

Children retelling stories

Responding, reshaping, and remembering in early
childhood education and care

Agneta Pihl



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To the memory of my mother

Abstract

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Oral storytelling is a prevalent cultural practice for sense-making. Through stories, people get to know themselves, others, and the world around them. Children are introduced to this practice at home and in early childhood education and care (ECEC).

The present research concerns oral retelling in a Swedish preschool setting. Its overarching interest is how children orally retell stories they have been told. More specifically, how processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping unfold in children's retelling activities are of analytical interest. The thesis consists of three empirical studies involving children aged three to five years. The analytical focus of Study I is on whether, and if so how, the children consider the understanding of the listener(s) when retelling stories. The analytical focus of Study II is on how the children remember, and reshape, stories in retelling activities. The analytical focus of Study III is on how the children indicate the intellectual and emotional states of fictional characters when they retell stories.

The theoretical framework informing these studies is a sociocultural perspective, conceptualizing communication, learning, and remembering as contingent on cultural tools and practices.

The empirical data consist of 21 video recordings of storytelling activities. Analytical work was guided by the principles of Interaction Analysis. Analysis of the meta-markers children use in their storytelling reveals that they do take into account the understanding of their listener(s) when retelling stories, if not consistently so (Study I). An analysis of how one focus child retells the same story in different constellations shows how she remembers details from the story told by the teacher and the very manner of how it was told and how she transforms the

story into what more readily makes sense to her (Study II). Finally, the findings clarify how the children indicate the intellectual and emotional states of the characters in the stories they retell. They do this in three ways: through explicating (mental state terms); gesturing and facial expressions; and sound symbolism (Study III).

The thesis has significance for our understanding of children, their storytelling, responding, remembering, and processes of reshaping. The findings here contribute to a more general reconceptualization of children's capacities to understand. The thesis has implications for early childhood education and care as a socially just practice, valuing all the communicative means children use.

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Agneta Pihl

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Preface

My curiosity about how children retell stories they have heard brought me to apply to postgraduate studies in Child and Youth Studies in 2014. The interest of my licentiate thesis was whether, and if so how, preschool-aged children consider the differences in knowing between themselves as oral storytellers and other children and their teachers as story listeners. Moreover, there was an interest in what children pick up, what features they introduce, and what they may transform when orally retelling stories they have been told. In 2018 I finished the licentiate thesis, which included two empirical studies, I and II, and an introductory text (in Swedish called the “kappa” [literally: coat]. There were still unanswered questions, however, and my curiosity in the processes of children’s retelling activities encouraged me to continue my studies in order to complete a doctoral thesis. The analytical process of the first two studies indicated that children use not only mental state terms to indicate the intellectual and emotional states of the characters of the stories they retell, but also gestures as well as sound symbolism. Consequently, an additional empirical study (Study III) was added to the thesis and its introductory text was revised updated and expanded.

Part I

Chapter 1 Introduction

The research presented in this thesis concerns children's oral storytelling. More specifically, the thesis explores how preschool children orally retell stories they have been told.

Storytelling, or narrating¹, is a prevalent part of people's everyday life, of shaping their identities, history, and social practices (Vygotsky, 1987). Moreover, narrating is a global practice for entertaining, maintaining cultural traditions over time, and passing on information from one generation to the next (Säljö, 2005). Orally retold stories are all unique, they will be remembered differently and reshaped in response to the sense the storyteller makes of it as well as the response of the listeners. According to Ong (2002), in many cultures the shift from oral to written culture has reshaped our thinking. In addition, he claims, orality and literacy derive from different cultures and historic times. Nevertheless, people approach new knowledge domains with a repertoire of means (Liberg et al., 1997). Therefore, in education it is of great importance to provide space for a variety in language activities such as storytelling, whether oral or written.

Narrative as a research interest in psychology was largely established by the work of Jerome Bruner (1986, see also 2006), who draws a distinction between a “narrative” and a “paradigmatic” mode of discourse. What he refers to as a paradigmatic mode is characterized by a logical and scientific way of reasoning. In contrast, Bruner (2006) describes a narrative mode as involving intentional actions and experience. According to Bruner (2006), both these mindsets, or modes of discourse, are important for enabling different possibilities for organizing knowledge, making sense, and remembering. In this thesis, the concept of sense-making is understood as the processes through which the children interpret and understand the practices, they participate in. Even if Bruner's work on narration as significant for human thinking has played a main role in psychological research, he was not the first scholar to pay attention to children's narration. Another pioneer in this field is Jean Piaget. In his experiments, among other things, he asked children to tell and explain something to another child. The conclusions

¹ In this thesis, *storytelling* and *narrating* are used synonymously (cf. Skantz Åberg, 2018). *Storytelling* is more common in everyday speech and more frequent in scientific discourse, when referring to the practice of telling stories. Similarly, *story* and *narrative* are used interchangeably to refer to what is told.

Piaget drew from these experiments was that it is not until the age of seven or eight years that there is what can be referred to as genuine understanding between children when talking with each other (Piaget, 1923/1926). Before this age, so-called egocentric thinking prevents shared understanding. This theory was later criticized by, among others, Donaldson (1978), who argued that paying close attention to children's comments and questions allows another picture of their abilities to emerge (see also Vygotsky, 1934/1987). The present thesis has a background in a long-standing interest in development psychology and related research fields, in regard to whether children understand that others understand differently. In this thesis this question includes the understanding and affections of fictional characters in stories, and the analytical attention is therefore on how processes of responding unfold in children's oral retelling. In addition, the thesis has a background in narrating and remembering as a creative and sense-making practice. Processes of remembering and reshaping in children's retelling of stories are thus of analytical interest.

While Piaget identified some important basic insights into the nature of children's narrating and remembering, the nature of these processes as they unfold during the course of the activity was not investigated in the manners expected of modern communication research (for a critical discussion of how Piaget and colleagues captured and analyzed data, see Pramling & Säljö, 2015). With this thesis, I intend to make some contributions of the latter kind; that is, to analyze in detail evolving processes of children's responding, remembering, and reshaping in oral retelling activities.

Narrating and remembering are interrelated processes, and support one another (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011). Narrative as a resource for remembering lies in the fact that it is a tool that encompasses a great deal of information in a meaningful form; information that would be difficult to remember without this meaningful relationship (Miller, 1956; Säljö, 2011). In fact, for both individuals and collectives, narrating serves to make sense of the world and to remember.

A pioneering study on remembering was conducted by psychologist Frederic Bartlett (1886-1969), who was interested in people's ability to remember stories. His ambition was to create experimental situations as naturally as possible, but with the ability to control for various factors. Whereas the children participating in the present thesis were orally told a story, which they were later asked to retell, the participants in Bartlett's (1932/1995) study were adults who read a story and later asked to retell it. With his experimental study, Bartlett demonstrated how people actively reconstructed their experiences when retelling the stories, they had

read. Bartlett drew the conclusion that how people remember and reconstruct stories is dependent on how they perceive the task. One important contribution of his study to psychology is the concept of schemata: People develop schemata (i.e., mental structures) to organize memories, and what is remembered is dependent on their interests and earlier experience. Moreover, what people do not remember they fill in. In the case of retelling, people do this to create a meaningful story. Bartlett's study revealed the importance of social factors in relation to what individuals remember (I will return to Bartlett's study later).

Research in psychology builds on separate traditions of learning and remembering. However, both learning and remembering are active processes (Säljö, 2011). Therefore, studying responsiveness, remembering, and reshaping in educational contexts requires an analytical focus on the actual practice and on how individuals or groups participate and what they take with them from this, rather than investigating learning as the transmission of information and memory as a storage facility for physical objects (memories, information).

Many children are introduced to oral storytelling at an early age; it is something people learn and that constantly develops. Oral storytelling also has a long tradition in early childhood education and care (ECEC). Despite our sociohistorical heritage of transferring experience through oral storytelling, scholars (e.g., Kirkby et al., 2014) argue that it has to some extent lost its position in contemporary educational settings. Typically, developmental psychologists have studied children's stories to gather information about their level of cognitive development (Engel, 1995). Developmental psychologists have traditionally seen the structure of children's storytelling as, metaphorically speaking, a window into the structure of their thinking. In contrast, this thesis will focus on the storytelling processes. The focus is on whether, and if so how, children consider the understanding of the listener(s) when retelling a story, as well as their understanding of the feelings and thinking of stories' fictional characters. Moreover, the interest is in what children pick up from the story that is told, what features they introduce, and how the story might be transformed when retold.

Purpose and research questions

The overarching purpose of this thesis is to generate insight into preschool children's oral storytelling, with a focus on the processes of sense-making in retelling activities. The overall research question is how processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping unfold in children's oral retelling. Retelling activities

at a preschool – where a child him- or herself, or together with peers, retells a story previously told by the preschool teacher – are studied *in situ*. With an interest in these processes, the following specific research questions are raised in the three empirical studies:

Do children consider the perceived understanding of their listener(s) when retelling stories, and if so, how is this done?

How do children remember, and reshape, stories in retelling activities?

In retelling oral stories, how do children indicate the intellectual and emotional states of fictional characters in the stories?

This thesis consists of three empirical studies. The purpose of Study I is to explore whether, and if so how, the children, when retelling a story, show responsivity to the listener's potentially varied knowing; that is, whether the children indicate in their storytelling that they adapt to the fact that the listener has not previously heard the story and therefore does not know what they themselves know.

Study II is concerned with what the children remember and reshape in their retelling. Following one focus child enables an analytical focus on what she picks up from the story she has been told, and how she introduces and transforms it when retelling it.

In Study III, the interest is in how the children indicate that they discern and consider the intellectual and emotional states of mind of fictional characters when retelling stories. The analytical focus is on the communicative resources the children use in their retellings.

Outline of the thesis

Having introduced the thematic of the thesis in this chapter, In the next one (Chapter 2), *Oral storytelling in early childhood*, I briefly situate this research in the broad research field concerning storytelling in early childhood, research with interest in the communicative means used in oral storytelling and research that illuminates how the concept of remembering has developed from the concept of memory as storage to remembering as a sense-making practice. Then follows Chapter 3, *A sociocultural perspective on communicating, learning, and narrating*, as the theoretical foundation for this thesis. Then, the *Method and methodology* of the thesis are presented (Chapter 4). The *Summary of the empirical studies* is presented in Chapter 5, followed by the *Discussion* in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 is a *Summary in Swedish*. The

introductory part of the thesis ends with six appendices: excerpts for Study I (Appendix A), excerpts for Study II (Appendix B) and excerpts for Study III (Appendix C). Transcript system employed in Study I (Appendix D) and the transcription convention used in Study III (Appendix E). The last appendix is the consent form (Appendix F). The thesis also includes three empirical studies.

Chapter 2 Oral storytelling in early childhood

Research on children's narratives stems from several disciplines, such as psychology, sociolinguistics, linguistics, communication studies, educational psychology, and pedagogy. The purpose of this thesis is to generate insight into preschool children's oral storytelling, focusing on the processes of sense-making in retelling activities. The overall research question therefore concerns how processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping unfold in children's oral retelling of stories. The setting is a Swedish preschool and involves 15 children aged three to five years. Consequently, this research is situated in the field of early childhood education and care (ECEC) (or in more traditional disciplinary terms, in educational psychology/pedagogy). The chapter is structured in the following way: First, empirical studies in settings where oral storytelling is experienced by children are introduced, followed by research with an interest in communicative means used in oral storytelling. In the present research, children's narrative remembering is understood as contingent on how they perceive the activity they engage in. Therefore, research that illuminates how the concept of remembering has developed from the concept of memory as storage to remembering as a sense-making practice is presented.

Oral storytelling at home and in educational settings

In this section, I will introduce the two major settings identified in research in which children are introduced to oral storytelling; that is, at home and in educational settings. I will present research that has been conducted in these settings and discuss different themes on research with an interest in oral storytelling in early childhood. I focus primarily on research concerning oral storytelling *by* children, but in some cases also storytelling *for* children.

Children are introduced to oral storytelling in their early years, both at home (cf. Liberg et al., 1997; Nelson, 1989, for studies in home settings) and in educational settings (cf. Glenn-Applegate et al., 2010; Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011, for studies in educational settings). Previous research has viewed the home

environment, and especially mothers as primary caregivers, as significant for young children's narrative identities (Puroila, 2019). Nevertheless, Puroila notes that some studies acknowledge the importance of institutional education for children's identities. After all, contemporary generations of young children spend a large part of their childhood in institutional early education settings.

This thesis concerns children's oral storytelling in an ECEC setting. Consequently, empirical studies in similar contexts are of particular interest. However, the first introduction to oral storytelling is likely to occur within the family. In *Narratives from the Crib*, a pioneering collection of studies edited by Katherine Nelson (1989), the soliloquies of a young child (Emily) as well as her conversations with her parents at bedtime were observed. The interest was in the child's language development, imagination, and understanding. The documentation was conducted from when Emily was 21 months old to when she was three years old. The volume is the result of a collaborative project in which several researchers, from different research traditions, analyzed the documentation of Emily's narratives. The data were analyzed from different theoretical perspectives and with different research questions. The interpretations of the data showed, among other things, that Emily's speech occurred in story form. A conclusion Nelson draws from the analyses is that children at a young age repeat what their parents say, but as their language develops it comes to function as representations of their mind; in other words, linguistically mediating their world of experience. However, an alternative interpretation by Bruner and Lucariello (1989) is that Emily used her monologues to learn about the narrative form, as a sense-making activity, which is in line with the present thesis focusing on the processes of sense-making in oral retelling activities. Moreover, in relation to the present thesis, the collection of studies of Emily's speech is interesting as it describes the very young child as a competent storyteller, which this thesis also aims to do in relation to the participating children. In addition, the interpretation of data from different theoretical perspectives contributes to insights into how the theory adopted and the questions asked influence the conclusions drawn.

In sum, one feature of previous research is that it describes the settings where children are introduced to oral storytelling. In the book *The Meaning Makers*, Wells (2009) writes about children's language and literacy development. The book is based on a longitudinal study with observations from both family and educational settings. Crucial differences among children are explained by the characteristics of their home environments; that is, growing up in a literate family context gives children an advantage vis-à-vis other children. Even if this conclusion was not a

surprise to Wells and the research team, in the study they had not expected the differences to appear in such early years (preschool) and to last throughout the school grades. However, among all the activities, sharing stories was the most important for the participating children's progress; and Wells's suggestion is that stories contribute to so much more than simply children's acquisition of literacy. Similarly, Theobald (2016) claims that research on narratives in early childhood tends to focus on the story product and the view of narrative as a vehicle for literacy and children's language development, but also their general development, such as the construction of self (Bruner & Lucariello, 1989).

Narratives are assumed to be more structured in educational contexts than in many home settings (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011). Nevertheless, even though researchers have recognized oral storytelling as having significant benefits for children's education and various important features of their development such as literacy, identity, and empathy (Hibbin, 2016a; Wells, 2009), learning to narrate seems to have disappeared from the agenda in contemporary educational settings (e.g., Kirkby et al., 2014). According to Theobald (2016), the value of storytelling activities in ECEC as promoting literacy and cognitive skills is well documented, which has led to storytelling as constructed activities with the teacher's agenda and methods. Less focus, in education as well as in research, has been placed on the interactional aspects of storytelling in children's everyday conversation. In addition, there is a shortage of research on how the storytellers and listeners manage storytelling. In a study (Hall et al., 2021), teachers were asked to conduct a lesson in understanding literary texts and creating stories in the first and second grades (for a research purpose). The teachers focused primarily on story (e.g., texts) comprehension, but neglected features such as the children's oral storytelling ability.

Teachers may feel some ambiguity concerning telling stories in the classroom (Henricsson & Claesson, 2016). On the one hand, the teachers interviewed in Henricsson and Claesson's study (2016) indicated that they feel inviting and present toward their students when telling stories in the classroom; on the other, they related that they sometimes feel uncertain because telling stories is about one's own engagement and it can be difficult if it is not received in a good way.

In a study in Norwegian preschools, Ødegaard (2007) found that the strategy taken by the teachers involved listening to the children rather than supporting them in appropriating the narrative genre. In the same manner, Hibbin (2016b) suggests that in the UK, oral storytelling is underutilized in primary education; rather, orality (speaking and listening) is taken for granted. In a study by Pramling

and Ødegaard (2011), young children's narratives in two different storytelling activities in a preschool setting were analyzed. In the first activity the teachers supported the children in appropriating a communicative form in a group activity, using storytelling cards. The second example involves a child-initiated biographical story, in which the analytical focus was on how the teachers supported the child in making the experience understandable (as a story) even to others who were not present at the actual event. The analysis clarifies how the teachers supported the children in conveying their experiences in a story form that also made sense to the others who were listening. This support typically took the form of certain kinds of questions, highlighting narrative features such as agent, setting, and events. That is, through asking certain kinds of questions that are important to the development of the logic of a story – “what needs to be made explicit in order to become intelligible to a listener” (p. 21) – the teachers scaffolded the children's appropriation of the narrative genre. Furthermore, the teachers' questions guided the children's attention to what could be worth telling (see also Ødegaard, 2006). The nature of questions in educational settings is of great importance for learners, as they indicate what is made relevant by participants (e.g., Siraj-Blatchford & Manni 2008; Thulin, 2010).

In educational settings, for example preschool, there is an ongoing interaction between children and teachers as well as between peers. Teachers' responses can be of a supportive character of the kind often conceptualized as the process of scaffolding (Oshiro et al., 2019). Scaffolding plays an important role in children's appropriation of the narrative genre (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011). Teachers can, for example, ask questions about things that should be clarified so that others (who were not present at the event referred to or who have not heard the story before) can understand the story. Who was there, where did it take place, when did it happen? This implies that the teacher, with knowledge of what constitutes a story, in response to the child can scaffold the processes of retelling and learning to narrate. However, not only teachers but also peers can scaffold collaborative storytelling, as seen in a study by Oshiro et al. (2019). The study clarifies how scaffolding develops in response to what the storyteller initiates; in addition, Oshiro et al. argue that scaffolding the process of storytelling also socializes children into the narrative format.

As noted above, research on oral storytelling in early childhood has been conducted in home settings but also in educational contexts. The focus has been on children's stories and on teaching and learning outcomes, such as language

acquisition. In contrast, this thesis focuses on the processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping in oral retelling.

Communicative means in oral storytelling and language acquisition

This section aims to add a broader research context to the interest in processes of responding in children's storytelling activities. The aim is also to provide an expanded basis for the concluding discussion by briefly presenting research with interest in communicative means children use in oral storytelling and language acquisition.

When children tell stories they use a repertoire of communicative means (cf. Bateman, 2020; Evaldsson & Abreu Fernandes, 2019; Liberg et al., 1997). A study conducted in a linguistically diverse preschool setting in Australia showed for example that, the teacher's responsiveness encourages the storytelling child to use multimodal resources in his telling (Theobald, 2019). In Theobald's study the teacher scaffolded the bilingual child through questions and by emphasizing what may be relevant information for the story to continue.

The question of what needs to be made explicit in stories so that they will make sense to others is related to responding to others' perspectives. Perspective-taking can be explained as an orientation to others that allows the experience that others have to differ from one's own (Mauritzson & Säljö, 2001). From a sociocultural perspective, retelling is seen as a communicative action that happens in interaction with others and in response to the social and cultural practice in which the storyteller participates. When a storyteller retells a story, others are always present in a sense, physically and/or imaginatively; that is, storytelling can be conceived of as dialogic languaging (Liberg, 1990; Linell, 2009). Even if one storyteller speaks alone for quite a long time, he or she may interact more or less with the listeners. In an educational context such as preschool, this means that children participate in retelling activities in response to other children and to their teachers, and teachers respond to the children.

In a research project conducted by Liberg et al. (1997) involving language learning, storytelling, and closely related forms of languaging in family settings, it was found that the children used different forms of languaging. Three different forms were identified. In the first, the participants merely expressed an intellectual and emotional subjective experience of events. In the second, a sequence of events was also drawn, and the participants related these events within a time perspective

and to communicate this relationship. In the third, they told about these related events in an increasing sequence of events until a peak was reached, and then offered a resolution. Liberg et al. conceptualize this third form of languaging as storytelling. However, they emphasize that all forms of languaging are important – serving different functions such as explaining, amusing, and teaching – and that some forms are more relevant in certain contexts than others. Additionally, similarities between the forms enable shifting from one form to another, and the different forms constitute resources for each other. The shift from one form to another was exemplified by one of the participating children in Liberg et al.'s project, by using a meta-marker (e.g., ‘No, that’s right...’) to indicate that something new was going to happen in his languaging. In the present thesis, as the focus is on processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping in retelling activities, there is also an interest in children’s use of communicative means. I will therefore present previous research on communicative means (i. e. meta-markers, mental state terms, gestures and sound symbolism) in storytelling of relevance to this thesis in the following sections.

Meta-markers

Whether or not children are able to take the perspective of the listener was a question that concerned Jean Piaget (1926). According to Piaget, as I have already mentioned, children younger than seven years are unable to take the perspective of the listener when explaining or retelling something. He also argued that younger children invent details or fill in gaps (what they have not understood or remembered) when retelling stories, and that the child him- or herself believes what is thereby made up. Piaget claimed that the experiments he conducted proved that the effort to understand other people and communicate thoughts objectively does not appear until about the age of seven years. Regarding younger children, the lack of understanding is not because the children are deliberately inventing things, but because they are still egocentric and feel no desire to communicate or to understand others, according to Piaget. The explanation he offered was subsequently criticized by, among others, Hundeide (1977). Empirical studies, exemplified by Hundeide, made evident that the perspective the researcher adopts in the interpretation of empirical observations raises different views regarding a child’s competencies; for instance, a child’s difficulty in answering a question may be caused by insufficient intersubjectivity between the child and the researcher. The conclusion Hundeide draws is that a child’s ability to solve a problem depends

on his or her earlier practical experiences of the subject. Additional studies conducted by Donaldson (1978) showed that, when Piaget's experiments were redesigned, children actually did have the ability to understand from others' point of view – that is to decenter –even at younger ages. When children were allowed to narrate, their capacities emerged in a way that was not evident in the experiments Piaget conducted. The conclusion drawn by Donaldson (1978) was that reasoning within the narrative form makes sense to children in a way that the experimental setups do not. Similarly, a re-analysis of Piaget's interviews with children (Pramling, 2006) attending to the meta-markers (e.g., “as if”, “like”) children use revealed another picture of young children's abilities. Rather, speaking in terms of “as if”, according to Pramling (2006), shows a responsiveness to the listener, an awareness that a communicative adjustment may be required to make oneself understood.

