head)	
37	R	She does not. Would you like your teacher to introduce stories in your class in order to teach English language skills?	Question about storytelling in class
38	Farid	Yes. ^{SS16}	SS16: affirms that he would like his teacher to introduce storytelling to teach English language skills
39	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
40	Farid	If she tells us stories, I think everybody in the class can	SS17: speculates that if teacher tells

		pass their exams and get higher marks. ^{SS17}	
41	R	How would that help the students?	the class stories, they can do well in their examination
42	Farid	By ... by ... by ...by	Question to probe for benefits
43	R	You said that when the teacher tells stories, the students will do better. In what sense?	S6 – unable to support speculation
44	Farid	Sometimes she will give us some words to memorise from the book. ^{SS18}	Question to probe for details
45	R	And then you apply those words in your writing, in your speaking?	SS18: thinks vocabulary building could be a reason
46	Farid	Yes. ^{SS18cont'd}	Question to probe for benefits
47	R	So, primarily stories help you with your vocabulary and your fluency. Any other skills?	SS18: affirms that storytelling will help with vocabulary and ultimately writing – use new words in writing
48	Farid	No.	Question to probe for further benefits
49	R	Thank you.	

Student Gavin - Male

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Gavin	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms he enjoys listening to stories)
3	R	Can you recall one story that you listened to and you enjoyed very much?	Question to probe for evidence of enjoyment
4	Gavin	Wizard of Oz. ^{SS2} When we are doing our work, the teacher will, like, make up a story and teach us how to answer more correctly and answer in a proper way like that. ^{SS3}	SS2: example of story he enjoys listening to SS3: illustrates how storytelling helps students in answering comprehension questions (language benefit – reading skill)
5	R	So, it helps you with your oral skills and comprehension skills also. Do you also enjoy reading stories, reading storybooks about stories?	Question about reading stories/ storybooks
6	Gavin	Yeah, ^{SS3} those are adventure storybooks. ^{SS4}	SS3: affirms he enjoys reading storybooks SS4: type of storybooks he enjoys reading
7	R	About adventures. And can you remember one story that you particularly enjoyed reading?	Question to probe for evidence of enjoyment from reading
8	Gavin	Bees' Quest. ^{SS5}	SS5: example of adventure story he enjoys reading
9	R	What's that about?	Question to probe for details
10	Gavin	About this boy. He went to a lot of journey like ... kill these creatures, all those. ^{SS6}	SS6: description of story as evidence that he has read the book
11	R	Ok. So, how has that helped you in your English language?	Question to probe for evidence of English language benefits
12	Gavin	To learn more words, grammar ^{SS7} and vocabulary ^{SS8} .	SS7: language benefit – grammar SS8: language benefit – vocabulary
13	R	Vocabulary. Grammar as well? Grammar. Can you give me ... an example?	Question to probe for details
14	Gavin	Like when you are saying your sentences, then use the right grammar. ^{SS7cont'd}	SS7 cont'd: using correct grammar in speech
15	R	What grammar?	Question to probe for details
16	Gavin	Is like using "is", "are", "was", "were" ... ^{SS7cont'd}	SS7 cont'd: examples of grammar points
17	R	What about acting? Do you enjoy acting out some parts of the story?	Question about acting out stories
18	Gavin	Yes. ^{SS8}	SS8: affirms he enjoys acting out stories

19	R	Can you remember an occasion when you acted out a story or part of a story?	Question to probe for evidence of acting out stories
20	Gavin	Quite long ago. I can't remember.	Student response:
21	R	Did you enjoy that experience?	Question to probe for evidence of enjoyment from acting out stories
22	Gavin	Yeah. ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms he enjoys acting out stories
23	R	So, your teacher introduces stories during English language lessons. Would you like her to continue with that?	Question about storytelling in class
24	Gavin	Yeah. ^{SS10}	SS10: affirms he would like his teacher to continue telling stories
25	R	Yes. Why?	Question to probe for reasons
26	Gavin	I know it's creative. And it's like, ... know how to read stories so that we can understand the, understand the story better. ^{SS11}	SS11: illustration of benefits of teacher using storytelling in lessons – understand the story better
27	R	So, you like the creativity of the stories. How would that help you...?	Question to probe for details
28	Gavin	Knowing like ...	
29	R	In your English language skills? How would that help you?	Question to probe for English language benefits
30	Gavin	To speak better English ^{SS12} and answer better in your work. ^{SS13}	SS12: language benefits – oral SS13: benefit – answering question
31	R	So, it is to help you in your oral skills. What about composition writing?	Question to probe for English language benefits
32	Gavin	Composition writing. More to write those phrases. Write longer compositions and ^{SS14...}	SS14: language benefit – writing (more ideas)
33	R	So you get more ideas.	
34	Gavin	Yeah. ^{SS14repeated}	SS14 repeated
35	R	Good.	
36	Gavin	And know how to spell the words. ^{SS15}	SS15: language benefit – spelling
37	R	Storytelling seems very helpful. You would like your teacher to continue telling stories in the class? [
38	Gavin	((nods))	SS16: (nods his head to affirm that he would like his teacher to continue telling stories in the class)
39	R	Ok. Thank you.	

Student Hasek - Male

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Hasek	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms he enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Can you recall a particular story that you really enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe evidence of enjoyment
4	Hasek	I really enjoyed listening to Wizard of Oz. ^{SS2}	SS2: example of story student enjoys listening to
5	R	Can you tell me a little bit about it?	Question to probe for details
6	Hasek	It's about a girl falling into a very, very funny dimension, and ends up talking, playing together with a lion. A tin man, scarecrow. And also seen good and bad witches along the way to and from the places where she goes. ^{SS3}	SS3: description of story as evidence that he has listened to that story
7	R	I see that you enjoyed so much that you remember the story. What about reading stories? Do you enjoy doing that?	Question about reading stories/storybooks
8	Hasek	Yeah. ^{SS4}	SS4: affirms he enjoys reading stories
9	R	Can you recall one story that you really enjoy reading?	Question to probe for evidence
10	Hasek	Jerimo Tilton. ^{SS5}	SS5: example of story he enjoys reading
11	R	And what's that about?	Question to probe for details
12	Hasek	It's about a mouse which is... which works in a newspaper company of the Royal Gazette. And he	SS6: description of story as evidence that he has read that story

		usually gets into lots of trouble and he is quite a scaredy mouse and usually don't like to do any sporty things. ^{SS6}	
13	R	And do you also act out some parts of the story, or some parts of the stories that you have read?	Question about acting out stories
14	Hasek	I act out stories at my After School Care about some Christian things. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms he has acted out stories (in some venue outside his school)
15	R	Oh, so it's not in class. It's more a CCA?	
16	Hasek	Yes. ^{SS7cont'd}	SS7 cont'd: affirms it's part of a co-curricular activity (CCA)
17	R	Your teacher tells stories in the class as well. Do you enjoy listening to the stories? Would you like her to continue with the storytelling in the class?	Question about storytelling in class
18	Hasek	Yeah. ^{SS8}	SS8: affirms that he would like his teacher to continue with storytelling
19	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
20	Hasek	Because when she reads the stories, we get to learn more ... better grammar ^{SS9} , better oral skills ^{SS10} . And you also get to have the fun part of the story such as acting in the story ^{SS11} , and like doing some group work of attentiveness ^{SS12} . And when the teacher asks us a question, we get it correct, we get a sweet from her ^{SS13} .	SS9: language benefit – grammar SS10: language benefit – oral skills SS11: socio-emotional benefit – fun (acting out stories) SS12: socio-emotional benefit – attentiveness (being focused) in group work SS13: socio-emotional benefit – reward for answering questions correctly
21	R	Oh, so there are rewards. Ok. Good. And there is a lot of enjoyment as well. Looks like it has helped you with different aspects of the language. Which aspect in particular do you think it has helped you?	Question to probe for English language benefits
22	Hasek	Um... oral. ^{SS10repeated}	SS10 repeated: example of benefit (oral skills)
23	R	Oral. So, you feel that you've improved in pronunciation?	Question to probe for further evidence
24	Hasek	Yes. ^{SS10cont'd} Because after a while, i realised that my oral skills improve a lot. But I still don't think it is perfect. I still think that there ...	SS10: language benefit – affirms pronunciation improves, but also elaborates that his oral skills (n general) improve a lot
25	R	There is room for improvement. What about writing? Has it helped you in your writing?	Question to probe for further evidence
26	Hasek	Yes. ^{SS14}	SS14: affirms language benefit – writing
27	R	In what way?	Question to probe for further evidence
28	Hasek	In a way like writing composition. If we don't know, we can ask the teacher how to spell. And we will remember the word. So, next time when we have spelling of that word, we won't have trouble trying to remember it and how to spell it. ^{SS15}	SS15: Language benefit (spelling in writing tasks)
29	R	Ok. Thank you very much.	

