Teaching the Use of Multimodal Resources in Speaking through Storytelling

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Abstract

In teaching speaking to learners of English, one of the most challenging aspects for teachers to teach and learners to acquire is the appropriate and effective use of interactional resources. Interactional resources in spoken interaction include linguistic features (e.g. formulaic phrases for opening or closing a conversation, discourse markers for initiating or maintaining a topic or a turn), as well as non-linguistic multimodal resources such as vocal features (e.g. pitch, pace, pause, volume, inflection and tone) and visual features (gestures, facial expressions, etc.). This study focuses on the use of multimodal resources in spoken interaction, and examines how a professional oral storyteller conducted storytelling lessons at a Primary school in Singapore to coach a class of Primary Three learners (8-to-9-year-old pupils) on the use of multimodal resources in speaking for aesthetic and communicative purposes. The study did a qualitative analysis of the six storytelling lessons conducted by the storyteller, particularly focusing on the activities included in each of the six lessons and relevant excerpts of the storyteller's interaction with the learners recorded during these lessons. The findings highlight the benefits as well as limitations of using such storytelling lessons by professional or trained storytellers to raise learners' awareness of multimodal resources in oral communication and to help them develop skills in using these resources. Based on the findings, suggestions are given on how classroom teachers can collaborate with professional or trained storytellers and incorporate storytelling lessons to teach the use of multimodal resources in speaking.

Keywords

Introduction

Speaking or spoken language proficiency is often regarded as the most fundamental aspect in both first and second/foreign language learning. Because of the primary role it plays in using language as a tool to communicate, which usually is the main or sole purpose of learning a language, both first and second/foreign language learners aim to develop speaking as an important skill. For example, among the many learners of English as a second or foreign language (EFL/ESL learners) for general or specific purposes, the mastery of oral skills is a priority and what most of them want to develop (Lazaraton, 2014; Richards & Renandya, 2002). It is believed that spoken language proficiency facilitates learners to not only communicate but also acquire and develop more language forms and other language skills as they use the language for construction and negotiation of meaning during spoken interaction (Goh, 2007).

Although it is a fundamental task, speaking is a complex phenomenon involving various skills or competencies – such as phonological skills, speech function skills, interactional management skills and extended discourse organization skills (Goh, 2007). Among them, the most challenging aspect for teachers to teach and learners to acquire seems to be the interactional management skills or interactional competence, which requires appropriate and effective use of interactional resources to "manage face-to-face interactions by initiating, maintaining and closing conversations, regulating turn-taking, changing topics and negotiating meaning" (Goh, 2007, p.5). Interactional resources for spoken interaction include not only linguistic features (e.g. formulaic phrases for opening or closing a conversation, discourse markers for initiating or maintaining a topic or turn), but also non-linguistic multimodal resources such as vocal features (e.g. pitch, pace, pause, volume, tone) and visual features (gestures, facial expressions, etc.). This study focuses on such multimodal resources in spoken interaction, and examines how a professional oral storyteller conducted storytelling lessons at a Primary school in Singapore to coach a class of Primary Three learners (8-to-9-year-old pupils) on the use of these vocal and visual features in speaking for aesthetic and communicative purposes. The study aims to address the question: "What are the benefits and limitations of teaching the use of multimodal resources in spoken interaction through storytelling?"

First, key features of multimodal resources in spoken interaction will be explained through a brief review of relevant literature. Next, the context of the study as well as the data and analytical framework used for examining the storytelling lessons will be described. Then, the findings from a qualitative analysis of the six storytelling lessons will be discussed. The analysis will focus on the activities included in each of the six lessons, as well as relevant excerpts of the storyteller's interaction with the learners recorded during the lessons, to address the research question. Based on the findings, suggestions will be given on how classroom teachers can collaborate with professional or trained storytellers and incorporate storytelling lessons to teach the use of multimodal resources in speaking.

