Loosen Your Tongue
An introduction to Storytelling

By

Karl J. Franklin

Discuss

Reflect

Construct

Dedicated to the memory of Professor Kenneth L. Pike

*"Invest ten percent of your time, energy, effort of study
getting ready for the future."* (p. 25)

*"When philosophies clash at the deepest epistemological
level of their axioms or presuppositions,
logical discourse is impossible, directly."* (p. 60)

From *Pike's Perspectives: An Anthology
of Thought, Insight and Moral Purpose*
(Kenneth L. Pike with Hugh Steven, 1989)

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Contents

Appendices

Introduction

This book is a revised and updated version from the 2009 publication of the same title and (its on-line version)[1] I have designed the book for those who wish to understand and teach the details of storytelling, including telling and retelling Bible stories. Each chapter includes a section that outlines materials that trainers and facilitators can use for further study and research.

A storyteller links a story inextricably to his or her imagination. C.S. Lewis described the process he utilized as follows:

> *One thing I am sure of. All my seven Narnian books, and my three science-fiction books, began with seeing pictures in my head. At first they were not a story, just pictures. (Hooper, ed. 1982:53)*

For Lewis some of the pictures had "a common flavour, almost a common smell," that grouped them together. His advice to the storyteller is to be patient so that the images can begin to join. Lewis says that if we are fortunate ("I have never been so lucky," he says), we may find a whole set joined consistently to form a complete story. Usually, however, there are gaps in the story and the storyteller has "to do some deliberate inventing." This includes deciding why certain characters appear in the story with certain actions. Lewis concludes by saying, "I have no idea if this is the usual way of writing stories, still less whether it is the best." However, in the experience of Lewis, images always came first (1984:68).

Some of the information in this book discusses how to construct stories, and may therefore seem to leave less to the imagination of the storyteller. However, because such detail is important for teaching and learning the craft of storytelling, we include a chapter on story construction as well.

I estimate that it will take at least two hours of class interaction and participation to work through each chapter, including the mentoring exercises. I have benefited from conducting two pilot workshops in Papua New Guinea, teaching a course at EQUIP (SIL Australia), as well as four graduate courses at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics (GIAL). I have also incorporated materials from previous versions that I wrote on storytelling. The section called "Facilitator Notes" at the end of each chapter includes materials and advice from many experts in storytelling and related fields.

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[1] See: http://www.gial.edu/specpubs/loosen-your-tongue.pdf. This present edition (2010) updates my research, conflates sources from the prior annotated bibliography into the references, revises all the chapters and appendices, and provides a beginning glossary on storytelling.

Course Objectives

Although I had storytelling facilitators, teachers, students and field workshop participants in mind in earlier editions of this book, I now believe the principles can be helpful to anyone who is interested in the general art of storytelling. By consulting and reading the background materials (the "Facilitator Notes"), the serious reader will have sufficient information to work with a more experienced storyteller in a course or workshop devoted to storytelling. However, note that many of the exercises require at least one partner for adequate practice.

By the end of a course or workshop, participants should be able to discuss a wide range of concepts related to storytelling in general. They should also be able to relate them specifically to the kinds of stories that would be beneficial in various situations. They will have had practice in telling and retelling stories, recording stories, and should be able to evaluate differences between oral and written story styles.

Orientation

The outline of the book is as follows:
1. After the title of each chapter, there are **Goals** or **Objectives** given, sometimes with several sub-goals as well.
2. Following the objectives are some ideas on **Preparation** to help the facilitator prior to introducing the topic.
3. The next section is **Practice**, suggesting exercises that can help fulfill the objectives of the chapter and give some indication of the competencies of the teacher.
4. **Facilitator Notes** provide additional background and research materials for teachers, workshop leaders, and facilitators. The information there has contributed to the formation of each chapter, but goes beyond it as well. Facilitators can add their own materials to this section.
5. A **Skill-Check** concludes the chapter, outlining exercises to help the students (or teacher) fulfill the objectives of the chapter.

The Criterion Referenced Instruction (CRI) approach, as outlined by Robert F. Mager, is one of many adult education models on learning and instruction available.[2] The main principles in the approach are:
- ❑ Derive your instructional objectives from job performance and be sure they reflect the competencies that are needed;
- ❑ Study and practice only those skills that you have not yet mastered to the level required by the objectives;
- ❑ Practice each objective and obtain feedback about the quality of your performance
- ❑ Repeat practice in skills that are used often or are difficult to learn;
- ❑ Sequence each chapter according to the pre-requisites and the progress noted by judging your own competence (mastery of objectives).

