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Have I got a story to tell you...

I am sure you have heard this offer before, from friends, family members, teachers and (of course) storytellers. Humans have told stories to each other since the inception of language. Stories are how people communicate what it means to be human. They tell of emplaced, relational tragedies, challenges and joys of living. Stories are spoken, gestured, danced, dramatised, painted, drawn, etched, sculpted, woven, stitched, filmed, written and any combination of these modes and more (Phillips & Bunda, 2018, p. 3). The word *story* emerged in English in the 1200s, derived from the Latin word *historia*, referring to an account of what had happened. The roots of story are embedded in the sharing of life's happenings (Smith, 2007). Storytelling is understood as human instinct; "a survival impulse like the drives for nourishment, shelter, and procreation" (Leeming, 1997, p. 3).

The term storytelling has come to be used across the arts. In this book, we look to storytelling as the oral art form where a teller performs a story with a live audience. Both teller and listener experience the story together in the same place at the same time. In this understanding there is no bound book or screen present to separate the relationship between the teller and the listener. The storyteller holds the story in her mind and uses words and gesture to bring the story alive in response to the listeners. German Jewish philosopher, Walter Benjamin (1955/1999) described the act of storytelling as the storyteller drawing from her experience or that of others and "making it the experience of those who are listening to the tale" (p. 87).

Louise: In my practice as a storyteller, this is exactly the intention that drives my storytelling: to make the story the lived experience of the audience – that they feel that they are in the story.

Listeners can connect with the characters and accompany the teller on the journey of experience, then emerge with new insight and understandings. To fairy tale scholar, Jack Zipes (2005), the storyteller is “an actor, an agent, a translator, an animator, and ...a thief who robs treasures to give something substantive to the poor” (p. 17). The treasures are the collective pool of stories of humanity. Storytellers hear or read stories and take what they like, then transform them with their personal and ideological viewpoints to perform (verbally and kinaesthetically) a substantive tale for their chosen audience.

Unfortunately, western stories and western scholarship of storytelling dominates. Such as Thai Master Storyteller Wajuppa Tossa noted, when she asked Isan children in North East Thailand to list folktales, most listed Western fairytales, such as “Little Red Riding Hood” and “Cinderella” (Tossa 1999, p. 148). This is indeed a tragedy, as it is through stories that we come to understand our own cultural identities, and then through immersion in stories from cultures other than our own that we broaden our intercultural understanding. We argue that children need to know the stories of their own culture and of others to grow with open-mindedness and empathy as a global citizen. In particular, we claim space for the stories and teachings of the East¹ from many of the world’s oldest cultures, including the longest living culture, Aboriginal Australians, along with Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Vietnamese and Thai cultures. All of these cultures have rich oral storytelling traditions.

Aboriginal Australian creation stories, named by English anthropologists as Dreaming stories or Dreamtime stories², hold a unique name in each of the hundreds of Aboriginal

¹ East, here is used as originally defined – geographically east from the Old world. Australia (though then named New Holland) is included in the East with the Hindoostan (India), China, Japan, Siam (Thailand) and Cochin China (Vietnam) as seen in John Wilkes 1796 map of Modern Asia. Such notions of West and East grew out of European colonising thinking. Colonised Australia has often since been categorised as part of the West, because the construction of Australia as a nation was dominated by European (in particular English) cultural thinking, practices and societal structures.

² Unfortunately, the dream-related terminology serves to make light of the complexities of the concepts in Aboriginal Australian creation stories, “by emphasising their putatively magical, fantastic and illusory attributes” (Nicholls, 2014)

