



Digital Storytelling for EFL Preschool Classroom: Tools, Activities and Themes Proposed by Preservice Teachers

Narración digital en el aula de inglés en infantil: herramientas, actividades y temas propuestos por futuros docentes

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Abstract

The storytelling practice, in general, and the digital storytelling (DS), in particular, entail many advantages for young pupils in the educative context. The main aim of this paper was to examine the tools, the type of activities, and the themes of the stories devoted to preschool pupils. Preservice preschool teachers were asked to choose tools to create their genuine story materials and to design an activity for a specific target age of preschool education to go with them. A total of 136 preservice teachers' tasks were analysed for this study. The results showed that the most frequent tool type in the three-target age (3, 4, and 5 years old) was the one allowing the integration of *Dialogues* in the stories; the most popular activity type was *Reading comprehension* for 4- and 5-year-olds, and *Images (match or order)* for 3-year-olds; and the most recurrent theme was *Animal and pets* for 4- and 5-year-olds and *Friendship* for 3-year-olds. This type of study is essential to train preservice teachers both digitally and methodologically for today's school.

Keywords: Preschool Education; English; Stories; Practice.

Resumen

La práctica de narración de cuentos, en general, y la de narración de cuentos digitales, en particular, conlleva varias ventajas para el alumnado de edades tempranas en el contexto educativo. El principal objetivo de este trabajo era analizar las herramientas, el tipo de actividades y los temas de las historias destinadas al alumnado de infantil. Se les pidió a los futuros docentes de infantil que eligieran herramientas para crear sus materiales de cuentos de forma genuina y para diseñar una actividad destinada a una edad específica en educación infantil que acompañaran a estas historias. En total se analizaron 136 tareas de futuros docentes. Los resultados mostraron que el tipo de herramienta más frecuente en las tres edades de infantil (3, 4 y 5 años) era el que permitía integrar *Diálogos* en las historias; el tipo de actividad más común fue *Comprensión lectora* en 4 y 5 años e *Imágenes (unir u ordenar)* en 3 años; y tema más frecuente fue *Animales y mascotas* para 4 y 5 años y *Amistad* en 3 años. Este tipo de estudios es esencial para poder formar al futuro profesorado tanto digital como metodológicamente para la escuela de hoy en día.

Palabras clave: Educación infantil; Inglés; Historias; Práctica.

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Introduction

Children generally love stories, as these enable them to access or create a world of magic that appeals to their imagination. This has long been known; that is why the practice of storytelling in the classroom is not new. By using this innate love for stories in children, we can develop multiple feelings, respect, emotions, attitudes, and types of understanding depending on the plots created in stories. Teachers have always used storytelling as an exercise to introduce and illustrate concepts or abstract ideas, above all, for young pupils (Trigo, Rivera, & Sánchez, 2020).

A great number of benefits can be attributed to the storytelling practice: memory recall, early literacy development, creative thinking, among others (Phillips, 2000). In the field of language education, storytelling becomes an excellent tool for language acquisition and learning (Speaker, Taylor, & Kamen, 2004), new vocabulary introduction, vocabulary revision (Wright & Dunsmuir, 2019), introduction to grammatical patterns (Yunita et al., 2019), pronunciation, intonation features, prosody and sound patterns (Ramírez-Verdugo & Alonso-Belmonte, 2007; Rezende Lucarevski, 2018), and, in general, contact with the target language (Georgopolou & Griva, 2012), which becomes the essential benefit in the case of very young pupils.

Besides, it is widely known that technologies offer wonderful support for language teaching and learning. Furthermore, we have witnessed a true revolution thanks to the Internet and the wealth of websites and resources created to facilitate the process of teaching and learning a foreign language (FL) at all educative levels: from preschool to higher education.

The most important effect of the digital revolution is that “K-8 teachers and students use multimedia resources to develop literacy skills” (Brown et al., 2005, p.2), which, in turn, is related to the change from consuming to creating content. This does not entail that learner do no longer consume content: indeed, they consume and create it, and both practices benefit from digital tools, both being part of what is called multimodal literacy (Erstad & Gillen, 2020).