Multimodal Resources in Spoken Interaction

Studies of talk in interaction (e.g. Hall, 1999; Waring, 2018; Young, 2011) explained the ability to employ interactional resources mutually and reciprocally by all participants in a particular social interaction as interactional competence. Analysis of interactional resources in these studies has, however, focused mainly on linguistic cues which can contribute to interactivity in oral communication. These include

- formulaic expressions for opening or closing a conversation (e.g. 'how are you doing these days', 'let's chat again soon'),
- discourse markers for initiating or maintaining a topic or turn as well as for regulating or structuring the flow of information (e.g. 'well', 'anyway'),
- explicit phrases for clarification (e.g. 'so you're saying that', 'see what I'm getting at') or guidance (e.g. 'what I'm saying is', 'the most important point is'),
- performative verbs (e.g. 'I promise', 'I suggest'),
- prefacing phrases (e.g. 'in my opinion'),
- tentative/inclusive phrases (e.g. 'how about', 'why don't we') and so on.

Although the use of non-linguistic features such as vocal and visual cues is often acknowledged as other forms of interactional resources in these studies, none has provided a detailed analysis and discussion of these non-linguistic features. It can be challenging for scholars to capture and study these vocal and visual cues due to the transient nature of these features emanating from various semiotic sources during the process of a spoken interaction.

More recently, Lwin (2010, 2020) did a multimodal analysis of recorded oral storytelling performances by professional storytellers, and gave a detailed and systematic examination of vocal and visual features which were strategically used in tandem with verbal features for esthetics and communicative effects in storytellers' spoken discourse. Her studies examine vocal features in terms of storyteller's modulation of pitch, pace, pause, volume, inflection and tone; and visual features in terms of different types of gestures, body postures, facial expressions, etc. (Lwin, 2010, 2020). While the use of these interactional resources from different modes of communication (i.e. multimodal resources) will be less elaborate in those spoken interactions which have primarily a communicative function (e.g. answering the phone, dealing with customers in a retail shop), they are used in elaborate manners in those spoken interactions primarily with an aesthetic function (i.e. aesthetically marked mode of communication, such as storytelling performances by professional or trained storytellers). Although multimodal features in spoken interaction are highly transient, and hence are often overlooked in most studies as well as in the teaching of speaking, it is undeniable that these features do add extra depth to meaning. They play important roles in facilitating recipient's inferential processes when interpreting the message conveyed by a speaker. These features, when strategically used by the speaker at appropriately points of spoken interaction, have the potential to influence the audience or recipient's cognitive, emotive and evaluative responses (Lwin, 2010, 2012, 2016, 2017, 2020).

With regard to teaching speaking, Lwin (2016) has shown how such multimodal features used by storytellers could facilitate children's learning of spoken vocabulary. Her multimodal analysis of storytellers' discourse suggests that specific types of voice modulations and gestures, facial expressions, etc. aptly used by a storyteller serve as important vocal and visual clues for the children to make inferences about the meanings of unfamiliar words used by the storyteller in the process of unfolding a storyline. In other words, these multimodal features, when used strategically by a storyteller, have the potential to support children's noticing and inferring of word meanings, which in turn can facilitate their vocabulary learning. However, the potential of such storytelling sessions for teaching the use of multimodal resources in speaking has not been explored. More studies need to be done to understand how such storytelling sessions can be used to raise learners' awareness of multimodality in oral communication and help them develop skills in using these multimodal resources in speaking.
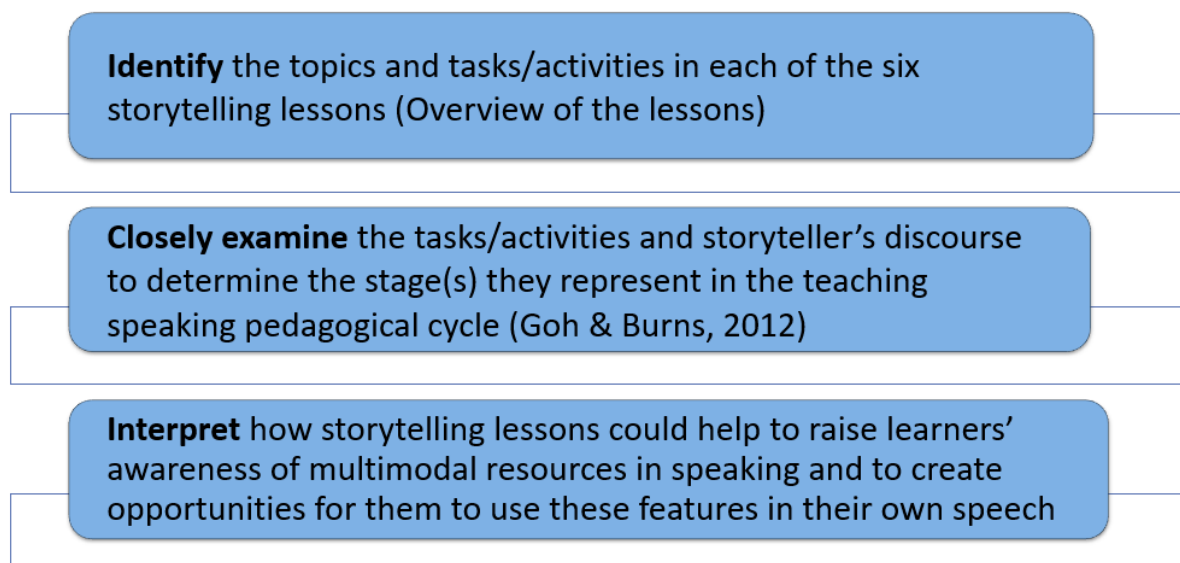
Method