Student Ivy - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Ivy	Yes, of course ^{SS1} .	SS1: affirms that she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Yes. Can you recall a story you particularly enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Ivy	The Kampong Days, because there are many memories in the Kampong Days for my parents and all. ^{SS2}	SS2: example of stories she enjoyed listening to
5	R	Oh, it reminds you of your parents' old days. What about reading stories? Do you enjoy reading stories a lot?	Question about reading stories/storybooks
6	Ivy	Yes. ^{SS3} It can help me learn more interesting words, vocabulary ^{SS4} and help me improve my grammar	SS3: affirms she enjoys reading stories SS4: language benefit – vocabulary

		more^{SS5}.	
7	R	Oh, great. When your teacher tells stories in the class, do you have the opportunity to act out some parts of the story?	SS5: language benefit – grammar Question about acting out stories
8	Ivy	Yes, we act in a school play before in the school hall. <small>SS6</small>	SS6: affirms she has acted in a school play
9	R	And how has that experience helped you in your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
10	Ivy	We have learned new things. And inside the script, there are some words that we don't understand. When we ask the teacher, we can learn more words. <small>SS7</small>	SS7: language benefit – vocabulary
11	R	So, it improves your vocabulary. What about speaking skills? Do you think it has helped you in your oral skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
12	Ivy	Yes, it has helped me speak my English better. <small>SS8</small>	SS8: language benefit – oral skills
13	R	Oh, good. What about writing skills? Do you think you have improved in your composition writing ...?	Question to probe for English language benefits
14	Ivy	Yes. <small>SS9</small>	SS9: language benefit – writing
15	R	.... because of the stories?	Question to probe for English language benefits
16	Ivy	Yes, because there are paragraphs. <small>SS10</small> And I can read through the words and remember the story and write it down. <small>SS11</small>	SS10: language benefits – writing (paragraphing) SS11: language benefits – writing (vocabulary)
17	R	Great. Any other areas that you think you have improved because of the stories?	Question to probe for English language benefits
18	Ivy	Yes.	Student response: illustration
19	R	Like?	Question to probe for English language benefits
20	Ivy	I can read the words more better as my grammar improved. I know more words <small>SS11repeated</small> and my studies are getting better. <small>SS12</small>	SS12: language benefits – grammar SS11 repeated
21	R	Oh, that's great. So, would you want your teacher to continue telling stories and using stories in the class?	Question about storytelling in class
22	Ivy	Yes. <small>SS13</small>	SS13: affirms she would like the teacher to continue telling stories
23	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
24	Ivy	Because it has interesting characters and we can act out in a play <small>SS13cont'd</small>	SS13 cont'd: thinks storytelling offers dramatization opportunities
25	R	And how have the lessons been affected by the stories? You think the lessons are more interesting now?	Question to probe for English language benefits
26	Ivy	Yes, because we can see the real life act, rather than inside the story. <small>SS13cont'd</small>	SS13 cont'd: lessons are more interesting with opportunities to act out stories
27	R	Ok, you act out the stories. Great. Thank you.	

Student John - Male

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	John	Yes. <small>SS1</small>	SS1: affirms he enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Can you remember a story you particularly enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	John	The Pied Piper of Hamelin. <small>SS2</small>	SS2: example of story he enjoys listening to
5	R	Yes. Can you tell me a little bit about it?	Question to probe for details
6	John	It has interesting character, good grammar and <small>SS3</small>	SS3: description as evidence that he has listening to that story (S10 does not seem sure of the story)
7	R	Do you think listening to stories has helped you in your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
8	John	Yes. <small>SS4</small>	SS4: affirms listening to stories has helped

9	R	How? How has it helped you?	him in his English
10	John	The grammar^{SS5}, the spelling^{SS6} and some of the words^{SS7} in my compositions, and ...	Question to probe for evidence SS5: language benefit – grammar (in writing) SS6: language benefit – spelling (in writing) SS7: language benefit – vocabulary (in writing)
11	R	Do you like reading stories?	Question about reading stories/storybooks
12	John	Yes. ^{SS8}	SS8: affirms he enjoys reading stories
13	R	Can you recall a story you have read?	Question to probe for evidence
14	John	....Student (())	
15	R	You like to tell me about it?	Question to probe for evidence
16	John	...	
17	R	Can you recall now?	Question to probe for evidence
18	John	...	
19	R	No. In class, when your teacher tells stories, do you have the opportunity to act out some parts of the story?	Question about acting out stories
20	John	Yes. ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms he has the opportunity to act out stories
21	R	Which particular story, for instance?	Question to probe for evidence
22	John	The Pied Piper of Hamelin. ^{SS10}	SS10: example of story he has acted out
23	R	Ok. And which part did you play?	Question to probe for evidence
24	John	I think ... it is the mouse. ^{SS11}	SS11: example of part he acted as
25	R	One of the rats. Ok, and did you enjoy yourself?	Question to probe for evidence
26	John	Yes. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms he enjoys acting out the story
27	R	Acting it out? Good. When your teacher tells stories in the class, how do the students in the class react?	Question about storytelling in class
28	John	Happy. ^{SS13}	SS13: his observation that the class feel happy when the teacher tells stories
29	R	They are happy. Do you find the stories interesting?	Question to probe for evidence
30	John	Yes. ^{SS14}	SS14: affirms that he finds stories interesting
31	R	How has that helped you in your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
32	John	My English has improved.	Student response: example
33	R	That's good. And in which particular aspect?	Question to probe for evidence
34	John	Grammar. ^{SS15}	SS15: language benefits – grammar
35	R	What about other areas like vocabulary or composition writing?	Question to probe for evidence
36	John	Yes. It teach me more words^{SS16} and details^{SS17}.	SS16: language benefits – vocabulary SS17: language benefits – details in writing
37	R	Do you use them in your compositions?	Question to probe for evidence
	John	Yes. ^{SS18}	SS18: affirms he sees the language benefits (vocabulary and details) in his writing
	R	That's good. So, would you want your teacher to continue using stories in the class?	
	John	Yes ^{SS19}	SS19: affirms he likes his teacher to continue telling stories
	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
	John	Because I can learn words, new words, idioms^{SS20} and grammar^{SS21}.	SS20: reason – vocabulary building SS21: reason – grammar benefits
	R	Thank you.	

Student Kara - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Kara	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Do you listen a lot to stories?	Question about listening to stories
4	Kara	Sometimes. ^{SS2}	SS2: listens to stories sometimes
5	R	Sometimes. Ok. Can you recall a particular story that you enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
6	Kara	...(())	Unclear response – unable to confirm if she listens to stories
7	R	Do you want to tell me a little bit more about it?	Question to probe for evidence
8	Kara	It's about an adventure. Each diver had an adventure ^{SS3} . And some words, vocabulary in a book. Sometimes we read, we will be good in our vocabulary. ^{SS4}	SS3: description of story as evidence that she has listened to the story SS4: language benefits – vocabulary
9	R	I see. Good. What about reading stories? Do you read a lot?	Question about reading stories/ storybooks
10	Kara	Yeah. ^{SS5}	SS5: affirms she enjoys reading stories
11	R	Can you recall a story you particularly enjoyed reading?	Question to probe for evidence
12	Kara	Um... maybe the Sea Overcome(?) ^{SS6}	SS6: example of story she enjoyed reading
13	R	And what about that story?	Question to probe for details
14	Kara	The story is about ... also some kind of adventure ^{SS6cont'd}	SS6 cont'd
15	R	Yes?	
16	Kara	Then teaches us good and bad things. ^{SS6cont'd}	SS6 cont'd
17	R	Like?	Question to probe for details
18	Kara	Like that kind of good people, bad people. ^{SS6cont'd}	SS6 cont'd
19	R	I see. In your four years, do you have teachers who told stories in the class?	Question about storytelling in class
20	Kara	Yes. P1, P2. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms teachers in Primary 1 and 2 classes told stories
21	R	Primary One and Two classes. Do you think you have benefited from those stories?	Question to probe for benefits
22	Kara	Yes.	Student response: agreement
23	R	How have you benefited from those stories in terms of your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
24	Kara	We ... sometimes oral ^{SS8} , we can use all the words ^{SS9} . Compo, we can also use some of the vocabulary and grammar ^{SS10} .	SS8: language benefits – oral skills SS9: language benefits – vocabulary SS10: language benefits – writing (vocabulary and grammar)
25	R	What about storyline? Do the stories give you more ideas?	Question to probe for English language benefits
26	Kara	Yes. ^{SS11}	SS11: affirms language benefits – more ideas in writing
27	R	So, you think stories should continue to be told in the class?	Question about storytelling in class
28	Kara	Yes. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms she likes stories to continue to be told
29	R	And you would like your teacher to use storytelling in the class?	Question about storytelling in class
30	Kara	Yes. ^{SS13}	SS13: affirms she likes her teacher to continue to tell stories
31	R	Good. How do you think it is useful?	Question to probe for benefits
32	Kara	It will help us in our vocabulary ^{SS14} and it will help us in our compo ^{SS15} .	SS14: reason for teacher to continue telling stories – language benefits (vocabulary) SS15: reason for teacher to continue telling stories – language benefits (writing)
33	R	What about oral skills like pronunciation, expressiveness?	Question to probe for further benefits