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[2] See, for example, http://cepworldwide.com/discover/about_mager.html (last accessed January 2010).

Acknowledgements

My interest in storytelling began several years ago when I analyzed the progress of Bible translation among small languages of the Pacific. I later suggested an alternative strategy to Bible translation for small languages in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Pacific (Franklin 2005a, 2005b). However, at the time (and in many places, still), there was considerable ambivalence to the notion of focusing on anything but translating the Scriptures. Nevertheless, with the encouragement and interest of a number people and parties, specifically, the PNG administration of SIL and the Regional Area Directors in the Sepik and Sandaun Provinces, I conducted two pilot workshops to try out some preliminary materials. One workshop was at Amanab (Sandaun Province) in 2002 and another at Hauna (East Sepik Province) in 2003 (See Appendix B. The SIL Aviation Department, the SIL Media Services, and the Bible Translation Association of PNG gave me assistance. In Australia, the Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT) and the Director of the South Pacific SIL (now known as EQUIP) gave me forums in which to lecture and teach. Students who took the orality course there gave me valuable feedback. The Seed Company (TSC) was instrumental in financing the workshops in PNG and has continued to provide resources for research, including the publication of this book. Some of those who gave helpful responses to my early efforts were David and Judy Payne, Henry Huang, Ken Gregerson, Jim and Janet Stahl, Bob Litteral, Bob Brown, Bob Conrad and Joice Franklin.

During the last four years (2006-2009) I have developed the principles and practices outlined in this book at a graduate course (called *Oral Tradition and Literature*), held at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics (GIAL) in Dallas, Texas. Pam Echerd, Jim and Janet Stahl, Joice Franklin, and Elinor Abbot have assisted me in the courses. Jim and Janet now work with The Seed Company, an affiliate of The Wycliffe Bible Translators, USA, to coordinate its efforts on orality. I have also appreciated the input of the students who took part the courses.

Finally, I thank God for the privilege of serving him and writing this book. I hope that it will be instrumental in convincing others that storytelling, while not translation, is an avenue for small and neglected language groups, in particular, to develop their language skills.

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Karl J. Franklin
Dallas, March 2010

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CHAPTER 1

Stories Are Everywhere

It is not surprising that stories are the primary way that people pass on or seek information—according to some literacy experts, up to seventy percent of the world's population depend upon oral communication as their primary source. In such cases, stories inform the society, even if the people do not have them in written form and, of course, thousands of language groups do not have any written materials. In such cases, people often tell their stories in some other dominant language. Our goal is to encourage people to tell stories in their mother tongues.

We want to consider storytelling as contributing to Saville-Troike's question (1982), "What is being communicated in the social system?" The functions of storytelling communication include categories that are expressive (feelings), directive (requests or demands), poetic (aesthetic), phatic (empathy and solidarity), and metalinguistic (references to language itself). The function (rather than form) of language provides the primary dimension for organizing communication processes.

The art and practice of storytelling is probably as old as humankind is and is best represented in folklore. Classical stories are sometimes called folklore (Pickering 1999), encompassing a wide range of materials from the oral tradition. This includes not only stories, but customs, dances, games, rituals, songs, legends, myths, proverbs, etc., as well. See, also McKinney (2000) on the use and classification of oral genres. Richard Bauman (1992) has edited a handbook that focuses on the performing arts and their cultural and expressive genres. See also Spaeth (1996) on "The timelessness of storytelling." and White (1982) on "Speaking in stories."

Folk stories have abounded since people first started talking to each other, recounting their experiences. For the teller of the story this represented an oral history, an account of the "facts" as the person could best remember and tell them. However, in order for something to be accepted as a "factual story" it was (and still is) necessary for someone to corroborate it. It was usually not enough to believe someone if they alone told the story; other witnesses were needed.

This first chapter of this book outlines some of the rationale for using stories and focuses upon their retold versions, rather than upon translations of stories.

Objectives

- ➢ To enable participants to understand the importance of stories in their own culture and language.
- ➢ To encourage participants to use stories in their own (and other) language and culture

Preparation

It is important for you (as student or facilitator) to know several stories from your own culture and to tell them in your language. In many courses and workshops, participants may tell the stories in English, although in other countries, a trade language is often used. Practice telling the stories in your own language first.

Try to remember a storyteller that you have heard and think about why you consider the person a good storyteller (or perhaps not a good storyteller). What are the characteristics of good and bad storytellers in your culture?