Participants in this study were a professional storyteller Mrs. Jessie Goh and a class of Primary Three learners at an all-girl primary school in Singapore. The class consisted of thirty 8-to-9-year-old girls. The English language teacher of the class was consulted when planning this storytelling programme for the children, but the actual storytelling lessons were conducted by Mrs. Goh, the storyteller. The English language teacher of the class assumed the role of an observer during these lessons. The six storytelling lessons were conducted over six weeks, one 1-hr lesson per week. The learning objectives of the lessons were stated as: To enhance oral communication skills through the use of storytelling in order that pupils may speak audibly and confidently incorporating proper pronunciation, articulation, fluency and rhythm; and to build pupils' eloquence in standard English, awareness of body language and voice projection. The data for this study were the six storytelling lessons and recordings of interaction between the storyteller and the children during these lessons. The lesson activities and relevant excerpts of storyteller's interaction with the children were qualitatively analysed for pedagogical features of teaching speaking, drawing on the teaching-speaking cycle – a model for teaching speaking proposed by Goh and Burns (2012). Goh and Burns' (2012) teaching speaking cycle was chosen as the framework to guide the analysis in this study as it characterizes a pedagogical

model for classroom implementation with a clear sequence of learning activities or steps for planning lessons that aim to develop learners' speaking competence. The model highlights the following stages forming a pedagogical cycle (Goh & Burns, 2012, pp. 152-163):

1. Focus on learners' attention on speaking (e.g. using awareness-raising activities)
2. Provide input and/or guide planning (e.g. supporting learners with vocabulary, content or information that they will need to complete a speaking task effectively)
3. Conduct speaking tasks (i.e. providing learners with context where they can practise speaking through a communication task)
4. Focus on language, skills, and strategies (i.e. creating opportunities for learners to improve language accuracy through explicit teaching of relevant skills and strategies)
5. Repeat speaking tasks (i.e. repeating the whole or part of original task so that learners can apply knowledge about selected language items or skills to enhance performance)
6. Direct learners' reflection on learning (i.e. encouraging learners to reflect on their learning experience either individually or as a group)
7. Facilitate feedback on learning (i.e. providing learners with important feedback on their performance)

The first step in the analysis was to identify the tasks or activities included in each of the six storytelling lessons. Next, the activities identified in each lesson were examined closely to determine which particular stage or stages of Goh and Burns' (2012) teaching speaking cycle it appears to represent. Relevant excerpts of the storyteller's interaction with the children during the lessons were also examined to interpret how these activities drew the children's attention to the use of multimodal resources in speaking and how they provided the children with opportunities to use these resources in their own speeches. Figure 1 summarizes the procedure for a qualitative analysis of the data.