- Kara **Yes.** ^{SS16}
- R How can it help you? How can stories help you?
- Kara ***It will help us in our pronunciation*** ^{SS16repeated},
vocabulary ^{SS14repeated} ***and composition*** ^{SS15repeated}.
- R I see. Thank you.

SS16: affirms storytelling will help in oral skills (pronunciation and expressiveness)
Question to probe for further benefits
SS14, SS15, SS16 repeated

Student Lucy - Female

- 1 R Do you enjoy listening to stories?
- 2 Lucy **Yes, I enjoy listening ...** ^{SS1}
- 3 Rto stories. Can you recall a particular story that you enjoyed listening to?
- 4 Lucy ***Fables*** ^{SS2} ***because it is very interesting. Can learn some morals.*** ^{SS3}
- 5 R What about reading stories? Do you think you enjoy reading stories?
- 6 Lucy **Yes.** ^{SS4}
- 7 R How has that helped you in your English language skills?
- 8 Lucy ***Vocabulary*** ^{SS5}, ***oral reading and how to pronounce the words.*** ^{SS6}
- 9 R How to pronounce words and new vocabulary as well?
- 10 Lucy Yes.
- 11 R In your four years in this school, do you have teachers who tell stories during your English language classes?
- 12 Lucy Sometimes we talk about ...
- 13 R In your Primary one and two classes, did your teachers tell you stories in your English language classes?
- 14 Lucy **Yeah.** ^{SS7}
- 15 R Would you like your teacher to continue using stories in the class?
- 16 Lucy **Yes.** ^{SS8}
- 17 R Why?
- 18 Lucy ***Because by teaching from the textbook is a little bit boring. But if you add some stories, it's like it can be more interesting and entertaining.*** ^{SS9}
- 19 R So, it is to increase the interest of the students.
- 20 Lucy **Yes.** ^{SS9cont'd}
- 21 R What particular language skills do you think could be improved, using stories?
- 22 Lucy Chinese also.
- 23 R The language skills, the English language skills in particular. Do you think it could help in terms of composition writing?
- 24 Lucy **Yes.** ^{SS10}
- 25 R How?
- 26 Lucy ***In the story, there is the starting and the ending, so can use in the composition.*** ^{SS11}
- 27 R The structure of the stories. In terms of the ideas, do you get more ideas from the stories? So, in Primary three and four, you do not have storytelling in the class. Would you like your teacher to introduce stories in your class?
- 28 Lucy **Yes.** ^{SS12}

Question about listening to stories
SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
Question to probe evidence

SS2: example of story
SS3: socio-emotional benefits (interesting, learn morals)
Question about reading stories/storybooks

SS4: affirms she enjoys reading stories
Question about English language benefits

SS5: language benefits – vocabulary
SS6: language benefits – oral skills (pronunciation)
Question to probe for further benefits
Student response: agreement
Question about storytelling in class

Question about storytelling in class

SS7: affirms teachers in primary 1 and 2 classes told stories
Question about storytelling in class

SS8: affirms she likes her teacher to continue using stories
Question to probe for reasons
SS9: reasons for using stories – more interesting and entertaining

SS9 cont'd
Question to probe for English language benefits

Question to probe for English language benefits

SS10: affirms language benefits – writing
Question to probe for English language benefits

SS11: language benefit – writing (story structure)
Question about storytelling in class

SS12: affirms she likes the teacher to

29	R	Why?	continue using stories
30	Lucy	....	Question to probe for reasons
31	R	Make it more interesting, like you said earlier on?	
32	Lucy	Yeah. ^{SS13}	SS13: Reason – more interesting
33	R	Thank you.	

Student Mel - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Mel	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Can you recall a story that you liked very much?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Mel	Yes.	
5	R	Can you tell me a little bit about that story?	Question to probe for evidence
6	Mel	It's about my teacher. <i>She told about this bear and two men. One was skinny, one was like a bit fat. So, then, one time, they were walking in the woods, near many trees. Then this bear approached them. Both of them, of course, were very scared. The skinny one was able to climb up a tree and escaped. But the more plumper one could not climb the tree, so he just stayed there. The bear came beside him and sniffed him and thought he was dead. Later, the skinny man came down and asked him what the bear said. The man said the skinny guy is like very selfish, cared about himself and don't care about his friend.</i> ^{SS2}	SS2: description of story as evidence of story listened to
7	R	So, did you hear this story in your class?	Question to probe for evidence
8	Mel	Yes.	
9	R	Great. Do you think listening to the stories helped you with your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
10	Mel	<i>Yes, I think it helped me with my vocabulary also because sometimes she introduces new words for us. Of course, we will ask, "What does it mean?" and she will tell us and we will write it in our vocabulary book.</i> ^{SS3}	SS3: language benefits – vocabulary
11	R	What about oral?	Question to probe for English language benefits
12	Mel	Sometimes, in our textbook also. She will ask us to stand up and read. So, we can read loudly and also ...yeah.	Student response: examples of benefits (oral)
13	R	You also enjoy reading stories from storybooks. How has that helped you?	Question to probe for benefits of reading stories
14	Mel	<i>It has helped me because sometimes it is more interesting</i> ^{SS4} . <i>I learned more about the story. Sometimes it relates to other stuff in my studies. So, I can learn from there also.</i> ^{SS5}	SS4: socio-emotional benefits – more interesting SS4: other benefits – relates to other subjects
15	R	Great. When your teacher tells stories in your class, do you have the opportunity to act out some of the stories?	Question about acting out stories
16	Mel	<i>Yes, sometimes she does let us act out to make it more fun.</i> ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms she acts out stories; socio-emotional benefit – more fun
17	R	How has that helped you with your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
18	Mel	A bit. But, <i>more with my creativity</i> ^{SS7} .	SS7: example of benefits (creativity)
19	R	Oh, creativity. That's very interesting. Like what? Can you elaborate a little?	Question to probe for details
20	Mel	<i>Like sometimes she gets us to act out. Then we get to do our own actions. Like from our Social Studies book sometimes.</i> ^{SS7cont'd}	SS7 cont'd: creativity through dramatization of stories
21	R	And you may want to change some parts of the story?	Question to probe for evidence

22	Mel	Yeah. <i>We can pull up our collars when we are acting as a guy.</i> ^{SS7cont'd}	SS7 cont'd: creativity through dramatization of stories
23	R	And you enjoyed that very much?	
24	Mel	Yeah. ^{SS6repeated}	SS6 repeated
25	R	Would you like your teacher to continue telling stories and using stories in your English language class?	Question about storytelling in class
26	Mel	Yes ^{SS7} . Hope she will. It's more interesting ^{SS8} , like compo also. She will see the pictures, and out of the four, she will tell us a bit about them. Sometimes she will tell us stories about her friends, or kidnappers – real kidnappers. So we can learn from that also ^{SS9} .	SS7: affirms she likes teacher to continue telling stories SS8: reason – socio-emotional benefits (interesting) SS9: illustration of benefits (more interesting details in writing)
27	R	How has that helped with your composition writing?	Question to probe for English language benefits
28	Mel	We ... sometimes our composition is a bit boring. We like don't really get to understand the pictures. Sometimes, the picture is a bit darkish. They know the picture. So we will ask them, "What is this? What is this?" So, they will help us understand what is the picture about, what's the story, what's happening.	Student response: illustration
29	R	So, you get more ideas as well. Very interesting. Thank you.	