languages (e.g., Jukurrpa in Walpirri language (Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2015)) have been told across tens of thousands of years, telling of life with giant marsupials and changing land formations (Cane, 2013). The spirituality and lore of Australian Aboriginality is taught through stories ritually passed on across hundreds of generations (Turner, 2010). In India, the great epic works of the Ramanyana and the Mahabaratha are kept alive through storytelling from generation to generation (Parthasarathy, 1998). For thousands of years in India, different cultures, religions, and languages have been interwoven through written and told stories that are context-focussed (Ramanujan, 1989). The long history of Chinese oral and written literature and storytelling traditions (see Campany, 2015; Miller, 2000; Shepherd, 2007) are particularly influenced by Confucius and the Taoist classics of Lao Tzu (Leeming & Sader, 1997). Across the varied provinces of China different public storytelling genres have emerged over generations (such as pingshu from the North: Ningxia, Sichuan, Hubei provinces; to the kwv txhij from Southwest: Yunnan province) (Miller, 2000). The earliest Japanese stories, are origin/creation stories – explaining how the universe came to be, like the Aboriginal Australian creation stories, and were recorded in the oldest Japanese book, the Kojiki: an anthology of cosmology, mythology and genealogy (Leeming & Sader, 1997). Zen koan folktales of Japan have long been told to teach new senses of reality (Leeming, 1997), through profound provocations, such as *listen to the sound of one hand clapping*. Storytelling traditions of Thailand are also steeped in moral lessons and spirituality, in particular Buddhism. Folk tales and legends have long been told by elders to instil beliefs in younger generations (All Good Tales, 2018). The storytelling tradition in Vietnam is known as *kể chuyện* and is believed to have existed and been passed on for more than three thousand years, with myths and legends shared from the ancient Vietnamese people, Văn Lang, and the people of the land – Lạc Việt. It is believed that people told tales about the Gods of the Sun, the Earth, and the Rice Plant, the River, the Mountain; however, very rare documents were

kept for retrieval and restoration as a collection of stories (Dinh, 2019). *Kể chuyện* has continued across the millennia, sharing historical tales, community and family values, moral lessons, sacrifice, nation-building and patriotism.

Each of us has been growing with storytelling in the moonlight, around the fire, or flames of candles or oil lamps. As story and storytelling is located, this book brings together a range of relative geographical neighbours to share the wisdom of teaching through storytelling: the pedagogy of storytelling in Australia and Asia. Storytelling across this region is about cultural values and practices, social changes, places, and language. Aboriginal Dreaming stories express deep spiritual connection to specific places of country, as Kakadu Elder, Bill Neidjie (1986) describes:

“Our story is in the land...

It is written in those sacred places.”

And these ancient stories are passed on within language groups by delegated custodians of the story. Tamil folktales begin with ‘in a special place’ (Blackburn, 2001). In the epic Indian stories, such as Ramanyana and the Mahabharata, there are stories inside stories, where the story within illustrates the larger story and vice versa (Henricsson & Claesson, 2020). As Indian folklorist and scholar Ramanujan (1989) explains “there is a continuity, a constant flow of substance from context to object from non-self to self, in eating, breathing, sex, sensation, perception, thought, art, or religious experience” (p. 52). Stories born in the East don’t have the same focus on protagonists that stories born in the West do, as broadly speaking thinking in the west is framed on individualism, whereas thinking in the east is framed on collectivism (Haytova, 2020). We do not intend to set up a binary, but rather alert to broader awareness of story genres and styles across the world. In particular, chapter authors will share the rich storytelling cultures they draw from in the Asia Pacific region.

Storytelling as pedagogy

Before the written word, oral storytelling was the key method of communicating how the local flora and fauna and landscapes came to be, and cultural values and historical events. Such as the Dreaming stories of Aboriginal Australia (e.g., see Noonuccal, 1994; Andrews, 2020) and the Panchatantra of India (to teach five (*pancha* in Sanskrit) treatises (*tantra* in Sanskrit) of wisdom) (Henricsson & Claesson, 2020).