Practice

You should have a partner(s) so that you can tell and listen to each other's stories. You should discuss your story, noting in particular:
- Why the story was told
- Why the particular characters and events were introduced
- What parts of the story seemed to be important and for what reason(s)
- What parts of the story were not well understood (or liked)
- How the story might be changed

Facilitator Notes

Stories embody a culture, for "Men do not long continue to think what they have forgotten how to say" (Lewis 1982:107). We remember wars because of war stories, romance because of love stories and morality or ethics because of stories that teach morals. In short, stories are certain threads interwoven within our memories.

Schank (1990) says that when we explain the world (at least to ourselves) it is a critical aspect of intelligence. He further claims, "Comprehending events around you depends upon having a memory of prior events available for helping in the interpretation of new events" (1990:1). Schank and others have demonstrated that we understand the world around us and interpret it in terms of scripts. Scripts make clear what is supposed to happen and make mental processing easier by allowing us to think less about routine things. You do not have to figure out what is going to happen once you know the cultural script. "People have thousands of highly personal scripts used on a daily basis that others do not share" (1990:8). Sometimes of course, people only partially share scripts; for example, my wife and I both brush our teeth, but we follow slightly different scripts.

We may have difficulty remembering abstractions, but we can remember stories. We tell our stories to illustrate our beliefs, even when they are highly abstract. To do this well, we have to know what story to tell and the right time to tell it. According to Schank, without memorable stories and despite our best intentions, our listeners will not hear us. A good teacher or trainer couches explanations in an interesting format demonstrating knowledge by means of experiences

in stories. We hear stories and correlate them with what we already know because "Stories are everywhere, but not all stories look like stories" (1990:26).

Haven (2007) claims that studies from cognitive scientists and developmental psychologists confirm that "human minds *do* rely on stories and on story architecture as the primary roadmap for understanding…" and that "Lives are like stories because we think in story terms, make sense out of experiences in story terms, and plan our lives in story terms" (p. vii). The thesis of Haven's book is that "stories are more effective and powerful than any other narrative structure" such that they "belong as the bedrock of management, leadership, education, outreach, and general communication efforts" (p. viii).

Steffen (1996) gives a number of reasons that support telling Bible stories and ends with a plea for the more widespread use of stories because:
- They are a universal form of communication
- Half of the world's population prefer that mode for learning
- They connect imagination and emotions
- Major religions socialize the young and indoctrinate with them
- Seventy-five percent of the Bible (Steffen's main interest) is narrative
- They create instant evangelists
- Jesus taught theology through stories

Steffen claims that in order to tell stories effectively we need to get rid of certain beliefs, including comments that stories are only for entertainment, best told by professionals, unrelated to theology, separated from reality, or that they are only for children. On the latter point, Lewis (1982: 33) notes, "that a children's story which is enjoyed only by children is a bad children's story." He compares it to enjoying a waltz—if you can only enjoy it "only when you are waltzing it is a bad waltz."

SCIENTISTS TELL STORIES

The "scientific method" is an elaborate and widely acclaimed method of telling a story. Scientists observe something and then make statements to account for the nature of it or, more precisely, how they can measure it. Other scientists agree or disagree with the measurements or observations and hypothesis by testing it by means of experimentation and argumentation. The examining community agrees to accept certain established criteria arising from their experience. Non-scientific comments, such as folk descriptions (like the "rising" and "setting" of the sun) may be "accepted" by the scientific community, but require explanation using scientific vocabulary and jargon. In addition, the scientists' observations or measurements need replication for validation. For example, the scientific community has terminology for various parts of the sun and its "actions," so a person or community that wishes to be scientific must use those names in their discussions. Scientists prize their language because they claim it "explains" or "describes" the phenomena better than folk language, like the "rising" and the "setting" of the sun, which cannot be taken literally. When folk language is used, everyone in the scientific community considers the language imprecise or metaphorical.

However, in the so-called "post-modern" world, people now question even the sacredness of scientific terminology. The very notions of reality, truth and objectivity, are up for grabs. What

is your truth is my semi-truth or my untruth. This is not very helpful to "science" because although they may discuss their discoveries in different ways, most still believe (based upon examining and measuring objects) that something really does "exist." There is matter and there are "laws" that regulate how the matter "behaves." Gravity is a law and so is weightlessness, which seem at first to contradict each other. However, the results of both are observable, although cultural observers may dispute the causes. One culture may see an apple falling from a tree as an act of a supreme being, not something "happening" in response to a natural law.

The point is that we need stories to describe the world around us, even when we believe that certain things do not exist. We may not believe that animals talk, but we are willing to hear or read a story in which they do. In addition, when they do, we expect them to make sense and that their talk is relevant to the theme of the story. Likewise, we expect tellers to construct a story around some main idea or argument with other supporting ideas and arguments. Scientists tell us stories about gravity, and cultural storytellers tell us stories about their universe. One set of stories may be simply to "entertain" us, and another to "educate" us. In either case, to be a creditable story there must be some central idea or theme—the story has to be "going somewhere."

