Chapter 2
Storytelling Practices with Children in the Home: Section Introduction

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Abstract The focus of this chapter is on storytelling in the home context. The chapter begins with an overview of previous research. This provides the background for the three studies featured in this section: Filipi and Waring, both concerned with showing changes in the children's storytellings at two ages, and Busch et al., concerned with pursuing recipiency in multiparty tellings at the dinner table.

2.1 Background to the Studies

In becoming members of society, children learn to co-produce talk and to display their understanding of the reflexive nature of interaction as they interact with family members and family friends who support children in their interactions. The supportive actions of adults, usually a parent in the first instance, facilitate participation in interaction well before words are formed (Filipi, 2009). This underscores the need for fine-grained multimodal analyses that go beyond words to capture what children can actually do. Such analyses have enabled substantial findings to emerge to show that by the time children are two, they have a solid interactional "machinery" in place and a toolbox that contains interactional resources that enable them to successfully participate in interaction (Filipi, 2009). They are thus able to take turns without overlap, coordinate their actions multimodally, initiate talk as well as respond in appropriately fitted ways, and deal with trouble through repair to (re)establish intersubjectivity. Their interactional competence and their displays of what it means to

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be a member of their group, enable the shaping of identity and build self-confidence, necessary for successful transitions from home, and for later achievement in school (see Bateman & Church, 2017; Burdelski & Evaldsson, 2019; Filipi, 2017a, 2017b; Forrester, 2015, 2017; Theobald, 2016; Theobald & Danby, 2017).

Storytelling adds a particular set of knowledge and skills that furthers children's interactional competence. In telling stories, children need to collaborate with a coparticipant. They need to monitor talk for an appropriate time to launch their story as a first (Jefferson, 1978) or second story (Sacks, 1992; Sidnell, 2010; and in young children, Theobald, 2016); they need to display the recognisability and newsworthiness of a story (Sacks, 1992; and in young children, Filipi, 2017a); and they need to display their understanding that the initiation of a telling is vulnerable if resources used to launch the story are not up to task. Children as young as nineteen months are able to do this through their embodied actions and deictic gestures in coordination with artefacts such as picture books, and prosodic or vocal marking (Heller, 2019). This early organisation of the practice gives way to the use of verbal resources such as *guess what* at a later age (from around the age of three) to initiate a telling (Filipi, 2019).

More broadly, sharing and telling about personal events is a particularly ubiquitous feature of childhood interaction. Storytelling promotes language acquisition (Stevens et al., 2014). It also provides a vehicle for the socialisation of emotion (Cekaite & Björk-Willén, 2018) and encourages social connections with others (Theobald, 2016). Young children are socialised to monitor and regulate their behaviour in accordance with socially acceptable conduct (e.g. Kidwell, 2013). This is evident in the facilitating actions of the adults (who are often recruited) to assist children to co-tell events; for example, in Filipi's (2017b) analysis of the telling of a birthday event as it unfolds through the parent's *wh-* and *yes/no* questions. Material resources may also come into play in tellings, particularly in storybook reading, either on paper or through digital devices, where adults and children draw upon the images provided by the picture books to collaboratively recount a sequence of events, display emotional stances and relate the events to their own social worlds (Kim & Tse Crepaldi, 2021; Radford & Mahon, 2010). Such resources might also generate stories about possible future events or occurrences.

Finally, as stories are told for a range of social purposes (Mandelbaum, 2012; Schegloff, 1997), storytelling practices with children involve a range of genres and associated activities. This includes storybook reading, a crucial function of which is shared enjoyment (Cekaite & Björk-Willén, 2018). Storybook reading also creates opportunities for pretend and imaginary play (Nicolopoulou, 2016) as well as rich talk about the events depicted, affiliated with early literacy practices that support linguistic development. Storybook reading also often generates second stories as children are invited to or indeed make unsolicited connections between the events and lives of characters depicted, and their own lives (Filipi, 2019; Heller, 2019; Takada & Kawashima, 2019), creating further occasion for social development. Other genres are recounts (Burdelski, 2019; Filipi, 2017a, 2017b; Takagi, 2019) where children are invited to share the events of the day (known by one parent) to display what they know to others; and updates (Searles, 2019), where the events of the day are not known,

and therefore newsworthy and triggered by something in the context. (These genres and others, together with their functions, are further discussed in a recent review in Filipi, 2022.) Important to social development are the opportunities for incremental experiences in interaction achieved through frequent participation. These experiences build understanding of discourse and contribute to cognitive development through memory construction (Bruner, 1986).