There is a strong tradition of oral storytelling as education, though Zipes (1995) surmised that much of the research on the tradition of oral storytellers is speculative as little was written about storytellers until the nineteenth century. Zipes surmises that tellers came from all sectors of society and told purposeful and functional stories that fitted with their situation. Stories “were disseminated to instruct, warn, satirize, amuse, parody, preach, question, illustrate, explain, and enjoy” (p. 20). The intent of meaning depended on the teller and the situation. Czech philosopher Comenius (2002) of the seventeenth century, considered father of modern education, argued for storytelling in teaching as a practical tool because a story can “teach, engage and entertain at the same time” (p. 193). This tradition of oral storytelling for educational purposes occurred and continues to occur across cultures according to cultural genres and values (Kramsch, 1998). For example, from the Vedic age (approximately 1500-800 BC) to colonisation, a Gurukul education system was widely practised across India, in which *shishyas* (students) were taught orally (largely through story) by *gurus* (teachers) in their home. Mohondas K Ghandi described the Gurukul system as a beautiful tree that was destroyed during the British rule (Rao, 2020).

Storytelling has sustained status as a provocative educator for thousands of years perhaps as German Jewish philosopher Hannah Arendt (1970) explains: “storytelling reveals meaning without the error of defining it” (p. 105). By this Arendt inferred that the meaning of a story is never definitive, as listeners will create meanings applicable to their lives and

experiences. The nature of story and storytelling allows listeners to form multiple possible meanings. To Walter Benjamin (1955/1999), the possibility of multiple meanings is half of the art of storytelling, that is, “to keep a story free from explanation as one reproduces it” (p. 89). Although a storyteller will paint incredible detail of the extraordinary and the ordinary for the listener, the psychological connection of the events is not forced on the listener. This is why Benjamin claimed that story achieves a fullness of understanding that information lacks, because it is up to the listener to interpret the content of the story in the way she understands it. There is scope through story for the listener to make personal connections, an exchange of experience that Benjamin called *Erfahrung*, when one learns something about oneself and the world. Further to this idea of multiplicity of meanings, Fisher (1987) claimed that there is no story that is not embedded in other stories and the meaning and merit of a story is determined through its positioning against other stories. This shared experience of meaning is heightened in the collective context of live oral storytelling as opposed to the individual experience of story fixed through text or new media technologies.

Story provides a way for humans to frame their understanding of the world, giving shape and order to it (Fisher, 1987). To American educational psychologist Jerome Bruner (1986), story is defined as a way of knowing, and that “‘great’ storytelling is about compelling human plights that are accessible to ‘readers’” (p. 35). The accessibility of stories is his key point. Connection with a story is necessary to be affected. Yet, Bruner clarified that the story still needs to allow space for the reader’s (or listener’s) imagination so she can make the story her own. Each person can experience the same story differently. A story will trigger different personal connections, different messages and different levels of meaning for each person in different contexts at different times. Through storytelling, our experiences, desires and anxieties can be made evident to us and to others. Saxby (1994) and Dyson and Genishi

(1994) acknowledge that young children in particular possess a disposition to explain and explore both their inner and outer worlds through story.

In early childhood education, storytelling is recognised as a core component of the kindergarten curriculum proposed by German pedagogue, Friedrich Froebel (Weber, 1984). Many educators acknowledge long lists of benefits of storytelling in early childhood education (Barton & Booth, 1990; P. J. Cooper, Collins, & Saxby, 1994; Egan, 1986; Hamilton & Weiss, 1990; Jaffe, 2000; Paley, 1991, 1997; Rosen, 1988; Phillips, 2000, 2012a, 2013; Trostle Brand & Donato, 2001). These include qualities such as stimulating imagination, improving listening, aiding critical thinking, building understanding of emotions and forming a strong learning community. American educator Nina Jaffe claimed storytelling could be a vehicle “for effective communication of curriculum content, with long-lasting repercussions for children as learners and participants in a complex and demanding world” (p. 175). According to Kuyvenhoven (2009), these benefits account for storytelling as a teaching method, as a tool. What is absent in the literature is a rationale for storytelling itself to affect the entire teaching process, not just as a tool on an ad hoc basis. Both Rosen and Kuyvenhoven have expressed frustration at not being able to source an educational theory of storytelling. Although much is written on the beneficial nature of storytelling in education, storytelling as pedagogy has not adequately been theorised.