Children's narrative abilities have also been of interest in a study in which children's use of markers was analyzed to describe differences in narratives (Castilla-Earls et al., 2015). According to Castilla-Earls et al. (2015), elicitations of the complexity of children's narratives have previously preferably focused on macrostructure elements such as characters, settings, internal response, plan, action/attempt, complication, and consequence (cf. Labov & Waletzky, 1997). However, Castilla-Earls et al. argue, the microstructures (i.e., narrator evaluation, formulaic markers, temporal markers, causal adverbial clauses, and knowledge of dialogue) of the narrative productions are also of relevance for assessing children's narrative abilities. The results reveal that the older preschool children (aged five) told more complex stories containing elements such as formulaic markers (e.g., “One day...”) and temporal markers (e.g., “*Then* he looked for his frog”). Castilla-Earls et al. claim that children's narrative productions are useful tools for assessing children's language abilities. In contrast, the present thesis has no ambition to assess children's abilities but rather to study the very processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping in their retelling activities. According to Pramling and Säljö (2015), in studies of communication with children it is evident that they use meta-markers such as “as if” to make the listener aware of the stance that the speaker takes regarding his or her own claims. In the current thesis, the relevance of meta-markers as a communicative resource lies in how the children use them in response to their listeners' understanding when they retell stories.

Mental state terms

Oral stories can take the form of fictional accounts or the rendering of lived experience. In this thesis, children retell fictional stories they have heard from their teachers. The interest here, among other things, is in how the children consider that others may understand differently when they retell fictional stories; that is, take the listener's perspective. In this thesis perspective-taking refers not only to how children consider the varied understanding of the listener when retelling stories; in retelling, the storyteller also responds to the story, the fictional characters, and their challenges. Children's ability to indicate the plot of a story depends on their ability to think from and talk about the perspectives of its fictional characters (Pelletier & Astington, 2004).

Stories tend to be driven by the intentions and emotions of their fictional characters (e.g., their desires, wants, and beliefs). A common term for such psychological phenomena is mental state (Symons et al., 2005). Such terms are integral to communicating, and thinking, about intellectual and emotional experiences. In storytelling, the outcome of actions derived from these states can consequently be conceptualized as the psychology of the story (cf. Oatley et al., 2018). The storyteller interprets and expresses these intellectual and emotional states using, for instance, mental state talk, which is talk about the mind, such as "know" and "think" (Saklofske et al., 2006). Mental state terms and other related concepts such as cognitive or internal state language (Adrián et al., 2007; Curenton & Gardner-Neblett, 2015) mediate (Wertsch, 2007) our experiences of ourselves and others as psychological – that is intellectual and emotional – beings. When children understand and use metacognitive language, they can coordinate mental state understanding with story action in retelling stories (Pelletier & Astington, 2004). The conclusion drawn from a study by Oshiro et al. (2017) is that children use such states to make sense about a story.

Studies of children's use of mental state talk have been of interest in assessing children's Theory of Mind (ToM) competence (Saklofske et al., 2006). The concept of ToM is used in explanations of how people are aware of others' thoughts, feelings, and desires (Saklofske et al., 2006). Such understanding is needed in order to understand how others are thinking and to determine how they are likely to act. ToM is also closely connected to language and, among other things, is used to explain communication difficulties for people with autism (Siegal et al., 2006). Moreover, studies focusing on ToM have mainly been conducted within the research tradition of psychology, focusing on children's ability to understand the

mental states of others. While this thesis also has an interest in how children use mental state talk, it is situated in the field of ECEC with an interest in the process of oral storytelling, and as a collaborative activity (Theobald, 2016), rather than in the product (i.e., the story as such) or the story as a window to children's minds or developmental 'level'.

Studying children's retellings over time (three days), Levy (2011) compared the repeated retellings of seven- and twelve-year old children with interest in frequency and scope of mental states of fictional characters. The children watched a silent film (*The Snowman*) and were asked to retell it. Levy found that all the participating children made use of similar linguistic processes. They increased the frequency of mental references by rearranging, transforming, and adding to reproductions of earlier retellings. One child describes two non-mental events in sequence "*the next day he woke up*" and "*when he woke up the snowman had melted*" (p. 157) and the adult introduces a mental description in her question "was he sad"? and "how do you know he was sad". In response the child produces a combined face and hand gesture as if about to present an imaginary scarf to the snowman. On the second day the child adds a mental description "*[the boy] looked very sad*" (p. 158). The account was a combination of the adult's previous question and the child's previous gesture. The third day the account is rearranged including a physical event, a mental state, and an explanation of the mental state: "*when he woke up he looked sad because the snowman had melted*" (p. 158). The results do according to Levy illustrate Vygotsky's (1978) that many developments on the intrapersonal level occur first on the interpersonal level. Similarly, this thesis adopts Vygotsky's view that development occurs in the social/interpsychological level and is then transformed at the individual/intrapsychological level as I will return to in chapter 3 *A sociocultural perspective on communicating, learning, and narrating*.

Gestures

A fundamental communicative resource in oral storytelling is embodied enactment, such as gestures (Evaldsson & Abreu Fernandes, 2019) gaze and facial expressions (Bateman, 2020). According to Kendon (2004) there is no universal classification of gestures. Gestures have for example been classified according to whether they are voluntary or involuntary, whether they have a literal or metaphorical implication as well as how they are linked to speech. Gestures have been divided into those that are functioning as to refer something in the external world and those that are functioning as expressions of state of mind (see the

example in the previous section provided by Levy, 2011). Gestures are often used unconsciously but are interpreted as meaningful by the listener (Henricsson, 2022), the storyteller adapts the gestures in response to the listener. Previous research has indicated that there are cultural variations in how people tell stories and how they use gestures. For example, Kunene et al. (2017) compared oral stories told by storytellers who speak Zulu (a Bantu language) and storytellers who speak French (a Romance language). They found that Zulu speakers produced longer and more detailed stories as well as narratives accompanied by more co-speech gestures than French speakers.

In ECEC and related research fields, narration and second-language acquisition have been of recurrent interest. For example, the interplay between speech and gestures in narration in a second language has been studied by Choi and Lantof (2008), who investigated the shift from a first to a second-language pattern in the retelling of stories in participants' second language. Their findings reveal that second-language speakers tend to keep the pattern that their first language consists of. Choi and Lantof argue against previous research claiming that the development of inner speech is highly unlikely in a second language. However, they emphasize the need for further research in this matter. They also note that conducting research on speech-gesture interface is a complex matter, but also one of the most important ones to address in research on second-language learning.

Iconicity in language can be described as forms that are symbolically linked to their meanings through non-arbitrary signs (Laing, 2017). Iconic signs can be gestural or verbal. Imai and Kita (2014) suggest that there are both similarities and close behavioral links between sound symbolism and speech-accompanying iconic gesture. In the present research, oral storytelling is understood as a fundamental cultural practice and narrative as a tool for sense-making, learning, and remembering. This is in line with Bruner's (1990) account that people as well as collectives organize their experiences in narratives with the purpose of making sense and remembering. Storytelling as a sense-making practice has been recognized by many scholars, of whom Wells (2009) is a prime example:

We are the meaning makers – every one of us: children, parents and teachers. To try to make sense, to construct stories and explanations, and to share them with others in speech and in writing is an essential part of being human. For those of us who are more knowledgeable and more mature – parents and teachers – the responsibility is clear: to interact with those in our care through 'action, talk and text' in such a way as to foster and enrich their meaning making and develop their understanding. (Wells, 2009, p. 313)

Similarly, young children's interaction with stories is described by Kerry-Moran and Aerila (2019) as a meaning-making activity, which is also the case in the present thesis. In addition, children's interaction with stories is recognized as not only verbal but also created through play and embodied in gesture and tone of voice (cf. Puroila, 2019). Through gestures, emotions can be made visible in oral storytelling (Young, 2000). Gestures in oral storytelling can be related to personal experience or as will be seen in this thesis (see for example Study II and III), the storyteller taking the position of a fictional character.

Sound symbolism

Tentative findings in the first two studies of this thesis suggest that children use sound symbolism to indicate intellectual and emotional states in fictional characters, which has led to the analytical interest in how children use sound symbolism to indicate such states in narrating (Study III). Previous research has recognized sound symbolism as central for sense-making processes as well as language acquisition, and as being characterized by a non-arbitrary relationship between speech sounds and meaning (Imai & Kita, 2014). Moreover, several scholars stress that children are sensitive to this correspondence (cf. De Carolis et al., 2017; Imai et al., 2008). The key role of sound symbolism in language and meaning making is therefore an aspect of language that is important to pay more attention to in both research and educational settings. Sound symbolism may function as a communicative mediating means for indicating intellectual and emotional states of fictional characters of stories. Therefore, it is of interest in the present thesis to analyze whether children use sound-symbolic expressions to indicate intellectual/emotional state of mind when retelling stories; this is done in Study III of this thesis.

Scholars conceptualize the sound-sense relationships in communicating in various ways. For example, Hiraga (2004) writes that onomatopoeia and sound symbolism are different in nature. Onomatopoeia, Hiraga argues, occurs when sounds in speech imitate other physical sounds; it has a direct connection, such as pure imagic iconicity between form and meaning. In contrast, sound symbolism occurs when sounds are associated with other sensual or conceptual dimensions. According to Hiraga, onomatopoeia occurs in words while sound symbolism occurs in both words and particular sounds. Moreover, Hiraga asserts that onomatopoeia can be defined in both a narrow and a wide way. The narrow way entails the purely mimetic use of speech sounds to describe other non-linguistic

physical sounds, for instance cries of animals, whereas the wider interpretation involves the phonological patterns that represent not only the sounds of what is described but also the activity as a whole. Hiraga emphasizes that sound form not only states the meaning but also enacts it.

The advantage of iconicity (i.e., forms that are symbolically linked to their meanings through non-arbitrary verbal or gestural signs) in language learning has been emphasized in recent research (cf. Imai et al., 2008; Imai et al., 2015). Moreover, research has demonstrated findings regarding our sensitivity to sound-symbolic resemblance between form and meaning (De Carolis et al., 2017). A common form of iconicity in language is onomatopoeic words (i.e., words that sound like what they represent) such as “*woof woof*” and “*bang*”. However, Laing (2017) states that the findings in previous research are largely built on experiments including non-words, atypical of native language. According to Laing, it is therefore difficult to extend the conclusions drawn from those experiments to real-world situations of learning. Consequently, Laing aimed to determine whether young infants show a learning preference toward iconic words in their native language. The conclusion drawn from the results of Laing’s study is that the effect of sound symbolism in early language development may also be relevant to onomatopoeia. However, Laing writes that further research is necessary to be able to draw firm conclusions. A processing advantage for onomatopoeia already at ten months of age may, according to Laing, explain why infants acquire so many onomatopoeias as their earliest words. Both early production as well as perception point to a learning advantage when it comes to onomatopoeic words. Laing concludes that it is impossible to separate the iconic effect that may be inherent in onomatopoeic words from their other attributes; that is, the fact that they are more prominent in early input (for example from caregivers). Another of Laing’s suggested reasons for the prominence of onomatopoeias in infants’ early output is the onomatopoeia’s simple phonological form.

Imai et al. (2015), like many contemporary linguistic researchers, claim that language is iconic in origin and gradually becomes more conventionalized (and differentiated into different languages). De Carolis et al. (2017) also argue that studies have shown that there is an association between sound and meaning across all languages. In addition, according to De Carolis et al., there are parallels between the child’s struggle to grasp the symbolic and referential nature of words and our ancestors’ struggle. However, while today’s children are supported by their parents, our ancestors had to develop signs from scratch, and it might be the case that it was not until a basis was in place that they could move toward more arbitrary signs.

Onomatopoeia is an interest that can be tracked in different disciplines and research traditions, and different kinds of data have been analyzed. Sasamoto and Jackson (2016) adopt the relevance theory in their study. Relevance theory can explain how a listener is entitled to expect a speaker's apparent act to be at least sufficiently relevant to be worth paying attention to. Sasamoto and Jackson claim that onomatopoeia has something in common with non-verbal communication, for example gestures, and therefore that relevance theory is well suited to developing accounts of onomatopoeia.

According to relevance theory, there are two layers of information in communication. The first layer involves what the speaker intentionally wants to communicate, while the second is a manifestation to the listener that the first layer is of relevance. Regarding the distinction between showing and saying, showing is often associated with bodily expressions or visual evidence (e.g., pointing to a bottle of aspirin to show that someone is in pain). The authors argue that the case of onomatopoeia adds an extra dimension to the discussion of showing as onomatopoeia is a kind of hybrid form, neither purely linguistic nor entirely embodied. Rather, it uses resemblances between phonetic forms and events. Sound-meaning relations may be subtle, and people may not consciously detect them. In addition, the degree of iconicity varies; for example, mimetic words for sounds are more iconic than words for intellectual and emotional states (Iwasaki et al., 2017).

On an overarching level, the origin and evolution of languages have often been conceptualized in terms of arbitrariness. If one takes such a stance, iconicity becomes an exception. However, an alternative view premises that the origin of languages is actually the attempt to mimic through sound how something appears, as I briefly touched upon earlier. Over time, these iconological expressions tend to become increasingly conventionalized (this can be illustrated by how different languages contain onomatopoeia for certain animals, such as a cock/rooster). While there are clear resemblances between such sounds/words in different languages, over time they also come to be aligned with the character of their respective language: *kuckeliku* (Swedish), *kykeliky* (Norwegian), *gaggalagó* (Icelandic), *cock-a-doodle-doo* (English), *kikeriki* (German), *cocorico* (French), *kukkokiekuu* (Finnish), and *kykyryky* (Czech). While there are clear similarities between these examples, they also indicate the forming of their respective language; note, for instance, that both the English and Finnish examples include the name of the animal in its sound: “cock” in English and *kukkokiekuu* in Finnish (which literally translates as “the cock crowed”). I will not delve further into the

discussion of the origin and development of language(s), but merely wish to establish a resonance ground for my more specific investigation, which will consist of analyzing in detail how children may use onomatopoeia and other communicative means to indicate intellectual and emotional states when retelling oral stories.

Historically, there have been various ways of understanding language acquisition, for example a behavioristic, nativistic, and cognitivist view as well as a social interactionist one (Liberg et al., 1997). In this thesis, I understand learning (including acquisition in first and second languages) as depending on activities the learner is involved in and as something that occurs in social interaction and that is eventually appropriated by the individual. When children acquire language(s) they use a repertoire of ways to approach such activities, according to Liberg (1990). Therefore, in research involving processes of storytelling in ECEC, the analytical process must involve children's various ways of approaching storytelling activities. In addition, in education as well as research, there is a need to emphasize all communicative means children use. Nevertheless, there are few investigators who have studied the various communicative means in children's everyday life. One exception to this is O'Reilly (2005), who conducted a study with an interest in what is referred to as active noising. Active noising is defined as active sounds made by participants, and the concept incorporates onomatopoeia. In O'Reilly's empirical study analyzing family therapy sessions involving families with disabled children, the results show that active noising was used by the children as a way to engage in the conversation. Yet, the therapists and parents did not always pick up on these participatory contributions. A focus on active noising as well as other sound-symbolic expressions is thus important for children as peripheral participants in adult conversations. Educational settings, such as preschools, include very young children who have not yet appropriated spoken language, as well as children who for other reasons use alternative ways of communicating. In addition, at preschools (for example in Sweden, as in this thesis) there are children who may have recently arrived from another country and are therefore just about to gradually take on (appropriate) the majority language. Therefore, it is of great importance to take into account all communicative means, in ECEC research as well as ECEC practice.

There are cultural and language variations around the world regarding the use of, for example, sound symbolism. The Japanese language, for instance, is richer in sound symbolism than the English language (Imai et al., 2015). Still, according to Imai et al. (2008), not only many Indo-European languages around the world

but also non-Indo-European languages such as Finnish have a large word class similar to Japanese mimetics. They also stress that sound-symbolic words in these languages are not limited to nonsense words used in speaking to children and by children themselves, as may be the case in many other languages. The conclusion that Imai et al. (2015) draw is that sound symbolism may be a useful cue in the earliest developmental stages of word learning. They argue that this is likely because sound symbolism provides a way to bootstrap word meaning from perceptual information. According to Riabova and Kobenko (2015), onomatopoeia is important because it adds expressive and emotive features, and helps children understand the world around them. Despite this, according to Sasamoto and Jackson (2016), the use of onomatopoeia is more or less neglected in studies within ECEC and even in studies of language. They claim that onomatopoeia is productive and, in some languages and genres of text, quite prevalent. As an example of this they mention the Japanese language, poets, and literature for children. Onomatopoeia is also widely encountered in domains that refer to the senses, like restaurant reviews and advertising. Sasamoto and Jackson study onomatopoeia as a communicative phenomenon, with a focus on what and how it is communicated. Onomatopoeia thus enables the speaker to communicate not only encoded concepts but also sensory impressions, which is difficult to achieve merely through the use of words. This is in line with the view of communication taken in the present thesis; that is, we do not simply transmit information, as it were, but also give perspectives on phenomena and experience. That is, central to communication is how we convey our understanding, emotions, and attitudes.

To exemplify onomatopoeia and sensory experience, Sasamoto and Jackson (2016) offer examples from a Japanese children's picture book, which includes onomatopoeic expressions from a number of animals falling from the sky (e.g., a fallen elephant: *dokashiin*). The expressions used in the book are made up, partly from established expressions of falling objects (i.e., *doka*, *dosu*, *doshi*). Using parts of established expressions to create new ones enables the book's author to create impressions of multisensory experiences. Yet another example provided is the sound "*don*" (i.e., *bang*; for an example see Oshiro et al., 2017), used to represent totally different manners. It is used in an example of pounding on a door and as an abstract concept explaining how a person deals with life (*don don*). Both examples are context-dependent regarding the interpretation of the onomatopoeia. Furthermore, Sasamoto and Jackson claim that humans use onomatopoeia to share impressions and feelings that may be difficult to express using other words.

However, in Study III of this thesis it is argued that, for example, “*woof woof*” is quite specific (i.e., which animal it refers to), and that its psychological state (angry, happy, etc.) depends on how it is uttered. In previous research on onomatopoeia, examples are taken mainly from dictionaries (cf. Abelin, 1999). In contrast, Sasamoto and Jackson (2016) aim to address why speakers coin creative forms of onomatopoeia and how listeners interpret them, which acknowledges the additional value in studying the actual use of onomatopoeia and other sound-symbolic utterances, as Study III of this thesis also does.

Involving monolinguals and bilinguals, Hoang et al., (2016) conducted two studies with an interest in tense use and shift. The results of the first study showed that both French and English monolinguals used changes in tense, with preschool children preferring the past tense and adults preferring present. In the second study, tense use in narratives by French-English bilingual, as well as French and English monolingual, children (all 8 to 10 years old) were observed. The bilingual children tended to use more present tense as well as a multitude of expressive strategies, which made the stories more vivid. One strategy used was onomatopoeia. The results suggest that the bilinguals did not present a development lag in differences in tense use in relation to the monolinguals. The bilinguals adopted an imagistic narrative style, which could be linked to both bilingualism as well as cultural preferences. The authors emphasize the importance of tense use in storytelling and the complex discourse understanding it requires. Present tense can create imagistic and vivid narratives, and adults often shift tenses. The orientation phase in narratives, which introduces things like the time, setting, and characters, is often told in the past tense (Labov, 2001; Pihl et al., 2017). Present tense is often employed in close proximity to the turning point and the resolution of the narrative. Tense preference and shift in storytelling can differ by age. For example, preschool children tend to use past tense while adults prefer present (Hoang et al., 2016).

Sound symbolism is particularly frequent in oral languages, novels, and poetry. This raises questions about how such resources are used by children in oral storytelling, which is the interest in Study III of this thesis. As mentioned above, there are various ways to theorize the relation between language and sound-sense relationships. In this thesis, the interest is directed at how processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping unfold in children’s oral retelling. Based on this, sound-sense relationships in communicating are of analytical interest. More specifically, there is an interest in how children use sound symbolism to indicate intellectual and emotional states in narrating.

Liberg (1990) conceptualize people's use of different language forms as *linguaging*. Similarly, in the present thesis, I will conceptualize these processes as *communicating* in order to emphasize the activity. Here, resources will be conceptualized as *mediating communicative means*.

Memory and Remembering

In thinking and talking about the mind, we tend to seek support from metaphors (Säljö, 2011), often in the form of terms implying or denoting an actual physical space, a place that holds things. In an attempt to explain the mental process of memory, researchers have used metaphors like holding ideas in one's mind, ideas being difficult to grasp, and so on (Roediger, 1980). Comparing the mind with a physical space implies that memories are considered to be isolated objects stored in particular locations in the mind. Additionally, it implies that in order to recall information it is necessary to search for and find memories. Philosophers and cognitive psychologists have adopted this view, and it has come to be central to our theories of learning and memory. When we are confronted with phenomena we do not understand, we tend to relate them to something more concrete such as physical objects, as shown in an overview by Roediger (1980) of memory metaphors.

With the ambition of studying "pure memory", Ebbinghaus (1885/1998) tried to eliminate the effects of people's previous experience and knowledge. His research was to be greatly influential in psychology. However, later research critically illuminated how people's ability to remember is highly sensitive to context (cf. Hirst & Manier, 1995). In line with these later insights, the present thesis understands children's narrative remembering as contingent on how they perceive the activity they are engaging in. The shift from "memory" to "remembering", the latter being an activity, is informative of different ways of conceptualizing how people reconstrue previous events and information.

A study with an interest in the dynamics of learning was conducted by Marton (1970), who staged an experimental study on free recall with the aim of explaining how the process of internal representation develops. Marton explains internal representation as mental structures of information created in a person's effort to overcome limitations in managing the complexity of the environment. The study involved 30 adults. A list of famous names was presented orally, and the participants were asked to recall the names on the list. Marton explained the process of the experiment as first storage and later retrieval. This was followed by

an interview in which the participants were asked to specify the structure they had built up during the experiment. The results revealed that grouping phenomena was a dominant feature; a famous metaphor used by Miller (1956) for this process is “chunking”. The premise for this so-called organizational theory of memory is that people make sense of information by relating it in what is to them a meaningful way. As suggested by Marton and Miller, people are limited in their ability to store information but are at the same time unlimitedly able to remember what makes sense to them. The pedagogical implication Marton proposes is that a good teacher can help a student to structure information. However, one does not always have a teacher around, and therefore the most important task in education should be to instruct learners in how to learn and how to remember. A study related to Marton’s idea of teaching how to remember (and thus how to learn) was conducted by Pramling (1990). The purpose was to study the outcome of a pedagogical approach, which intended to encourage children to reflect on their own learning. A story was read to the children, and they were later interviewed about it. The results suggested that the children in the experimental groups (assumed to be more accustomed to reflecting on their own learning) were more capable of understanding the plot of the story (for further discussion, see Study II of this thesis).