Student Nat - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Nat	Yes, very much. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Can you recall one story that you particularly enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Nat	<i>I enjoyed listening to the story about Rumpelstiltskin.</i> ^{SS2} <i>It's about ... one day, a beautiful girl ... his father went outside to tell everyone that her daughter can make things turn into gold. One day, a man listened to that, he heard that. Then he said he want his daughter to go to his house to make things into gold and will pay her some money. Then, one day, a woodman came inside the house and said, "I can make you ... I can make things into gold unless you know my name. If you do not know my name by three days, she will need to marry the woodman." So, the man ... the pretty girl started to agree. And the man started to make things into gold. The lady was very worried. One day, the father went out to the forest and heard someone said, "My name is Rumpelstiltskin." And he was dancing around. So, the lady go and ask the father and the father knew it, so go and tell the daughter. Within three days, the woodman come and ask the lady, "What is my name?" So, the first choice she said, "Is it ...is it ...um ... I'm not too sure." But then the third time when she said the name, she said it was Rumpelstiltskin. And the woodman said, "How did you know? No one ever knew my name." So, the lady would not have to marry Rumpelstiltskin.</i> ^{SS3}	SS2: example of book she enjoyed listening to SS3: description of story as evidence of story she has listened to
5	R	Interesting story. You remember it all. Very good. That has helped you to remember some of the phrases. I noticed that you used some of the phrases in there. Good. Do you read storybooks?	Question about reading stories/storybooks
6	Nat	I read , for example, <i>Jeremy Stilton</i> ..	Student response: example
7	R	Do you think it has helped you in any way in your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
8	Nat	Yes, it has helped in the grammar ^{SS4} , vocab ^{SS5} and it even helped my compo to extend the story and make my story even more interesting ^{SS6} .	SS4: language benefits – grammar SS5: language benefits – vocabulary SS6: language benefits – writing

9	R	Great. That's good. Your teacher... I'm sure your teacher has been telling stories and using stories in the English language classes. So, would you like her to continue with the storytelling?	(extend the story to make it more interesting) Question about storytelling in class
10	Nat	Yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms she likes the teacher to continue using stories
11	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
12	Nat	Because the stories makes the class more interesting and won't feel so plain for others to listen to her class. ^{SS8}	SS8: socio-emotional benefits (more interesting)
13	R	Besides interest, how will stories help the children in their language ability?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
14	Nat	To read out loud ^{SS9} . Help in some of the good phrases ^{SS10} . She will tell us ...	SS9: language benefits – oral SS10: language benefits – vocabulary
15	R	The vocabulary?	
16	Nat	Yeah. She will ask us to write inside our vocab book. And every time you go home you must learn the meaning. ^{SS10cont'd}	SS10 cont'd: elaboration (vocab book: meaning)
17	R	I see, I see. It helps you in that way. Does it help you with composition writing?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
18	Nat	Yes. ^{SS11}	SS11: language benefits – writing
19	R	How has that helped you?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
20	Nat	Making my composition have more good phrases, ^{SS10repeated} make my compo have good sentences ^{SS12} .	SS10 repeated SS12: language benefits – sentences in writing
21	R	Sentence structure, vocab and the storyline? Would it be more interesting and more ideas?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
22	Nat	Yes.	Student response: reasons
23	R	Have you the opportunity to act out some of the stories with your classmates?	Question about acting out stories
24	Nat	Sometimes. ^{SS13}	SS13: affirms she has acted out some stories
25	R	Sometimes. Did you enjoy that?	
26	Nat	Yes. ^{SS14}	SS14: affirms she enjoys acting out stories
27	R	Looks like you have fun with stories. Would you like your teacher to continue with storytelling?	Question about storytelling in class
28	Nat	Yes. ^{SS15}	SS15: affirms she likes the teacher to continue using stories
29	R	Ok. Thank you.	

Student Olivia - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Olivia	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Can you give me the title of a story you have listened to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Olivia	The Singing Donkey. ^{SS2}	SS2: example of story she enjoys listening to
5	R	You like that story?	
6	Olivia	Yes. Very funny and it is nice. ^{SS3}	SS3: reason why she likes that story
7	R	How has listening to stories helped you in your language skills?	Question to probe English language benefits
8	Olivia	To learn more words ^{SS4} and you can read the book better. So you can pronounce the words properly ^{SS5} .	SS4: language benefits – vocabulary SS5: language benefits – pronunciation
9	R	To read the words better? Good. What about reading storybooks? Do you read storybooks, or any other	Question to probe for further English language benefits

		stories from online sources?	
10	Olivia	No.	
11	R	Do you read a lot?	Question about reading stories/ storybooks
12	Olivia	Yeah, I read. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms she reads
31	R	What are they mainly? Storybooks?	
14	Olivia	Yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms she reads mainly storybooks
15	R	Do you enjoy them?	
16	Olivia	Yeah, very nice to read. ^{SS8}	SS8: affirms she enjoys reading stories
17	R	How has that helped you?	Question to probe for English language benefits
18	Olivia	Um...it's like sometimes when you are bored, you can read it. ^{SS9} Sometimes when you don't know some words, you can check your dictionary. So, you'll know more words. ^{SS10}	SS9: socio-emotional benefits (to kill boredom) SS10: language benefits – vocabulary
19	R	So, your vocabulary has increased?	Question to probe for English language benefits
20	Olivia	Yeah.	Student response: agreement
21	R	In what other ways has it helped you?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
22	Olivia	mm... maybe you can learn to write new words and you can speak fluently when you say your oral to your teacher. ^{SS11}	SS11: language benefits – oral skills (fluency)
23	R	What about storyline and ideas in your composition writing?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
24	Olivia	It's like some of the ideas, we can take it from the story and use it in our compositions. ^{SS12}	SS12: language benefits – writing (ideas in writing)
25	R	Great. Your teacher tells stories in your English language classes. Have you the opportunity to act out some of the stories?	Question about acting out stories
26	Olivia	Yes. ^{SS13}	SS13: affirms she has acted out stories
27	R	And did you enjoy the sessions?	
28	Olivia	Yeah, because it's fun. ^{SS14}	SS14: affirms she enjoys acting out stories – socio-emotional benefits (fun)
29	R	What have you learnt from that?	Question to probe for English language benefits
30	Olivia	We are supposed to be confident when we go on stage to act. ^{SS15} And you must know all the sentence so you can really act out the whole scene. ^{SS16}	SS15: socio-emotional benefits (confidence) SS16: other language benefits – memorizing sentences
31	R	So, you remember words, phrases and sentences?	Question to probe further English language benefits
32	Olivia	Yes. ^{SS16cont'd}	SS16cont'd: other language benefits – memorizing words, phrases, sentences
33	R	Very good. So, would you like your teacher to continue telling stories in your English language lessons?	Question about storytelling in class
34	Olivia	Yes, because we get to learn more words. Sometimes if the people don't know some words, you can ask the teacher. And the teacher can explain to you. ^{SS17}	SS17: affirms she likes teacher to continue using stories (reasons – vocab improvement)
35	R	Um...good. Thank you.	