The use of storytelling as an engaging and meaningful teaching methodology in the literature is most notable in the work of Kieren Egan (1986, 2005) and Vivian Paley (1991, 1997). Egan proposed that teachers approach a unit of learning as a story to be told. He built his argument on the notion that “children’s imaginations are the most powerful and energetic learning tools” (p. 2) and that stories are an activity that engages children’s imaginations. Egan drew on the power of the story form for teaching. He argued that carefully crafted stories enable children to acquire higher levels of meaning of abstract concepts of humanity,

such as death, love, honour and courage. However, few teachers have fully embraced Egan's storytelling approach to curriculum (Mello, 2001). Whilst, Paley provides detailed accounts of story as the pillar of the kindergarten curriculum. She positioned children as storytellers through a curriculum that consists largely of children dictating stories that are then acted out (P.M. Cooper, 2005).

Globalisation has brought stories from one culture into another, and storytelling methods from one culture into another, such as telling Thai folktales through Japanese kamishibai storytelling³ (Tossa, 2012). Kamishibai storytelling tradition is used as an integrated approach to learning drama, visual arts, literacy skills, reviving language and promoting bilingualism (McGowan, 2015). Storytelling in education has pockets of enthusiasts across Asia and Australia. For example, storytelling has been employed to revitalise Indigenous languages (e.g., Poetsch, Jarrett & Angelo, 2019; Tossa, 1999, 2008, 2012) and as a teaching method in second/foreign language education (Vale & Feunteun, 1995). Michael Jarrett, Gumbaynggir storyteller, revitalises Gumbaynggir language through storytelling across the mid-North coast of New South Wales, Australia (Australian Government, 2020).

Teaching Gumbaynggir in schools benefits the whole community. It breaks down barriers, leads to a better understanding of Aboriginal people, and brings Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together. This kind of sharing is our cultural way (Jarrett, 2021).

Storyteller Wajuppa Tossa found that through the storytelling project she led across many years in North Eastern Thailand to revitalise Lao, Khmer, Thai Khorat, Yo and Phutai languages through a team of trained storytellers sharing Isan folktales, that participating

³ Japanese storytelling through miniature box paper theatre. See Chapter Six for discussion and illustration.

children's interest and pride in their local dialect grew as a result of the project. Storytelling for second language acquisition has been found to improve vocabulary knowledge for young English as a foreign language learners (e.g., see Kalantari & Hashemian, 2015; Li & Seedhouse, 2010). In addition, some research on storytelling in foreign language learning contexts identifies benefits such as understanding the narratives and developing their vocabulary and comprehension in Japan (Uchiyama, 2011), becoming aware of cultural values, and becoming self-confident (Mokhtar, Halim, & Kamarulzaman, 2011), and young foreign language learner's making meaning language through storytelling pedagogy (Nguyen, 2019).

Key principles of storytelling pedagogy

To define and inspire further storytelling pedagogy, we describe four key principles that we see capture the essence of teaching through storytelling. Louise and Thao identified these principles through careful reflection of their own storytelling practice and discussion with other storytellers, including those in this book. The principles of relationality, responsiveness, empathetic imagination and knowledge creation define the pedagogical attributes that storytelling offers. The following describes these principles through discussion with storytelling scholarship, along with Louise and Thao's storytelling experience of each principle. Resonance of these principles will appear across the chapters of this book, further illustrating how they work in education in Asia and Australia.

Relationality

Storytelling is the embodied sharing of stories between people, provoking relationality with others. For storytelling, we gather together, moving closer to hear and see the storyteller. A community is immediately created for the story. Everyone gathered, is in the moment being with the story. The process is defined as being "fully engaged in a story" (Green, Brock, & Kaufman, 2004), with "transportation into the narrative world" (Green & Brock, 2000). Storytelling enables connection with others. Even though storytellers may

share a story that is not their personal experience, a good storyteller will always share something of herself through the intimacy of connection with her audience. Walter Benjamin (1955/1999) describes this quality of storytelling as: "traces of the storyteller cling to the story the way the handprints of the potter cling to the clay vessel" (p. 91). In many ways this personal sharing creates intimacy and thereby draws the listener in, as she identifies her life with that of the storyteller. There are points of connection that resonate with listeners, for they may have had similar experiences or they can imagine that the same could happen to them. Relationships with others are at the core of live oral storytelling. It is not a lone experience; there must be tellers and listeners. This significant feature sets it apart from reading literature. In her work on Hannah Arendt, Julia Kristeva (2001) described live oral storytelling as an experience of "inter-being" (p. 15). The fate of the story depends on being with others. To Kristeva, the co-implication of selves and others is in the loop of storytelling.