These changes are not only reflected on expanded definitions of literacy, but also on the apparition of different types of literacy: technology literacy, visual literacy and information literacy, for example (Brown et al., 2005). Robin (2008) added digital literacy and global literacy to this list and points out that the combination of all these new forms of literacy is variously called 21st century literacy, digital age literacies, or even 21st century skills. There does not seem to be a consensus as to whether all these literacies are discrete entities or parts or a larger, expanded concept of literacy.

Therefore, it is not surprising that digital storytelling (DS), so often used as a literacy tool, is closely related to 21st century literacy skills. Thus, Alismail (2015) claimed that DS is a powerful resource to foster information literacy, visual literacy, technology literacy, and media literacy —see, for example, the concept of transmedia storytelling explained in Hanssen (2019) and Capuano et al. (2015). Likewise, Moradi and Chen (2019) discussed the usefulness of DS for the development of information literacy, multimedia literacy, visual literacy, digital literacy and technology literacy.

Caution must, of course, be exercised when considering the relevance of all these different literacies, or sides of literacy, to storytelling as carried out in a preschool context. Still, according to O’Byrne et al. (2018), whose research was specifically about early childhood education, storytelling is beneficial for information literacy, media literacy, and visual literacy; but to reap these benefits, storytelling must be introduced from early age.

Different definitions have arisen around the concept of DS (Kaeophanuek et al., 2019; Korosidou & Griva, 2021; Moradi & Chen, 2019). One of those definitions is the one proposed by Robin (2008) “the art of telling stories with a variety of digital multimedia, such as images, audio and video” (p. 709). Even though the DS concept might be seen as something new, the fact is that at the end of the 1980s Lambert and Atchley (cited in Robin, 2008) created the DS movement with the Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS), currently known as StoryCenter (Barber, 2016; Robin, 2008). Some of the main contributions of the CDS are the Seven Elements of DS: 1) point of view of the story and the perspective of the author; 2) dramatic question to keep the readers’ attention that will be answered at the end of the

story; 3) emotional content to connect personally the story to the audience; 4) the voice of the storyteller, which becomes a must to help the audience understand the story and the context; 5) the power of soundtrack to embellish the storyline; 6) content economy to prevent the reader to feel overloaded; 7) pacing of the story, or how quickly or slowly it progresses.

The differences in all the DS definitions do not only revolve around whether these elements are included: they also have to do with the choice of tools. Thus, some scholars focus on editing software such as Adobe Premiere or, in the case of Daniel and Cowan (2012), Windows Moviemaker. Software of this kind allows users to take the students' drawings, for instance, and link them together so as to form a whole visual text to which a recorded narrative may be added. On the other hand, the choice might be one of the many online tools that allow users to create a story from scratch using ready-made elements. Authors like Korosidou and Griva (2021) used Storybird, Storyjumper, and Storyboard That. Godwin-Jones (2012) listed some websites allowing users to create their stories in online format: Storybird, Storyjumper, Little Bird Tales, Stage'D!, My Storymaker, Zooburst, among others. In the work carried out by Ivone et al. (2020), a great variety of tools were described, although they emphasized Storybird and Storyjumper as tools for creating DS, while, for example, in the conceptual paper of Adara (2019), the author stressed the use of tools like Storybird, Powtoon and Pixton to create DS so as to enhance preschool-children's literacy.

The question of orality must be addressed at this point. It is one of the main elements mentioned above and several definitions of DS lay great emphasis on it (Alismail, 2015; Moradi & Chen, 2019; Robin, 2008).

Even though research on the implementation of DS has been studied in the literature, no studies have been found around the tools or type of tools used to create DS for preschoolers, as target audience, the most popular themes in DS, as well as the activities designed for those DS materials.