Theories expressing the spatial storage and search assumptions have been taken for granted and few investigators have questioned the outlines of the theories, Roediger argued in 1980 (see also Säljö, 2011, for a more recent view confirming this claim). One difficulty that arises from this perspective is the problem of knowing that one does not know, for example, certain facts (Kolars & Paley, 1976). An analogue for not remembering is that of a lock and key. That is, if the key does not fit in the lock, one cannot come any further in the search process. However, a limitation of spatial metaphors is that they do not identify the *processes of remembering*. The increasing number of models have produced a great number of hypothetical mental processes that are only loosely tied to behavior (Säljö, 2011). Therefore, in my studies, the concept of *remembering* (rather than *memory*) is of great relevance. This implies that remembering is an active process that depends on the sense a person makes of the activity he or she is involved in. This will be further explored in the next paragraph.

Reshaping and remembering oral stories

Remembering (as distinct from memory) has also been described by Bruner (1990) as a unique human ability. His criticism of the cognitivist tradition of studying memory, as described earlier, is that making sense of something is fundamentally different from processing information. The difference between memory as a faculty and remembering as a sense-making practice has important implications for how we constitute the object of study in research, which allows for narrative remembering to be studied in this research as a sense-making activity.

A classic empirical study relating to remembering as a sense-making practice was conducted by Istomina (1975). The purpose of that study was to investigate how three- to seven-year-olds remembered things under two different conditions. One condition entailed simply recalling several items, while the other entailed remembering the items in the frame of a play activity. Part of the activity involved the children going shopping and buying five ingredients to use in cooking. Children aged three to four years remembered 0.6 items within the first condition, while in the frame of the play activity they remembered 1. Children aged six to seven remembered 2.3 items in the first condition and 3.8 in the play activity. The conclusion drawn from this study was that it is easier for children to remember within an activity that is meaningful to them. Another implication is that the ability to remember is not constant; rather, remembering is related to the situation and how it makes sense to the individual. In addition, children's earlier experiences (in this case, shopping and cooking) function as structuring resources (Säljö, 2000) for their remembering.

Another critical discussion, by Säljö (2011), of the cognitivist tradition of memory studies is that if a person in a memory study were allowed to use external resources, for instance paper and pen, his or her results would likely improve dramatically. This reasoning highlights the question of what is regarded as remembering, as also discussed by Wertsch (2002). He argues that the so-called accuracy criterion is unreasonable as a criterion for remembering. Similarly, Säljö (2011) argues that it is usually impossible – and even irrelevant – to remember exactly. We talk to others, we discuss, and we reconstruct our memories, we learn, and we remember in interaction with others. Hence, in different social situations, remembering plays out differently; for example, what is considered relevant to tell and remember will differ. To offer an example, telling a friend about one's holiday travels differs fundamentally in terms of what and how we remember compared

to how we would do this if asked by the police to report something that happened during these travels (cf. Jönsson et al., 1991).

The research reported in this thesis builds on the tradition of remembering as a sense-making practice, a sociocultural tradition of theorizing remembering founded on Bartlett's classical study published in 1932. As I introduced earlier, in his study he asked individuals to retell stories. Among other things, the analysis showed that when something to be remembered was difficult to grasp it was subsequently reformulated into something that made sense in terms of a culturally predominant narrative form. This implies that the narrative form reshapes not only how individuals remember but also what they remember. The basis for this process, according to Bartlett, is *striving for meaning*; that is, we remember what we can make sense of. Bartlett's study illuminates the close relationship between narrating and remembering. This was also shown in Istomina's (1975) study, mentioned earlier, in the context of pretend play. In line with Bartlett's perspective, the approach in this thesis is that remembering is not simply a reproductive practice but a creative, sense-making one (cf. Wertsch, 2002).

The concept of remembering as a reconstructive practice was indeed an important contribution of Bartlett's study. However, it has been argued that the study yielded limited evidence on the actual remembering process (Edwards & Middleton, 1987; Wagoner & Gillespie, 2014). Therefore, in a recent study, Wagoner and Gillespie (2014) used an extension of Bartlett's method with an interest in the sociocultural process of remembering. The participants (20 individuals in the age span of 18 to 23 years) read the story of the ghosts, the same one used in Bartlett's study. The participants were then given a distractor task, and after this were asked to write the story down as accurately as possible. The researchers were interested in the transformations that underlie reconstructive remembering. Bartlett used the concept of "schemata" in relation to how participants organized their past reactions or experiences. Transformation and rationalization were used to make sense of the story. Schemata are contextualized from the past into novel situations and contribute to making the unfamiliar familiar. Along these lines of argumentation, Engel (1995) emphasized the need for research on the actual process of children's storytelling. In contrast to Bartlett's and Wagoner and Gillespie's studies, which were designed experiments, the present thesis studies narratives *in situ*; that is, as they occur in children's daily activities in ECEC.

The relation between children's narrative ability and memory has also been studied by Klemfuss and Kulkofsky (2008), with an analytical interest in the

suggestibility in the preschool children's stories. Children were interviewed about a previously staged event. In contrast to the present thesis, Klemfuss and Kulkofsky focused on the narrative product, which was coded (e.g., volume, complexity, and number of descriptive details). The analysis showed that narrative ability appeared to supersede age as a predictor of resistance to suggestive questions. In relation to the present research, it is interesting that the results stress narrative ability as important to yet another aspect of children's development.

As shown above, research with an interest in children's oral storytelling and remembering has built mainly on the conception of memory as a system or faculty. This results in a focus on the narrative product and the quantity of what children remember. In contrast, the purpose of this thesis is to generate insight into preschool children's oral storytelling with a focus on the processes of sense-making in retelling activities. The overall research question is directed at how processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping unfold in oral retelling. Accordingly, the concept of remembering will be used in this thesis with the purpose of studying how the process unfolds; that is, in this research *narrating* is studied as an activity and *narrative* is understood as a fundamental tool for sense-making, remembering, and learning.

Chapter 3 A sociocultural perspective on communicating, learning, and narrating

This chapter presents the sociocultural perspective on communicating, learning, and narrating that is adopted in this thesis. The perspective is grounded in the work of Russian developmental psychologist Lev S. Vygotsky (1896-1934). Neo-Vygotskians, like James Wertsch (2007), Roger Säljö (2000), and Jerome Bruner (1996), have contributed interpretations and elaborations on this perspective. The theoretical ambition within this perspective is to explain and clarify the relationship between human mental functioning and the cultural, institutional, and historical practice humans are part of (Wertsch, del Río & Alvarez, 1995).

From a sociocultural perspective, communication is understood as responsive. This is in contrast to a so-called transmission model of communication, according to which information is sent from sender to receiver (e.g., from a teacher to a child) to be stored in memory (as a container) and retrieved therefrom when called for in identical form (accuracy of retention). From a sociocultural perspective, communication is instead understood as responsive, both retroactively and proactively; that is, in relation to what has been said before and anticipating what may be said in response later (Bakhtin, 1986; Linell, 2009). Rather than reproducing information identically (accuracy of retention), remembering is understood as an activity of sense-making, contingent on the appropriation of cultural tools and practices (Bartlett, 1932/1995; Säljö, 2011). Building on the Vygotskian law of sociogenesis, the development of higher mental functions, such as remembering, first emerges in communication with others and is gradually made one's own to also become the means of communicating with oneself (i.e., thinking, problem-solving, remembering). When communicating (and remembering), people may use different semiotic means (see, e.g., Vygotsky, 1978, on carving in canes and tying a string around one's finger). There are a number of terms in contemporary theorizing for such semiotic means, perhaps the most common being multimodality (Kress, 2010). Other terms are communicative means and communicative resources (the latter having somewhat more positive connotations

than the former, which is more neutral). In this thesis, I use these terms synonymously (except multimodal, which is more clearly located in a social semiotics perspective than in a sociocultural one).

Building on this sociocultural perspective on communication (and remembering), empirically studying how individuals in interaction indicate the responsivity of their communicative actions constitutes a theoretically motivated research interest that this thesis aligns with. Furthermore, in the nature of communication and appropriation, as conceptualized from this theoretical position, previous communication is never entirely reproduced; rather, communication in being responsive to previous (and anticipating upcoming) utterances always implies contextualized sense-making. An analytical premise stemming from this theoretical reasoning is that sense-making is visible in how participants in practice reshape communication, and more specifically in the present case, a story. Responsivity, remembering (rather than memory storage and retrieval), and reshaping are theoretical premises that guide research into investigating how these processes unfold in interaction between participants. Hence, from the premise that these processes characterize communication, empirically studying how they unfold constitutes a theoretically motivated research interest. The present thesis aims to contribute to this line of investigation into early childhood education and care (ECEC) and children's oral storytelling.

The first part of this chapter aims to clarify how communicative resources mediate higher mental functions. I will then present the concept of cultural tools and their implications for learning. Thereafter, the cultural tool narrative is presented, followed by the view on re-creation in storytelling activities. Lastly, perspective-taking in social interaction is described from this theoretical perspective.

Mediating resources in higher mental functions

The idea of mediation was developed as a criticism of behavioristic theory on learning that explained human behavior as caused by external stimuli (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Vygotsky, this idea of behaviors being shaped or reinforced was a simplified picture that could not explain higher mental functions such as reasoning, remembering, and problem-solving. Instead, he argued that these functions are cultural and social matters. Development, in Vygotsky's view, starts on the social/interpsychological level and is then transformed at the individual/intrapsychological level.

In this thesis, the concept of mediation refers to the fact that we interpret and act using cultural tools when in contact with the world (Wertsch, 2007). There are always mediating tools between the world and people, like language or physical artefacts, and we can do a great deal more with these tools than we can without them (Säljö, 2005). Wertsch (1998, 2002) explains the relationship between human thinking and cultural tools as fundamental and inseparable. The parts of the process of operating with mediational means are intimately connected and simultaneous, according to Wertsch (1998). Moreover, mediation in the use of language is never objective; when mediating, we put something in the foreground and something else in the background. Consequently, which mediating means we choose has implications for how we perceive the world and how activities unfold. When the child appropriates a language and comes to perceive the world through it, this is described as language mediating the world for the child (Wertsch, 2007).

The concept of mediating means, developed by Wertsch (1998), explains the importance of the resources people use in learning processes, problem-solving, and carrying out other activities. The concept also illuminates that a person is not in direct contact with the world; rather, the world is mediated through cultural tools (Vygotsky, 1997). In addition, the various tools people use are shaped within the mediating activity (Vygotsky, 1997; Wertsch, 1998).

The concept of mediation is central in this thesis, as it enables an explanation of the interaction between the children's thinking and other actions and the cultural tools they use. Here, mediating means implies that language will be seen both as a fundamental tool kit as well as a sense-making activity. Moreover, the relevance in this thesis is that the use of the cultural tool narrative, as a communicative form, is seen as mediating higher mental functioning. The analytical focus is therefore on how children use available resources (mediating means) in processes of responding, remembering and reshaping when retelling stories.

Learning as the appropriation of cultural tools and practices

From the sociocultural perspective taken in this thesis, the metaphor for learning is appropriation (Säljö, 2005). This metaphor emerged in response to criticism of the metaphor of "internalisation" as used in English translations of Vygotsky (1978). With the argument that this term reconstitutes the dichotomy between outer and inner that this theorizing is an attempt to overcome, "appropriation"

was suggested as an alternative (Wertsch, 1998). Conceptualizing learning as appropriation implies a recognition of something required of the learner; information is not simply received and stored (cf. a traditional conception of memory and recall described above). Rather, and as suggested by Wertsch, appropriating implies an act of sense-making that in a way reshapes what is appropriated to fit novel communicative needs and circumstances. Appropriation is typically explained in terms of making what is initially others' also one's own, or of gradually taking over. While both explanations imply the dynamics of this process and sense-making, they differ in what they emphasize: The making-one's-own version highlights the relationship between others and oneself, and thus has connotations concerning identity and difference; meanwhile, the gradually-taking-over version highlights that appropriation requires effort on behalf of the learner, and the qualified and ongoing nature of this process (something is not taken over in finished form, once and for all). Hence, the two explanations of appropriation frequently found in the research literature emphasize partly different features of the process of learning, but both work in contrast to "internalization" by emphasizing activeness, sense-making, and reshaping (rather than reproducing). Central in studies that adopt a sociocultural perspective is an attempt to focus on and understand how humans as learning beings interact with available cultural tools and how these shape and support learning processes.

From this perspective, narrative is seen as a cultural tool that mediates higher mental functions, such as thinking, problem-solving, and remembering. The term *tool* was initially used in reference to physical tools such as pen and paper but was later expanded to also include a metaphorical use involving language and other symbolic tools that are crucial to human learning and sense-making (Säljö, 2005). Within this perspective, language is seen as the most important cultural tool or tool kit. In addition – in alignment with the perspective adopted in this thesis – language is seen as action, which is sometimes referred to as languaging, the active form (e.g., Liberg, 1990; Linell 1998). In addition, I do not make a distinction between languaging and communicating and will hereby use the concept of communicating. Moreover, I use the concepts of retelling, responding, remembering, and reshaping to illuminate the fact that the children are active in these processes. When children are introduced to new tools, they do not necessarily replace the old ones; rather, their repertoire of tools increases. For example, even when a culture develops or imports the tool of writing, the importance of oral language remains central to people's sense-making (Ong, 2002), including how they organize their experiences in narratives.

Making sense is situated within – that is, it depends on as well as contributes to constituting – the social context, and we act subject to how we interpret what is necessary, or expected, in the situation (Säljö, 2000). Through participating in different practices, we learn how to identify and act in different discourses. And as Bruner (1991) puts it: “Principles and procedures learned in one domain do not automatically transfer to other domains” (p. 2). These domains constitute what Bruner refers to as a “culture’s treasury of tool kits” (p. 2). One such important cultural tool is narrative. Additionally, according to the sociocultural perspective taken in this study, children are introduced to cultural tools within the social, cultural, and historical practices they participate in. Furthermore, what cultural tools children are introduced to and supported in taking over is crucial to their learning. When a learner gradually takes over a cultural tool, this is referred to as appropriation (Säljö, 2005). According to Pramling and Ødegaard (2011), appropriation is a metaphor for learning and a “theoretical attempt to indicate the active and dynamic nature of learning. Appropriating a cultural tool requires some effort on the part of the learner” (p. 18). A cultural tool such as speech can never be fully mastered; we may have to struggle with this tool again in the light of new communicative demands (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011; Säljö, 2005). However, the process of learning is not exclusive to educational settings; rather, it is an aspect of all human actions (Säljö, 2005). The statement that learning is an aspect of human activities and something that happens continually, whether we want to do it or not, is also of interest in the analysis of children’s narratives. Understood in terms of appropriation it is rarely, if ever, a clear-cut case of the learner “having” or “lacking” knowledge (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011, p. 19). In line with this, the stance is the premise that knowledge cannot be transmitted from one person to another in any straightforward way. From this perspective, appropriation is about being able to use cultural tools in increasingly complex ways and in various practices.

Based on the theoretical concepts and premises discussed in this section, the focus of this thesis is on responding, remembering and reshaping in children’s storytelling activities. The importance of language as a cultural tool and narrative as a mediating means is also of interest in analyzing what children pick up when retelling a story they have been told. Relevant to this, for example, is how negotiation about the meaning of stories is conducted, and what is considered necessary in telling a story in order for it to be intelligible to a listener (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011).

The cultural tool narrative

A multifunctional cultural tool for sense-making and communication is the narrative genre (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011; Skantz Åberg, 2018). This genre has great importance for the child's understanding of the world (Bruner, 1991, 2006). Additionally, narrative allows us to talk about experiences and our thoughts about the future; it is functional for making sense not only of the world but also of ourselves. Bruner (1991) describes the basic elements of the narrative genre as time and actions. Furthermore, he argues, in order to understand the nature and growth of the mind, it is not sufficient to simply analyze individuals in a cultural vacuum. Rather, we must study the available cultural tool kits, such as symbolic systems of narrative discourse. In their pioneering work on oral storytelling, Labov and Waletzky (1997) conceptualize a minimal narrative as including two temporarily ordered clauses. According to them, a fully developed narrative structure includes abstract, orientation, complication, resolution, coda, and evaluation. The *abstract* introduces the story, and its purpose is to make clear what the story is about. The *orientation* phase describes with whom, when and where the story takes place. The *complication* includes the acceleration of the story, which leads to the *highlight* functioning as a description to tell what happened. Thereafter the *resolution* explains what happened in the end. The *coda* signals the end of the story and serves as a bridge between the story's ending and the present moment. The *evaluation* is situated outside the course of the events and forms a secondary structure. Young children in a preschool setting, like in this research, may not always have developed a narrative competence that includes all the features described above (Liberg et al., 1997), which I will return to later in the thesis.

As emphasized by Bruner (1990), people organize their experiences in narratives to make sense and remember; narratives not only represent but also constitute reality. As a mediating means, narrative offers a different insight into remembering in that a story can enclose a great deal of information that would be difficult to remember without this meaningful relationship (Säljö, 2011). Narratives are human inventions that shape how we perceive our world and ourselves, and reshape our psychological functioning (for instance, how we remember). Their structures allow us to recall experiences and make sense. As noted, narrative is an account of events that occur over time; in addition, a story has particular elements embedded in it (Bruner, 1990, 1991). These elements are of relevance to the story's characters and their intentions and emotions, which serve as grounds for interpretation and reasoning. Thus, to be a successful

storyteller, one needs to leave room for interpretation. Stories tend to be driven by the intentions and emotions of the fictional characters and how these come into play when the characters encounter various challenges.

Interpretation in narratives can be understood as questions about the intentions, thoughts, and feelings (conceptualized in this thesis as intellectual and emotional states) of the agents of the story and how a storyteller handles these features in the storytelling activities. Interpretation also concerns the background knowledge of both storyteller and listener. To be worth telling, a story needs to offer something fresh or a breach of normal human happenings – something that turns these events into something extraordinary in some sense (Ødegaard, 2006). One of the features of narrative described by Bruner (1991) is the reliability of a story; that is, not speaking in terms of truth but rather of what makes sense. Narratives are not (only) about reality, but they do create realities. Some of the issues of a story might be universal, but as (in Bruner's view) genre is also a way of telling, narratives might not be easily translated into another genre; "Language, after all is contained within its uses", he argues (1991, p. 14).

Re-creation in storytelling activities

When discussing the processes of responding, remembering and reshaping in children's retelling activities, I do it from the Vygotskian point of view that a creative act is any human action that results in something new (Vygotsky, 2004). In Vygotsky's work, creative activity is referred to in terms of imagination and fantasy. He notes that imagination or fantasy is often mentioned as something that is not true but argues that it is actually the basis of all creative activity. The ability to combine the old to create something new is the basis of creativity, and this ability is something the child gradually takes over; that is, appropriates (Säljö, 2000).

While a common claim is that children have a very rich fantasy or imagination, much more so than adults, Vygotsky (2004) argues that the case is actually the opposite. The reason for this counterargument is the premise that imagination is always based on previous experiences. Hence, the richer the experience, the richer the imagination. Children's imagination is therefore less rich than that of adults, because they have less experience. The implication of this for education is that if intending to build a strong foundation for creativity ECEC personnel and other adults have to broaden children's experiences, and this is done by allowing them to encounter new practices and cultural tools. One such practice is storytelling, in

which imagination can be regarded as a tool that mediates the psychology of the story (cf. Oatley et al., 2018); that is, how the story is driven by the emotions and intentions of its fictional characters.

In this thesis, the implication for the interest in remembering is that fantasy is not the opposite of memory but rather depends upon it. Moreover, imagination is important in human development because we can imagine what we have not seen and can conceptualize based on what others have experienced or narrated. In this way our experiences are broadened, and our imagination serves our experience. Vygotsky (2004) declares that every inventor is a product of his or her time and environment: “Creation is a historical, cumulative process where every succeeding manifestation was determined by the preceding one” (p. 30). When it comes to reasoning, this develops later and more slowly than imagination; children’s imagination therefore seems richer, and children’s emotions are as rich as those of adults. In childhood, imagination operates relatively independent of reasoning, while in adolescence one has many experiences but has also developed reasoning.

Since a narrative contains a breach of something normal, as mentioned above, it is necessarily normative. The normative form changes with a preoccupation with the age and surroundings of the circumstances around the production of the narrative. The “trouble” that accompanies the breach does not need to be solved. Bruner (1991) suggests that narrative is rather designed precisely to contain such unanswered issues. The narrative has traditionally been treated as a speech act. However, Bruner argues that narrative involves negotiation and sensitivity to the context, which include an interplay of perspectives: You tell your version and I tell mine. This creates some kind of coherence, and even if narrative is not cumulative like scientific discourse (paradigmatic discourse) it builds a culture or a tradition, for example a family’s dinner talk. Narratives, to use Bruner’s word, are “accruing”, which enables stories of the past to continue in the present. This is in line with Vygotsky’s (2004) idea about how we use our creativity to make something new through making new combinations of something familiar. Storying is always a re-creative act; we speak in a certain communicative form that exists before us and simultaneously in relation to what makes sense to us from hearing others’ stories, but also create something new. We do not simply reproduce a story.

Perspective-taking in social interaction

When entering a social situation, we use our assumptions about what the other person knows and may find interesting. To develop a mutual activity, some

coordination of perspectives is necessary (Säljö et al., 2001). Perspective-taking is therefore both a premise and an unavoidable consequence of social activities and language practices. The ability to coordinate perspectives and its implication for sense-making has been discussed from multiple domains and with different concepts. An implication in educational settings, however, is that teachers play an important role in supporting children in developing their perspective-taking (Säljö et al., 2001).

Critical to the child's development is that he or she becomes capable of "substituting a real object for a symbol" (p. 7, emphasis omitted), Siraj-Blatchford (2009) suggests, claiming that this implies the child viewing him- or herself as an object and even objectifying others. In play, children pretend to be someone else and then interact with a pretend person. In this way, the child is able to admit others' perspectives and shift between these perspectives. Eventually, children's play becomes collaborative, and the development of this higher level of abstraction is sometimes spoken of in terms of "theory of mind" (ToM) (Nelson, 1996). This concept denotes the child's developing ability to understand that others' intentions and desires may differ from one's own. The theory also relates to the interpretation of and reasoning about stories and characters, including how such states in fictional characters may differ as well as drive a storyline. This ability is important in implying that the child will eventually be able to describe, explain, and defend his or her way of thinking to others. However, from the theoretical viewpoint of this thesis, the ability to consider others' perspectives is understood as a situated ability, dependent on communicative mediation (see also Hakkarainen & Bredikyte, 2014; Oshiro et al., 2017).