Student Pam - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Pam	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: agreement (student enjoys listening to stories)
3	R	Can you recall a particular story that you have listened to?	Question to probe for evidence

4	Pam	Yes, one of them is <i>The Singing Donkey</i>. Another one is <i>The Tiger and the Bad Man</i>. ^{SS2}	SS2: examples of story she enjoys listening
5	R	Good. How do you think listening to stories has helped you in your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
6	Pam	It helped me because I can learn more hard words and I can learn more vocabulary from my teacher ^{SS3} , and more grammar ^{SS4} .	SS3: language benefits - vocabulary SS4: language benefits – grammar
7	R	What about pronunciation of the words?	Question to probe for English language benefits
8	Pam	Yes. ^{SS5}	SS5: affirms language benefits – pronunciation
9	R	When you listen to stories, you listen to the pronunciation as well. What about reading? Do you read storybooks?	Question about reading stories /storybooks
10	Pam	Yes. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms she reads storybooks
11	R	Do you enjoy reading stories?	
12	Pam	Yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms she enjoys reading stories
13	R	How has that helped you in your language ability?	Question to probe for English language benefits
14	Pam	Some of the stories are ... have hard words. If I don't understand, I ask my parents. They will tell me what's the meaning. ^{SS8}	SS8: language benefits – vocabulary
15	R	Your teacher tells stories in the class during English language lessons. Do you have the opportunity to act out some of the stories?	Question about acting out stories
16	Pam	Sometimes. ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms she sometimes acts out stories
17	R	Sometimes. Did you enjoy yourself acting out those stories?	
18	Pam	Yes. ^{SS10}	SS10: affirms she enjoys acting out stories
19	R	How has that helped you in your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
20	Pam	It teach me to speak loudly ^{SS11} and to be brave ^{SS12} .	SS11: language benefits – speech SS12: socio-emotional benefits – courage
21	R	Expressive as well?	Question to probe for English language benefits
22	Pam	Yes ^{SS11cont'd} , and also ...	SS11cont'd: language benefits – expressiveness
23	R	Do you find yourself feeling more confident now?	Question to probe for English language benefits
24	Pam	Yes. ^{SS13cont'd}	SS13 cont'd: socio-emotional benefits – confidence
25	R	So, that's oral skill. What about composition writing skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
26	Pam	My teacher ... the teacher gives us this booklet. It's called <i>Compo Sheet</i>. It will tell us with some phrases about the picture. ^{SS14}	SS14: language benefits – writing (phrases about the picture for Picture Composition Writing)
	R	Would you like your teacher to continue telling stories in your English language classes?	Question about storytelling in class
	Pam	Yes. ^{SS15}	SS15: affirms she likes the teacher to continue telling stories
27	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
28	Pam	Because it is very interesting ^{SS16} and we will know more stories ^{SS17} .	SS16: reasons for teacher continuing to tell stories (socio-emotional benefits – more interesting) SS17: language benefits – more ideas (know more stories)
29	R	Good. Thank you.	

Student Qilin - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Qilin	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Do you recall a story that you enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Qilin	Three Pigs and the Wolf. ^{SS2}	SS2: example
5	R	Ok. So, what have you learnt from that story?	Question to probe for benefits
6	Qilin	When you work together, you will be stronger in terms like when you work together, then you'll help each other. ^{SS3}	SS3: description of what she has learnt from the story (teamwork) as evidence of a story she enjoyed listening
7	R	Ok, so unity is strength. How has that helped you in your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
8	Qilin	Because sometimes the teacher allows us to read and let us volunteer to read. So, I do volunteer sometimes. So, it can allow me to read fluently and maybe know some new words ^{SS4} ^{SS5} .	SS4: language benefits – oral (fluency of reading) SS5: language benefits – vocabulary
9	R	Great. Do you read a lot?	Question about reading stories/ storybooks
10	Qilin	Yeah. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms she reads a lot
11	R	Any particular stories that you enjoy reading?	Question to probe for evidence
12	Qilin	Oh, I read A Diary of a Wimpy Kid and (()) Animals. ^{SS7} For A Diary of a Wimpy Kid, it is very interesting ^{SS8} . It is really meant for children. And for (()) Animals, I like their font. It's very colourful ^{SS9} .	SS7: example of story student enjoys reading SS8: socio-emotional benefits – interesting SS9: aesthetic benefits – font type, colourful
13	R	Great. How has that helped you in your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
14	Qilin	Like I said, I learnt new words. So, when I learn new words, I may go check the dictionary or ask my parents. ^{SS5repeated}	Student response: example of benefit (vocabulary)
15	R	And you'll really use those words in your composition writing?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
16	Qilin	Yeah. ^{SS10}	SS10: affirms she uses new vocabulary in writing
17	R	And do you see improvement in your composition writing?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
18	Qilin	I used those phrases ^{SS10repeated} . Sometimes we have videos and phrases.	SS10 repeated
19	R	Great. What about acting out? Do you have the opportunity to act out some of the stories in your classes?	Question about acting out stories
20	Qilin	In our class, we have groups. So, our teacher let us prepare for one or two weeks. ^{SS11}	SS11: group preparation implies that she has acted out stories
21	R	And do you think that is good for your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
22	Qilin	Yeah. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms language benefits
23	R	How? How has that helped you?	Question to probe for English language benefits
24	Qilin	For your creativity. ^{SS12cont'd}	SS12 cont'd: example of language benefit – creativity (in writing)
25	R	That's great. So, that helps with composition writing, to be creative in your ideas. Your teacher tells stories during your English language lessons?	Question about storytelling in class
26	Qilin	For Primary One to Three, yes. Now in Primary Four, not so ... ^{SS13}	SS13: affirms teachers tell stories
27	R	Not so much?	
28	Qilin	Yeah.	
29	R	Would you want your teacher to continue telling stories in your English language classes?	

30	Qilin	Yes. ^{SS14}	SS14: affirms she likes the teacher to continue telling stories
31	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
32	Qilin	Because it is interesting ^{SS15} , it's very fun ^{SS16} .	SS15: reasons – socio-emotional benefits (interesting) SS16: reasons – socio-emotional benefits (fun)
33	R	Fun, interesting. And what other value can you get from storytelling?	Question to probe for English language benefits
34	Qilin	You can learn a lot of things ^{SS17} and morals ^{SS18} .	SS17: cognitive benefits – increase knowledge SS18: social benefits – morals
35	R	And, like you said, vocabulary. What other language skills will storytelling help children to improve in?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
36	Qilin	The teacher tells you. Next time when you present something, you can know how to present it.	Student response: example
37	R	Ok. So, you learn from the stories that you've read or listened to. Thank you.	

Student Rosa - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Rosa	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Any particular story that you enjoy listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Rosa	Yeah.	Student response: agreement
5	R	Can you remember the title?	Question to probe for evidence
6	Rosa	The Three Pigs and the Wolf. ^{SS2}	SS2: example of story she enjoys listening
7	R	That's a very famous story. Do you think listening to stories will help you in your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
8	Rosa	Yes.	Student response: agreement
9	R	How?	Question to probe for evidence
10	Rosa	It will help me build my confidence ^{SS3} . For language skills, they ... the words may help me build my vocabulary ^{SS4} .	SS3: socio-emotional benefits – confidence SS4: language benefits – vocabulary
11	R	What about pronunciation? When you listen to how the words are pronounced, do you think you learn from that as well?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
12	Rosa	Yes ^{SS5} .	SS5: language benefit – oral (pronunciation)
13	R	Ok. What about reading? Do you read a lot of stories?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
14	Rosa	Yes. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms she reads a lot of stories
15	R	Any kind of stories that you particularly like?	Question about reading stories/storybooks
16	Rosa	Normally, I like fictional stories ^{SS7} .	SS7: example of stories she enjoys reading (fictional stories)
17	R	Yes?	Question to probe for elaboration
18	Rosa	Because they are funnier and interesting ^{SS8} . There is this series of Animals Tilton (?) I particularly like. It's very funny and the words are quite suitable for us. ^{SS9}	SS8: reasons – socio-emotional value (funny and interesting) SS9: language reasons – words appropriate for primary four students
19	R	For your compo-writing, you mean? Do you use any of the words in your composition writing?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
20	Rosa	Um... sometimes. ^{SS9}	SS9: language benefits – writing (sometimes uses new vocabulary in writing)
21	R	I believe in your four years in this school, you have teachers who tell stories during your English language	Question about acting out stories

22	Rosa	lessons. Do you have the opportunity to act them out? Yes, I love to act them out. ^{SS10}	SS10: affirms she enjoys acting out stories
23	R	How has that helped you in your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
24	Rosa	Acting out the parts of the story helps us to develop better friendship with our friends... ^{SS11}	SS11: social benefits (improve social relationships)
25	R	Social values?	Question to probe for details
26	Rosa	Only if I'm acting with my friends. It also helps us to understand more of the story by action. ^{SS12}	SS12: language benefits – comprehension of story)
27	R	Good. What about vocabulary or any language skills in particular?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
28	Rosa	Language skills in particular?	Student response: seeking clarification
29	R	Right. Do you think reading stories will help you in those areas?	
30	Rosa	Yes, because some stories, the vocabulary has a variety. It has a variety of vocabulary words. ^{SS13}	SS13: language benefits – vocabulary
31	R	So, it enriches your vocabulary	
32	Rosa	Yeah.	
33	R	What about compo-writing?	Question to probe for English language benefits
34	Rosa	Compo-writing...	
35	R	Ending of a story?	
36	Rosa	It helped ... some stories helped me to develop better ideas in my compo-writing. ^{SS14}	SS14: language benefits – better ideas in writing
37	R	So, would you want your teacher to continue telling stories in your English language classes?	Question about storytelling in class
38	Rosa	Yes. ^{SS15}	SS15: affirms she likes the teacher to continue telling stories
39	R	Yes. But why?	Question to probe for reasons
40	Rosa	Because it will help me build up my vocabulary and grammar skills and my compo-writing. ^{SS16}	SS16: reasons – language benefits (improves student's vocabulary, grammar and writing)
41	R	Does acting out the stories help you with your confidence level?	Question about acting out stories
42	Rosa	Yes, because I personally like acting. ^{SS17}	SS17: affirms she enjoys acting out stories
43	R	Oh, great. Looks like you are having a good time with stories. Thank you.	