The main objective of this paper is, therefore, to know the tools selected by preservice preschool teachers to prepare their DS materials in English as a FL for early-childhood education pupils, as well as the activities they proposed for those written materials and the themes underlying those materials. Particularly, the main objective is sub-divided into four specific objectives (SO):

SO1. To examine the tools used by preservice teachers according to the target age.

SO2. To analyse the types of activities designed by preservice teachers according to the target age.

SO3. To inquire about the themes proposed in the materials created by preservice teachers according to the target age.

SO4. To explore the tools employed to work on each theme.

Method

Participants

The study was carried out in an online university, where all the degrees and master's degrees are taught entirely in a virtual mode using adequate platforms and videoconferencing tools. The participants were enrolled in a subject called "ICT Tools applied to the Learning of English Language" that belonged to the English Mention from the Degree of Early Years Education (official teaching certification for early-years children, i.e. from 3 to 6 years old) in a Spanish University. The language used for teaching the subject was English, and participants' mother tongue was Spanish.

A total of 191 undergraduate students, enrolled in the aforementioned subject (181 females and 10 males), were collected during four academic years (from 2017-2018 to 2020-2021). However, only 70 participated in the task which consisted of the selection of two tools for creating stories devoted to preschool pupils, and the design of activities to go with those story materials. It was a voluntary task out of ten proposed for the subject. A total of 66 undergraduate students selected the two tools (132 DS tasks) while only four chose only one (plus 4 DS tasks). Therefore, the cases object of study were 136 DS tasks.

Instrument

The instrument consists of a voluntary task where undergraduate students had to choose two ICT tools from the list presented in class. Participants (preservice preschool teachers) also had to create materials with those tools in English (a story in most of the cases) and an activity using those materials devoted to preschool pupils. They filled the information about the activity and material design (title of the activity, target age, theme, and activity description) and the genuine link (or screenshots) of their materials.

A total of 12 tools were selected: ABC Ya wordcloud, Bubblr (no longer available), Little Bird Tales, Make Beliefs Comix, Storyboard That, Storybird, My Storymaker (no longer in service), Word Art, Wordle (now EdWordle), Zimmer Twins, and Zooburst (no longer in service). The following table illustrate the tool type we categorised according to the tools selected for this study (Table 1).

Table 1

Categories of Tools and tools included for the study

Tool Type	Description	Tools
1) Standard stories (StS)	Users can create their stories with images and text.	Storybird
2) Stories with voice (SwV)	Users create their stories (text, images) and include voice (by uploading a file, normally as mp3, or using the microphone directly).	Little Bird Tales
		Storyjumper
3) Stories with dialogues (SwD)	Users elaborate standard stories (text, images) and add bubbles with the function of dialogues.	Bubblr
		Make Beliefs Comix
		My Storymaker
		Storyboard That
		Zimmer Twins
4) Wordcloud generators (WG)	Users create cloud of words from a list uploaded by the users. Normally, the words with the highest frequency appear in a bigger size than the rest.	Zooburst
		ABC Ya wordcloud
		Word Art
		Wordle

Procedure

All the tasks were collected via the virtual platform during the second semester of all the academic years mentioned above. The information was transferred into an Excel document to categorise the variables of this study. Next table (Table 2) summarises all the variables:

Table 2

Variables analysed in the study

Variables				
Age of the target group	3 years old	4 years old	5 years old	No Age Specified (NAS).
Tool type	Standard stories (StS)	Stories with voice (SwV)	Stories with dialogues (SwD)	Wordcloud generators (WG)
Tool	1) ABC Ya wordcloud	2) Bubblr	3) Little Bird Tales	4) Make Beliefs Comix
	5) My Storymaker	6) Storybird	7) Storyboard That	8) Storyjumper