Figure 1
Procedure for Data Analysis

Identify the topics and tasks/activities in each of the six storytelling lessons (Overview of the lessons)

Closely examine the tasks/activities and storyteller's discourse to determine the stage(s) they represent in the teaching speaking pedagogical cycle (Goh & Burns, 2012)

Interpret how storytelling lessons could help to raise learners' awareness of multimodal resources in speaking and to create opportunities for them to use these features in their own speech

Results and Discussion
Results from the analysis are discussed in terms of the overview and close examination of the lessons, and benefits and limitations of the storytelling lessons.

Overview and close examination of the lessons

Table 1 shows an overview of the six lessons conducted by the storyteller and the tasks/activities identified in each of them.

Table 1
Overview of the Lessons

Lesson Topic	Tasks/Activities
What is storytelling?	Demo-storytelling (modelling) by the storyteller
Bring stories to life with sounds and actions	Active listening Hand movements Voice projection Clarity of speech
Story elements, rhythm and rhyme	Listening and observation Tongue twister for clarity of speech Follow the storyteller's action and tell stories in groups
Use of vocal variation – pitch, pace, pause, power, inflection and mood	Listening and observation Recap on clarity, rhythm, speed and hand clapping co-ordination Speech practice for clarity, projection and volume control
Working on the chosen story for group performance	Recap on how to learn (and remember) the story structure Performance tips – posture, eye contact, use of voice, movement and gestures
Teller in performance mode: Stand to tell	Storytelling in groups – everyone is a storyteller Feedback forms from story groups with the leader of each group as a scribe for the group Closure: Summary and game of concentration

A close examination of Lesson 1 shows that the key activity of the lesson is the demo-storytelling or modelling by the storyteller. First, the storyteller explained the spontaneous nature of storytelling, and emphasized the differences between storytelling and story reading or recitation. Then she demonstrated storytelling using a folktale "The Wide-Mouth Frog". Before she began, the learners' attention was drawn to not only her words but also her voice modulation as well as gestures and facial expressions by giving the following instruction:

> Open your eyes and watch me.
> Open your ears and listen to me.
> Open your mind to visualize.
> Open your heart to empathize.

The choice of the story "The Wide-Mouth Frog" for modelling was also found to be purposeful as it includes paralleled sequences of events which were repeated as the character went to visit different animals one at a time. Such repetitions allowed the storyteller to keep drawing the learners' attention to how she used higher pitch and louder volume at certain junctures to create rhythm and highlight certain parts of the messages in her speech. An example is given in Excerpt 1 below (Words said in higher pitch are in italics and louder volume are in capital letters).

> Excerpt 1
> The first animal he met was the giraffe.
> "*HI WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU EAT FOR BREAKFAST*?"
> The giraffe looked down.
> "I am the GIRAFFE. I eat leaves for breakfast."
> "*I'M THE BIG-MOUTH FROG! I EAT FLIES FOR BREAKFAST*!"
> He stuck out his long tongue, and SLUUURP, he caught a fly.
> The big-mouth frog went to visit the elephant.
> "*HI WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU EAT FOR BREAKFAST*?"
> "I am the ELEPHANT. I eat leaves for breakfast."
> "*I'M THE BIG-MOUTH FROG! I EAT FLIES FOR BREAKFAST*!"
> He stuck out his long tongue, and SLUUURP, he caught a fly.

Following the storyteller's modelling, the learners were asked to retell the story about the big-mouthed frog to each other in pairs. The lesson ended with the storyteller recapping the spontaneous nature of storytelling and the use of gestures, facial expressions and voice modulation when speaking. With these activities, this first lesson can be seen as representing the first stage of the teaching speaking cycle – i.e. focusing learners' attention and raising their awareness of speaking. It should be noted that in this case learners' attention is drawn to not only the spontaneous nature of storytelling but also vocal and visual features accompanying the storyteller's spoken words.