Student Sara - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories during your English language lessons?	Question about listening to stories
2	Sara	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Yes. Can you recall a story that you enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Sara	Well, the stories is (are what) Miss Tan told us is (()) about those funny stories that happened to him in his childhood. ^{SS2}	SS2: example of stories she enjoys listening
5	R	Ok. So, you enjoyed listening to those personal stories? And you also enjoy reading storybooks, or ...?	Question about reading stories/storybooks
6	Sara	I like to read storybooks a lot. That's when I end up getting my glasses because of reading too much. But I wouldn't stop. ^{SS3}	SS3: affirms she enjoys reading storybooks
7	R	Ok. And any stories that you particularly like?	Question to probe for evidence
8	Sara	There's one I borrowed from the library, which was ...The title was Annie of Green Gables (()). It's very fun. It's about a girl Annie ...(()). And she lived with a lot of people. She lived with her mother's friends	SS4: description of story as evidence that she has read the story

		and her mother's friends' friends keep changing until she end up in an orphanage. ^{SS4}	
9	R	So, you've read stories. You've also listened to stories. Have you any opportunity to act out the stories?	Question about acting out stories
10	Sara	No, I didn't have the opportunity. I'm quite shy ^{SS5} .	SS5: negative response – has not acted out stories (reason – quite shy)
11	R	I hope one day you can act out some parts of a story. When you said that you enjoy reading stories and storybooks, do you think it has benefited you in your language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
12	Sara	Yes, it helps me a lot in my English and my English speaking is much better than before. ^{SS6}	SS6: language benefits – oral (speaking skill)
13	R	So, it has helped you in your oral skills?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
14	Sara	Yes.	
15	R	Which aspects of oral skills?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
16	Sara	um...	
17	R	Is it expressiveness, or is it the pronunciation of words?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
18	Sara	Pronunciation of words. ^{SS6cont'd}	SS6 cont'd: language benefits – oral (pronunciation)
19	R	What about learning new words from the stories? Do you learn new words from the stories?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
20	Sara	Yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms she has learnt new words from the stories
21	R	And how have you used those new words?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
22	Sara	I used them a lot ^{SS8} , sometimes in my compositions. When I do that, my composition increased from 20 to 22 to ... ^{SS9}	SS8: used the new words a lot SS9: language benefits (using new words improves writing scores)
23	R	Oh, so you've improved. That's good. You enjoy listening to stories. You said you enjoy listening to stories.	Question to probe for further English language benefits
24	Sara	Yes. I do.	Student response: agreement
25	R	Would you want your teacher to continue telling stories during your English language lessons?	Question about storytelling in class
26	Sara	Yes. ^{SS10}	SS10: affirms she likes the teacher to continue telling stories
27	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
28	Sara	Because sometimes if the class is all ... mm ...rowdy and noisy, the stories will help us calm ourselves down and maybe relax a little. ^{SS11}	SS11: reasons – socio-emotional benefits (stories calm and relax students)
29	R	Oh, so you think it is relaxing. Do you think language skills can be taught through stories?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
30	Sara	Yes. Good storybooks can teach language skills. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms language benefits from storybooks
31	R	Like grammar and vocabulary . Can you learn these aspects of the English language through stories?	
32	Sara	Yes. ^{SS13}	SS13: affirms language benefits – grammar, vocabulary
33	R	You think so? Yes? Thank you.	

Student Tina - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Tina	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Can you recall one story that you particularly enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe evidence

4	Tina	Kira Kira. ^{SS2}	SS2: example of story she enjoys listening
5	R	Oh, Kira Kira. And who told you this story?	Question to probe for details
6	Tina	My form teacher, Mrs Lau.	Student response: details
7	R	And you had a great time listening to it?	
8	Tina	Yes.	
9	R	Do you think listening to stories has helped you in your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
10	Tina	Yes. ^{SS3}	SS3: affirms listening to stories has helped her in her English
11	R	How?	Question to probe for details
12	Tina	It has helped me with my compo ^{SS4} and vocabularies. ^{SS5}	SS4: language benefits – writing SS5: language benefits – vocabulary
13	R	Oh, vocabulary. You learn new words. What about reading storybooks? Do you like to read stories, or read them out loud?	Question about reading stories/storybooks
14	Tina	Sometimes. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms she sometimes enjoys reading stories
15	R	So, any story that you particularly enjoy reading?	Question to probe for evidence
16	Tina	My World's Best Friend. ^{SS7}	SS7: example of a story she enjoys reading
17	R	Do you read often?	
18	Tina	Yes. Every time when it is quiet. ^{SS8}	SS8: affirms she reads often, whenever it is quiet
19	R	Do you think the reading of stories has helped you in your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
20	Tina	Yes. ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms reading stories has helped her in her English
21	R	How?	Question to probe for details
22	Tina	mm...	
23	R	Which aspects of the language? Is it the oral skills, vocabulary, grammar, or composition writing?	Question to probe for details
24	Tina	Grammar ^{SS10} , vocabulary ^{SS11} and oral ^{SS12} .	SS10: language benefits – grammar SS11: language benefits – vocabulary SS12: language benefits – oral
25	R	Oral. So, do you find yourself improving in your oral language?	
26	Tina	Yes. ^{SS12repeated}	SS12 repeated
27	R	Yes. Your teacher tells stories in the class. Do you want your teacher to continue telling stories in the class?	Question about storytelling in class
28	Tina	Yes. ^{SS13}	SS13: affirms she likes the teacher to continue telling stories
29	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
30	Tina	So that it can give us more vocabularies and help us to learn more words. ^{SS14}	SS14: reason (language benefits – vocabulary)
31	R	Learn more words. How else can it help you?	
32	Tina	...	
33	R	What about the storyline ? Do you get ideas from the stories?	Question to probe for details
34	Tina	Yes. ^{SS15}	SS15: affirms language benefits – more ideas to improve storyline (writing)
35	R	Thank you.	

Student Umar - Male

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Umar	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to

3	R	Can you recall one story that you particularly enjoyed listening to?	stories Question to probe evidence
4	Umar	Science where there is green pollination, and insects in pollination ... ^{SS2}	SS2: brief description of story as evidence of story he enjoys listening
5	R	So, that's science. Some science fiction. You enjoy reading science fiction?	Question to seek clarification
6	Umar	Yes. ^{SS3}	SS3: affirms he enjoys reading science fiction
7	R	How has that helped you?	Question to probe for benefits
8	Umar	Because I can learn the amazing facts about the plants and insects... how they pollinate the plants, how the wind pollinates the plants ... ^{SS4}	SS4: cognitive benefits (life science knowledge)
9	R	Get ideas from the stories?	
10	Umar	Yes. ^{SS4repeated}	SS4 repeated
11	R	What about reading? Do you read a lot?	Question about reading stories /storybooks
12	Umar	Yes. ^{SS5}	SS5: affirms he reads a lot
13	R	What particular stories do you enjoy reading?	Question to probe for evidence
14	Umar	Romance of the Three Kingdoms. ^{SS6}	SS6: example of stories he enjoys reading
15	R	<i>Romance of the Three Kingdoms</i> . Is it a Chinese book? Is it in English?	
16	Umar	No, they translated it into English. ^{SS6cont'd}	SS6 cont'd: more details about the book
17	R	We are talking about English storybooks. Do you think the reading of stories and storybooks will help you with your English?	Question to probe for benefits
18	Umar	Yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms that reading storybooks will help with his English
19	R	How has it helped you?	Question to probe for benefits
20	Umar	It has helped me learn more vocab words ^{SS8} and better English.	SS8: language benefits – vocabulary
21	R	Better English, in what sense?	Question to probe for details
22	Umar	I use correct sentences ... ^{SS9}	SS9: language benefits – correct sentence structures
23	R	Correct sentences. You see this happening in your compositions?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
23	Umar	Yes. ^{SS9cont'd}	SS9 cont'd: language benefits – correct sentence structures in writing
24	R	So, in composition writing, you find that you can draw on the ideas from the stories?	Question to probe for details
25	Umar	Yes. ^{SS10}	SS10: language benefits – more ideas for writing
26	R	You use the language of the stories. Very good.	
27	Umar	Yes.	Student response: agreement (benefit: use the language of the stories in writing)
28	R	Have you attended storytelling classes?	
29	Umar	Yes, P4.	
30	R	Oh, P4. Did you enjoy yourself?	
31	Umar	Yes. ^{SS11}	SS11: affirms he enjoys attending storytelling classes
32	R	Do you think storytelling should continue?	
33	Umar	Yes. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms he likes storytelling to continue
	R	Would you like your teacher to continue telling stories in the English language classes?	Question about storytelling in class
	Umar	...	
	R	Besides fun, how else can the stories help the children, in terms of language skills?	Question to probe for further language benefits
	Umar	They will use the bad English by not saying the	SS13: implies that stories help with