STORIES BELONG TO SOMEONE

We are drawn to stories that in some way relate to our cultural experiences. For example, I find the stories by Ray Hicks of Appalachia (Pavesic 2005) entertaining and related to my tradition. Our tradition allows us to become very personal when we tell our stories. This is because we all have a story to tell, and the story of our lives is the macro-story, made up of as many stories as we can remember and recount. Memory and imagination enter into the storyteller's version, not necessarily facts built from empirical evidence. If I tell you an autobiographical story about hunting squirrels, I build it upon of the images in my mind I can remember about such events: primarily these will be from my own experience, but the story will draw upon the experiences of others as well. A "good" story includes some of the experiences of the hearer, who also forms mental images as he or she hears the story. If parts of my story do not connect very well, the story can easily be misunderstood or, worse still, ignored. When I tell my story, I introduce scenery, I assume background, with people and animals a part of it. If you do not know what a squirrel is, then my story about hunting squirrels will not make the same sense to you that it does to me. If you are used to only hunting rabbits, your rabbit hunting imagery may interfere with my squirrel-hunting scene. The scenes and scripting for the two will have some parallels, but there will be important and contrastive differences. The insider has the advantage of knowing what is central or pivotal in describing hunting for either a squirrel or a rabbit. However, the insider may not be able to give you a very good plan or script for the activity. The insider may assume too much: he (and women who hunt) will think you know what kind of gun is used, or dogs, when and where the activity takes place, and so on. Outsiders who not know these things may require a more elaborate script, based on what they want to ask or research. The script needs the outsider's elaboration because they have not yet been an insider and experienced such a hunting venture.

In addition to what is "real" about the activity—the need for a gun, dogs, and a place to hunt, and when the hunt takes place—there may be "symbolic" dimensions. Each rabbit hunter may carry

a rabbit's foot in his or her pocket for luck, or all squirrel hunters may wear certain kinds of jackets or boots and carry nuts in their pockets. The cultural participants work out the details, but if you want to look the part of an accepted rabbit hunter, you need to dress and act in a prescribed manner. Scientists and farmers also have their own codes (or noncodes) of dress and speech, often conventionalized to particular "dialects."

JESUS THE MASTER STORYTELLER

Let us switch now to examples that might concern us in trying to make the Bible understood to nonexperts. (We can simply assume that there is a greater degree of understanding by the expert exegetes, although it is seldom that simple.) The Bible is full of stories and Jesus turns out to be the best storyteller of all. The Gospel authors record his stories more than anyone else does because he tells more stories than anyone else. Further, his stories have aroused such interest that people continue to debate them right up to this very day. Every weekend preachers, priests, and rabbis may elaborate upon his stories to make all kinds of points, even those that are very obscure from the text itself. They do this in a number of ways. First, they assume that some of what Jesus says is "symbolic," that is, it is not literal in the sense that Jesus is relating factual instances. Although each of the stories may be built on actual first-century life (peasants and Palestine), the teaching point of the story extends far beyond the literal life and times of Palestine. If it did not, we would have little motivation to believe or tell the stories today.

Jesus also used real objects to represent principles and themes: grain, seed, weeds, fields, nets, vine and vineyards, sheep and shepherd. All of these were actual objects in the culture. Other things were not: the kingdom of God, Abraham's bosom, eating flesh and drinking blood, were not the everyday experience of the Jews. Jesus was trying to get across a particular principle and the most effective way to do so was by telling a story using culturally relevant objects and stationing them in metaphors. Alternatively, he took culturally difficult events and objects and recast them in terms of metaphors. For example, in the concept to teach entire dependence upon God, he illustrated how the branches of a vine depended upon the vine and the vinedresser, or that a child depended upon sustenance from the father. The Jews had mental images of vines, vinedressers, and wine gardens firmly fixed in their minds, so the metaphors made immediate sense.

Bailey refers to Jesus as a "*metaphorical* theologian" because his primary method was using metaphors, similes, parables and dramatic actions rather than logic and reasoning. "He created meaning like a dramatist and poet rather than like a philosopher" (2008:279).

MAIN POINTS IN STORIES

Think again about some of the necessary ingredients for a story: a main point, imagination, motivation, style, all involving plots with characters, events and a space-time orientation. In the case of Jesus' stories, he always had a point to make, often centering on the kingdom of God and its importance to individuals. He used his imagination and the cultural artifacts at his disposal to tell the stories and make them challenging and convincing. His style was persuasive; it was a story of utmost importance and people listened to it. In fact, he claimed that it was to the peril of the listeners if they did not heed the story and change their ways.