In Lesson 2, the storyteller continued to draw the learners' attention to vocal and visual features accompanying her spoken words. She explained attentive listening as what "happens when your mind, eyes, ears and hands cooperate and learn", emphasizing the importance of paying attention to more than one mode or source of meaning-making (i.e. multimodal resources) in spoken interaction. She then told a story titled "Two Goats on a Bridge" focusing on her hand movements (see Excerpt 2).

> Excerpt 2
> Watch again and follow me.
> Hill (teller uses hands to represent a hill)
> Hill (learners follow the teller's hand gesture)
> Goat (teller uses hands to represent a goat)
> Goat (learners follow the teller's hand gesture)
> One day (teller raises a finger to show one)
> One day (learners follow the teller's hand gesture)
> Goat went down (teller uses hands to represent walking downward)
> Goat went down (learners follow the teller's hand gesture)

Storytelling continued with the teller using distinct hand gestures and facial expressions accompanying her words, and learners following her hand gestures and facial expressions as they repeat each line the storyteller said. Again, paralleled sequences of events in the story allowed the learners to repeat the use of similar hand movements and facial expressions to represent similar meanings when the second goat in the story did the same action of coming down a hill to eat the grass on one side of the mountain. The storyteller then added clarity of

speech and voice projection to her hand movements and facial expressions to teach the learners how stories could be brought to life with sounds and actions. With these activities, Lesson 2 is found to be representing the second stage in the teaching speaking cycle – i.e. providing input, which in this case is the use of hand gestures, facial expressions, etc. to support learners with what they will need to complete a speaking task effectively.

Lesson 3 saw the learners telling stories in groups. The lesson again began with the storyteller's reminder to the learners about the importance of listening and paying attention to both aural and visual channels. She illustrated it by telling them a paper folding story (i.e. the story was told as the storyteller folded a piece of paper into different shapes and patterns representing meanings for characters' action, emotions, etc.) It made the learners pay attention to the meanings or messages that the storytelling was conveying to them through both aural and visual channels of communication, as the story unfolded. There was also recapitulation of story elements such as characters, place, objects and problem – which the children had learnt earlier from their class teacher during the English lessons, and the importance of clarity of speech. For the main activity in this lesson, the learners were asked to tell stories in groups. It suggests that this lesson represents the third stage in the teaching speaking cycle – i.e. conducting speaking tasks or providing learners with context where they can practice speaking through a communication task, which in this case is the storytelling task.

Lesson 4 focused specifically on the skills and strategies of using vocal variation or voice modulation. The lesson began as usual with the storyteller's reminder to the learners about the importance of paying attention to both aural and visual channels of communication during spoken interaction. She then illustrated it by telling a string story (i.e. the story was told as she tied a string into different shapes and patterns representing meanings for characters' action, emotions, etc.), making the learners pay attention to the meanings or messages conveyed through both aural and visual channels. The key activity of this lesson was the use of vocal variation – pitch, pace, pause, power (i.e. volume), inflection and mood – to deliver an interesting story that will engage the audience. The storyteller first illustrated how to "play with" her voice, as seen in Excerpt 3 (Low pitch is indicated by the symbol ~ and high pitch in italics. Slower pace and pauses are indicated by dots, louder volume in capital letters)

> Excerpt 3
> I've chosen "A Quiet House", it's a folktale, so easy to tell and I also want you to use your voice. Did you notice how I tell my story? I'm very clear. I have to be understood. Every word must be heard.
> And I play with my voice so
> sometimes my voice will go ~low~ and sometimes *high*
> sometimes I stop, and some of my stops are long… and some are short
> sometimes I go s.l.o.w… sometimes I go fast
> sometimes I'm soft sometimes I'm LOUD
> sometimes my voice is ohHO is THAT *SOooo*
> <children laugh>
> It's like a tune. The rise and fall of your voice
> And sometimes when it is a sad story, I'll tell it in a s.a.d way (with a sad facial expression)
> And when it's a HAPPY STORY, I'LL TELL YOU *WITH A HAPPY FACE* (with a happy expression)
> Not with a sad voice and face, ~ they live (sob) happily (sob) ever… after (sob) (sad expression)
> <children laugh and scream>

Subsequently, the learners in groups made crescendo and decrescendo sounds to support the storyteller telling the story "A Quiet House". These sounds made with different levels of volume and pitch by the learners using their vocal variation contributed to the storyteller's representations of different animal characters and their actions, emotions, etc. in the story.