	9) Word Art	10) Wordle	11) Zimmer Twins	12) Zooburst
Theme	1) Adventure and mystery	2) Animals and pets	3) Colours, alphabet and numbers	4) Description
	5) Family	6) Feelings	7) Festivities and celebrations	8) Friendship
	9) Healthy habits, food and sports	10) School, house and shop elements	11) Seasons and weather	
Activity	1) Crossword/ wordsearch/ wordcloud	2) Fill in the gaps	3) Follow the model	4) Images (match or order)
	5) Invent / continue / predict	6) Listening comprehension	7) Phonics pronunciation	8) Reading comprehension
	9) Role play	10) Talk and discuss/say aloud	11) Tracing words	12) No activity proposed

The data matrix was exported to the statistical software SPSS 25.0 (IBM SPSS Statistic, Chicago, USA). The methodology of analysis is quantitative. We performed a univariate analysis to find out the distribution of the data. Finally, we carried out contingency tables with two or three variables to answer the specific objectives of this study.

Results

Results from the association between Target Age, Type of Tools and Tools

Frequency tests for tools and type of tools chosen by preservice teachers according to the target age were carried out (see Table 4). Most of the activities are aimed at the 5-year-old group, concretely, 76 (54.3%), followed by 4 (30%), 3 (10.7%) and, finally, the age was not specified in 7 activities (5%).

The most used type of tool is SwD, which was found in 58 activities (42.6%), followed by StS and SwV with a frequency of 36 each (26.5%). Storybird is the most popular choice (26.5%), followed closely by My Storymaker (22.1%) and Storyjumper (20.6%).

Next, we will indicate the most used types of activities and tools considering the age. The most used tool type in 3-year-group are StS and SwD, which were found in five activities each (66.6% between the two types), followed by SwV (26.7%) and WG (6.7%). The most popular tool was also Storybird (33.3%), followed by My Storymaker (26.7%, Little Bird Tales and Storyjumper with the same frequency (13.3%), and, finally, Storyboard That (6.7%).

Regarding 4-year-old groups, the most employed tool types coincide with 3 years, particularly SwV, and SwD, where there are a total of 32 cases, representing 76.2% of the total (38.1% each). This is followed by StS (19%) and 4) WG (4.8%). The most popular tool for this age group has been Storyjumper (31%), followed by My Storymaker (33.3%) and Storybird (22.2%).

With regard to 5-year-olds, the most used tool type is SwD (21.1%) and 4) WG (3.9%). The most popular tools were Storybird (61.1%), My Storymaker (18.4%), and Storyjumper (17.1%).

Although the materials were designed for the three age groups that include all tool types, some specific tools were only used in a specific age group. Thus, the only tools used for 4- and 5-year-olds are Zimmer Twins, Make Beliefs Comix and Wordle, and for 5-year-olds the tools found were BublR and ABC Ya wordcloud.

The preservice teachers who did not specify the age used type SwD, particularly the tool My Storymaker (3.4% out of the total), and StS and especially Storybird (2.8% out of the total). The Excel colour scale tool has been used to make the data more illustrative. Table 3 shows the percentage and the frequency of tools chosen per Target Age.

Table 3

Association between Target Age, Tool Type and Tools

Tool Type and Tools		N	Target Age				Total
			3 Yrs	4 Yrs	5 Yrs	NAS	
StS	Storybird	N	5	8	22	1	36
		%	13.9	22.2	61.1	2.8	100
	Storyjumper	N	2	13	13	0	28
		%	5.6	36.1	36.1	0	77.8
SwV	Little Bird Tales	N	2	3	3	0	8
		%	5.6	8.3	8.3	0	22.2
	Total	N	4	16	16	0	36
		%	11.1	44.4	44.4	0	100
	Storyboard That	N	1	1	7	0	9
		%	1.7	1.7	12.1	0	15.5
	My Storymaker	N	4	10	14	2	30
		%	6.9	17.2	24.1	3.4	51.7
	Zimmer Twins	N	0	2	8	0	10
		%	0	3.4	13.8	0	17.2
SwD	Make Beliefs Comix	N	0	1	1	0	2
		%	0	1.7	1.7	0	3.4
	Bubblr	N	0	0	1	0	1
		%	0	0	1.7	0	1.7
	Zooburst	N	0	2	4	0	6
		%	0	3.4	6.9	0	10.3
	Total	N	5	16	35	2	58
		%	8.6	27.6	60.3	0	100
	Wordle	N	0	1	1	0	2
		%	0	16.7	16.7	0	33.3
WG	Word Art	N	1	1	1	0	3
		%	16.7	16.7	16.7	0	50
	ABC Ya wordcloud	N	0	0	1	0	1
		%	0	0	16.7	0	16.7
	Total	N	1	2	3	0	6
		%	16.7	33.3	50	0	100
Total		N	15	42	76	3	136
		%	11	30.9	55.9	2.2	100