		sentences correctly. ^{SS13}	correct sentence structures
R		So stories will help them learn some of the language in the stories and they will improve. Ok. Thank you.	

Student Val - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Val	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Can you recall a story that you enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Val	It's a story when I was P...	
5	R	Lower primary?	
6	Val	Yeah, lower primary. The teacher read to us about Humpty Dumpty. It was very funny. ^{SS2} When I was in P1, I was small. So, ...	SS2: example of story she enjoys listening to
7	R	So, you found it enjoyable?	
8	Val	Interesting. ^{SS3}	SS3: reason for enjoying stories – socio-emotional benefits (interesting)
9	R	Interesting. Good. What about reading? Do you enjoy reading stories?	Question about reading stories/ storybooks
10	Val	Yes. ^{SS4}	SS4: affirms she enjoys reading stories
11	R	What stories do you enjoy reading?	Question to probe for evidence
12	Val	I like adventure books. And my favourite storybook is in series. It's called Warriors. ^{SS5}	SS5: example of storybook she enjoys reading
13	R	Do you think reading stories and storybooks will help you in your English language skills?	Question to probe for English language benefits
14	Val	Yes, because some of the books, they have some words we have never learnt before. ^{SS6}	SS6: language benefits – vocabulary
15	R	So, it's vocabulary...	
16	Val	And some information. ^{SS7}	SS7: cognitive benefits – new knowledge
17	R	And new ideas. Do you see the benefits in your writing, in your composition writing?	Question to probe for English language benefits
18	Val	When I was in lower primary, I didn't really read. So, my composition was not really good. But when I was in the upper primary, I started to read. I found it enjoyable and ...	Student response: illustration
19	R	And now you found that your language is improving.	
20	Val	My composition. ^{SS8}	SS8: language benefits – improvement in writing
21	R	Good. What about oral skills? Do you find your oral skills improving?	Question to probe for English language benefits
22	Val	Yes. ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms language benefits – oral skills
23	R	Yes, in what way?	Question to probe for English language benefits
24	Val	I know more words that are not so simple like this girl, I know how to describe them properly like how they do in storybooks. ^{SS10}	SS10: language benefit – vocabulary (descriptive words)
25	R	What about pronunciation and expressiveness?	Question to probe for English language benefits
26	Val	Pronunciation? Not really. ^{SS11}	SS11: does not think storytelling helps with oral skills (pronunciation)
27	R	What about acting out stories? Have you the opportunity to act out certain stories?	Question about acting out stories
28	Val	Yes. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms she has acted out certain stories
29	R	In class? And how has that benefited you?	Question to probe for English language benefits
30	Val	It gave me more confidence ^{SS13} <i>and it changed my</i>	SS13: socio-emotional benefits –

31	R	<i>memorising skill.</i> Memorising skill. Does it help you with expressiveness?	emotional value (confidence) Question to probe for further English language benefits
32	Val	<i>I have more confidence in expressing myself and do bigger actions.</i> ^{SS13cont'd}	SS13 cont'd: more details
33	R	That's good. Would you like storytelling to continue in your English language classes?	Question about storytelling in class
34	Val	Yes. ^{SS14}	SS14: affirms she likes the teacher to continue telling stories
35	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
36	Val	<i>Because it is fun</i> ^{SS15} <i>and we can learn more words</i> ^{SS10repeated} <i>and enjoy the lessons</i> ^{SS15repeated} .	SS15 repeated (reasons – fun) SS10 repeated (language benefits – vocabulary) SS15 repeated (reasons – enjoyment)
37	R	Oh, that's good. Thank you.	

Student Wendy - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Wendy	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Can you recall one story that you particularly enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Wendy	<i>Three Little Pigs.</i> ^{SS2}	SS2: example of story she enjoys listening
5	R	Good. Can you tell me a little bit more about Three Little Pigs?	Question to probe for details
6	Wendy	<i>The story is about three little pigs escaping from Big Bad Wolf.</i> ^{SS3}	SS3: brief description of story as evidence that she has listened to that story
7	R	How has that story helped you in your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
8	Wendy	Good.	
9	R	How has it helped you? Has it helped you in any way?	Question to probe for details
10	Wendy	<i>A little bit only.</i> ^{SS4}	SS4: affirms listening to the Three Little Pigs has helped her a little in her English
11	R	In what way?	Question to probe for details
12	Wendy	Um...mm	
13	R	Is it in learning new words?	Question to probe for examples
14	Wendy	Yes. ^{SS5}	SS5: language benefits – vocabulary
15	R	Ok. What about storybooks? Do you read storybooks?	Question about reading stories /storybooks
16	Wendy	Yes. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms she reads storybooks
17	R	A lot?	
18	Wendy	Yes. ^{SS6cont'd}	SS6 cont'd: affirms she reads storybooks a lot
19	R	A lot. Ok. Can you tell me one story that you enjoy reading?	Question to probe for evidence
20	Wendy	<i>Matilda.</i> ^{SS7}	SS7: example of stories student enjoys reading
21	R	Matilda. What is it about Matilda that you like?	Question to probe for details
22	Wendy	<i>She is clever, a brilliant and bright girl.</i> ^{SS8}	SS8: brief description of story as evidence that she has read the book
23	R	Oh, good. You read a lot, you said. Do you think that has helped you in your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
24	Wendy	Yes. ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms reading stories has helped her in her English
25	R	How?	Question to probe for details

26	Wendy	Improving my words and vocabulary. ^{SS10}	SS10: language benefits – vocabulary
27	R	Good. Besides the vocabulary, how else have you benefited from your reading?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
28	Wendy	Improve my knowledge. ^{SS11}	SS11: cognitive benefit – improves knowledge
29	R	Good. What about writing skills? Does it help you with your writing skills?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
30	Wendy	Yes. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms reading stories has helped her in her writing
31	R	You write better compositions? In your English language class when you listen to stories, or when you read stories, do you have the opportunity to act out some of the stories?	Question about acting out stories
32	Wendy	Yes. ^{SS13}	SS13: affirms she has acted out stories
33	R	Like what? Can you give me an example?	Question to probe for evidence
34	Wendy	mm... Three Little Pigs. ^{SS14}	SS14: example of a story she has acted out
35	R	Again, Three Little Pigs? And you enjoy acting out ...Three Little Pigs. How does that help you in your English language? Does it help you in your oral skills?	Question to further for English language benefits
36	Wendy	Yes. ^{SS15}	SS15: affirms acting out stories has helped her in her oral skills
37	R	How?	Question to probe for details
38	Wendy	Going by talking a lot, giving more ideas. ^{SS15cont's}	SS15 cont'd: affirms acting out stories has helped her in her oral skills (talks a lot, gains more ideas)
39	R	Ok. Good. Thank you.	