Towards the end of the lesson, the learners also did speech practice with vocal variation by telling the following story. See Excerpt 4 (Slower pace is indicated by dots, louder volume in capital letters, higher pitch in italics).

> Excerpt 4
> In a dark…. dark…. wood there was a dark…. dark…. house
> In that dark… dark... house there was a dark… dark… room
> In that DARK.. DARK.. room there was a DARK DARK cupboard
> In that DARK DARK cupboard there was a DARK DARK SHELF
> ON THAT DARK DARK SHELF THERE WAS A DARK DARK BOX
> *IN THAT DARK DARK BOX…THERE WAS A ………. RING!*

By gradually increasing the pace and volume with each line, and importantly by making a strategic long pause before the last word, the learners leant how vocal variation can be used strategically to achieve certain effects such as suspense when speaking. The learners were also taught to check and understand their voice quality and control. To do that, the storyteller provided them with questions such as, "Do I have a soft voice or loud one (from 0 to 7)?" "Can I have a range of sound and control it?" for them to check and understand voice modulations better. With such explicit teaching of skills and strategies, and activities that gave the learners opportunities to check and improve their use of these vocal features to achieve certain effects, Lesson 4 clearly represents the fourth stage in the teaching speaking cycle – i.e. focus on skills and strategies.

Lesson 5 mainly recapped ways to learn and remember a story using story elements, and the performance tips – such as the use of vocal variation, gestures, facial expressions and posture to match the spoken words. The learners first repeat the telling of "The Dark Dark House" story. Then each group prepared for telling a story of their choice as a group performance. This lesson, therefore, represents the fifth stage in the teaching speaking cycle – i.e. repeat speaking tasks.

Lesson 6 saw the learners giving group storytelling performances, which was followed by the storyteller gathering feedback forms from the groups of learners as well as the English teacher of the class. The lesson ended with the storyteller summarizing the stories, activities and skills she had covered from lesson 1 to 6, and a game of concentration – emphasizing again the importance of paying attention to not only the verbal channel (i.e. words) but also the accompanying vocal and visual features (i.e. voice modulation and gestures as well as facial expressions). This activity given towards of the end of the lesson suggests the sixth stage in the teaching speaking cycle – i.e. direct learners' reflection on learning. The feedback forms given to the learners to complete as a group at the end of Lesson 6 consisted of the following three reflection questions:

- What did you like about the sessions?
- What did you learn from the sessions?
- What more would you like to have?

A sample feedback form is included in Appendix A. Responses from the learners to these questions are collated and presented (with their original spellings, word choices, grammar and sentence structures) in Table 2.

Table 2

Learners' Feedback

Question	Learners' Responses
What do you like about the sessions?	We like the part when there is funny expressions. We had many fun doing paper folding. I like her fun stories. We had doing In a dark dark house. We had a big shock when Ms Jessie said ring! We enjoyed doing thoung twisters and in a dark dark house. I like the story which the trainer choose. We like the pirate story. I like the game of concentration. The stories are very funny. The story is fun. The stories is interesting. I like the activities :) We like the string session. We like all the stories.
What did you learn from the sessions?	We learn to speak loudly and clearly. How to improve our English I learn how to speak well and listen attentively. Learning new words and to respect storytellers when they are telling a story. I learn to be a story-teller. We learn to attention. To be a storyteller. How to tell stories of your own. We learnt how to be storytellers.
What more would you like to have?	Games More activities I would like to have more storytelling lessons I would like more sessions as I think they are interesting. I would like more Activity and stories. More stories More storytelling sessions More stories and activities

Benefits and limitations of storytelling lessons

A close examination of the tasks/activities in the six lessons and the storyteller's interaction with the learners during the lessons shows that, firstly, the learners' attention was consistently drawn to the storyteller's strategic use of vocal and visual features accompanying her spoken words to achieve certain effects. The lessons routinely began with a clear instruction or reminder to the learners to pay attention to multimodal sources of making meaning in spoken interaction – e.g. "Listen and observe", "Attentive listening happens when your mind, eyes, ears and hands cooperate and learn". The storyteller's discourse during the lessons also shows

her consistent effort and emphasis placed on vocal variation or voice modulation as well as hand movements and facial expressions, accompanying her spoken words.