Results from the association between Target Age and Activity

The highest frequency was obtained in cases with no activity proposal (15.4%). This is followed by the activities of 8) Reading comprehension (14.7%), 10) Talk and discuss / say aloud (12.5%), and, with an equal frequency, the activities 4) Images (match or order) and 5) Invent / continue / predict (10%) in each case.

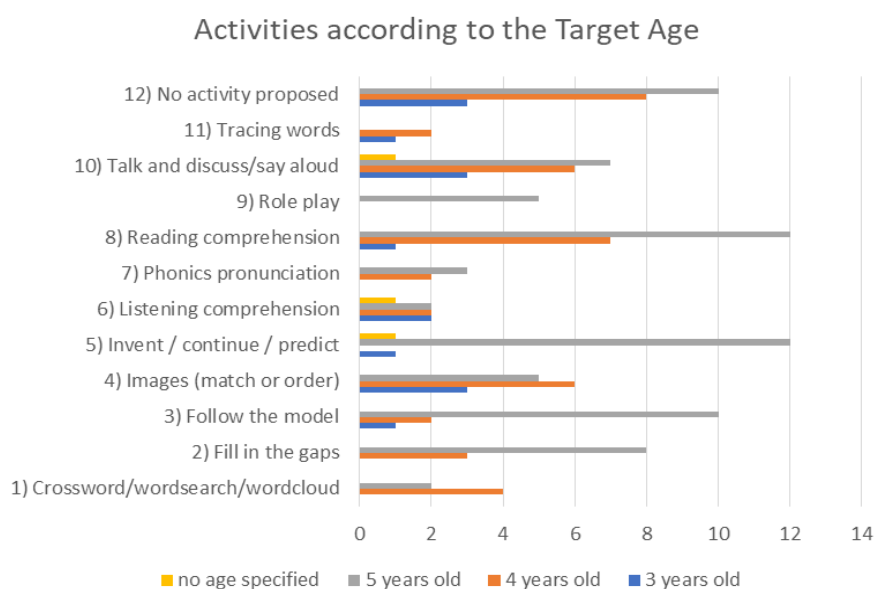
Figure 1 shows the frequency of each type of activity according to the age. For 3-year-olds, three types of activities coincide in frequency: 4) Images (match or order), 10) Talk, and discuss / say aloud, and 12) No activity proposed (20% in each case). The types of activities 2) Fill in the gaps, 1) Crossword / wordsearch / wordcloud, 9) Roleplay, and 7) Phonics pronunciation have not been proposed.

Regarding 4-year-olds, the highest frequency was found in 12) No activity proposed (19%) followed by 8) Reading comprehension (16.7%) and 10) Talk and discuss / say aloud, and 4) Images (match or order) (14.3% each). The categories of activities 9) Roleplay or 5) Invent / continue / predict have not been designed for this age group, unlike 3 years, where activities of the last type did appear.

In 5-year-olds, the most frequent activity types are 8) Reading comprehension and 5) Invent / continue / predict (16.7% each). The categories 12) No activity proposed and 3) Follow the model show the same frequency (13.2% each). Finally, 11) Tracing words has not been proposed for this group of age.