As mentioned above, according to the sociocultural perspective adopted in this thesis, language is a fundamental tool for sense-making. One tradition that is closely connected to the sociocultural perspective is the dialogical tradition and the view on language as a vital mediating resource (Linell, 1998). According to this tradition, utterances and other communicative actions are always in response to previous actions and addressed to present or imagined others (Linell, 1998, 2009). When responding, Linell argues, people always include the proposed responses, and the individual will not entirely understand the meaning of what has been said before he or she knows what the response is. The assumptions that underpin the dialogical approach of sense-making in interaction derive from Bakhtin and his notions of "addressivity" and "responsivity" (Bakhtin, 1986). He argues that, in their utterances, speakers are limited to what has occurred before and what is expected to happen after:

Any concrete utterance is a link in the chain of speech communication of a particular sphere. The very boundaries of the utterance are determined by a change of speech subjects. Utterances are not indifferent to one another, and are not self-sufficient; they are aware of and mutually reflect one another. These mutual reflections determine their character. Each utterance is filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication. Every utterance must be regarded primarily as a response to preceding utterances of the given sphere (we understand the word “response” here in the broadest sense). Each utterance refutes, affirms, supplements, and relies on the others, presupposes them to be known, and somehow takes them into account. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 91)

Moreover, Bakhtin (1981) states that genuine understanding between people is always dialogical in nature, and that utterances in a conversation consist of a link in a chain of different voices. This makes it more or less impossible to understand an individual statement without including the intention of all the other statements in the dialogue. Every statement or voice in a dialogue is in contact with and relates to previous statements or voices in the dialogue. In this thesis, the concept of voices should be understood as encompassing different kinds of voices, which means that they express different intentions and perspectives.

According to Linell (1998, 2009), Bakhtin’s understanding of dialogue differs from a traditional view on human communication. As Linell asserts, there is a tradition of perceiving dialogues as an individual transfer-and-exchange model for communication (Linell 1998). In addition, Linell argues that this tradition tends to only understand human statements and their meaning as a communicative intention of the speaker, with the listener’s task being that of interpreting what is said. Conversely, Linell (1998) argues, dialogism describes conversation as an essentially social and collective process. In this process, he further argues, the speaker is dependent on the listener as a “co-author” (p. 24). In line with this, the assertion is that “the speaker is also a listener (to his own utterance) and is engaged in sense-making activities in the course of the verbalization process itself” (p. 24).

The relevance for this research, of the theoretical stance described above, is that retelling is seen as an interactive phenomenon and responding to the listener implies being aware of what makes a story intelligible. In addition, it has methodological implications. Even when there is only one storyteller visible in the analyzed excerpts in the studies, retelling is seen as a dialogic practice (Linell, 2009).

Chapter 4 Method and methodology

The overarching purpose of this thesis is to generate insight into preschool children's oral storytelling, with a focus on the processes of sense-making in retelling activities, addressed through three empirical studies

The first two studies of the thesis take their point of departure in a dialogue between two classical strands of research in developmental psychology. The first tradition is concerned with whether children understand that others may understand things differently from how they themselves do. This discussion grounds the interest of Study I in whether – and if so how – children consider the perceived understanding of their listener(s) when retelling stories. The interest of Study II is grounded in classical research on remembering as a sense-making practice. Following one focus child, the analytical focus of Study II is on what the child picks up of from the story she has been told, and what features she introduces and what she transforms when retelling it. Moreover, there is an interest in the child's own perspective on the narrative activity. In addition to the answers to the research questions posed in Studies I and II, there were tentative findings – indications – in the data analyzed in these studies suggesting that children use sound symbolism to indicate intellectual and emotional states in fictional characters. This observation led to the interest of Study III, whose analytical focus was therefore the repertoire of communicative means children use to indicate such states when retelling stories.

With these interests, the research presented in this thesis takes a qualitative approach, enabling a deepened understanding of participants' actions in their everyday social and cultural practices (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). In this chapter, I will present the methodology that this thesis rests upon and the methods and approaches used when generating and analyzing the empirical data. First, I present the setting and participants, followed by the empirical data and selection of cases of this research. Then, I offer a short description of the story genres. I thereafter describe the processes of transcription, translation, and analysis. Finally,

I discuss the ethical considerations linked to this thesis and its setting and participants.

Setting and participants

The empirical data for this thesis were generated in a Swedish preschool setting. At the time of data generation (2014-2016), this preschool was participating in a program called *from3to3*² (<http://www.from3to3.com/>). This program was started in 2005 in Canada, with the purpose of developing language and social reasoning skills (perspective-taking and mental-state understanding) in children who primarily spoke a minority language (i.e., not English or French). The Canadian program focuses on children from the age of three to Grade 3, thus the name. The underlying principle behind focusing on this age span is the assumption that during this period children acquire language and the ability to develop social understanding. Within this framework, the storytelling activities are organized by the participating teachers, gathering the children to tell them stories. The children are later (soon thereafter, as well as after a longer time) invited to retell the stories to the teachers and other children. The aim of the *from3to3* program is to develop a pedagogy that supports children's ability to use language to create complete, coherent oral narratives and to interpret and reason about the meaning of what they hear and read. The teachers also plan to give the children opportunities to represent the stories in different ways, such as through drawing, writing, or drama. During the period 2013-2018, the program was also run in a Swedish preschool with multilingual children. The empirical data for the three studies in this thesis were generated at this preschool, where I was employed as a preschool teacher at the time of the data generation. I also initiated the Swedish part of the *from3to3* program.

The setting for the present research is this Swedish preschool, involving 15 children aged three to five years and their teachers. In the preschool, the group size has varied throughout the years. However, there have been in total 15 children aged three to five participating in the routinized daily storytelling activities during the years of data generation (2014-2016) for the present thesis. In the analyzed video recorded activities for Study I, nine children aged four to five participate in the in-depth analyzed activities. In the in-depth analyzed activities for Study II,

² The *from3to3* project is no longer active in a formal sense in the participating Swedish preschool, but the experiences and knowledge generated through the project still inform the pedagogy.

two children aged four to five participate. For the interest of Study III, the activities selected for in-depth analysis involve eight children aged four to five. Though, in the excerpts chosen to illustrate the results there are only some of the children who speaks or acts out. In fact, there are two children who frequently anticipate in the chosen excerpt. The reason for this is that the interest of the empirical studies requires a coherent story, that is narrative structures with macrostructural features (that is; abstract, orientation, complication, resolution, evaluation and coda, Labov & Waletzky, 1997). Children in a preschool may have various, interest and experiences in telling and retelling stories. For example, some children have newly arrived from another country and do not yet speak the majority language. Nevertheless, them not being visible in the chosen excerpts does not mean that they do not participate in the routinized activities. As I have previously mentioned, the *from3to3* program involves also rhymes and simple stories including gestures and all children participate based on their interests and abilities.

The area where the preschool is located is often referred to as a multicultural or multiethnic urban area, in the sense that most of its residents are immigrants. In a study conducted by Bunar (2010), the settings were two schools in multicultural cities in Sweden. The participants of Bunar's study are described as coming from various ethnic backgrounds, and the children participating in my research could be introduced in a similar manner. I agree with Bunar that issues such as power, ethnicity, religion, and gender have to be brought up, but it is how this is done that determines whether or not this contributes to the marginalization of certain groups. The 15 children who participated in my research are all multilingual; none of them have the majority language of the preschool (Swedish) as their mother tongue. A categorization of populations (e.g., in terms of ethnicity, religion, social class, gender, and language) is indeed not unproblematic. For example, Ross (2021) argues that the fact that migration patterns in Europe are creating new diversities results in the increasing unlikelihood of the assumption that everyone will fit into such groups. Furthermore, according to Lykke (2010), positions in such categorized groups are open, dynamic, and a transformative phenomenon. Instead, Lykke argues, categories should be understood as products of social and political movements. The relevance of this for the present thesis is that, today, a group of children at a preschool where many languages are present is highly common in many countries, and accordingly also in Sweden. In this research, the attempt is not specifically to analyze the children's storytelling in the position of their being second-language speakers. Rather than categorizing them as belonging to such a category, they are merely seen as children. Granted, even

“children” is a category, and a categorization is already made when mentioning that the children are all multilingual and do not have Swedish as their mother tongue. In addition, categories based on children’s second-language speech are very vague (e.g., compare children with well-educated parents who speak languages typically regarded as high-class such as English, French, or German to refugee children with parents who speak a language that no staff at the child’s preschool can speak). As the children’s mother tongue is not the language spoken at the preschool, in this case Swedish, and as this may affect how they take on the challenge of retelling stories they have heard, I will analyze how they do this and refrain from making general claims about its being due to their language background. Children from a contemporary preschool group mutually, and in part individually, retelling stories they have been told is interesting in itself and will have important implications for the understanding of children’s insights and skills as well as for developing educational practices. I argue that it is an important ethical question of not interpreting everything certain children do as expressions of their belonging to, or being seen as members of, a vaguely defined and likely heterogenous group.

The empirical data

With an interest in how children orally retell stories they have heard, video documentation was chosen as the method of data generation. This method links to theoretical premises, in this case a sociocultural perspective on communication, learning and remembering. Accordingly, an epistemological premise of this thesis is that a relevant unit of analysis (Säljö, 2009) is activities in which children participate. This means that it is the activity that is in focus (Säljö 2011). In the present research, this entails that it is the storytelling activities in which the children participate in the everyday setting that are in focus of the analysis. In studies of activities *in situ* in everyday settings, like the present thesis, video-based observation is the most appropriate method for attaining as rich as possible empirical data (Heath, 2011). However, in video-based research there is a need to consider how to effectively use video as an investigative tool (Jewitt, 2012). In research, video can be used in many ways, such as participatory video (e.g., in video diary format) and video interviews. This research uses video in what Jewitt (2012) refers to as video elicitation and video-based fieldwork. The former method is used in Study II, with the purpose of providing a basis for reflection. The focus child and I watched the video recordings of her retelling, with the purpose of reflecting on the

activity in an attempt to explore the child's perspective (Sommer, Pramling Samuelsson & Hundeide, 2010; Heath, 2011) on the activity. The latter – that is, video-based fieldwork – is an established method in social interactional studies (Jewitt, 2012). This method, used in the present research to record ongoing activities with a focus on how children orally retell stories, is applied in Studies I, II, and III.

For the research project, 21 storytelling activities were video recorded from fall 2014 to spring 2016. Initially, one fixed video camera was used for this purpose. The activities were arranged differently: It could involve one teacher telling a story to a group of children at circle time, the children collaboratively retelling a story at circle time, or one child retelling a story to another child. Within the *from3to3* program, teachers are encouraged to arrange things so that the storyteller sits facing the listeners. Accordingly, I discovered that an additional camera was necessary in order to capture all the participants' embodied actions (Heath, 2011). Like all data, video data include and exclude elements. This partiality can be considered a limitation. However, Jewitt (2012) instead argues that it can be regarded as a potential, as it necessitates selecting and filtering events in ways that afford systematic analysis. In most cases I was behind one video camera, but on one occasion I sat opposite the child and the video camera was on a fixed stand. One additional contribution of video-based studies is the possibility to review recordings together with participants (Heath, 2011), which I did in Study II.

The empirical data – that is, the 21 video recordings and transcriptions – are saved and stored in a specific research storage folder on a server at the University of Gothenburg for security class 2 data. The research storage folder, regulated and paid for by the department via additional agreement with the information technology unit, is used for the storage and backup of large amounts of data for a limited number of users. After the research project is completed, the research data will be transferred for long-term archiving to the Department of Education, Communication and Learning at the University of Gothenburg. Research data will be archived on the server for at least ten years (SFS 2019:866).

Selection of cases

As mentioned above, the *from3to3* program started in 2013 at the preschool where I was employed as a preschool teacher. Already from the start of the program, the storytelling activities were, video recorded. This was done in order to evaluate the program and as part of the preschool's systematic quality work. In 2014, I was

accepted to the Swedish National Research School on Communication and Relations as Foundations for Early Childhood Education (FoRFa). At this point I was working two days a week at the preschool. My responsibilities included running the *from3to3* project; the choice of activities to be filmed was linked to what days I was at the preschool and when I was responsible for the storytelling activities. However, there were also occasions when other teachers led the storytelling activities, and I was behind the video camera. As mentioned earlier, the participation of the program led to an interest to investigate how children retell stories they have been told and eventually this interest was formulated as the purpose of this thesis. In line with that research interest, video documented activities were selected and those activities thereby form the corpus of the empirical data. Activities are in this case seen as a story from beginning to end (c.f. Liberg et al., 1997). The first selection was done in relation to the interest of my licentiate thesis and the interest in the two empirical studies. For Study I, 19 activities were selected and for Study II two additional activities were added to the empirical data. The corpus of data for Study II thereby consists of 21 video recorded activities which also constitute the empirical data for Study III. Video documentation offers great resources for analytical possibilities (Derry et al., 2010). But at the same time, it raises challenges, for example what from the extensive video material should be sampled for additional examination. The chosen theoretical perspective, and the research questions, guided this selection. In line with the described interest, 21 instances of video documentation (see Table 1) of storytelling activities were selected for an initial transcription.

Table 1. An overview of the entire corpus of empirical data. All participants are given pseudonyms except for the teacher researcher whose name is in capital letters.

Date	Story	Length	Children	Teachers	Storyteller	Study
2014-09-29	The rat princess	02:09	2	1	Sofia & Ensar	
2014-10-06	The fox and the crab	12:33	10	2	AGNETA	I
2014-10-07	The fox and the crab	10:24	9	2	Collaboratively	I
2014-11-03	The fox and the crab	02:04	2	1	Adam	I
2014-11-10	The fox and the walking stick	06:00	1	1	AGNETA	-
2014-11-10	The fox and the walking stick	05:36	2	1	Adam	-
2014-11-10	The fox and the walking stick	04:14	2	1	Adam	-
2014-12-16	The fox and the tiger	03:37	1	1	AGNETA	-
2014-12-16	The fox and the tiger	03:25	1	1	Yones	-
2014-12-16	The fox and the tiger	03:53	8	2	Yones	
2015-01-12	The fox and the tiger	03:49	9	2	Yones	III
2015-02-17	The old fashioned bed	06:24	1	1	AGNETA	-
2015-02-17	The old fashioned bed	05:02	9	2	Yones	III
2015-04-13	Four arms four legs	04:44	1	1	AGNETA	-
2015-04-13	Four arms four legs	14:56	8	2	Adam	-
2015-04-20	The fox and the walking stick	07:04	1	1	AGNETA	II
2015-04-20	The fox and the walking stick	03:24	2	1	Emina	II
2015-04-21	The rat princess	04:18	7	3	Collaboratively	-
2015-05-06	Four arms four legs	14:39	8	2	Adam	-
2015-12-01	The fox and the walking stick	06:47	2	1	Emina & Maria Emina &	II, III
2016-05-09	Reflection	13:28	1	1	AGNETA	II
Total:		134,7				

As shown in Table 1, the entire corpus of data consists of 21 storytelling activities, totaling 134,7 minutes, that is 2 hours and 14,7 minutes of video documentation. The average length of the activities is about 6.5 minutes. The from3to3 program involves activities including simple rhymes as well as more or less complex stories. However, for analytical reasons more complete stories were chosen, guided by the research questions in the three studies. As mentioned, the video documentation was both part of the everyday practice at the preschool as well as part of the data generation for this research. All the children at the preschool were filmed when participating in these activities. Children participated based on interest and ability. For example, children who had recently come to Sweden could participate by mimicking gestures and sounds even if they did not yet have all the words at their disposal. Some children retold complex stories and meta-communicated about them (see for example Study I in this thesis). For the purpose of analyzing how processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping unfold in children's

oral retelling, more complete stories – with a beginning and an end, an account of events that occur over time, and particular elements embedded (see Bruner, 1990, 1991; Liberg, 1997) – were chosen in an initial sorting of the recorded activities. The chosen activities form the basis of the corpus of data involving the 21 activities presented in Table 1. For the interest of each study, the corpus of data was analyzed by searching for patterns, similarities, and differences. As shown in Table 1, the storytelling of particularly two children, Emina and Yones, was then chosen for in-depth analysis. The reason for this is that their narratives illustrated responses to the listeners and to the stories (intellectual and emotional states of the fictional characters) and processes of remembering and reshaping in a way that not all the narratives did, even if there were traces of this in other children's narratives as well (Derry et al., 2010). For the interest of Study I, three events were chosen for in-depth analysis. Three activities were chosen in Study II as well, this time following one focus child telling the same story but in different constellations. In Study II, the initial storytelling activity when I told the story for Emina builds a background for the subsequently retellings but is not in-depth analyzed. This enabled an analytical focus on the process over time. For Study III, the data material was initially analyzed in relation to the study's interest. Subsequently, three events were chosen for in-depth analysis

The story genres

The stories the teachers tell, and the children retell in the observed activities, are mostly so-called trickster stories, but also repetition stories. Reasonably, story genres differ in the use of features such as mental state terms, and the kinds of stories that are (re)told therefore also have significance for the studied phenomena. Trickster stories, in which the protagonists are often anthropomorphized foxes or other animals, occur in oral storytelling traditions around the world. The trickster is characterized as a set of opposites, and is very sly and attempts to trick others, hence the name. Most trickster stories involve several characters; one example involving only a single character is Aesop's fable *The Fox and the Grapes*, in which a fox fails to catch grapes from a branch and exclaims "They're probably sour anyway". In this empirical material the stories, *The fox and the crab*, *The fox and the walking stick* and *The fox and the tiger* can be conceptualized as trickster stories. Repetition stories have an iterative theme and often also contain absurd elements, for example the classical story about *The Pancake*. The story is about a mother with seven hungry children. She decides to make pancakes but the pancake escapes by

jumping out of the pan and out the window, chased by the mother and the seven hungry children. As the pancake rolls along the road, it meets different animals (repeating the names of each of the previous ones it has managed to escape) until it reaches a pig at a lake. The pig also wants to eat the pancake but has a plan to catch it: The pig offers to let the pancake ride on its snout across the lake, and when they are in the middle of the lake snatches the pancake and eats it. In this empirical material the stories, *The old fashion bed* and *The rat princess* can be conceptualized as repletion stories.

Transcription, translation, and analysis

Video as a method is not only a way to generate data from the field; more than anything, video data constitute a principal analytical resource (Heath, 2011). The 21 video-documented retelling activities that form the corpus of data in this research have been transcribed into text. After that an initial analytical review of the entire body of data, which consisted of reading the transcribed material as well as watching the videos again (one of the advantages of video observations is the possibility to revisit the data for analysis) a selection of activities was chosen for the in-depth analysis. In each of the three studies three activities (see Table 1) were selected, guided by the research questions of each study. The transcribed and selected activities were then translated into English. The attempt in the translations was to as closely as possible mimic the nature of the participants' speech rather than providing a text that was grammatically correct. In the three studies, excerpts from the activities were eventually carefully chosen for the purpose to illustrate the results of the studies.

The analytical work was guided by the principles of Interaction Analysis (IA) (Derry et al., 2010; Jordan & Henderson, 1995; Wallerstedt et al., 2022, for an empirical example, see Lagerlöf, 2015). Given this approach, how the children make use of various means in situated activities is central. Moreover, the chosen approach entails activities analyzed as sequentially unfolding responsive actions. The three studies raise different analytical interests, which require different levels of transcription.

Study I concerned whether, and if so how, the children consider the understanding of the listener when retelling stories, they had been told. There is no straightforward way of transforming video data into text, and there are important things to consider (cf. Davidson, 2009; Ochs, 1979). Representing the activities in a turn-by-turn structure is relevant in Study I, as this allows for an

analysis of responsivity. Participants' utterances are always in some sense responses to previous utterances, and at times anticipate others' responses (Linell, 1998, 2009). The transcription in Study I involved how the children use, for example, intonations and overlapping speech in their utterances. Subsequently, a modified version of the transcription system that has been used in Conversation Analysis (Jefferson, 2004) was employed (see Appendix B). In line with the described interest in Study I (that is, whether, and if so how, children consider the understanding of the listener when retelling stories, they have been told), particular attention was paid to subtle meta-markers. For example, the analytical interest was directed at how the children introduced the story they were about to tell. From the sociocultural perspective guiding this research, meta-markers are considered essential for understanding how people clarify how they take others' utterances and how they intend for others to take theirs (Pramling, 2006; Pramling & Säljö, 2015). Meta-markers refer to the kind of indicators people use in communicating, through which they constitute a space for interpretation between what is literally said and what is meant. Typical examples of meta-markers are phrases such as "kind of", "similar to", and "metaphorically speaking". In using such expressions, speakers make clear that they do not intend for their utterances to be taken literally but rather as a manner of speaking. Whether speakers use such meta-markers when explaining something or telling a story is therefore critical to whether, in communication, they make known to each other how they intend for their utterances to be received (Linell, 1998).

In Study II, the analytical interest was what the focus child picks up from the story she has been told, what features she may introduce and how she transforms the story when retelling it. The level of transcription used in the Study II enabled the purpose of analyzing the unfolding activities as responsive, allowing the child's voice to come to the fore. For transcription and analysis, I followed the retellings from initiation to end, and subsequent retellings as well as video elicitation (Jewitt, 2012). Analytical claims are closely grounded in transcribed excerpts of data. This makes the analysis transparent and offers a possibility to critically scrutinize claims made, contributing to a study's validity (Schoultz et al., 2001). In the transcripts, besides commas and periods, I avoid imposing literary conventions such as capitalizing words and using question marks. Words in double brackets indicate that what is heard is not entirely clear but has been interpreted as transcribed. An important premise of IA, as well as in the sociocultural perspective adopted in this thesis, is that knowledge and actions are fundamentally social in origin. This entails that knowledge and practice are seen as situated in interaction between

participants. The basic data for theorizing knowledge are found in details of social interactions in naturally occurring everyday interactions (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). The focus on details such as meta-markers, transformations, and sound symbolism in oral retelling activities includes speech as well as what is sometimes referred to as non-verbal communication. Of interest is how the children interact and make sense of the storytelling activities.

Study III of this thesis focuses on how children indicate the intellectual and emotional states of fictional characters when orally retelling stories they have heard. The selected storytelling activities for Study III were structured into a line-by-line rendering. Tentative findings from previous studies suggest that children use sound-symbolic expressions to indicate intellectual and emotional state. However, any communicative means the children use in the storytelling activities to indicate such states is of analytical interest. In relation to the interest in the communicative means the children use, the transcription was informed by principles of Conversation Analysis (CA). Moreover, the focus on the use of communicative means such as sound symbolism in the children's oral retellings stresses the need for a notation illuminating, for example, shifts in tone of voice, pauses, and "smiley" voice. Consequently, the transcription convention used in Study III is a modified version of Gail Jefferson's transcript notations as presented in *Glossary of Transcript Symbols with an Introduction* (Lerner, 2004) (see Appendix C).