When Louise tells stories, those who she tells of are with her, she carefully holds their lived experiences in her hands, gently breathing life into them through embodied performative retelling. As Wajuppa Tossa (2012), explains "effective storytelling is a form of communication from the heart of the storyteller to the heart of the listener. The story, the storyteller, and the audience are equally important in any storytelling performance" (p. 200). Folklorist Katherine Galloway Young (2011) explains the relationality that storytelling evokes by drawing from Merleau Ponty's (1962/1995) notion of intercorporeity, as a sensibility shared between bodies. Stories are made emotional and visible in and through the storyteller's body (Young, 2002), so that "the story inhabits the whole body and the body inhabits the story" to evoke a pedagogical experience of "being-with" (Henricsson & Claesson, 2020, p. 252, 264). By being with others holistically, as more than the cognitive exchange of didactic teaching, storytelling nurtures teacher-student bonding (Kuyvenhoven,

2009). Storytelling implies an existence of community because it requires storytellers and audiences who listen and respond to each other.

For Thao, her language teaching through storytelling speaks volumes of how storytelling nurtures deep relationality as an integration of language, mind, body, and value. She senses the relationality in the act of telling and listeners responding. The relationships and connections as are built up between her and the children. Thao pays more attention to this principle as “Performance is not the heart of the storytelling process; relationship is” (Heckler & Birch, 1997, p. 14). This synergy between the children and herself in teaching and learning diminishes the hierarchical roles in a classroom and school community where children can expand a sense of possible selves. Relationality is seen through an ongoing interest, a shift from shyness to smiling and talking, and a desire for knowledge and understanding. This is important because “when you instil the desire in children, they will begin to be the best they can be” (Small, 2003, p. 40). When Thao tells stories, relationality shapes values of being.

Responsiveness

Storytellers respond to their audiences; they customise their stories for the audience and customise how they tell the story in response to how the audience responds. Storytellers choose the story to tell based on what they read as significant for the audience to hear, and what the audience hears as significant (Stephens, 1992). Louise has previously likened this responsiveness to tailoring: the cutting and fitting clothing to fit the wearer’s body, so too does the storyteller shape a story to fit the listener’s lives and minds (Phillips, 2012b). Historically tailors travelled from house to house and village to village seeking trade and in turn being carriers of news, gossip, and stories. Because of these work conditions, tailors became storytellers (Haase, 2008). A storyteller responding to an audience is somewhat like a tailor listening, measuring, and attending to the requests of the client to fashion garments that fit comfortably and offer new ways of being. Sometimes stories fit some listeners better than

others. Story-tailoring, as Louise suggests, brings attention to sustaining openness through careful listening and responsiveness. It is not about crafting the perfect story, but about inquiring with others through story. Storytelling is a highly responsive pedagogy. This may be because “stories simultaneously remind people of what is universal while celebrating what is unique to a culture” (Heckler & Birch, 1997, p. 9). Therefore, listeners always have something to respond to. “It is responsive to the needs of the people who own it” (Livo & Rietz, 1986, p. 18). Thao sees responsiveness as a harmonious process of mutual understanding between herself and the children. Louise and Thao recognise storytelling as a responsive pedagogy when they respond to children’s cognitive, emotional and imaginative dimensions in storytelling.