Such consistent focus on multimodality in spoken interaction throughout this series of lessons seemed beneficial for raising the learners' awareness of vocal and visual resources in spoken interaction. For example, in their feedback, a group of learners shared that they liked the parts when there were "funny expressions". Another group shared that they learned "to speak loudly and clearly". Feedback from another group says, "We had doing In a dark dark house. We had a big shock when Mr Jessie said ring!" – which suggests that they had learnt to notice how the effects, such as suspense, could be strategically created by the storyteller through her use of vocal variation.

It is not the aim of this study to examine whether the learners used these vocal and visual features as appropriately and effectively as the storyteller when they did their final group storytelling performances in Lesson 6. Nonetheless, it was clear that the learners were given the context where they could practise using these features in their storytelling performances. Such context or opportunities were created consistently through the various activities such as voice projection and vocal variation practice, tongue twisters for clarity of speech, hand movements, etc. during the six lessons. There were also clear instances of explicit teaching for the use of facial expressions and vocal variation such as pitch, pace, pause, power, inflection and mood.

Scholars who suggested teaching the use of linguistic features as interactional resources (e.g. Hall, 1999; Johnson, 2001) have proposed three processes, namely observation, reflection and creation, for learning the use of verbal interactional resources in speaking. They argued that learners can be guided to detect patterns of words/phrases used in interaction through systematic observation and opportunities to reflect and create interactive practices. Findings from this study suggest that, for learning the use of multimodal resources, learners can similarly be guided through the process of observation, reflection and creation. The analysis of the six storytelling lessons in this study revealed how the learners were provided with opportunities to observe, reflect and create interactive practices through individual, pair and group storytelling performances which involved elaborate uses of vocal and visual features. Thus, it can be deduced that such storytelling lessons can be beneficial for learners to learn the use of multimodal resources in spoken interaction.

As stated earlier, the learning outcomes of these storytelling lessons are (i) to enhance oral communication skills through the use of storytelling in order that pupils may speak audibly and confidently incorporating proper pronunciation, articulation, fluency and rhythm; and (ii) to build pupils' eloquence in standard English, awareness of body language and voice projection. The learners' feedback at the end of the six storytelling lessons suggests that these learning outcomes were met to some extent. Learners' responses to what they learnt from these storytelling sessions include, "We learn to speak loudly and clearly", "How to improve our English", "I learn how to speak well and listen attentively" (see Table 2). However, it is interesting to note that the analysis of the storytelling lessons, according to Goh and Burns' (2012) teaching speaking cycle, shows only the following 6 out of 7 stages in the teaching speaking cycle.

1. Focus on learner's attention on speaking
2. Provide input and/or guide planning
3. Conduct speaking tasks

4. Focus on Language skills, and strategies
5. Repeat speaking tasks
6. Direct learners' reflection on learning

The last stage – Stage 7 Facilitate feedback on learning, i.e. providing learners with important feedback on their performance – does not appear distinctly in the data. Although there were instances of the storyteller giving brief comments on the learners' use of voice projection, vocal variation and hand movements during the lesson activities, there was no distinct lesson(s) or stage(s) in a lesson which was primarily for facilitating feedback on learning. Instead, the last item in the last lesson was for the learners (and their class English teacher) to provide feedback on the storyteller's lessons. One reason could be because such storytelling performances and activities are usually associated with entertainment (Lwin, 2010, 2020). Hence, it is not surprising that several responses in the learners' feedback mentioned "fun" – e.g. "We had many fun", "I like her fun stories", "The stories are very funny", "The story is fun" (see Table 2). Even though there were clearly stated learning outcomes for this series of six storytelling lessons, it seems that learners' storytelling performances and their use of vocal and visual resources in their won telling/speaking performances were not meant to be evaluated or assessed for the purpose of giving feedback.