Being able to successfully participate in interactions such as storytelling with adults and family members through the set of skills and knowledge just outlined, provides an evidence-based display of storying-in-action as children display social competence that continues to change over time.

2.2 The Contributions in This Section

In this first section of the collection, attention lies with the beginnings of storytelling in the home as young children interact with a parent through pretend play (Filipi, current volume), with both parents over shared meals (Waring, current volume), or with family members over dinner (Busch et al., current volume). The analysis in each study pays attention to the ways in which young children participate in conjoint story creation to bring the outside world in through their observations of everyday life made visible in their tellings. Also visible are (1) the actions they deploy to manage local contingencies that arise in starting the story, in negotiating roles, in eliciting an apposite response from their co-speaker, in recipiently designing their stories; and (2) how these actions and stories differ based on age or how they change over time. Through these analytical concerns, each study adds to the small but growing body of research reviewed briefly above.

Filipi's study is concerned with the analysis of two episodes of pretend play between a parent and child aged 15 months and the same child at the age of three. Filipi concurs with Nicolopoulou (2016) that pretend play is an early form of storytelling, a position that permits her to contend that the episode at 15 months is the first reported instance of a child-initiated storytelling. The enacted story contains a recognisable story structure in which the child recreates a routine, shared experience from her daily life, that of going for a walk in the pram in which she takes on the role of parent. It is enacted through a series of mainly physical actions that are coordinated with vocalisations, gestures and objects in the physical space. The parent both facilitates the story and acts as a character. At age three, the child again initiates the pretend play but through greater verbal resources. She creates a second story from a favourite storybook, actively assigns roles, and suggests and negotiates story development with her parent, all based on her knowledge and experience of the world made visible through play.

Waring's study, similarly, attends to differences in a child's storytelling over time. Waring's focus is on a child aged three and again at age eight. Differences emerge in both story structure and story content. At age three, the child's story telling is shaped by imaginative stories with monsters and heroes where good wins out over

evil. The child's story structure and delivery are also highly dramatic, including the canonical story announcements at both story beginning and end. Differences in story launching are also noticeable; at age three, the child is invited to tell for reasons of display for the absent parent. In contrast at age eight, the stories are recognisable as conversational stories based on lived experience. Even when the story is shared and the child is cast as co-teller, her perspectives on the story create newsworthiness. Notable too is that the story is told to achieve a social purpose. Finally, awareness of the importance of recipiency is also sharper as evident through the actions of launching a pursuit of "appropriate" recipient response for the story to succeed.

Both of these chapters are concerned with showing how a specific storytelling practice changes through close analysis at two distinct moments in time. The issue of the contributions that CA can make to development (and more broadly to learning and/or acquisition discussed in the previous chapter) is by no means without controversy when the focus is on longitudinal change because of CA's concerns with interaction as a local phenomenon tied to the here and now (Deppermann & Pekarek Doehler, 2021; Wagner et al., 2018). Bearing in mind that no two interactional contexts are the same (Waring, this volume), change can nonetheless be observed through paying attention to a *specific* interactional feature (for example, turn design or sequence structure) or resource. Such approaches, in previous studies on young children in the home, have yielded rich findings about repair initiation (e.g. Filipi, 2009; Forrester, 2008); request sequences (Wootton, 1994, 1997); turn designs to show increasing understanding of what constitutes "fitted" answers to questions (Forrester, 2015) or recipiently "fitted" utterances in the correct language (Filipi, 2015); practices in recruiting assistance (Pfeiffer & Anna, 2021); and changes in the response token *yes* (Filipi, 2018). In paying attention to two practices—pretend play in Filipi and storytelling as a social, conversational practice in Waring—these two chapters add to this small but important body of work. By attending to children's social practices, they will also carve out an increasingly larger space in the developmental literature which is still dominated by psychology and its focus on cognition.

The theme of pursuing recipiency reported by Waring (current volume) is also woven into the study by Busch et al.'s chapter. Here, attention turns to the multiparty tellings in a family, and the delicacy and need to manage a different set of contingencies where interactions involve more than two speakers. The data is drawn from two households at dinner where the families are sharing stories as they eat. The children range in age from 2;8 to 10;10. The younger children are shown to be supported by the adults as they manage the launching and telling of their stories. The older children, on the other hand, possess a variety of verbal and embodied resources. These are deployed to launch and announce their stories and to select their recipient. The analysis also points to the ways in which children deal with the vulnerability of maintaining their recipients' continued interest—using laughter for example—thereby securing the successful outcome of bringing their story to completion. The study's importance lies in both exposing storytelling practices between siblings and its focus on older children, an often neglected age group.

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