Figure 1

Activities proposed by preservice teachers according to the Target Age



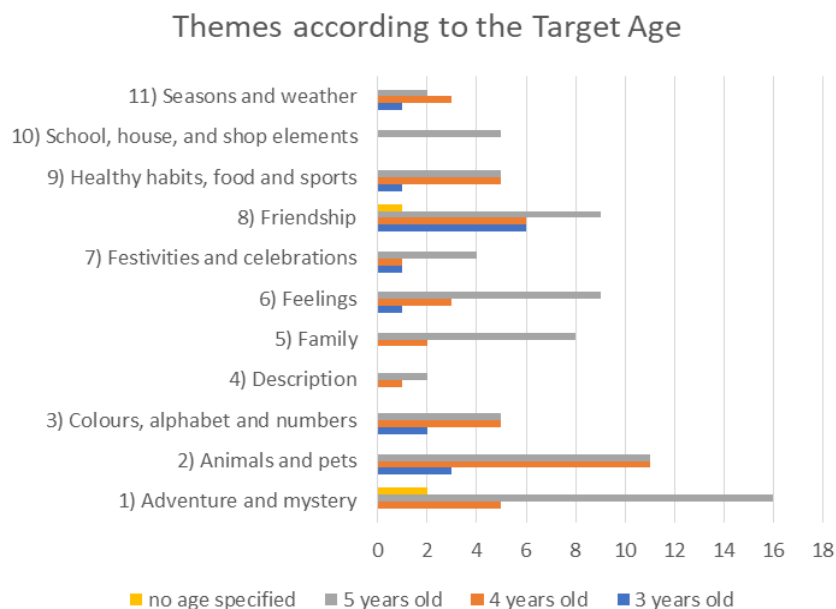
Results from the association between Target Age and Theme

Three themes have occupied almost half the activities: 2) Animals and pets (n= 25; 18.4%), followed by 1) Adventure and mystery (16.9%) and Friendship (16.2%). On the opposite side, we find the themes 4) Description (2.2%), and 10) School, house and shop elements (3.7%).

About the choice of the theme according to the age, Figure 2 shows that for 3-year-olds the most selected theme is 8) Friendship (40%) followed by 2) Animals and pets (20%). The themes not included in this age group were 1) Adventure and mystery; 4) Description; 5) Family; 10) School, house and shop elements.

For the group of 4 years of age, the most chosen theme is 2) Animals and pets (14.5%), followed by 8) Friendship (14.3%). The only theme not selected here is 10) School, house and shop elements.

Regarding 5-year-olds, the most chosen theme has been 1) Adventure and mystery (69.6%) followed by 2) Animals and pets (14.5%). In this case, all the themes have been covered, although the two least frequent ones have been 4) Description and 11) Seasons and weather (2.6% each).

Figure 2*Association between Target Age and Theme***Results from the association between Tool Type and Theme**

In this section we are going to inquire about the themes covered depending on the type of tool used. In the case of StS, the most popular theme was 2) Animals and pets (25%), followed by 5) Family (16,7%). For 2) Stories with voice, it also matched 2) Animals and pets (25%), followed by 3) Colours, alphabet and numbers (16.7%). The most recurrent themes in SwD were 1) Adventure and mystery, and 8) Friendship (27.6% in both cases). Finally, to work with 4) Wordcloud generators, the most frequent theme was 2) Animals and pets (50%).

Table 4 shows the number and percentage of responses depending on the tool used for each theme.

