



University of Utah

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH JOURNAL

PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S STORYTELLING AND DRAMATIZATION

Alex Chee (Jessica Stafford, Cheryl Wright, Danielle Willardsen, Annie Jane Frazier)

Department of Family and Consumer Studies

Purpose: The University of Utah's Child and Family Development center offers storytelling among many activities in the daily curriculum. During storytelling time, a child dictates their story to their classmates and the teachers present. The author of the story is given an option to choose classmates to help develop their stories further by inputting their feedback or lengthening the story. The non-participating children serve as an audience for the storytellers. These dramatizations are voice recorded and written on paper by the teacher transcriber present that day. The stories with multiple children storytellers are video recorded, voice recorded, and written on paper for analyzing. The dramatizations are later presented to parents and children and for instructional purposes. In this program, storytelling is recognized as an activity that strengthens literacy and social development skills among children. The purpose of this study is to observe the content of stories produced and dramatized by children at the Child and Family Development Center.

Methods: We collect copies of the written stories and voice recordings of the dramatizations as they are normally produced in the classroom. The only noticeable change likely to result from our research is that the story dramatizations will be recorded and analyzed. This qualitative study collects data on the content of all children's stories. The dramatization stories will be collected in the form of copies of children's written stories and videotapes, and voice recordings. The data will be analyzed using Hyper Research software by student researchers at the University of Utah. Researchers will code the data using predetermined coding categories based on our research questions. As story development occurs, additional codes are likely to be developed as we analyze the data.

Results: As our study does not have a specific end goal or predetermined result, our data is still being documented. In the recent collection of stories, we are seeing more patterns of small group stories that are enacted with props and onomatopoeias. The children look forward to telling their story to their classmates as well as being engaged while a story is being told. The children's stories tend to bring imagination and reality together in one story. The pureness and creative minds of a child make the data fluctuate and ever changing.

Conclusion: This research highlights the cognitive development and interpretation of a child through their stories and dramatizations. As we collect data there is no intervention on the part of the researchers, for it is to collect raw and pure data. The current model does not involve more than minimal risk to the subjects, and the waiver will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects. Concerns of permission are met by notifying parents about the voice recording before the voice recording commences and by providing them with summaries of our work after the study end.