Validity and trustworthiness

Validity in qualitative research, like in this thesis, is often seen as a controversial issue (Edwards, 2001). The reason for this is the existence of various understandings of qualitative research within different research traditions. There are many different ways to discuss the validity of a study, according to Cohen et al. (2011). They claim that early versions of the concept of validity were mainly used to discuss the validity of a study's measuring instrument. However, in recent years the concept of validity has gained broader meaning, especially in qualitative studies. According to Edwards (2001), validity in qualitative research concerns offering a representation of the field as completely as the research method allows. The validity of studies within the research tradition in which this thesis is positioned (i.e., interaction in early childhood education and care) is based on the criteria of transparency and theoretical consistency (cf. Schoultz et al., 2001; Wallerstedt et al., 2014). The present research is conducted *in situ*, in a preschool setting; that is, in ongoing everyday activities. Consequently, the circumstances for

data generation – for example, how teachers and the researcher ask children for clarification, how the video camera is set up, and so on – are not always optimal. However, grounding analytical claims in close proximity to represented excerpts of empirical data, as is done in this thesis, allows the reader to scrutinize this connection as well as make other interpretations (from various theoretical positions; however, in this thesis, data are consistently analyzed exclusively from a sociocultural perspective). The criterion of theoretical consistency means that theoretical premises and principles, empirical data generation, and method and analysis are logically consistent. In this thesis, I attempt to make this rationale transparent to the reader by explicating theoretical premises and conceptual resources for analyzing data, as well as making clear why the kind of data used, its form of representation (sequential transcription in some detail), and the analysis are logically consistent. Aspects of trustworthiness in qualitative studies like this are depending on the theoretical perspective and choice of method. As mentioned in Chapter 1 (Oral storytelling in early childhood) of the present thesis the research questions asked affect what conclusions can be drawn. In addition, the trustworthiness of the studies is increased by the use of video data; this kind of data allows researchers to collaboratively look iteratively at the video-recorded data and the transcribed sequences, ensuring that analytical claims are properly grounded in the data and that the transcripts closely reflect the data (Derry et al., 2010; Jordan & Henderson, 1995). Collaborative data sessions have been held with fellow researchers throughout the research process.

Ethics

The setting of the present research is a preschool in Sweden involving young children aged three to five. Children in educational settings are dependent on care for their wellbeing from, among others, their teachers. In research in preschool settings, the researchers also bear responsibility for seeing to the children's wellbeing (Mockler, 2014). Throughout the research process there may be dilemmas in relation to caring for the children's wellbeing and rights. For example, it may not always be obvious to the children when the researcher is video recording the activities. If so, the children will not have the possibility to withdraw their participation (see Larsson et al., 2019). In addition, young children cannot foresee the potential consequences of participating in research and may therefore be seen as vulnerable. Nevertheless, the global research interest in early childhood education and care (ECEC) has also actualized the importance of seeing children

as reliable, voluntary informants (Farrell, 2016). To gain consent and to engage children in research a relationship between the researcher and the children is critical (Dockett et al., 2009). As I was one of the teachers as well as a researcher at the participating preschool at the time of data generation, a relationship was already established between me and the children. It was important for me to explain to the children when and why I was videorecording and to ask them for permission to do so. Since I knew the children well, I could also, more easily, discover if they would have shown any inconvenience in being video recorded, which did not happen during the data generation.

Teachers have traditionally been underestimated as experts of their own practice (Guerrero-Hernández & Fernández-Ugalde, 2020). However, research schools and projects involving teachers have been conducted with the aim of investigating questions relevant also to the practice (Pramling, 2020). Such projects and collaborations do, according to Pramling (2020), support teachers' ability to systematically investigate questions relevant for the practice and support teachers in developing collective agency. When teachers as experts of their own practice also are researchers, special ethical issues come to the fore (Mockler, 2014). These issues can, according to Mockler (2014), be handled within a framework of quality guided by ethics. She mentions five critical ethical dimensions: informed consent, avoiding harm, student voice, power dynamics, and professional judgement. Below I will elaborate what implications such ethical dimensions have for my research.

In research, the informed consent means that participants are told about the purpose and processes of the research and that it is voluntarily to participate. The present research follows the ethical guidelines of the Swedish Research Council (2017). All the participating children were informed about the research and gave their permission to participate. In addition, a prerequisite for children's participation in research is that the parents give their permission for their children's participation. The parents to the participating children of the present research have all been informed in person and in written information about the purpose and the design of the present research. Except for me as a teacher researcher (see Guerrero-Hernández & Fernández-Ugalde, 2020, on being both a teacher and researcher) there were also other teachers present at the time of data generation. They were informed and gave their permission to participate. All the participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could decide to end their participation at any time. According to Hultin (2014), participants in research may have the power to end their participation, nevertheless, the researcher is in power to choose theoretical perspectives, select what is interesting to highlight,

and choose how to present the results. Consequently, Hultin argues, the power that the researcher has requires ethical responsibility regardless of ethical considerations.

When teachers conduct research in their local contexts, avoiding harm can for example involve anonymity and confidentiality in observation protocols (Mockler, 2014). In line with this and the anonymity requirement in the ethical guidelines of the Swedish Research Council (2017), all participants in the present research were given pseudonyms in transcriptions (except from the participating teacher researcher). Moreover, the generated data are saved and stored in research storage, not accessible by unauthorized persons, which fulfills the confidentiality requirement. In the present research avoiding harm involves both anonymizing the transcribed activities and for the teacher researcher to model democratic and socially just behavior in the activities with children. For example, are children encouraged to use all their available communicative means when retelling (e.g., embodied enactments and sound symbolism), allowing also those new to the spoken language (in this case Swedish) to participate. All the participating teachers also stress that all the orally retold stories are “right”, every storyteller has his or her own interpretation of the stories and what is worth telling or not.

In a preschool practice, supporting children’s participation and influence about the content of learning in the daily activities requires a genuine dialogue with the children and teachers who adjust the activities according to the experience and needs of the children. Above all, eliciting children’s voice in the practice raises questions for teachers regarding supporting children to express themselves in the activities they are participants in. Additionally, teachers need to develop strategies to become excellent listeners to children’s voices. According to Farrell (2016), the awakening interest in research in listening to what children say and how they say it has highlighted children’s actual right to participate in research. In line with this is the conceptual understanding of children as already competent participants, and not only “as one day becoming adult humans” (Farrell, 2016, p. 7). With this in mind, children can actually display their communicative competence in interactional practices. The developing field of ethics in research involving children is affording new possibilities; however, as Farrell (2016) puts it: “These affordances may be impaired both by concern for children’s immaturity, on the one hand, and romantic optimism about children’s capacities to participate, on the other” (p. 11). Consequently, Farrell stresses the importance of systematic considerations throughout the research process. In contemporary research there is a view that

sees children as having the right to be listened to and to be valued as competent stakeholders (Larsson et al., 2019) in matters that concern them.

It is essential that the researcher understands the power dynamics (Mockler, 2014). The relevance for the present research is that I, as a teacher researcher, who conducted research within my own practice, will have to be aware of and handle these issues throughout the entire research process. At the time of data generation, I was one of the teachers at the participating preschool as well as a doctoral student attending a research school for early childhood education teachers. A critical reflection is that the parents' consent may have been facilitated by the fact that I already had a relation to them and the children in my role as preschool teacher. This premise implies that the parents and children trust me and therefore may be particularly willing to participate. I am also aware of the power relation between me as their children's teacher and them being dependent on me as responsible for their children's wellbeing during the time at preschool; perhaps this has made it more difficult for them to decline participation in the research. However, there were no signs of such hesitation when I talked to the parents.

The research process, as well as the everyday educational work, are reflexive practices requiring professional judgment about, for example, what documentation is used, how it is used, and how it might be shared and critiqued within the research and/or teaching community. The present research has throughout the entire process strived to be reflective, through critical scrutiny and discussion primarily with the supervisors but also with other researchers.

The issue of quality in ECEC personnel-researcher collaborative research (Swe. *praktiknära forskning*), like the present research, is closely related to ethics. The ethics of research and the ethics of practice can be shaped by, and can shape, each other, including enabling teachers and researchers to see their practice from new perspectives, allowing for a more just and democratic approach.

Chapter 5 Summary of the empirical studies

This thesis consists of three empirical studies with an overarching interest in how the children orally retell stories they have heard. This chapter summarizes the three studies. In all the studies, children aged three to five years participate in storytelling activities in a preschool setting. The teacher orally tells a story to an individual child or in a group activity. Later, the child/children retell the stories to their teachers and peers.

Study I: Children's re-storying as a responsive practice

The purpose of Study I (Pihl et al., 2017) is to explore whether, and if so how, when retelling a story, the children show responsivity to the listener's potentially varied knowing; that is, whether they indicate in their storytelling that they pay attention to the fact that the listener has not previously heard the story and therefore does not know what the storyteller knows. Closely adjacent to this, the study pursues an interest in what the children's retelling denotes about their understanding of the story.

How children learn to narrate, and whether they take into account the fact that someone they tell something to has a different understanding than they themselves do, is one of the fundamental theoretical and empirical interests of the tradition of educational psychology. This study problematizes the idea that children in the age span three to five years are unable to understand one another in retelling or explaining something, as suggested by Piaget's founding research (Piaget, 1923/1926). Analytically attending to meta-markers (Pramling, 2006; Pramling & Säljö, 2015), as is done in the present study, yields another picture of such young children's abilities.

For this study, three occasions of oral storytelling activities were selected from a review of the entire body of data (which at the time consisted of 19 activities, see Table 1), for closer analysis. The first occasion is when the teacher tells the story

to a group of children; the second is when a group of children retell the story during circle time; and the third and last activity is when one child retells the same story to a child who has not heard it before. The activities are documented through video recordings and are analyzed according to the principles of Interaction Analysis (IA).

The analysis shows that the children shift between speaking inside the narrative frame of the story and speaking about features of the story. It further reveals that, in their retelling, the children speak from different positions. One excerpt from the data illustrates all these positions. One child, Yones, clarifies what the story is about (i.e., being the commentator), saying “it was about a crab and a fox”. Taking the position of the storyteller, he continues – “and the crab said” – and finally speaks as an agent within the frame of the story, saying “shall we run a race the one who comes first has won”. As seen in this and other examples analyzed in the study, the children do consider the perspective of the listener(s), although they do not do this consistently.

The contribution the present study makes to the overarching research tradition of educational psychology and the fields of children’s understanding and storytelling is knowledge about how children, through shifting from speaking within the frame to meta-communicating about the story, indicate that they are responsive to the listener’s understanding. Moreover, the findings show that when the children do not understand the central trick of the story they invent, transform, and rationalize an alternative account. Given these findings, a more specific interest in how the children transform the stories and what this implies for their remembering generated the research interest of Study II.

Study II: Children remembering and reshaping stories in retelling

Study II of this thesis (Pihl et al., 2018) investigates children’s retelling and remembering. In contrast to the dominant interest in previous research involving children and memory on the product of children’s retelling and remembering (i.e., their stories and how much they remember, respectively), this study focuses on the processes of storytelling and remembering. The tension in research between memory (as a separate system) on the one hand and remembering as a sense-making practice on the other is an important background to this study. My research builds on the tradition of remembering, which was historically initiated by Bartlett’s classical study published in 1932 (cf. above).

As mentioned, the findings from Study I generated an interest in remembering and transformation in children's retelling of stories they have been told. The research questions raised are: What does the child pick up from the story she has been told? What features does she introduce and how does she transform the story when retelling it? Moreover, what does she indicate is her perspective on the activity; that is, how does the activity appear to the focus child?

My overview of previous research on children's narrative remembering (see Chapter 2 of this thesis) revealed that this practice has predominantly been investigated with the purpose of clarifying children's other abilities, such as their narrative performance (see Ukrainetz et al., 2005) or the relation between their narrative ability and memory focusing on the product (see Klemfuss & Kulkofsky, 2008). Another common approach in this tradition is to study children's autobiographical narratives. Against this background, it can be concluded that there is a great lack of research on the very processes of children's retellings. The contribution of this study is contingent on the fact that the analysis is focused on how retelling and remembering are done by children. Another important feature of the study is that retelling is investigated over both a short and a long time, and with an interest in the child's perspective on the activity as well.

In this study, two children aged four to five years participate in storytelling activities organized by a teacher. From the larger corpus of data, three retelling activities were chosen to present the results. The reason for selecting these activities is that they are retellings of the same story, retold by the same child in different constellations.

The overall results of this study are that the focus child remembers details and transforms the story in different ways. The analysis reveals six characteristics of the retelling process. Firstly, the focus child retains the basic structure of the story. Secondly, she uses embodied enactments and shifts her tone of voice when representing the different characters in the story. Thirdly, concepts that may be unfamiliar are replaced by more familiar ones, and, fourthly, she transforms the story by introducing new elements. Associative playfulness is the fifth characterization of the retelling. Lastly, the child shifts from (what is presumably) an unknown word to one that sounds similar. This study further illustrates how retelling and remembering are clearly related to the sense the child makes of not only the story but also of the activity she is engaged in.

Study III: Indicating intellectual and emotional states in narrating: Sound symbolism, gesturing, and explicating practices in children's oral storytelling

The topic of Study III is how children in their retelling of oral stories indicate their understanding of the intentions, expectations, and feelings of fictional characters. To analyze this, the focus is on the various communicative means the children use to describe such states. The research question asked in this study is: How do children in retelling oral stories indicate intellectual and emotional states of fictional characters?

Words that refer to such states of mind are conceptualized as mental state terms (e.g., can, want, believe, and think). Emotions in oral storytelling are visible as gestures, for example when the speaker takes the position of fictional characters of stories (Young, 2000). Based on tentative findings of previous research indicating that even sound symbolism may fill such narrative function, whatever means children use to indicate intellectual and emotional states in their oral retelling of stories is therefore analyzed.

In addition to the use of such language being central to the ability to create a meaningful and interesting story, studies of how children manage these features can provide information about how they interpret and understand stories. In this study, analyzing how children use semiotic means to render the intellectual and emotional states of characters implies the children responding to the fictional characters as well as to the audience. This stance has methodological implications; narrating is analyzed as a dialogic/interactive practice (cf. Linell, 2009).

The method used in Study III, as well as in the two previous ones, is video documentation. After listening to stories told by their teacher, the children are asked to retell them to the teacher and to other children. These retellings are analyzed in terms of whether, and if so how, the children indicate the intellectual and emotional states of the characters of the story (e.g., being frightened or thinking). The findings clarify how the children do this in three ways: (i) through explicating, as acknowledged by previous research, (ii) through gestures and facial expressions, and (iii) through sound symbolism.

The educational implications of the findings are discussed in terms of how sound symbolism and gesturing in storytelling are critical to social justice, in allowing children who do not speak the majority language to participate in

storytelling. The findings also indicate that, already at this young age, children are socialized into the practice of storytelling as at heart a performative form of art about human affective and intellectual responses to events and challenges, rather than simply involving the rendering of a series of connected events.

Chapter 6 Discussion

The overarching purpose of this thesis has been to contribute to the domain of early childhood education and care (ECEC) through knowledge about preschool children's oral storytelling, focusing specifically on the processes of sense-making in retelling activities. Empirically, the study is grounded in a localized need to know more about the actual processes of children's retelling, as distinct from their stories as such or their stories as indicators of their linguistic development. Therefore, the interest has been in how processes of responding, remembering, and reshaping unfold and in studying these activities *in situ*. This chapter will present the most important findings in relation to previous research and the theoretical perspective employed.

The research questions asked in the three empirical studies concern how children consider the perceived understanding of their listener(s), how they remember and reshape stories, and how they indicate the intellectual and emotional states of fictional characters in oral retelling activities. This chapter will discuss the contributions of this thesis based on the overall focus and results of the three empirical studies. In the first section I will discuss *processes of responding and the use of communicative means in oral storytelling*, in the second *children's narrative competencies*, and in the third *processes of remembering and reshaping stories*. In the fourth section I will discuss *limitations of this thesis and suggestions for further research*. Finally, I will discuss *the implications and contributions to research and early childhood education and care*.

Responding and the use of communicative means

Through analyzing how children use meta-markers in their narration, as was done in Study I of this thesis, it has been made evident how the participating children respond to their listeners and the fact that they do not necessarily know what they themselves as storytellers know. Adjusting one's narration to one's audience by shifting from speaking within the frame of the story to meta-communicating about the story, as the participating children do, constitutes a critical feature of

appropriating narration as a cultural practice. This thesis contributes detailed insight into how children do this and thus that they are in a process of appropriating this prevalent cultural practice. In addition to clarifying how children use meta-markers to indicate their understanding to others, an additional contribution is showing how children's differing consideration of their listener's potentially different understanding is managed – and by implication made analytically visible – through their speaking from different positions of narration.

Moreover, the analysis of processes of reshaping and remembering in retelling activities in the empirical studies of this thesis has revealed how the children respond to the plot and fictional characters of the stories. The children who participated in this research have done this using a repertoire of communicative means, such as making features of the intellectual and emotional states of characters explicit and using sound symbolism. Embodied enactments such as gestures and facial expressions are additional communicative means the children use to indicate the intellectual and emotional states of characters.

The intentions and emotions of fictional characters are what usually drives a story forward. Accordingly, outcomes of actions derived from these intellectual and/or emotional state(s) can be conceptualized as the psychology of the story (cf. Oatley, Dunbar & Budelmann, 2018). In retelling, the storyteller interprets and expresses these states, for instance using mental state talk (Saklofske et al., 2006). The results from Study III of this thesis indicate that children as young as four to five years indicate the intellectual and emotional states of fictional characters in stories. They do this by, for example, using mental state terms such as “liked” or “was scared”.

As discussed above, previous research has shown that children at this young age may make intellectual or emotional features of stories explicit (Saklofske et al., 2006). However, the additional ways (i.e., gestures, facial expressions, and sound symbolism) they may do this, identified in Study III of this thesis, are less well known. In addition, following one focus child (Emina), as is done in Study II, made it possible to analyze the nature and development of narrative activity. The results show that Emina remembers details of the story on the one hand and, on the other, how the story was told by the teacher (i.e., the very manner in which it was initially told). The latter is evident when, for example, the focus child enacts representations of the different characters in the story through embodied means and shifts in tone of voice in ways that parallel the teacher's previous telling. Similarly, Nelson (1989) interprets a young child's (Emily) repetitions of her parents' stories as linguistically mediating the world. Another parallel to the

collection of *Narratives from the Crib* is that appropriating the cultural tool narrative means not only remembering a story and considering the potentially different understandings of one's listener(s) – as will be discussed below – but also rendering one's story in an engaging presentation (the practice of narration is not merely information transmission but rather entails engaging one's listeners, for example through enactment and getting into character). That children, even at this young age, demonstrate that they pick up these features of narration is shown through the detailed analysis provided in this thesis (Study II).

The findings in this thesis illuminate how the participating children indicate the intellectual and emotional states of characters by making such features explicit as well as through embodied enactments and sound symbolism; this contributes to research on children's oral storytelling and their processes of making sense of stories in terms of what in a sense lies beneath the surface of unfolding events. Based on the findings, I argue that gesturing as well as sound symbolism are critical not only for one's own and others' understanding of stories but also for social justice (cf. Cefai et al., 2015). As communicative resources, gestures and sound symbolism allow second-language speakers to participate in mutual sense-making activities such as oral storytelling. Social justice applied in education, Cefai et al. (2015) explain, seeks to compensate for unequal educational outcomes and provides culturally responsive teaching.

Children's narrative competencies

In line with the sociocultural perspective adopted in this thesis, communicating and learning are conceptualized as appropriation (Wertsch, 1998); that is, in terms of gradually making cultural tools and practices one's own. This perspective implies that appropriation of the cultural tool narrative is dependent on the narrative practices a child is engaged in. The results of Study II reveal that the focus child appropriates the story format, for example, when she retains the structure of the actual story she is retelling.

Appropriating the cultural tool narrative includes mastering such features that ensure that what is being told also makes sense to those who were not present when the events occurred or when the story was initially told (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011). The work of Jean Piaget (1926) has had great impact not only on psychological and educational research but also on the view of children's competencies in early childhood education and care (ECEC). Piaget argued that the inability to perceive matters from the perspective of others before age seven

or eight made it impossible for genuine understanding between children. In contrast, when one focuses on meta-markers, as is done in Study I of this thesis, another picture of children's competencies arises (cf. Pramling, 2006; Pramling & Säljö, 2015, for other analyses of this kind challenging prevalent images of children's ability to understand). The analytical focus in Study I, on how children using meta-markers clarify to the listener what the story is about and how its events can be understood, contributes novel knowledge that is not presented in previous studies within this field. The results from Study I show that children as young as four to five years do take into account the listener's different understanding when they orally retell stories, but that they do not do this consistently. This could theoretically be read as indicating that these children are in the midst of appropriating this cultural practice.

Claiming that children as young as four to five years are able, at times, to consider the perspective of their listener when telling stories does not necessarily mean that all children of this age do so. However, simply showing empirically that these young children are able to do this constitutes a contribution regardless of the generality of this finding to other populations (of 4- to 5-year-olds).

Remembering and reshaping stories

In the first of the three empirical studies (Study I) of this thesis, the results indicated that when the children do not understand a story, they invent, transform, and rationalize an alternative account of the story and its plot. This led to the interest in investigating this further in Study II. As mentioned, the focus child in Study II remembers details from the story as well as how the story was told by the teacher. In addition, the analysis of the processes of retelling and remembering showed how the focus child transforms the story by introducing new elements, replacing concepts that may be unfamiliar with more familiar ones, and shifting from (what is presumably) an unknown word to one that sounds similar. Another result from this research is that associative playfulness characterizes the retelling. It could be questioned whether some of the reported empirical findings, such as the fact that the children in the data (not only in the cases represented in the three studies) exchange presumably unfamiliar words and concepts with more familiar ones, are contingent on their linguistic experiences; that is, that they speak Swedish as an additional language. This may be the case. However, as no comparable data are available on children with other linguistic experiences (native-Swedish speakers), it is important not to presume that this is the case.