Table 4*Association between Tool Type and Theme*

Topic	Tool Type					Total
	StS	SwV	SwD	WG		
1) Adventure and mystery	N	4	3	16	0	23
	%	17.40	13.00	69.60	0.00	100.00
2) Animals and pets	N	9	9	4	3	25
	%	36.00	36.00	16.00	12.00	100.00
3) Colours, alphabet and numbers	N	3	6	2	1	12
	%	25.00	50.00	16.70	8.30	100.00
4) Description	N	0	2	1	0	3
	%	0.00	66.70	33.30	0.00	100.00
5) Family	N	6	3	1	0	10
	%	60.00	30.00	10.00	0.00	100.00

6) Feelings	N	5	0	8	0	13
	%	38.50	0.00	61.50	0.00	100.00
7) Festivities and celebrations	N	0	2	3	1	6
	%	0.00	33.30	50.00	16.70	100.00
8) Friendship	N	4	2	16	0	22
	%	18.20	9.10	72.70	0.00	100.00
9) Healthy habits, food and sports	N	3	3	4	1	11
	%	27.30	27.30	36.40	9.10	100.00
10) School, house, and shop elements	N	1	1	3	0	5
	%	20.00	20.00	60.00	0.00	100.00
11) Seasons and weather	N	1	5	0	0	6
	%	16.70	83.30	0.00	0.00	100.00
Total	N	36	36	58	6	136
	%	26.50	26.50	42.60	4.40	100.00

Note: 1) StS = Standard stories; 2) SwV = Stories with voice; 3) SwD = Stories with dialogues; 4) WG = Wordcloud generators.

Discussion

This study aimed to know the type of activities that future teachers prepare to develop DS with specific digital tools for their early-childhood education pupils. To do this, we evaluated 136 DS tasks in which we identified some key aspects as variables: target age, tool type, tool, type of activity and story theme. We found that almost all of them indicated the age of the Target group (97.8%). More than half of the preservice teachers carried out activities aimed at 5-year-olds (55.9%).

To respond to our **first specific objective (SO1)**, we discovered that the most selected types of tools in 3- and 4-year-olds were SwV, and SwD. In the case of 5 year-old target audience, the tool types preferred were SwD followed by StS. In all cases, the least popular type of tool was 4) Wordcloud generators. All tool types were represented in the three age groups.

Regarding the specific tool, in general, the top three popular ones were Storybird, Storyjumper, and My Storymaker, representing almost 70% of the total. However, their use varies according to the age. We found that the age at which Storybird was most used was 5 years. It should be also noted that the age group in which the most different tools were used was 5 years. It occurred because the number of activities increased as the target age group did. As seen in the literature, some authors considered the following ones as relevant DS tools: Storybird, Storyjumper and Storyboard That, like Korosidou & Griva (2021), who implemented these three in storytelling project for 5-year-old group of children. In our case, the top three of tools, as indicated before, was occupied by Storybird, Storyjumper, and, in our scenario, the other preferred tool was not Storyboard That, but My Storymaker, whose number of cases was threefold the number of Storyboard That. The reason for that might lie in the fact that Storyboard That was very limited in its demo account, and My Storymaker offered a variety of options for free, without any registration and payment options.

Concerning the **second specific objective (SO2)**, we highlight that the least popular activities were 11) Tracing words, 9) Role play, 7) Phonics pronunciation, 1) Crossword / wordsearch / wordcloud, and 6) Listening comprehension, barely reaching 5% in the best of the cases. However, these are activities that could be applied from the age of 3, such as role play, phonics pronunciation and listening comprehension, of which only the last was selected in an activity in 3-year-old group. The type of activity 9) Role play is the basis of most imitation games at an early age, an excellent activity for language development, enhancing creativity and stimulating pretend play in children (Andersen, 2005; Kalkusch et al., 2020; Mottweiler & Taylor, 2014) and, however, future teachers

worked on them neither for 3- nor 4-year-olds. On the contrary, role play activity only appeared in 5-year-old group and not with a high frequency (around 4%).

As for the **third objective (SO3)**, we found that one of the most recurrent themes in the three age groups was 2) Animals and pets. The group with the greatest diversity was the 5-year-olds where the theme 10) School, house and shop elements was not present in the other target-age groups. In addition, in 5-year-old group another most recurrent theme was 1) Adventure and mystery, while for 3- and 4-year-olds 8) Friendship was another most frequent theme.