Empathetic imagination

In storytelling, we imagine other places, beings and times. Storytellers want listeners to imagine that they are there in the story. As noted earlier “making it the experience of those who are listening to the tale” (Benjamin, 1955/1999, p. 87). Being drawn into a told story can be like walking in the shoes of another: a metaphor for felt engagement with another (Phillips, 2012b). According to American Philosopher Martha Nussbaum (1997), sympathetic responses to stories require imagination and emotional receptivity, and demonstration of “a capacity for openness and responsiveness” (p. 98) what she referred to as sympathetic imagination. If we look to the etymology of *sympathy* – *sym* means together, and *pathos* means feeling. So sympathetic imagination, implies imagining feeling together with the story characters. Storytellers such as Estes (1992) refer to this ability of storytelling to provoke an emergence of the mind with another reality as “sympathetic magic” (p. 387). Whereas we see that with the imagination that storytelling evokes *empathy* is aroused, that is, being ‘in’ (em) the feelings with the characters, aka, being in the shoes of another. Young (1987) describes

this as experiencing the taleworld, in which as the story unfolds, the listener loses her sense of felt time and space merging intersubjectively with the characters as co-inhabitants.

Nussbaum claimed story was particularly useful for children to nurture understanding of others because the complexities of humanity are not always visible in everyday interactions for children to view and understand readily. Understandings of humanity are only reached according to Nussbaum, via the training of the imagination that storytelling fosters. People in stories are imagined, then understood “as spacious and deep, with qualitative differences from oneself and hidden places worthy of respect” (p. 90). To Nussbaum, storytelling cultivates deeper understanding of difference that nurtures respect for others. She proposed that as children grasp complexities of humanity (such as perseverance and unfairness) by learning their dynamics through story in particular tragedies, they become capable of compassion. To be compassionate Nussbaum claimed, requires “a sense of one’s own vulnerability to misfortune” (p. 91). This involves imagining that this suffering could be happening to yourself. She proposed that stories are not simply shared to provoke compassion, but that stories are deliberated and critiqued as if the story is a friend.⁴ From this view Nussbaum suggested we ask “What does this friendship do to my mind? What does this new friend ask me to notice, to desire, to care about? How does he or she invite me to view my fellow human beings?” (p. 100). Such questioning offers a means to promote or provoke enriched understanding of being human. Storytelling is understood to have a unique capacity to cultivate empathetic imagination, to imagine and feel another’s feelings and build a greater understanding of the complexities of humanity.

⁴ Nussbaum adopted this idea from Booth (1988), who suggested viewing a literary work as a friend.

Knowledge creation

Storytelling has been used pedagogically for thousands of years across cultures, to teach new concepts, language, cautions and sage advice. Benjamin (1955/1999), Arendt (1958/1998) and Kristeva (2001) all claim that in storytelling, meaning rests with the listeners. The experience of meaning-making in storytelling is distinguished from reading by Benjamin, who explains that story is consumed collectively, whereas a novel is devoured selfishly. Each listener makes sense of the story in relation to their lived experiences, prior knowledge and values. Listeners create meanings applicable to their lives and experiences. Storytelling thus has the capacity to activate plurality of possible meanings that multiplies significance, yet resists closure.

In storytelling, Thao holds a view that knowledge is produced through social interaction in local contexts “with shared experience, dialogue, feedback, and exchange with others” (Heron & Reason, 1997, p. 283). That is, through collaboration in learning with others and joint reflection in an expanded community based on a shared context, storytellers can gain insights into storytelling and how storytellers and listeners perceive the world together. To Leeming (1997), “Stories are told, after all, to convey knowledge” (p. 4). Storytelling helps create knowledge by passing it on from generation to generation. Storytellers Norma J. Livo and Sandra Rietz (1986) recognise that “storytelling constructs ‘cosmic consciousness’” (p. 18) by which such means we can learn, confirm and even transform our understanding of the universe through storytelling.

Knowledge is transactional, based on practice and experience (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). Thao is not interested in the value of ‘knowledge for its own sake’ but knowledge created through pedagogies that promote values and recognise human rights. The ‘reality’ in stories is not separate from us but rather constructed and co-constructed and as subjective-objective reality, co-created by the mind in engagement with the universe (Guba &

Lincoln, 2005, p. 195; Lincoln, et al., 2011, p.102) through both conceptual and practical activity, such as storytelling. When a story is told, shared knowledge manifests.

