

Reflection on ict education



**ASSIGN
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Literacy is the learning to read and write proficiently while digital literacy is the ability to use different digital tools for learning in young children (Kazakoff, 2012; Green et al, 2006). Digital storytelling is more effective to children's learning rather than the traditional way as it can support the current trends in teaching and learning. Through this rationale, it can be seen that the child's writing skill and comprehension improved as she had fun through the process of creating the digital story. This rationale also discussed the implication of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the early years setting, the planning and the usage of digital story in the early years setting with the supports of policies, theories and curriculums that can develop children's literacy, communication and language skills.

ICT can be defined as anything that enable us to receive information, to interact with each other or to bring impact on the environment using electronic or digital device (Bolstad, 2004). There are many devices and equipment that can be use in an early years setting to encourage the usage of ICT such as cameras, computers, programmable toys and many more. ICT had brought an impact to the children learning and development, remarkably in their literacy development as children nowadays are living in a challenging and advance environment (Roney, 2008). Children should be provided with opportunities, for instance, through creating digital stories to develop ' technological literacy' to ensure their activeness and competence in their environment (Shah and Godiyal, 2000). Significantly in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), involving technology in children's learning and development can support the progression of the children and also achieving the learning goals (DfE, 2012a).

The synthesis report by Hatherly *et al* (2010) had shown the positive implication of ICTs for children's literacy development. The report stated that children's activities that are based on ICTs could develop children's literacy, language and communication skill. Other than that, the use of ICTs can motivate children to speak and engage themselves in conversation and to tell and share their experiences through various ways, for example, through digital story-telling that would facilitate children's literacy development.

Through observation, I chose a child who love to draw because I wanted to develop her literacy skill by supporting her through her interest in drawing using story-telling as making connection with drawing to writing can allow children to understand how writing can relate to their images and also their visual imagery (NYSUT, 2008). Before I started doing anything with the child, I asked for the willingness of the child to participate in this assignment as her opinions and views are to be considered first according to UNCRC Article 12 (UNICEF, n. d). I met her parents where we discussed about the resource plan and how this will help her learning and development. The discussion lead me to the understanding that the child was not exposed much to electronic devices at home. However, they allowed me to work with their child and also agreed in helping the child to familiarise herself with the device after the discussion. I understand that this could be advantageous for the child's learning as involving parents in children's education can bring many benefits including improvements in children's educational achievement and also increasing parents' confidence in helping their child at home (DCSF, 2008). Through the discussion also, I decided to make the resource with tablet and audio recorder as it will allow the child to navigate

the device better than by operating a mouse that might be hard for new learners (Pierangelo and Giuliani, 2008).

I started telling different types of stories to give the child a better understanding on how a story should be. Telling stories to children can enhance their language learning by introducing them to different languages and narrative styles such as the stories' prologue, climax and epilogue (Whitehead, 2010). I gave the child the freedom to choose what kind of story she wanted to write and we both agreed on writing an imaginary story inspired by the movie ' Frozen' according to the child's interest as practitioners should support children to write about things that interest them (DfE, 2012a). She was able to start planning her story without much difficulties but she faced problem in using the tablet. At the beginning, the child had a hard time trying to use the application in the tablet but I did not help her immediately. I gave her the time to explore the device herself and after a few trial and error and some guidance, she managed to navigate the device successful. As accordance to the Montessori Method ' control of error', children learning from their mistake themselves can help them to develop a skill and knowledge more proficiently as their confidence and self-esteem increased (Lawrence, 1998).

Throughout the process of illustrating the story, I took up the role as a facilitator. When the child had difficulties in continuing the story, I used open ended question like " What should you say if someone gave you something?" and " How did the girl felt?" According to Piaget, the role of an educator is to aid the children to come to their own understanding and asking questions instead of telling the answers and this could improve children's

comprehension and vocabulary (Chamberlin, 2014; Teachnology Inc, n, d).

The child wanted to incorporate fantasy element in her story where the snowman has the ability to talk and I strongly agreed. Encouraging children's imagination can develop their social skills and improve their confidence in learning or acquiring literacy skill (The Reader's Digest Association, 2014).

I started to involve myself more in the making of digital story when the child started to write text on each drawing as practitioners should " support and scaffold individual children's writing as opportunities arise" (DfE, 2012a: 31).

I wanted to know the child's writing skill so that I can support her to reach her maximum potential in literacy within her Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). ZPD refers to the distance between what a child can do independently and what they could potentially do with the support of more knowledgeable adults and peers (Tools of the Mind, 2014). For example, I provided the child with short stories and few words' flashcards related to her story that she can use. From the few options, she was able to choose which words she wanted to use, for instance, the word ' build' instead of ' make'. There were a few spelling error where she invented herself through the sounds of the words but I encourage the child to continue without correcting her because children's invented spelling can reflects their attempts in connecting the relationships of language's sounds to the alphabetic system (Whitehead, 2010). I could see the child's confidence in writing increased when she write without looking hesitant. Through this, I realised the child is developing positively in literacy as the child's writing skill matched the early learning goals in EYFS where she could write simple sentences that can be read and

could spell some words correctly and some phonetically reasonable (DfE, 2012b).

Subsequently, I put all her completed drawings together using PowerPoint because it is an easy and accessible software where users can create and design their slides without much difficulties and it is suitable for new learners (Boundless, n. d). The child was very excited as it was her first time seeing a story in a digital form, moreover, she was involved in creating it. PowerPoint has the function where the child can easily choose the animation/effect that allowed her to portray her story better. For example, the child chose the curtain opening effect to display the starting of her story. The software effects that are used in a digital story enable children to link their story effectively and demonstrate understanding of their own story where children get to improve their reading comprehension (Vogel, 2007). Through the attractive and interactive way of presenting the story telling using the effects, I believe it will support the child's literacy learning through the linking of words to image as according to Bruner, children from the age 1-6 years in his second mode of representation, iconic, the information that children had learned is stored in the form of images (McLeod, 2008). I also chose to use voice recorder to record the child's voice because " writing with real voice has the power to make you pay attention and understand" (Elbow, 1981: 299 cited in Nilsson, 2010). Voice recording had allow the child to express things she cannot write in words (Nilsson, 2010), therefore the child felt no barrier to explore her own vocabulary and I can see this when she said words that she did not write in her story. The child wanted to put music alongside with her voice and I agreed as it will display her emotions and

expressions when she was creating the story. After completing the editing, I played the slides and praised her for her great work as treating her story interesting and reread it again can show the child that her effort was worth it (Lawrence, 1998).

Reflecting on this experience, I felt that the making and the usage of this resource alongside with the theories and approaches that I followed brought a positive result in enhancing the child's language and emergent literacies and also allowing the child to understand better about ICTs. Through reflecting, I realised I should include more children in creating the resource as the children's collaboration could encourage the exchange of knowledge in literacy happen during the discussion and planning to create the digital story. I also understand that digital storytelling is a fun yet effective way to support children's learning because it enable the child to create stories that interest her and expanding her scope of learning in a modernized way. Now that I understand the impact of ICT in children's learning, I will continue to incorporate ICT in my future activities with the children but with larger group of children so that children from diverse background can also have the opportunity to experience and learn from the usage of the technology.

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