Limitations of the present thesis and suggestions for further research

The overall research interest in this thesis concerns how processes of responding, reshaping, and remembering unfold in children's oral retelling. The results of the empirical studies of the thesis have actualized a critical discussion about social justice in ECEC. Social justice in education concerns, among other things, being valued and being a participant (Hartsmar et al., 2021). Children's right to participate in education, according to Swedish regulations setting the framework for the studied institution, is not only about attending education but also having real influence and participating based on their abilities (Swedish National Agency for Education 2019). The children in the present research participate in the storytelling activities in various ways. For example, some participate by using a simple or more complex narrative structure in their retellings (cf. Liberg et al., 1997). Others participate by mimicking sound symbolism and gestures used by their teachers or peers. Inequality in education may appear due to social expectations regarding certain groups (Hartsmar et al., 2021), as well as not allowing or encouraging children to use all the communicative means available. Nevertheless, the chosen excerpts in the three empirical studies represent only some of the participating children's narratives. The reason for this is that the purpose, research questions, and theoretical tools of the three studies have guided the analytical focus, which requires analyzable retellings. It is a limitation of the thesis that there is no, or very little, analytical focus on more than just a few of the participating children's retellings. There is indeed a need for further research in order to address interest in the facilitation of all children's participation and the different ways they appropriate the fundamental tool narrative.

When I began the work on this thesis I was still employed at the participating preschool. The preschool is located in what can be referred to as a multicultural area, and all the children who participated in the present research have a different mother tongue than the majority language of the preschool (i.e., Swedish). Nevertheless, my interest was not in the children's retellings because of their being second-language speakers; my view was that the participating children were ordinary (albeit all unique in their own ways) preschool children with the same right as anyone else to represent contemporary preschool children without being categorized. Still, I have realized (for example, when presenting my research at seminars and when reading the literature) that this view has its limitations. We live in a globalized world, and there is a need for further educational research

illuminating these issues in a quest toward a socially just education. Moreover, the question of whether children shift presumably unfamiliar words to more familiar ones, which was one of the findings in Study II of this thesis, is specific to children with particular language experiences or constitutes more general processes in children (of this age span) will have to be a question for further research.

The analytical focus in this research has been on the participating children and how they use communicative means. The setting of the research is ECEC. In such educational settings, the role of the teacher is significant for both practice and research interest. Previous research has studied, for example, the character of the support teachers offers in children's appropriation of the narrative genre (Oshiro et al., 2019). Moreover, the importance of the nature of the questions teachers ask has been emphasized (e.g., Siraj-Blatchford & Manni 2008; Thulin, 2010), and Ødegaard (2006) recognized that the teacher's questions guide the children's retellings and their learning of what may be worth telling. The excerpts in the three empirical studies of the thesis were chosen with guidance from the research questions. In these excerpts, the role of the teacher is not as visible as it may be in studies specifically addressing the role of the teacher. As mentioned, the present thesis focuses on the children; nevertheless, its implications for ECEC are of great relevance and will be discussed in the next section.

Implications and contributions to research and early childhood education and care

The purpose of this thesis has been to generate insight into preschool children's oral storytelling, with a focus on the processes of sense-making in retelling activities. Moreover, the insights contribute to research on these processes and have implications for ECEC. For example, the thesis contributes to further strengthening and re-conceptualizing young children's capacities for understanding (and explaining), along the lines of Pramling (2006) and Pramling and Säljö (2015), and also goes beyond these studies in investigating this issue in the context of children's oral retelling of stories.

One implication – given (a) the culturally critical standing of narrative as a form of sense-making, communication, and remembering, and (b) the findings that children consider (respond to) the listener, the story, and its characters, but not consistently – is that supporting children in appropriating the cultural practice of narration (and thus, by implication, the cultural tool of narrative) is pivotal to supporting their development more generally. To recap what is pointed out in

Study II: When supporting children's narrating and remembering, teachers also support their sense-making, and vice versa. Another implication – given (c) that the children in this research show that they tend to take over (i.e., appropriate) not only the unfolding events of stories but also the manner in which the teacher initially told the story – is that preschool teachers should try to ensure that the stories they tell are presented in an engaging form. A strand of professional development, according to this line of reasoning, may thus be to delve into theorizing and empirical work on drama pedagogy in ECEC (cf. Fler & Kamaralli, 2017). A more basic implication of this thesis, and based on what has been argued here, is, of course, that preschool teachers actually do tell stories to children and support them in retelling these stories as well as in telling new ones. Oral storytelling is a fundamental tool for sharing experiences, making sense, and remembering; thus, its appropriation is a critical feature of enculturation and is therefore critical to the practice of early childhood education. Moreover, the findings in this thesis have implications for ECEC and for how teachers support the development of an understanding of others' and one's own intentions and feelings (i.e., social reasoning).

Chapter 7 Svensk sammanfattning

Inledning

Denna avhandling handlar om barns muntliga berättande. Det övergripande intresset är hur förskolebarn muntligen återberättar berättelser som de har fått höra. Muntligt berättande är en grundläggande kulturell praktik för meningsskapande som barn tidigt introduceras i, i hemmet eller i förskolan. Denna forskning handlar om muntligt berättande i en svensk förskolekontext och involverar förskolebarn i åldrarna tre till fem år.

Avhandlingen har en bakgrund i ett mångårigt intresse för utvecklingspsykologi och relaterade forskningsfält, huruvida barn förstår att andra förstår annorlunda. I denna avhandling inkluderar denna fråga förståelsen för intellektuella och känslomässiga tillstånd hos fiktiva karaktärer i berättelser. Analytisk uppmärksamhet riktas därför mot hur responsiva processer utvecklas i barns muntliga återberättande. Dessutom har denna avhandling en bakgrund i berättande och minnande som en kreativ och meningsskapande praktik. Processer av barns minnande och återskapande av berättelser är därför av analytiskt intresse.

Inom utvecklingspsykologin återfinns främst studier med intresse för barns berättande för att få information om deras kognitiva utvecklingsnivå (Engel, 1995). Strukturen av barns berättande har setts som ett ”fönster” in till strukturen av deras tänkande. I motsats till det fokuserar denna avhandling på processer i barns återberättande.

Syfte och forskningsfrågor

Det övergripande syftet med denna avhandling är att bidra med kunskap om förskolebarns muntliga berättande, med fokus på meningsskapande processer i berättaraktiviteter. Den övergripande forskningsfrågan är hur processer för responderande, minnande och omskapande utvecklas i barns muntliga återberättande. Aktiviteter där barn på en förskola återberättar en berättelse som förskolläraren tidigare berättat – studeras *in situ*, det vill säga i vardagliga aktiviteter. Med intresse för dessa processer ställs följande specifika forskningsfrågor i de tre empiriska studierna:

Tar barn hänsyn till den upplevda förståelsen av sina lyssnare när de återberättar berättelser, och i så fall hur görs detta?

Hur minns och omformar barn, berättelser i aktiviteter av återberättande?

Hur indikerar barn de intellektuella och känslomässiga tillstånden hos fiktiva karaktärer i berättelserna när de återberättar muntliga berättelser?

Tidigare forskning

Forskning om barns berättande härrör från ett antal discipliner, såsom psykologi, sociolingvistik, kommunikationsstudier, pedagogisk psykologi och pedagogik. I föreliggande forskning studeras vardagliga aktiviteter i en förskola. Följaktligen ligger den aktuella studien inom fältet pedagogisk psykologi/pedagogik.

Barn introduceras tidigt till muntligt berättande i hemmet (se exempelvis Liberg m fl., 1997; Nelson, 1989, för studier i hemmiljö) och i förskola (se exempelvis Glenn-Applegate m.fl., 2010; Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011, för studier i förskola)

I en studie av Pramling och Ødegaard (2011) analyserades barns berättande i två olika berättandeaktiviteter i förskola. Analyserna visar att lärarna stöttade barnen i att förmedla sina erfarenheter i en narrativ form. Stöttningen skede främst genom frågor, klarläggande av berättandets olika aspekter såsom aktörer, miljö, och händelser. Det vill säga genom att ställa vissa typer av frågor som är viktiga för utvecklingen av logiken i en berättelse.

I familjesammanhang är muntlig berättande sannolikt mindre strukturerat än i utbildningsinstitutioner (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011). En banbrytande studie av berättelser i hemmiljö är *Narratives from the Crib*, redigerad av Katherine Nelson (1989). Intresset för det arbetet var barnets språkutveckling, hennes fantasi och förståelse. Samtalet mellan ett litet barn (Emily) och hennes föräldrar vid läggdags samt barnets monologer analyserades.

Värdet av berättaraktiviteter som främjande av literacitet och kognitiva färdigheter i utbildningssammanhang i de tidiga åldrarna är enligt Theobald (2016) väl dokumenterat. Mindre fokus har dock i både utbildningssammanhang och i forskning riktats mot interaktionella aspekter av muntligt berättande i vardagliga sammanhang. I en intervjustudie av Henricsson och Claesson (2016) framkom det att lärare kan känna en viss tvetydighet i att berätta i klassrummet. Å ena sidan känner de sig inbjudande och närvarande när de berättar muntligt för eleverna, å andra sidan känner de sig ibland osäkra när de gör det eftersom berättande till stor

del handlar om eget engagemang och det finns alltid en risk att berättelsen inte tas emot på ett bra sätt.

Frågan om huruvida barn inser att andra kan förstå annorlunda än dem själva och vad detta innebär för hur de kommunicerar intresserade Piaget (1923/1926). För att undersöka denna fråga bad han barn att berätta något för ett annat barn. Piaget hävdade att resultaten visade att barnen i stor utsträckning inte förstod varandra därför att de var egocentriska. Hans slutsats var att förmågan att förstå andra människor inte visades förrän vid sju års ålder. Senare studier som analyserades av Hundeide (1977), visar att tolkningen av empirin är beroende av vilket perspektiv forskaren anlägger, vilket ger upphov till olika syn på barnets kompetenser. Studier som Donaldson (1978) genomförde visar att när barn får berätta, framstår deras kapacitet på ett sätt som inte var uppenbart i de experiment som Piaget genomförde. Slutsatsen som drogs av Donaldson (1978) var att narrativa resonemang är meningsfulla för barn på ett sätt som experiment inte är. På liknande sätt visade en re-analys av Piagets intervjuer med barn (Pramling, 2006) med fokus på metamarkörer som en kommunikativ resurs (till exempel "som om", "gillar") som barn använder ger en annan bild av små barns förmågor. Att tala i termer av "som om", enligt Pramling (2006), visar snarare en lyhördhet för lyssnaren, en medvetenhet om att det kan krävas en kommunikativ anpassning för att göra sig förstådd.

I den här avhandlingen syftar responsivitet inte bara på hur barn beaktar lyssnarens olika förståelse när de återberättar berättelser; berättaren responderar också på berättelsen, dess fiktiva karaktärer och deras utmaningar. Ett vanligt begrepp för sådana psykologiska fenomen är termer för mentala tillstånd (eng. mental state terms). Sådana termer är viktiga resurser för att kommunicera och tänka om intellektuella och känslomässiga upplevelser. Resultatet av handlingar som härrör från dessa tillstånd kan följaktligen konceptualiseras som berättelsens psykologi (jfr Oatley m.fl., 2018). En grundläggande kommunikativ resurs i muntligt berättande är gestaltning genom exempelvis gester (Evaldsson & Abreu Fernandes, 2019), och blickar och ansiktsuttryck (Bateman, 2020). Gester används ofta omedvetet men tolkas som meningsfulla av lyssnaren (Henricsson, 2022), berättaren anpassar gesterna som respons på lyssnaren. Enligt Kunene m.fl., (2017) finns det kulturella skillnader i hur muntliga berättare använder gester och att det påverkar exempelvis berättelsernas längd. Ytterligare en kommunikativ resurs i återberättande för att indikera intellektuella och känslomässiga tillstånd hos fiktiva karaktärer är ljudsymbolik. Även i användningen av ljudsymbolik finns det kulturella och språkliga variationer runt om i världen. Det japanska språket är till

exempel rikare på ljudsymbolik än det engelska språket (Imai m.fl., 2015) Sasamoto och Jackson studerar onomatopoeia (ljudhärmande ord, till exempel pang, glittrar, susar) som ett kommunikativt fenomen, med fokus på vad och hur det kommuniceras. Onomatopoeia gör alltså det möjligt för talaren att kommunicera inte bara kodade begrepp utan också sinnesintryck, vilket är svårt att uppnå enbart genom att använda ord. Detta är i linje med synen på kommunikation som tas i föreliggande avhandling; det vill säga att vi inte bara överför information, så att säga, utan ger också perspektiv på fenomen och erfarenheter. Det vill säga, centralt för kommunikation är hur vi förmedlar vår förståelse, känslor och attityder.

En hel del forskning har intresserat sig för minnet och för att förklara denna mentala process har forskare använt olika metaforer (för en sammanfattning av studier, se Säljö, 2011). När vi konfronteras med fenomen som vi inte förstår tenderar vi att relatera dem till fysiska föremål, vilket framgår av en översikt över minnesmetaforer gjord av Roediger (1980). Han fann att rumsliga metaforer ofta används och metaforer som lagring och kodning (jfr en dator) ofta använts i studier av minne. Med ambitionen att studera "rent minne", försökte Ebbinghaus (1885/1998) eliminera effekterna av människors tidigare erfarenhet och kunskap. Denna forskning har varit starkt inflytelserik i psykologin. Senare forskning avslöjar dock att människors förmåga att komma ihåg är mycket känsliga för sammanhanget (se exempelvis Hirst & Manier, 1995). I denna avhandling förstås barns berättande och minnande som beroende av hur de uppfattar den aktivitet de engagerar sig i. En begränsning av de rumsliga metaforerna är att de inte identifierar minnandets processer. Modeller av hypotetiska mentala processer är inte tillräckligt kopplade till beteende (Säljö, 2011). Därför är begreppet minnande (snarare än minne) i min studie av stor betydelse. Minnande avser en aktiv process som är beroende av den mening deltagare ser i aktiviteten. Hur själva studieobjektet konstitueras skiljer sig således åt mellan en kognitiv (utvecklings)psykologisk tradition och en sociokulturell tradition.

Muntligt berättande förstås i denna avhandling som en grundläggande kulturell praktik och berättelsen ses som ett verktyg för meningsskapande, lärande och minnande. Detta perspektiv på berättande harmonierar med Bruners (1990) beskrivning av hur såväl individer som kollektiv organiserar sina erfarenheter i berättelser med syfte är att skapa mening och minnande. Den forskning som jag bygger på är grundad i traditionen av minnande som en meningsskapande praktik, dvs. en sociokulturell tradition som går tillbaka på Bartletts klassiska studie publicerad redan 1932. Bartlett lät vuxna individer återberätta berättelser de fått läsa. Analysen visade bland annat att det som var svårt att komma ihåg, blev

omformulerat beroende på vad som framstod som meningsfullt. Grunden för denna process, enligt Bartlett, är en strävan efter mening. Bartletts studie belyser det nära förhållandet mellan berättande och minnande. I linje med Bartletts perspektiv är tillvägagångssättet i föreliggande studie att minnande inte bara är en reproduktiv praktik utan också en responsiv, kreativ, meningsskapande sådan (se också Wertsch, 2002).

Ett sociokulturellt perspektiv på kommunicerande, lärande och minnande

Den här studien antar ett sociokulturellt perspektiv på kommunicerande, lärande och minnande, så som det är grundat utifrån arbetet av den ryska utvecklingspsykologen Lev Vygotskij (1896–1934). Perspektivet har vidareutvecklats av samtida forskare som Wertsch (2007) och Säljö (2005). Det sociokulturella perspektivet bidrar med begreppsliga resurser för att studera kulturella aktiviteter såsom berättande. Kärnan i ett sociokulturellt perspektiv är den teoretiska ambitionen att förklara och klargöra sambandet mellan mänsklig utveckling och social interaktion (Wertsch m.fl., 1995).

Utifrån detta perspektiv ses berättande som ett kulturellt redskap som förmedlar högre mentala funktioner, såsom tänkande, problemlösning och minnande. Begreppet redskap användes till en början med hänvisning till fysiska verktyg som papper och penna men utökades senare till att även omfatta en metaforisk användning av språk och andra symboliska redskap som är avgörande för mänskligt lärande och meningsskapande (Säljö, 2005). Inom detta perspektiv ses språket som det viktigaste kulturella redskapet. Dessutom – i linje med perspektivet i denna avhandling – ses språket som handling, som ibland kallas språkande, den aktiva formen (se till exempel Liberg, 1990; Linell 1998). Jag använder i denna avhandling återberätta, respondera, minnas och omforma för att belysa det faktum att barnen är aktiva i dessa processer.

Människor organiserar sina erfarenheter i berättelser för att skapa mening och för att minnas (Bruner, 1990). Berättelse utgör en rik resurs för individers (och kollektivs) minnande; en berättelse kan innehålla mycket information som skulle vara svårt att minnas utan detta meningsfulla förhållande (Säljö, 2011). Berättelse är exempel på ett kulturellt redskap, dvs. mänskliga uppfinningar som formar hur vi uppfattar vår värld, oss själv och omformar psykologiska funktioner (till exempel hur vi minns).

Begreppet mediering refererar i denna avhandling till att vi i kontakt med världen tolkar och agerar med hjälp av kulturella redskap (Wertsch, 2007). Användningen av det kulturella redskapet berättande ses som att det medierar högre mentala funktioner, inklusive aktivt minnande. Från ett sociokulturellt perspektiv används begreppet *appropriation* som metafor för lärande, vilket avser en individs gradvisa övertagande av ett kulturellt redskap (Säljö, 2005). Ett kulturellt redskap som exempelvis berättande kan aldrig bli helt bemästrat. Vi kan behöva kämpa med det här redskapet återigen när vi möter nya utmaningar, inklusive nya former av berättelser (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011; Säljö, 2005).

Metod och metodologi

Utifrån beskrivet forskningsintresse har denna avhandling ett kvalitativt tillvägagångssätt som möjliggör en utökad förståelse för deltagarnas handlingar i sitt vardagliga sociala och kulturella sammanhang (Cohen m.fl., 2011). En bakgrund för denna avhandling är *from3to3*-projektet som startade 2005 i Kanada. Syftet med detta projekt är att utveckla språk och socialt resonemang hos barn från 3 år i förskola till år tre i skolan. 2013 startade programmet också i en svensk förskola³, liksom i det kanadensiska projektet, med flerspråkiga barn. Konkret går det till på det sättet att deltagande lärare samlar barnen och berättar rim, ramsor och muntliga sagor. Barnen uppmuntras senare att muntligen återberätta dessa för och med varandra.

Med intresse för hur barn muntligen återberättar, valdes videodokumentation för att generera data. I studier av aktiviteter *in situ* i vardagliga miljöer, som i den här studien, är videobaserad observation den lämpligaste metoden för att uppnå en så rik empiri som möjligt (Heath, 2011). Från en större mängd data, bestående av 21 berättaraktiviteter som involverar 15 barn i åldrarna 3 till 5 år, valdes 6 aktiviteter ut för djupare analys. De dokumenterade aktiviteterna analyserades enligt principerna för interaktionsanalys (Jordan & Henderson, 1995; jfr Derry m.fl., 2010; för ett empiriskt exempel, se Lagerlöf, 2015). Den transkriberade datan har översatts till engelska, med ett försök att efterlikna deltagarnas tal snarare än att tillhandahålla grammatiskt korrekt text.

³ Projektet är formellt sett inte längre aktivt i den aktuella förskolan, däremot används erfarenheter och kunskaper från projektet fortsatt i utbildningen och undervisningen.

Etiska aspekter

Denna forskning har genomförts på en förskola i Sverige med barn i åldrarna tre till fem år. Unga barn i förskola är beroende av omsorg för sitt välbefinnande från bland andra sina lärare. I forskning i förskolemiljöer har även forskarna ansvar för att se till barnens välmående (Mockler, 2014). Under hela forskningsprocessen kan det uppstå olika etiska dilemman som forskaren behöver ta hänsyn till. Till exempel kanske det inte alltid är självklart för barnen när forskaren filmar aktiviteterna. Om så är fallet kommer barnen inte att ha möjlighet att säga nej till att delta (se Larsson m.fl., 2019). Dessutom kan små barn inte förutse alla möjliga konsekvenser av att delta i forskning och kan därför ses som sårbara. Det globala forskningsintresset för utbildning och omsorg i tidiga barnaår har dock aktualiserat vikten av att se barn som pålitliga och frivilliga informanter i forskning (Farrell, 2016).

För att få samtycke och för att engagera barn i forskning är en relation mellan forskaren och barnen avgörande (Dockett m.fl., 2009). Eftersom jag var en av lärarna såväl som forskare på den deltagande förskolan vid tidpunkten för datagenereringen, var en relation redan etablerad mellan mig och barnen. Det var viktigt för mig att förklara för barnen när och varför jag spelade in video och att be om deras tillåtelse att göra det. Eftersom jag kände barnen väl kunde jag också, lättare se om de skulle visa tecken på att inte vilja bli filmade, vilket inte hände under datagenereringen.

Barnens vårdnadshavare har informerats, både personligen och skriftligt, om utformningen och syftet med studien. Alla barn, deras föräldrar och deltagande lärare har gett sitt tillstånd till att delta. Forskningen följer de etiska riktlinjerna från Vetenskapsrådet. Det innebär att allt deltagande var frivillig och att alla deltagare i den avhandlingen (utom den deltagande forskaren) getts pseudonymer.

När jag som forskande lärare bedrivit forskning inom min egen praktik behöver jag vara medveten om och hantera etiska frågor genom hela forskningsprocessen, exempelvis kan det handla om maktrelationer. En kritisk reflektion är att föräldrarnas samtycke kan ha underlättats av att jag redan hade en relation till dem och barnen i min roll som förskollärare. Det innebär att föräldrar och barn litar på mig och därför kan vara särskilt villiga att delta. Jag är medveten om maktrelationen och att de är beroende av mig som ansvarig för deras barns välmående under tiden på förskolan; kanske har detta gjort det svårare för dem att avböja deltagande i forskningen. Det fanns dock inga tecken på en sådan tveksamhet när jag pratade med föräldrarna.

Sammanfattning av de tre delstudierna

Detta kapitel sammanfattar de tre delstudierna. I samtliga studier deltar barn fyra till fem år gamla i berättaraktiviteter i förskolan. Läraren berättar muntligt en berättelse för ett enskilt barn eller för en grupp. Senare återberättar barnet/barnen berättelsen för lärare och andra barn.

Studie I: Barns återberättande som en responsiv praktik

Syftet med den första empiriska studien (Pihl m.fl., 2017) är att undersöka om, och i så fall hur, barn i sitt berättande visar att de uppmärksammar det faktum att lyssnaren inte tidigare hört berättelsen och därför inte vet vad de själva vet.

Till den aktuella studien valdes tre tillfällen av muntliga berättaraktiviteter ut för närmare analys. Analysen visar att barnen växlar mellan att tala inom berättelsens ram och att prata om berättelsens olika drag. Vidare klargör analysen hur barnen i sitt återberättande talar från olika positioner. Analysen konceptualiseras som olika nivåer. Nivå 1: klargöra vad en berättelse handlar om (d.v.s. ta rollen eller positionen som en kommentator); Nivå 2: berätta berättelsen om karaktärer, i det här fallet en räv och en krabba (dvs. tar rollen eller positionen som berättare); Nivå 3: tala som en agent inom ramen för berättelsen (dvs. ta rollen eller positionen som en karaktär i berättelsen).