The missing stage of facilitating feedback on the learners' use of vocal and visual features in their speeches or storytelling can be seen as one of the limitations in using storytelling for teaching the use of multimodal resources in speaking. The lack of feedback on their speaking performances may leave the learners with the impression that such "playing with voice" and "funny expressions" or elaborate gestures and facial expressions are what they could use in storytelling for the fun of storytelling only. Perhaps, with a lesson or a distinct stage in a lesson dedicated to providing feedback on the learners' performance (i.e. Stage 7 in the teaching speaking cycle), the storyteller and/or the class English teacher could focus on facilitating feedback for the learners' appropriate/inappropriate and effective/ineffective use of these multimodal resources. Importantly, the learners should be facilitated to learn the continuum for the use of these multimodal resources – i.e. more elaborate in spoken interactions with primarily aesthetic function such as storytelling, and less elaborate in those spoken interactions with primarily a communicative function, e.g. answering the phone, dealing with customers in a retail shop. Helping learners understand this continuum for the use of multimodal resources in speaking can make the storytelling lessons even more beneficial as they can then help to raise learners' awareness of appropriate and effective use of vocal and visual features accompanying their spoken words depending on whether they are engaged in a spoken interaction with primarily esthetic or communicative functions.

Another limitation in using this series of storytelling lesson is the limited contribution or participation from the English teacher of the class during the six lessons. Although the teacher was consulted when planning the programme to invite a professional storyteller to help coach the learners' oral communication, the actual lessons were conducted only by the storyteller while the teacher relegated to the role of an observer. When conducting the storytelling lessons (in particular, Lesson 3), the storyteller asked the learners to recall story elements (such as character, place, object, problem) which the English language teacher had earlier taught them in their English language lessons. In other words, the storyteller gave the learners opportunities to apply what they had learnt about story elements in their English language lessons to choosing stories to tell and making preparation for their group storytelling performances. To make the storytelling lessons more beneficial for teaching speaking, the English language teacher of the class could similarly re-visit the use of vocal and visual resources that the learners had learnt

from the storyteller during the storytelling lessons in their subsequent English lessons. Importantly, the teacher could help the learners understand the continuum of more elaborate and less elaborate uses of these multimodal resources according to the function of a particular spoken interaction that they are engaged in. The teacher could also create opportunities for the learners to apply these multimodal resources in other speaking activities appropriately and effectively for aesthetic or communicative purposes. Through such collaboration between English teachers and professional or trained storytellers, the use of storytelling can become more beneficial for helping learners to develop skills and strategies in using multimodal resources in their oral communication for various purposes.

Conclusion

A common concern of classroom teachers for using such storytelling sessions to teach speaking is the curriculum time. A typical speaking lesson may be able to cover all seven stages (or more than one stage) of the teaching speaking cycle. However, as the analysis done in this study has revealed, the six stages in the teaching speaking cycle were covered in the six storytelling lessons which were held over six weeks. This seems to suggest that a significant amount of additional curriculum time will be needed if teachers or schools want to use such storytelling lessons.

Despite the need for more curriculum time and some limitations, the benefits of using storytelling for teaching speaking should not be ignored. As suggested by Cameron (2013), the English curriculum should more fully reflect the aesthetic and rhetorical functions of spoken language. In teaching writing, it is not uncommon to see teachers using the works of skilled writers and giving learners opportunities to read and discuss these works as a way of guiding learners to learn the skills and strategies in writing for aesthetic and communicative purposes. Similarly, in teaching speaking, teachers could use oral storytelling by professional and trained storytellers and give learners opportunities to observe and discuss their skilled performances as a way of guiding learners to learn the skills and strategies in using multimodal resources in speaking for aesthetic and communicative purposes. In other words, through collaboration between English language teachers and professional or trained oral storytellers, the spoken output of more accomplished speakers could be used to help less accomplished speakers (i.e. learners), particularly for teaching the use of multimodal features in different types of spoken interaction.

Appendix
Sample Feedback Form

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