To answer the **fourth objective (SO4)**, we noted that there were themes addressed with the four types of tools, such as 2) Animals and pets; 3) Colours, alphabet and numbers; 7) Festivities and celebrations; and 9) Healthy habits, food and sports.

As for the themes, it is worth mentioning that Korosidou & Griva (2021) also proposed for their story-based project seven main thematic units for young pupils: Colours, Numbers, Family, Animals, Food, The Weather, and Face and Body parts – Clothes. The themes proposed by in-service teachers coincided with most of the topics proposed by preservice teachers, though we tried to group them into eleven themes. The themes coinciding partially were 2) Animals and pets; 3) Colours, alphabet and numbers; 5) Family; 9) Healthy habits, food and sports; 11) Seasons and weather. Surprisingly, preservice teachers did not consider Body parts in any of the stories proposed; however, a similar theme proposed was 4) Description. This reveals that preservice teachers were in line with the in-service teachers' proposal of the aforementioned authors when taking into account the linguistic needs for FL vocabulary acquisition in an early stage as preschool education.

Another study considering the inclusion of 14 topics in DS was the one proposed by Ramírez-Verdugo & Alonso Belmonte (2007): Animals, Body, Family, Fairy Tales, Food, Friends, Games, Home & House, Illness, Mathematics, Places, Safety, Seasons, Sports, Time, and Weather. The topics coinciding totally or partially with the themes proposed by our preservice teachers were eight of them: Animals, Family, Food, Friends, Home & House, Seasons, Sports, and Weather. Even though the topics of these authors were devoted to 6-year-old pupils, we can state that the themes proposed by preservice teachers for preschool classrooms were appropriate.

Also, we consider that it is necessary to promote storytelling and activities associated to stories from 3-year-olds onward, since fostering reading at an early age also increases reading for pleasure. Moreover, activities like role plays or phonics pronunciation are ideal for the first year of Preschool Education; therefore, it is surprising that these were not considered by preservice teachers for 3-year-olds.

In our study, some of the preservice teachers' selection had some connection with some of the seven elements proposed in the CDS (Barber, 2016; Robin, 2008). We highlight, for example, element 3) of CDS, that is, emotional content to connect personally the story to the audience, when choosing the tools allowing to include emotions to characters; in our case, 49 out of 136 used a tool enabling this (My Storymaker, with highest frequency, followed by Zimmer Twins and Storyboard That). Also, element 4) of CDS, that is, the voice of the storyteller, which, although this is a must for the storytelling process (Alismail, 2015; Moradi & Chen, 2019; Robin, 2008), the selection of tools allowing to record the storytellers' voice could facilitate the sharing of asynchronous stories as tasks to do at home with parents, such as with the tools Storyjumper and Little Bird Tales. Finally, element 5) of the CDS, i.e., the power of soundtrack to embellish the storyline, which was, for example, a feature of the tool Storyjumper. We can, then, point out that some of the elements established by CDS were considered by preservice preschool teachers when selecting the tools for their DS.

Conclusions

Apart from the analysis of tools and activities, and the preference of preservice teachers for a preschool audience in the classroom, it is important to consider the update feature of certain studies. Tools and digital resources appear every day, and others are no longer in service (as the cases of Bubblr, Zooburst, or My Storymaker); or they become commercial and demo accounts are made more

limited. Therefore, digital training on updated tools should become a must for preservice and in-service teachers (Moreno & Trigo, 2017; Romero et al., 2020; Santos Díaz, 2017).

On the other hand, in relation to teacher training in digital tools particularly devoted to the creation of stories, it should be noted that we have witnessed a splendid revolution in the use of more updated and interactive tools or even platforms. This last is the case, for example, of Genial.ly, which is an ideal tool for designing challenge-based tasks (escape rooms or breakout), considering the positive impact of gamification in the classroom. The implementation of gamification in combination with DS will undoubtedly enhance the motivation towards the learning of EFL in preschool.

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