Bidraget till intresset för barns förståelse och berättande från den aktuella studien är kunskap om hur barn genom att skifta från att tala inom ramen till att metakommunicera om berättelsen indikerar att de responderar på (svarar på) lyssnarens förståelse. I studien diskuteras också att barn plockar upp hur läraren och andra barn tidigare berättat berättelsen medan logiken och berättelsens poäng är svårare att förstå. Utan den förståelsen gör de om berättelsen, vilket bildar utgångspunkt för analytiskt intresse i Studie II.

Studie II: Barns minnande och transformering av berättelser vid återberättande

I den andra empiriska undersökningen (Pihl m.fl., 2018) undersöks ett barns återberättande och minnande. I motsats till det dominerande intresset i tidigare forskning om barn och minne som en produkt fokuserar den här studien på processerna i återberättande och minnande.

De frågor som ställs är: Vad plockar barnet upp från berättelsen? Vilka teman presenterar hon och hur transformerar hon berättelsen när den återberättas?

Dessutom rymmer studien ett intresse för barnets perspektiv på aktiviteten; det vill säga hur aktiviteten framstår för barnet.

De övergripande resultaten av denna studie är att fokusbarnet kommer ihåg detaljer och på olika sätt omvandlar berättelsen. För det första behåller fokusbarnet grundstrukturen i berättelsen. För det andra förkroppsligar hon berättelsens skeenden och ändrar sitt tonfall när hon representerar de olika karaktärerna i berättelsen. För det tredje ersätts begrepp som sannolikt inte är kända för henne med mer bekanta begrepp, och för det fjärde omvandlar hon berättelsen genom att introducera nya element. Associativ lekfullhet är det femte karaktärsdraget i återberättandet. Slutligen skiftar barnet från (vilket förmodligen är) ett okänt ord till ett som låter likartat. Denna studie illustrerar vidare hur återberättande och minnande tydligt är relaterade till den mening barnet gör av inte bara berättelsen utan också av den aktivitet som hon deltar i.

Studie III: Indikera intellektuellt och emotionellt tillstånd i berättande: Ljudsymbolik, gester och explicita praktiker i barns muntliga berättande

Intresset för den tredje empiriska studien är hur barn i sina återberättande av muntliga berättelser visar sin förståelse för fiktiva karaktärs avsikter, förväntningar och känslor (mentala tillstånd). För att kunna analysera detta ligger fokus därför på hur barn använder ord som beskriver sådana tillstånd, det som ibland på engelska (det finns ingen lämplig översättning av detta begrepp på svenska) kallas mental state terms (tex. kan, vill, tror och tänker). Tidigare forskning indikerar att även ljudsymboliska uttryck kan fylla en sådan narrativ funktion. Därför är alla resurser barn använder för att indikera intellektuellt och emotionellt tillstånd i sitt muntliga återberättande av berättelser av analytiskt intresse. Förutom att användningen av ett sådant språk är centralt för att kunna skapa en meningsfull och intressant berättelse, kan studier av hur barn hanterar dessa funktioner ge information om hur de tolkar och förstår berättelser. Även i Studie III har videodokumentation använts som metod. Efter att ha lyssnat på berättelser som berättas av deras lärare, återberättar barnen dessa för lärarna och för andra barn. Dessa återberättelser analyseras i termer av om, och i så fall hur, barnen indikerar det känslomässiga och intellektuella tillståndet hos karaktärerna i berättelsen (till exempel att vara rädd eller att tänka). Resultaten visar hur barnen gör det på tre sätt: (i) genom att förklara med ord (ex. rädd), (ii) genom gester och ansiktsuttryck och (iii) genom ljudsymbolik. De pedagogiska implikationerna av

resultaten diskuteras i termer av hur ljudsymbolik och gester i berättande är viktigt för social rättvisa. Genom att låta barn som inte talar majoritetsspråket delta i berättandet och att få använda alla tillgängliga kommunikative resurser. Resultaten indikerar också att barn redan vid denna unga ålder socialiseras in i en berättarpraktik som i grund och botten en performativ konst som handlar om mänskliga, känslomässiga och intellektuella responser på händelser och utmaningar, snarare än bara återgivningen av en serie sammankopplade händelser.

Diskussion

Det övergripande syftet med denna avhandling har varit att bidra till orådet utbildning i de tidiga barnaåren, på engelska kallat *early childhood education and care* (ECEC). Bidraget är kunskap om förskolebarns muntliga berättande, med fokus specifikt på processer för meningsskapande i aktiviteter av återberättande. Intresset har varit hur processer för responderande, minnande och omformulerande utspelar sig och att studera dessa aktiviteter *in situ* (i pågående vardagliga aktiviteter). Detta kapitel kommer att presentera de viktigaste resultaten i relation till tidigare forskning och det teoretiska perspektivet.

Genom att analysera hur barn använder metamarkörer i sitt berättande, som gjordes i Studie I har det visats hur de deltagande barnen responderar på sina lyssnare och det faktum att de inte nödvändigtvis vet vad de själva som berättare vet. Att anpassa sitt berättande till sin publik genom att övergå från att tala inom berättelsens ram till att metakommunicera om berättelsen, som de deltagande barnen gör, utgör ett kritiskt inslag i att tillägna sig berättande som en kulturell praktik.

Dessutom har analysen av processer för att omformande och minnande i aktiviteter av återberättande avslöjat hur barnen reagerar på handlingen och fiktiva karaktärer i berättelserna. De har gjort detta med hjälp av en repertoar av kommunikativa resurser. Barnen indikerar intellektuella känslomässiga tillstånd hos fiktiva karaktärer i berättelser genom att till exempel använda termer för mentalt tillstånd som "gillade" eller "var rädd". De ytterligare sätten (d.v.s. gester, ansiktsuttryck och ljudsymbolik) som identifierats i denna forskning är dock mindre kända.

Genom att följa ett fokusbarn (Emina), som görs i Studie II, blev det möjligt att analysera karaktären och utvecklingen av berättaraktiviteten. Resultaten visar att Emina minns detaljer i berättelsen och på vilket sätt berättelsen berättades av läraren. Det senare är uppenbart när fokusbarnet till exempel gestaltar

representationer av de olika karaktärerna i berättelsen genom förkroppsligande resurser och skiftar i tonfall på ett sätt som är parallellt med lärarens tidigare berättande.

Baserat på resultaten i denna forskning hävdar jag att gester såväl som ljudsymbolik är avgörande inte bara för ens egen och andras förståelse av berättelser utan också för social rättvisa (jfr Cefai m.fl., 2015). Kommunikativa resurser som gester och ljudsymbolik tillåter andraspråkstalare att delta i ömsesidiga meningsskapande aktiviteter som muntligt berättande.

I linje med det sociokulturella perspektivet som antagits i den här avhandlingen, förstås lärande som appropriering (Wertsch, 1998), det vill säga att gradvis ta över kulturella redskap och praktiker. Detta perspektiv innebär att appropriering av det kulturella redskapet berättande är beroende av de praktiker barnet är engagerat i (Pramling & Ødegaard, 2011). Att justera sin berättelse till en publik på det sätt som barnen i denna forskning gör utgör en kritisk funktion för att appropriera berättande som en kulturell praktik. Denna forskning bidrar med en detaljerad inblick i hur barn gör detta och därmed hur de är i en process för att appropriera denna betydelsefulla kulturella praktik.

Denna uppsats bidrar till att ytterligare förstärka rekonceptualiseringen av små barns förmåga att förstå (och förklara), i linje med Pramling (2006) och Pramling och Säljö (2015), samt att gå vidare från dessa studier genom att undersöka denna fråga i samband med barns muntliga återberättande.

Avhandlingens begräsningar

Resultaten av avhandlingens empiriska studier har aktualiserat en kritisk diskussion om social rättvisa i ECEC. Social rättvisa i utbildning handlar bland annat om att delta (Hartsmar m.fl., 2021). Barns rätt att delta i utbildning handlar också om att ha ett reellt inflytande och delaktighet utifrån sin förmåga (Skolverket 2019). Barnen i den aktuella forskningen deltar i berättaraktiviteterna på olika sätt. En del deltar till exempel genom att använda en enkel eller mer komplex narrativ struktur i sina återberättande (jfr Liberg m.fl., 1997). Andra deltar genom att imitera ljudsymbolik och gester. Ojämlighet i utbildning kan uppstå på grund av sociala förväntningar på vissa grupper (Hartsmar et al., 2021), samt att inte tillåta eller uppmuntra barn att använda alla tillgängliga kommunikativa resurser. Den valda excerpten i de tre empiriska studierna visar endast några av de deltagande barnens berättelser. Anledningen till detta är att de tre studiernas syfte, forskningsfrågor och teoretiska verktyg har styrt den analytiska inriktningen, vilket kräver

analyserbara återberättelser. Det är en begränsning i denna forskning att det inte finns något, eller väldigt lite, analytiskt fokus på mer än bara ett fåtal av de deltagande barnens återberättelser. Det finns ett behov av ytterligare forskning med intresse för hur lärare kan underlätta alla barns deltagande och de olika sätten de tillägnar sig det grundläggande redskapet berättande.

När jag började arbetet med denna avhandling var jag fortfarande anställd på den deltagande förskolan. Förskolan ligger i vad som kan kallas ett mångkulturellt område och alla barn som deltagit i den aktuella forskningen har ett annat modersmål än förskolans majoritetsspråk (dvs svenska). Trots det var mitt intresse inte barnens återberättelser som andraspråkstalare utan att de deltagande barnen var vanliga (om än alla unika på sitt sätt) förskolebarn med samma rätt som alla andra att representera samtida förskolebarn utan att kategoriseras. Jag har insett att denna uppfattning har sina begränsningar. Vi lever i en globaliserad värld och det finns ett behov av ytterligare utbildningsforskning som belyser dessa frågor i en strävan mot en socialt rättvis utbildning.

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Appendix A

Excerpts Study I

Excerpt 2_a: Clarifying what the story is about

1.	AGNETA:	((håller pekfingret framför munnen)) sh °nu så ska jag säga en sak till° (.) <u>igår</u> (.) på samlingen (.) då var inte Emina här. /.../ Men när inte du ((pekar på Ensar)) var här åh inte Sofia ((pekar på Sofia)) åh inte Emina ((pekar på Emina)) (.) då berättade vi en <u>ny</u> saga (.) <u>igår</u> . (.) Är det nån som kommer ihåg?
		((holds her index finger in front of the mouth)) sh ° Now I'll say one more thing ° (.) <u>yesterday</u> (.) at circle time (.) Emina wasn't here. / ... / But when you ((points at Ensar)) wasn't here and not Sofia ((points at Sofia)) and not Emina ((points at Emina)) (.) we told a <u>new</u> story (.) <u>yesterday</u> . (.) Is there anyone who remembers?
2.	Children:	[Aa Aa
		[Aa Aa
3.	AGNETA:	[vad den sagan handlade om?
		[what the story was about?
4.	Yones:	Ja, ja det var en krabba [och en räv
		Yes, yes it was a crab [and a fox

Excerpt 2_b: Distinguishing between *what* happened and *how* it happened

8.	Yones:	Det handlade om en krabba åh en räv och krabban sa ska vi köra tävling den som hinner först har vinnit. Åh när krabban sa (.) klara färdiga kör sprang räven (.) räven sprang och sprang (”springer” med armarna)) och sen började bli (jättetrött) åh (.) åh han lekte eh eh
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		(.) han letade efter (vrider huvudet och tittar åt höger och vänster) Han letade efter _
		It was about a crab and a fox and the crab said shall we run a race the one who comes first has won. And when the crab said (.) ready set go the fox ran (.) The fox ran and ran ((“runs” with his arms)) and then started to get (tired) and (.) and he played eh eh (.) he was looking for (turns his head, looking right and left), he was looking for _
9.	Adam:	efter räven ((Agneta vänder huvudet mot Adam))
		for the fox ((Agneta turns her head towards Adam))
10.	Yones:	Han letade efter (.) HAN LETADE EFTER ((tar tag i Agnetas ben. Agneta vänder sitt huvud mot Yones)) (.) åh det är jag
		He was looking for (.) HE WAS LOOKING FOR ((grabs Agneta’s legs. Agneta turns her head towards Yones)) (.) And it’s me
11.	MUNA:	Yasir ska berätta en saga
		Yasir will tell a story
12.	Yones:	Sen (.) sen han eh sen (han till räven sen sa) sen sa krabban till räven ”Har du inte kommit <u>ännu</u> jag är redan här” sen sa oh nej de vann mig
		Then (.) then he uh then (he to the fox then said) then the crab said to the fox "Have you not arrived <u>yet</u> , I’m already here" then said oh no they won me
13.	AGNETA:	Vem vann?
		Who won?
14.	Yones:	<u>Krabban</u>
		<u>The crab</u>
15.	AGNETA:	hur kunde krabban vinna?
		how could the crab win?
16.	Yones:	jag vet inte den var den var snabb
		I don’t know it was it was fast

17.	AGNETA:	den var <u>så</u> snabb? (.) Hur (.) Vad var det som hände i sagan? ((tittar runt på alla barnen i ringen))
		it was <u>so</u> fast? (.) How (.) What was it that happened in the story? ((looks around at all the children in the circle))
18.	Adam:	Han bara eh krabban bara sprang fort ((gör en snabb rörelse med handen))
		He just uh the crab just ran quickly ((makes a quick movement with his hand))
19.	AGNETA:	°var han så snabb och kunde springa före? °
		°was he so fast and could run ahead? °
20.	Ensar:	ja
		yes
21.	Adam:	ja FÖRE ÄN RÄVEN (.) före än räven
		yes BEFORE THAN THE FOX (.) before than the fox
22.	Ensar:	han springde fort
		he runned fast

Excerpt 2_c: Retelling together

41.	AGNETA:	Okej då gör vi tillsammans, vi som var med ((gör en cirkelrörelse med båda händerna)) berättar för Emina, Sofia och Ensar (.) okej. (.) ° Det var en gång en. ° ((böjer sig framåt))
		Okay, let's do it together, we who attended ((making a circular motion with both hands)) tell Emina, Sofia and Ensar (.) Okay. (.) °once upon a time there was a° ((leans forward))
42.	Olivia:	en
		a
43.	Yones:	räv
		fox
44.	Adam:	räv
		fox
45.	AGNETA:	ahh
		ahh

46.	Yones:	och han var <u>så törstig</u> , törstig så han gick nu till (.) bäcken och dricker vatten ((böjer sig fram och låtsas dricka)) och han dricker och dricker
		and he was <u>so thirsty</u> , thirsty so he now went to (.) the creek and drinks water ((leans forward and pretends to drink)) and he drinks and drinks
47.	Adam:	och han ((böjer sig också fram och låtsas dricka))
		and he ((leans forward and pretends to drink))
48.	Yones:	sen kom bara en krabba åh vad synd krabba >du är inte snabb< (.) <u>Jo</u> det är jag (.) Jag brukar springa (allt till gräset och så komma tillbaka hit) okej då, du är snabb
		then a crab just arrived and what a pity crab > you are not fast < (.) <u>Yes</u> I am (.) I usually run (to the grass and then come back here) okay then, you're fast
49.	Adam:	ska vi tävla? ((Agneta och Adam har ögonkontakt))
		Shall we race? ((Agneta and Adam have eye contact))
50.	Yones:	nu ska vi tävla då
		now we race then
51.	AGNETA:	Ja ska vi <u>tävla</u> ? Sa krabban
		Yes, shall we <u>race</u> ? the crab said
52.	Adam:	ja det kan vi göra ((Agneta och Adam har ögonkontakt))
		yes we can do that ((Agneta and Adam have eye contact))
53.	Yones:	om jag (.) OM JAG hållde så ((håller sina händer bakom ryggen. Agneta och Adam har ögonkontakt))
		if I (.) IF I held like that ((holds his hands behind his back. Agneta and Adam have eye contact))
54.	Ensar:	((springrörelser med armarna))
		((running movements with his arms))
55.	Yones:	°och sen säger klara färdiga gå (.) nu ska vi springa och se vem som kommer först. Okej då! °
		° and then says ready set go (.) now let's run and see who comes first. Okay then! °
56.	Adam:	De sprang krabban sprang så fort utan räven
		They ran the crab ran so fast without the fox

Excerpt 3_a: The questions of *what* happened and *how* return

8.	Adam:	<u>En</u> gång (.) det var räv som som som eh eh en krabba som var i vattnet och han kom upp från eh eh vattnet och sen i eh ska vi tävla? "Ja det kan vi göra". Och sen (.) och sen dom stog (.) dom (.) på doms plats åh åh och sen det var en en en en rä (.) räven han han räknade en (.) han sa klara, färdiga kör åh sen dom spring. (.) Och och krabban var i i i rävens svans
		Once upon a time (.) It was a fox which which which eh eh a crab which was in the water and he came up from eh eh the water and then in uh shall we race? "Yes, we can do that". And then (.) and then they stood (.) they (.) at their places and, and, and then there was a a a fo (.) the fox he he counted one (.) He said ready set go and then they run. (.) And and the crab was in in in the fox's tail
9.	AGNETA:	Oh
		Oh
10.	Adam:	och räven sprang fort fort fort och fort fort (.) <u>och</u> och och krabban gick från av från från rävens eh eh eh <u>svans</u> (.) Och sen han eh eh han han gömde sig i <u>stenet</u> och sen han räven han hitta en en (.) en <u>krabban</u> åh sen sen (.) och sen sagan var slut.
		and the fox ran fast fast fast and fast fast (.) <u>and</u> and and the crab went off from from from the fox' eh eh eh <u>tail</u> (.) And then he eh eh he he hid in <u>the stone</u> and then he the fox he found one one (.) a <u>crab</u> and then then (.) and then the story ended.
11.	AGNETA:	okej, men vem kom först då? (.) Vem [vann?
		Okay, but who came first then? Who [won?
12.	Adam:	[krabban
		[the crab
13.	TEACHER:	<u>hur</u> kunde han komma först?
		<u>how</u> could he come first?

14.	Adam:	han vann med (.) <u>fort</u> med sina (.) sina, sina sina eh eh fötter. Dom var fort.
		he won with (.) <u>fast</u> with his (.) his, his eh eh feet. They were fast.

Appendix B

Excerpts Study II

Excerpt 1 a: *Changing an unfamiliar word to a more familiar one*

1.	TEACHER:	så
		so
2.	Emina:	det var en gång en... en hm tjej som är räb och hon knackade (knackar på sin
		once upon a time there was a... a hm girl who is a fox and she knocked (knocks
3		stol) på dörren. Snälla får jag sova på din eh säng? sa hon.
		on her chair) on the door. please can I sleep on your eh bed, she said

Excerpt 1b: *Retaining meaning with alternative wording*

4	Emina:	Neej det finns inte (slår ut med händerna) plats. Men då kan jag ta svansen
		noo there is no (throws her hands out) room. but then I can take the tail
5		(tar efter en låtsassvans) och och eh lägga på huvudet. Och sa pojken okej. Och
		(grabs a pretend tail) and and eh put on the head. and the boy said okay. and
6		sen när det bli... sol sen han sa jag ha jag har ingen kyckling (högt) jag
		then when it gets... sun he said I have no chicken (said in a loud voice) I

Excerpt 1c: *Enacting the story with embodied means and shifting tone of the voice*

7	Emina:	vill ha min kyckling sa han, och hon. Och sen knackade på annan dörr (knackar
---	--------	---

		want my chicken he said, and she. and then knocked on another door (knocks
8		på sin stol). Och sen snälla pojken får jag (spara) sova till din säng? Det finns
		on her chair) and then kind boy can I ((save)) sleep to your bed. there is
9		inte plats (slår ut med händerna) Och sen, då ska jag lägga svansen här i
		no room (throws her hands out) and then, then I will put my tail here in
10		huvudet (tar upp handen till huvudet). Och han sov och sov och han sov (
		the head (raises her hand to her head). and he slept and slept and he slept
11		tyst, lutar huvudet och blundar) och sen när det blir sol, då sa han jag har
		quietly (leans her head and shuts her eyes) and then when it gets sun, then

Excerpt 1d: *Transforming a subject through shifting from a word to a similarly sounding one*

12	Emina:	inte mina godisar. Och sen då får du gå ut här och (lägger armarna i kors)
		he said I have not my candies. and then you get to walk out here and (puts
13		prenada [<i>tolkning</i> 'promenera']
		her arms in cross) prenada [<i>interpretation</i> : Swedish: 'promenera', i.e.

Excerpt 1e: *Introducing and excluding elements from the story*

14	Emina:	så... och sen... spring kom hunden och hoppade på räven och sen ... räven
		walked] so... and then... run came the dog and jumped on the fox and
15		spring så fort (viftar med en arm) som han kunde.
		then... the fox run so fast (waves her arms) he could

16	Emina:	och sen han läggde sig och hunden sede svansen och sen (talar högre) ... tog
		and then he putted (put) him and the dog saw-ed (saw) the tail and then
17		(tar ett steg fram och låtsas ta något) svansen. Och han gråter räven, han
		(speaking louder)... took (takes a step forward and pretends to take
18		har ingen svans. Och sen... snipp slapp var svag eh eh ehm en till saga (ler)
		something) the tail. and he cries the fox, he has no tail. and then... <i>snipp</i>
		<i>slapp var svag</i> eh eh ehm another story (smiles)

Excerpt 2a: *Meta communicating about the story*

1	Emina:	Okej det börjar så här, en gång det var en en en räv. Sen han ville gå ut och
		okay it starts like this, once upon a time there was a fox. then he wanted to
2		sova. Knacka på dörren (Knackar med handen på stolen)
		go out and sleep. knock on the door (knocks with her hand on the chair)
3	Maria:	knackar med sin hand på sin stol
		(knocks with her hand on her chair)
4	Emina:	snälla kan jag sova hos dig? Nej nej nej det finns inte plats. Snälla jag ska
		please can I sleep with you? no no no there is no room. please I will
5		jag ska. (lägger huvudet bakåt) Ahh jag igen glömmer. Jag ska lägga min
		I will (leaning her head backwards) ahh I again forget. I will put my
6		svans på min huvude. Okej då... kom in bara (med ljusare röst). Sen när det
		tail on my heady (head). okay then... just come in (said with a lighter voice).