Student Ximin - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Ximin	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Any particular story that you enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Ximin	Goldilocks and the Three Bears. ^{SS2}	SS2: example of story she enjoys listening
5	R	And do you think listening to stories will help you in your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
6	Ximin	Yes. ^{SS3}	SS3: affirms listening to stories will help in her English
7	R	How does it help you?	Question to probe for English language benefits
8	Ximin	There are glossaries behind the story that explain the meanings about the difficult words. ^{SS4}	SS4: language benefits – vocabulary building
9	R	Oh, vocabulary building. What about reading stories? Do you read storybooks?	Question about reading stories/ storybooks
10	Ximin	Yes. ^{SS5}	SS5: affirms she reads storybooks
11	R	Do you read a lot?	
12	Ximin	Yes. ^{SS5cont'd}	SS5 cont'd: affirms she reads a lot
13	R	So, do you think reading storybooks will help you in your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
14	Ximin	Yes. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms reading storybooks will help her in her English
15	R	How has it helped you?	Question to probe for details
16	Ximin	It gives me more ideas in writing compositions. ^{SS7}	SS7: language benefits – more ideas for writing
17	R	Any other ways?	Question to probe for details
18	Ximin	Um	
19	R	What about grammar?	Question to probe for details
20	Ximin	Yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms language benefit –

21	R	Do you have the opportunity to act out some of the stories in your class?	grammar) Question about acting out stories
22	Ximin	In some drama ... in the drama club. ^{SS8}	SS8: affirms she acts out stories in a drama club
23	R	Oh, also outside the English language lessons. Did you enjoy yourself?	
24	Ximin	Yes. ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms she enjoys acting out stories
25	R	Does it help you in any way?	Question to probe for benefits
26	Ximin	It gives me more self-confidence. ^{SS10}	SS10: socio-emotional benefits – social value (self-confidence)
27	R	Oh, good. It builds your self-confidence. Does it help you in your oracy skills?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
28	Ximin	Yes. ^{SS11}	SS11: language benefits – oral skills
29	R	Like what? Is it pronunciation? Is it expressiveness?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
30	Ximin	Pronunciation. ^{SS11cont'd}	SS11 cont'd : language benefits – oral skills (pronunciation)
31	R	Good. Would you want your teacher to continue with storytelling in the class?	Question about storytelling in class
32	Ximin	Yes. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms she likes the teacher to continue telling stories
33	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
34	Ximin	Because the stories are very interesting. ^{SS13} And I love to listen to stories ^{SS1repeated} .	SS13: reasons – socio-emotional benefits (interest value)
35	R	Ok. Thank you.	

Student Yara - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Yara	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Any story in particular that you enjoyed listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Yara	I really like King Mida story ^{SS2} because he gives me an idea of what he learns from his mistakes and his greediness. ^{SS3}	SS2: example of story she enjoys listening SS3: socio-emotional benefits – learn from one's mistakes and greediness
5	R	Do you listen a lot to stories?	
6	Yara	Yes.	
7	R	In class or is it outside class?	
8	Yara	In class.	
9	R	What about reading stories? Do you enjoy reading storybooks?	Question about reading stories/ storybooks
10	Yara	Yeah. ^{SS4}	SS4: affirms she enjoys reading stories
11	R	Do you read a lot? Sometimes?	
12	Yara	Yeah. ^{SS5}	SS5: affirms she reads a lot
13	R	And how do you think reading stories has helped you?	Question to probe for benefits
14	Yara	It helps me learn a lot more words that I have never know about. ^{SS6} And makes my English ...	SS6: language benefits – vocabulary
15	R	You improve in your English.	
16	Yara	Yeah.	
17	R	So, it has helped you in that way. It helps you with the vocabulary. And what about grammar? Do you learn about past tense, present tense ... ?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
18	Yara	Yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms language benefits – grammar (tenses)
19	R	Through the stories?	
20	Yara	Yes.	

21	R	Good. And do you have the opportunity to act out some of the stories?	Question about acting out stories
22	Yara	No. ^{SS8}	SS8: negative – no opportunity to act out some of the stories
23	R	In Primary One, Two, Three? No. Not at all. Would you like to act out some of the stories?	Question to probe for details
24	Yara	Mm... I feel very shy. ^{SS8cont'd}	SS8 cont'd: feels very shy about acting out stories
25	R	You feel shy. Ok. Now your teacher tells stories during the class ...	
26	Yara	Yes, sometimes.	
27	R	And do you want your teacher to continue telling stories in your class?	Question about storytelling in class
28	Yara	Yes. ^{SS9}	SS9: affirms she likes the teacher to continue telling stories
29	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
30	Yara	Because I will feel very empty and bored during English class. ^{SS9cont'd}	SS9 cont'd: reason (so that he will not feel very empty and bored)
31	R	So, you feel that stories can be more interesting – make the lessons more interesting?	
32	Yara	...	
33	R	How else can ... Do you think students can improve in their English language skills when they listen to stories, or when they read stories?	Question to probe for English language benefits
34	Yara	Yes. If they don't know the word, they can ask the teacher. ^{SS6repeated}	SS6 repeated: language benefits – vocabulary
35	R	I see. So, it's vocabulary building. And would that help with the writing ?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
36	Yara	Yes. ^{SS7}	SS7: affirms language benefits – writing
37	R	Yes, in what way?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
38	Yara	Their vocabulary ^{SS6repeated} , grammar ^{SS8} .	SS8: language benefits – grammar
39	R	I see. Thank you.	

Student Zoe - Female

1	R	Do you enjoy listening to stories?	Question about listening to stories
2	Zoe	Yes. ^{SS1}	SS1: affirms she enjoys listening to stories
3	R	Any particular story that you enjoy listening to?	Question to probe for evidence
4	Zoe	Cinderella. ^{SS2}	SS2: example of story she enjoys listening
5	R	And what about Cinderella that you like?	Question to probe for details
6	Zoe	She show a lot of potential and she is very caring. ^{SS3}	SS3: comments on story as evidence that she has listened to that story
7	R	I see. What about stories? Do you read storybooks?	Question about reading stories/ storybooks
8	Zoe	Yes. ^{SS4}	SS4: affirms she reads storybooks
9	R	A lot?	
10	Zoe	Yes. ^{SS4cont'd}	SS4 cont'd: affirms she reads a lot of storybooks
11	R	Which story do you particularly enjoy reading?	Question to probe for evidence
12	Zoe	Percy Jason and the Lightning Dip. ^{SS5}	SS5: example of stories she enjoys reading
13	R	Do you think reading stories will help you in your English language?	Question to probe for English language benefits
14	Zoe	Yes. ^{SS6}	SS6: affirms reading stories will help her in her English
15	R	In what way?	Question to probe for details

16	Zoe	<i>They let us learn more new words</i> ^{SS7} <i>and I can use it in my composition</i> ^{SS8} .	SS7: language benefits – vocabulary SS8: language benefits – writing
17	R	Oh, so, a lot of vocabulary building. Any other aspects of the English language that you have benefited from the stories?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
18	Zoe	<i>The structure of the sentence.</i> ^{SS9}	SS9: language benefits – sentence structures
19	R	Structure of the sentences. Very good. Have you a chance to act out some of the stories?	Question about acting out stories
20	Zoe	No. ^{SS10}	SS10: negative – has not acted out stories
21	R	Not really. Ok. If there is a chance, would you like to act out some parts of the story?	
22	Zoe	No. ^{SS11}	SS11: negative – will not act out stories
23	R	For fun? Not at all? I'm sure your teacher tells stories in the class.	Question about storytelling in class
24	Zoe	Yes. ^{SS12}	SS12: affirms that her teacher tells stories in class
25	R	Do you want your teacher to continue telling stories in the class?	
26	Zoe	Yes. ^{SS13}	SS13: affirms she likes the teacher to continue telling stories
27	R	Why?	Question to probe for reasons
28	Zoe	<i>Because it makes the class more interesting</i> ^{SS14} <i>and we learn new words from another aspect (?)</i> ^{SS15}	SS14: reasons – socio-emotional benefits (interest value) SS15: language benefits – vocabulary (new words)
29	R	I see. Good. And that will help you in your composition writing?	Question to probe for English language benefits
30	Zoe	Yes. ^{SS16}	SS16: affirms language benefits – writing
31	R	What about oral? How will you benefit from listening to stories? How will that help you in your oral skills?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
32	Zoe	<i>How teacher project his voice, talk loudly, and where he pause.</i> ^{SS17}	SS17: language benefits – oral skills (voice projection, pausing)
33	R	Pausing, voice projection. What about expressiveness and pronunciation ?	Question to probe for further English language benefits
34	Zoe	Yeah. ^{SS17cont'd}	SS17 cont'd: language benefits – oral skills (expressiveness, pronunciation)
35	R	Thank you.	