Book overview

This book aims to share the rich storytelling pedagogies taking place in Australia and Asia. Practising storytellers from the region were invited to contribute a chapter on their storytelling pedagogy practice to illustrate different cultural traditions of storytelling and storytelling pedagogy purposes. The collation of the eight chapters of practice is by no means comprehensive of storytelling pedagogies in Australia and Asia, but rather a sample enabled through our connections. Each of the authors has responded to the chapter invitation differently reflecting their lived realities and interests in storytelling as a pedagogy. The book offers a mix of detailed insights of practice along with theoretical explanations of storytelling pedagogy, to meet the range of reader needs and interests at different points in time. Authors have endeavoured to write as if speaking directly to you, sharing insights of storytelling practice as storytelling muses. We are all storytellers, so our preferred mode is oral performative communication. We have tried to translate the same intimate relationality that storytelling nurtures into written words. At times co-authors are in conversation with each other, and at times authors are in storied conversations with child audiences or co-tellers (formatted like a playscript). We want the chapters to come alive in your minds so you can see and feel the possibilities of storytelling pedagogy, and are encouraged to weave storytelling pedagogy into your teaching practice, wherever that be.

The following chapters tell of storytelling across ages to cultivate intercultural understanding, imagination, active citizenship, conservation and language and literacy learning. Each chapter includes told stories, and suggested pedagogical implications to guide and inspire readers in the art of storytelling pedagogy in Australian and Asian contexts.

We begin with the great privilege Gumbaynggirr storyteller Michael Jarrett (from mid-North coast region of New South Wales, Australia) sharing storytelling pedagogy wisdom from the longest living culture (Chapter Two). Through his storytelling pedagogy he revitalises the Indigenous language of Gumbaynggirr.

In Chapter Three, esteemed Thai storyteller, Wajuppa Tossa with Prasong Saihong explain their pedagogical practice of storytelling of preserving Isan language along with English language teaching, literary studies, early childhood education and intervention and special education for children with disabilities.

In Chapter Four, storytellers of Indian heritage, Anamika Bhati and Nupur Aggarwal, share the rich storytelling traditions of India and their practices of storytelling pedagogy through a Panchatantra story, *The Monkeys and the hat seller*.

In Chapter Five, French educator Karine Lespinasse, with co-founders of the International Kamishibai Association of Japan, Etsuko Nozaka and Eiko Matsui, showcase kamishibai storytelling as a broad reaching pedagogical resource born in Japan to engage with Japanese concept of *kyokan* (to feel with).

In Chapter Six, Swee Yean Wong, Singaporean storyteller of Chinese heritage describes how she has come to know more about her Chinese heritage through storytelling, which has led her to find meaningful and playful ways to teach Chinese language through storytelling.

In Chapter Seven, Thao Thi Phuong Nguyen explains how storytelling provokes the working of imaginations to enhance English as a foreign language learning with primary school students in Vietnam.

In Chapter Eight, Anna Jarrett relays her storytelling pedagogy work in endangered shorebird education for primary school students on the South Coast of New South Wales, and creative relational storytelling education for children and families living in outback communities, Australia.

In Chapter Nine, Louise Phillips shares her storytelling pedagogy encounters of igniting active citizenship with young children in Brisbane, Australia, from stories crafted on a Stolen Generation⁵ experience, an endangered bird and child labour.

We bring key resounding ideas of storytelling pedagogy together in the closing Chapter Nine, noting that each of our storytelling practices are value driven and shaped by particulars ways of knowing and being. We hope you enjoy this rich invitation to teach and learn through storytelling across Asia and Australia.

⁵ Stolen Generation is the term used to refer to Aboriginal Australian and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were forcibly removed under the guise of white colonising law, policy and practice from their families and communities to be raised in institutions, fostered out or adopted by non-Indigenous families (AIATSIS, 2021).

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