7		var morgon räven han han tog sin käpp (Håller sina händer mot axeln som
		then when it was morning the fox he he took his cane (holds her hands
8		om hon håller en käpp) och läggde uppe (lyfter händerna ovanför huvudet)
		towards her shoulder as if holding a cane) and putted (put) up (lifts her hands
9		sen sa (tar ner händerna igen) var är min käpp var är min käpp (med ljusare
		above her head) then said (lowers her hands) where's my cane where's my
10		röst) Du ska ge mig godis (ler) sa räven mmm (blundar, tittar upp i taket)
		cane (said with a lighter voice) you shall give me candy (smiles) said the fox
11		aha (lutar sig framåt) jag vill få godis nu jag har tappat min... (tittar upp i
		mmm (shuts her eyes, then looks at the ceiling) aha (leans forward) I want
12		taket)
		candy now I have lost my... (looks up at the ceiling)

Excerpt 2b: Telling that something happens but not how it happens

13	TEACHER:	vad hade han tappat? Sin?
		what had he lost, his
14	Emina:	vänder sig på stolen och blundar
		turns around on the chair and closes her eyes
15	TEACHER:	var det käppen?
		was it the cane?
16	Emina:	käppen, nu får du ge mig godis jag har tappat min käpp
		the cane, now you'll have to give me candy I have lost my cane
17	TEACHER:	mm
		mm

18	Emina:	och sen han hade (äte) godis han gått på en annan. Gick gick (går med fingrarna på
		and then he had ((eated[ate])) candy he walked on another. walked walked (walks
19		stolen och sina ben)gick. Knackade (knackar på sin stol)
		with her fingers on the chair and her legs) walked. knocked (knocks on her chair)
20	Maria:	M knackar på sin stol
		(knocks on her chair)
21	Emina:	snälla kan jag sova hos dig? Nej nej det finns inte plats (med starkare röst) sa den
		please can I sleep with you? no no there is no room (said with stronger voice) it said
22		mannen. Men jag kan lägga min svans under. Okej då (ljusare röst) sa den pojken.
		the man. but I can put my tail under. okay then (with a lighter voice) said that boy
23		Och sen när det var igen morgon då sa han, var är mina godis var är min godis (med
		and then when it was again morning then he said, where's my candy where's my

Excerpt 2c: *The lamb returns through adbering to a song*

24	Emina	ljusare röst) Och sen, nu får du ge mig en kyckling sa räven. Och sen... mmm vad
		candy (with lighter voice) and then, now you'll have to give me a chicken said the
25		heter... okej då men glöm inte den (säger sedan något ohörbart). Då ska sova, sa
		fox. and then... mmm what's called... okay then but don't forget it (inaudible). then
26		räven. Och sen när... det var morgon igen då räven den sa, var är min kyckling!
		shall sleep, said the fox. and then when... it was morning again then the fox it said,

27		(med starkare röst) nu får du ge mig en en bä bä vita lamm, jag vill äta upp
		where's my chicken (with a stronger voice) now you'll have to give me a a
28		den (ler) sa... okej då nu får ja, nu går jag annans hus nu (sen sovde igen tills
		<i>bä bä vita lamm</i> (bä bä white lamb), I want to eat it (smiles) said... okay then
29		han) gått gått gått (går med fingrarna på stolen, vänder sig med ryggen mot
		now I get, now I go another's house now ((then sleepped (slept) again to he))
30		kameran) ha jag såg en till hus knacka (knackar med handen i stolen)
		walked walked walked (walks with her fingers on the chair, turns her back towards the camera) hah I saw one more house knock (knocks with her hand on the chair)
31	Maria:	(knackar med handen på stolen, ler)
		(knocks with her hand on the chair, smiles)

Excerpt 2d: *Introducing sounds*

60	TEACHER:	men vad hände vad hände sen med hunden då?
		but what happened what happened then with the dog
61	Emina:	hon gick i an i annan hus och sen rörde sig rörde sig hunden. Den sa, det
		she went in in another house and then moved then moved the dog. it said,
62		är min bä bä vita lamm jag går (reser sig från stolen, låtsas ha en säck över
		it's my <i>bä bä vita lamm</i> I walk (gets up from the chair, pretends to have a
63		axeln) springer springer (gör springande steg) och sen plötsligt den öppnas
		sack over her shoulder) runs runs (makes running movements) and then
64		(korsar och öppnar händerna) och där var den (med viskande röst). Den sa

		suddenly it opens (crosses and opens her hands) and there it was (with a
65		voff voff (går tillbaks till sin stol) jag vill ha, den den sa aoooo aooo han
		whisper). it said <i>bon-vow</i> (gets back on her chair) I want, it it said aaaaa
66		vill äta upp min min svans. Vad hjälpte di min mina ben? Jag hjälpte... att
		aaaa he wants to eat my my tail. what helped you my my legs. I helped...
67		ni ska gå. Vad hjälpte du näsan då? Luktade vilken stans skall du gå. Vad
		for you to walk. what did you help then the nose. smelled where you should
68		hjälp ni ögon? Vi har kollat var du går. Men vad har du hjälp svansen?
		go. what help you eyes. we've seen where you go. but what have you helped
69		Inget (med bestämd röst). Då släpper jag dig (reser sig upp från stolen och
		tail, nothing (with a firm voice). then I'll let you go (gets up from the chair
70		låtsas ta av sig en svans). Och sen hunden (lägger sig på golvet) aoom han
		and pretends to disconnect the tail). and then the dog (lays down on the
71		tog rävens svans. Nej min svans, sen räven jaga den ah ah ha (kryper fram
		floor) aoom he took the fox's tail. no my tail, then the fox chased it ah ah ha
72		över golvet) nej min svans min svans. (reser sig upp) nu <i>snapp slut sagan</i>
		(crawls across the floor) no my tail my tail. (gets up) now <i>snapp slut sagan</i>
73		<i>var slut</i>
		<i>The end</i>

Excerpt 3: *Elaborating with two identities*

104	Emina:	<i>sen och sen när det var morgon det var morgon... nu får du ge mig en hund ohh</i>
		<i>then and then when it was morning it was morning... now you'll have to give me a</i>
105		(tittar mot T och ler)
		<i>dog ohh</i> (looks at the teacher and smiles)
106	TEACHER:	hi hi hi
		hi hi hi
107	Emina:	nej ingen huund (lutar sig mot dataskärmen och höjer rösten)
		no not a dooog (leans forward towards the screen and raises her voice)
108	TEACHER:	var det inte så
		wasn't it like that
109	Emina:	nej... det e det var en det var en lamm igen det var en lamm
		no... it eh it was a it was a lamb again it was a lamb
110	TEACHER:	jaha
		aha
111	Emina:	hon vet hon vet inte den Eminan (pekar mot dataskärmen och ler)
		she doesn't she doesn't know that Emina (points at the screen and smiles)
112	TEACHER:	den där Emina har har glömt hur det var men den här Emina kommer ihåg
		hat Emina has forgotten how it went but this Emina remembers
113	Emina:	ja
		yes
114	TEACHER:	vad konstigt tycker jag att den Emina har glömt men den här kommer ihåg.
		how strange I think that that Emina has forgotten but this one remembers
115	Emina:	det var jag
		it was me

116	TEACHER:	är det du
		is that you
117	Emina:	ahh
		yees

Appendix C

Excerpts Study III

33.	Sofia:	bang!
34.	Yones:	Bom bang boff (slår med ena knytnäven i golvet) bang bom.
35.		(slår ihop sina händer och sätter sig upp igen) boff
36.		(slår ut med båda armarna) He he (ler och tittar på T)

Excerpt 1: liked

1.	Yones:	\$de va en gång ((vänder huvudet mot barnen som sitter i
		\$once upon a time ((turns his head towards the children in
2.		ringen))en ↑pojke (.) <u>sen</u> han <u>GI</u>llade att\$ gå till sin
		the circle)) a ↑boy (.) <u>then</u> he <u>LI</u> ked to\$ visit his
3.		mor:mor
		gran:ma:

Excerpt 2: tricking him, deciding, and being scared

6.	Yones:	jag måste ha en ((böjer sig framåt på golvet)) jag måste
		I must have a ((leans forward on the floor)) I must
7.		lura honom och sen (.) sa lejone:: ((vrider huvudet
		trick him and then (.) said lion::((slowly turns the head
8.		långsamt åt ena sidan och sedan uppåt)) och SEN sa räven
		to one side and then upwards)) and THEN the fox said
9.		du ((vrider huvudet snabbt åt ena sidan))
		you ((turns his head quickly to one side))
		kan inte äta upp mig >vaför då?< För ja:g är den som
		can't eat me >why?< 'Cause I: am the one who
10.		bestämmer <u>alla</u> ((en huvudrörelse)) är rädda

		decides <u>everyone</u> ((turning his head)) is afraid
11.		för mig(.) °så så° kom kom och °se° att alla är
		for me (.)°so so° come come and °see° that everyone is
12.		rädda för mig
		afraid of me

Excerpt 3: wrinkling, sneaking and looking sad

24.	Yones:	<u>Sen</u> han vaknade ((skrynklar ihop ansiktet, kniper ihop
		<u>Then</u> he woke up ((he wrinkles his face, squeezes his
25.		med ögonen)) ma:ha:ha:ha:ha:hä:e:h ((tittar upp och
		eyes tight shut)) ma:ha:ha:ha:ha:hä:e:h ((looks up with
26.		ansiktet öppnar upp)) <u>sen</u> (.) sen hon sa bara för
		an open face)) <u>then</u> (.) then she said just for
27.		present ska du ha katten med dig (.) Hon gick å hämtade
		present you should take the cat (.) She went for the
28.		katten å sen katten r::ullade((gör en svepande rörelse
		the cat and then the cat r::olled ((sweeping gesture
29.		med båda händerna från vänster till höger sida)) i
		with both hands from the left to the right side)) in
30.		pojken säng sen (.) sen <u>smög</u> hon försiktigt till
		the boy's bed then (.)then she <u>snuck</u> carefully to the
31.		dörren °sen blev det en knarr° (.) <u>sen</u> sen hade hon smög
		door °then there was a squeak° (.) <u>then</u> then she snuck
32.		till dörren sen hon hon <u>stÅngde</u> ((gör en gest som att
		to the door then she she <u>shUt</u> ((gesturing like
31.		stänga en dörr)) sen >det lÅ::ter- ((lutar sig framåt
		closing a door)) then >it sOU::nds- ((leans forward
32.		med händerna i golvet))
		with the hands on the floor))
33.	Sofia:	<u>bang!</u>
		<u>bang!</u>
34.	Yones:	<u>BOM</u> bang boff ((slår samtidigt med ena knytnäven tre
		<u>BOM</u> bang boff ((while hitting one fist three
35.		gånger i golvet)) bang bom ((sätter sig på knä och
		times on the floor))bang bom ((sits on his knees and
36.		slår ihop sina händer)) <u>BO::F</u>((samtidigt som han reser

		claps his hands together))_BO::F: ((while standing on
37.		sig på knä och gör en cirkelrörelse med båda armar
		his knees and does a circling movement with both arms
38.		utsträckta över huvudet till golvet)) He he he:h ((ler
		extended over his head to the floor)) He he he:h ((smiles
39.		och tittar på T))
		and looks at T))
40.	Olivia:	hi hi hi hi hi
		hi hi hi hi hi

Excerpt 4: crossed arms

19.	Emina:	och SEN när det blir ↑sol (.) då sa han jag har inte
		and THEN when there is↑sun(.) he said I havn't
20.		mina::h ((tittar mot kameran och ler)) \$godisA:r\$
		my::h ((looks at the camera and smiles)) \$candiE:s\$
21.		((vänder tillbaka huvudet mot flickan som lyssnar))
		((turns her head towards the girl who is listening))
22.		å ↑sen då får du gå ut hÄR å (.) ((lägger armarna i kors
		and↑then you go out hERE and (.) ((crosses her arms
23.		och kniper ihop läpparna)) "prenada" ((tolkning:
		and pinches her lips))"prenada"((interpretation:
24.		promenera.
		stroll, Swe. promenera.

Excerpt 5: do not fear

13.	Yones:	sen (.) sen en dag han gick till sin mor:mor: (.)
		then (.) then one day he went to his his græ:ma: (.)
14.		↑sen (.) hon hade en ↑jÄt↓te((mo:di)) schä::ng
		↑then (.) she had a ↑glä↓nt((mo:di)) be::d
15.		>sen när det var natt< han LI::ggde sig på den (.)
		>then when it was night< he LAY::ed down on it (.)
16.		sen (.) en en en dr:A::ke kom in sen sa han
		then(.) a a dr:A::gon came in the he said

17.		f:r::Ukta inte ((ler och tittar på T))
		don't fE::ar((smiles and looks at T))
18.	TEACHER:	((Tittar på Yones och nickar))
		((looks at Yones and nods))
19.	Yones:	↑ <u>SEN</u> (.) <u>mormor</u> kom (.) >hon blev rädd<
		↑ <u>THEN</u> (.) <u>grandma</u> came(.) >she got scared<
20.		sen draken försvann
		then the dragon disappeared

Excerpt 6:

45.	Yones:	sen °han blev° ((skrynklar ihop ansiktet som i en
		then °he become° ((wrinkles together his face in a
46.		bekymrad min)) han hon >stängde< ((gör en stängande
		worried expression) he she >shut< ((closing
47.		rörelse med armen)) sen (.) hon sa hä: hä: hä:
		movement with the arm))then (.) she said hæ: hæ: hæ:
48.		((skrynklar ihop ansiktet)) och ↑katten sa ” <u>MJAU</u> °mjau ”
		((wrinkles his face)) and ↑cat said “ <u>MEOW</u> °meow
49.		mjau° sen sen sa hon bara för bara bara för pres (.)
		meow°” then the she said just becaus’ just just becaus’
50.		pres- (.) och
		pres- (.) and
51.		<u>hunden</u> sa e:m: du ska ha och du ska ha
		the dog said e:m: you will have and you will have
52.		hunden och du ha bara för °present° ska du ha
		the dog and you have just as °present° you will have
53.		↑ <u>kalven</u> i din säng. sen hon ska ((vrider huvudet
		the ↑calf in your bed. then she will ((turns his head
54.		snabbt åt båda sidorna)) hämta kalven
		at both sides in a quick movement)) bring the calf
55.		och la hon i sängen. SEN sen hon sjungde en
		and laid her in the bed. THEN then she sang a
56.		vaggvisa sen (.) e:hum: ((tittar snett åt sidan
		lullaby then (.) e:hum: ((looks obliquely
57.		uppåt))(ha) hon smög försiktigt till dörren sen sen

		upwards)) (ha) she sneaked gently to the door then (.) then
58.		(.) sen (.) sa sen låte det BOM ((böjer sig
		(.) then (.) said then it sounded BOM ((leans
59.		fram och slår nävarna i golvet))
		forward strikes his hands on the floor))
60.	Olivia:	((slår sin ena näve i golvet))
		((strikes one hand on the floor))
61.	Adam:	((knyter sina händer och i en nedåtgående rörelse))
		((ties his hands in a movement downwards))
62.	Yones:	PA (reser sig upp till sittande igen) sen ((tittar
		PA (rises into a sitting position) then ((looks
63.		ner)) (.)^osen sen^o po- hon^osa^o po- sen pojken
		down)) (.) ^o then then ^o bo- she ^o said ^o bo- then the boy
64.		[muhää ((skrynkler ihop ansiktet i en gråtande min))
		[mä:hä:ä ((wrinkles his face in a crying expression))
65.	Olivia:	[hä:ä: ä:
		[uhää
66.	Yones:	sen sen e:hum ↑katten sa [”(↑)MJAU:” ” °mjau:”
		then then e:hum ↑the cat said [”(↑)MEOW:” “”(↑)meow ^o :”
67.	Olivia:	[“°mjau:” “°mjau:”
		[“°meow:” “°meow:”
68.	Yones:	och <u>HUNDEN</u> ((spärrar upp ögonen)) sa [”>(↓)VOFF<” ”
		>(↓)VOFF<”
		and <u>THE DOG</u> ((eyes wide open)) said [“>(↓)WOOF<”
		“>(↓)WOOF<”
69.		” >(↓)VOFF<” ” >(↓)voff<”
		” >(↓)WOOF<” ” >(↓)woof<”
70.	Olivia:	[Voff voff
		[woof woof
71.	Yones:	och ↑KALVEN ((spärrar upp ögonen)) sa [>bä:hä:ä:ä: < ((skakar
		hastigt
		and THE ↑CALF ((eyes wide open)) said [>bä:hä:ä:ä: < ((shakes
72.		på huvudet i sidled))
		his head quickly in a vertical movement))
73.	Olivia:	[bähää
		[bähää

Excerpt 7

25.		>Nej nej< ((tittar leende mot kameran)) och sen han tog
		>No no< ((looks at the camera smiling)) and then he took
26.		°h:u::nd° ((tittar mot kameran, knyter ihop händerna
		°dh:o::g° ((looks at the camera, ties the hands together
27.		och lutar dem mot sin högra axel)) å han går
		and let them lean at the right shoulder)) and he walks
28.		((reser sig upp och börjar gå samtidigt som hon säger))
		((stands up and starts walking while saying))
29.		å går å går °å går å går å gått å gått°
		and walk and walk °and walk and walk and walked and walked°
30.		((Höger hand är knuten och vilar mot axeln)) och sen
		((Right hand is knotted and rest against the shoulder)) and then
31.		han (.) >öppnade< (5 s.) så
		he(.) >opened< (5 s.) so

Appendix D

The transcription system employed in Study I. A modified version of what has been used in Conversation Analysis (Atkinson & Heritage 1984).

Symbol	Meaning
?	Inquiring intonation
(.)	Micro pause, A brief pause, usually less than .2 seconds
(10 s.)	Very long pause in seconds
:::	Colon or colons indicate prolongation of vowel
N[o [word	Left bracket indicate the onset of overlapping speech
((comments))	Words in double parentheses indicates the researcher's comments
“different voice”	Citation marks enclose impersonations of other speakers (voices)
<u>Underscore</u>	Stressed sounds or syllables
(inaudible)	Inaudible speech
(words)	Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript
°sotto voce°	Quiet speech

ALL CAPS	Indicates shouted or increased volume in speech
>quicker<	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more rapidly than usual for the speaker.
<slower>	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more slowly than usual for the speaker.
-	Indicates interrupted talk

Appendix E

Transcript conventions

The transcription convention used in Study III is a modified version of Gail Jefferson's transcripts notation as presented in Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction (Lerner, 2004).

Symbol	Meaning
(.)	Pause
(10 s.)	Very long pause in seconds
:::	Colon or colons indicate prolongation of vowel or consonant, a stretched sound
Over[lapping [speech	Left bracket indicates the onset of overlapping speech
((comments))	Comments made by the researcher
“different voice”	Citation marks enclose impersonations of other speakers (voices)
(inaudible)	Unhearable speech
(words)	Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript
°sotto voce°	Quiet speech
\$word\$	Dollar sign indicates smiley voice, or suppressed laughter
>quicker<	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more rapidly than usual for the speaker.
<slower>	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more slowly than usual for the speaker.
-	Indicates interrupted talk

<u>under</u>	Underlining denotes emphasis, with capitals indicating even greater emphasis
ALL CAPS	Loud speech
↑↓	Arrows indicates shifts into especially high or low pitch

Appendix F

Consent form

Göteborg 2015-04-15

Till vårdnadshavare

Hej,

Förskolan Almgården/ Peppargatan 7-9 ingår i ett projekt tillsammans med Mary Thelander/ Kanada om att stötta barns berättande och sociala förståelse. Inom ramen för detta projekt genomför jag nu på halvtid ett uppsatsarbete vid Göteborgs universitet. Två dagar i veckan arbetar jag kvar på förskolan. Då vi nu har nytillkomna barn sedan projektet startad i oktober 2013 skickar jag ut denna medgivandeblankett. Uppsatsen skrivs inom den nationella forskarskolan, Forskarskola i kommunikation och relationer som grundläggande för barns lärande (FoRFa). För att följa arbetet med berättande och hur barnen berättar och förstår berättelser behöver jag dokumentera arbetet. Detta görs genom att filma våra berättelseaktiviteter. Dessa filmer analyserar jag sedan för att ha som underlag när jag skriver. Materialet kommer att användas till forskande ändamål samt undervisningssyfte. Deltagande är frivilligt och att varje deltagare har rätt att avbryta sin medverkan när de så önskar. För att kunna genomföra och spela in berättelseaktiviteterna behöver jag tillåtelse från dig som vårdnadshavare. Jag ber dig därför att fylla i talongen och återlämna denna till mig så snart som möjligt. Studien följer Vetenskapsrådets forskningsetiska principer. När jag (tillsammans med mina handledare) skriver om studien kommer barnen och förskolan att ges fingerade namn. Tveka inte att kontakta mig eller mina handledare om du har några frågor. Vänliga hälsningar Agneta Agneta Pihl Niklas Pramling Louise Peterson agneta.pihl@gu.se niklas.pramling@ped.gu.se louise.peterson@ped.gu.se Institutionen för pedagogik, kommunikation och lärande Göteborgs universitet Box 300 405 30 Göteborg 031- 786 XXXX

Vårdnadshavare till:

☐ Ja, jag ger tillåtelse att mitt barn får delta i studien. ☐ Nej, jag vill inte att mitt barn deltar.

Målsmans underskrift:.....

Namnförtydligande:.....

Part II The empirical studies

I Pihl, A., Peterson, L., & Pramling, N. (2017). Children's re-storying as a responsive practice. In S. Garvis & N. Pramling (Eds.), *Narratives in early childhood education: Communication, sense making and lived experience* (pp. 89–101). Routledge.

II Pihl, A., Peterson, L., & Pramling, N. (2018). Children remembering and reshaping stories in retelling. *Journal of Early Childhood Education Research*, 7(1), 127–146.

III Pihl, A., Peterson, L., & Pramling, N. In press. Indicating intellectual and emotional states in narrating: Sound symbolism, gesturing and explicating practices in children's oral storytelling. *Research on Children and Social Interaction*.

Through stories, people get to know themselves and others and children are introduced to the practice of oral storytelling in early years. Previous research on oral storytelling in early childhood has mainly focused on the children's language abilities and the story as a product. In contrast, the purpose of this thesis is to generate insight into preschool children's oral storytelling, with a focus on the processes of sense-making in retelling activities.

Through video documentation of retelling activities in a Swedish preschool, processes of responding, remembering and reshaping in children's oral retellings have been studied. Three empirical studies have been conducted within this thesis and a sociocultural perspective on communication, learning and remembering has been adopted.

The results of the three studies show that the children take into account the understanding of their listener(s) when retelling stories, remembers details from the story and transforms the story into what more readily makes sense. Finally, the findings clarify that the children indicate the intellectual and emotional states of the characters in the stories they retell through mental state terms; gesturing and facial expressions; and sound symbolism.



Agneta Pihl is a lecturer at the city of Gothenburg. She has a background as a preschool teacher and her research concerns sense making processes in preschool children's oral retelling.