In retelling a story, the minute details and literal form of the source text are not as important as the main point or points of the story. We want to ensure that such points are culturally explicit and persuasive, but this does not mean that the meaning will be immediately transparent—for instance, note parables. Parables are simply a kind of story in which certain objects symbolically represent actual or potential situations. In the parable of the sower, the seed represents "the word of God." Capon (1985:61) calls the sower "the watershed of the parables" and Wierzbicka (2001:246) sees the sower as the key to Jesus' other parables and the theme as the Kingdom of God.

"Seed" can be used to represent it because some of the family of expressions about seed can apply equally well to the word of God. It can be "planted," "watered," "cultivated," and "harvested," and it can "grow" and "mature." We can even "eat" or feed upon its fruit. However, there are things we do with the word of God that we do not do with seed. We cannot memorize or even hear the seed (although some environmentalists might disagree), we cannot husk it, and we should not cook it. In the same way, there are some things we do with seed that we do not do, even symbolically, with the word of God: for example, fertilize or grind it.

When we tell a story, we need to be conscious about how the mapping of images and metaphors takes place between languages. The background of agriculture enters into a discussion and description of sowing seed and its maturation. However, we do not need to transfer the complete Palestinian agricultural scene into parables in order to learn from them. In addition, it does not follow that the more we can map, the more we can learn and the better our application. Many things about agriculture in Jesus' day are not relevant to his parables, and especially to their meanings. Nevertheless, to know what was salient and crucial to the story we need to make sure the points are relevant and clear in the language. Any story is "bad news" if poorly and improperly told, using words, metaphors and comparisons that are culturally misunderstood.

Storytelling is an oral technique and strategy to communicate a message. Recording a message came much later and, even when people heard the message read, they relied on their own memories to retell the story. Most people could not read the Scriptures even if they were available. Millard (2000), however, contends that written reports about Jesus were probably done during his lifetime and refers to a wide range of written sources that were available from the first century in Palestine.

SMALL LANGUAGES AND STORYTELLING

The oral nature of societies is apparent in many areas of the world. Despite near universal primary education, literateness as a skill needs regular nourishment. As we know, children do not begin their eating habits by chewing on steak; rather they initially drink milk. So it is with the translated message: new literates should not have to begin their reading habits with Scripture. Instead, they should have stories. In addition, the stories should sound natural. A text imported from a religious setting for an hour (or more) a week and then rarely heard the same way again the rest of the week, will probably have little effect.

Small languages in the Pacific represent people whose communication is primarily oral, not by means of newspapers and books (Franklin 2005a, 2005b). The viability of a language depends upon its use in common situations, representing the most efficient and effective way to communicate. When translated, Scripture contains a metavocabulary that religious practitioners use regularly, often with the same revered sense that scientists have with their jargon. Nevertheless, can storytellers retell a Bible story without recourse to religious vocabulary or jargon? When teachers introduce some unknown religious vocabulary, they often must give a folk explanation, much like a pastor "explaining" that "justification" means, "Just as if I had never sinned." We can verify "key terms" when the audience can represent them by mental images and interpret them by retelling them in a story.

THE PRACTICE OF STORYTELLING

Another advantage that listeners have when hearing stories is that they can leap ahead in their understanding of the story and become involved in the storytelling process (Denning 2001:137, 139). This demonstrates that the force of a story is in the telling, where there is interaction between the storyteller and the listeners. People can discuss the story, complain about it, praise it, but in each case, they are embodying their concepts and ideas at a deeper level of understanding.

Given the problems of translation and explication that exist in all cultures, it seems imperative that we understand the stories that we hear. For example, people everywhere can understand the implications of stories like the Good Samaritan or the Prodigal Son for their culture. What is the point of a translation if the main idea of the story is lost and not considered for application?

Authors have documented how folktales and stories in cultures and societies around the world represent values. McDonald (1993) reminds us that there is no correct version of a folktale and, we would add, the same is true in retelling a story. Rather, there is a myriad of retellings and because of this every person is a potential storyteller. In our courses and workshops (see Appendix B), we facilitate telling stories by talking through an entire story, retelling the story in groups, then evaluating the story. In the process, we can also listen to personal stories, literary stories (usually heard in school or in church), myths and historical accounts. In the process, the stories have impact and people remember them.

Stories should also make us more aware of other groups and cultures and therefore help us think differently, giving us new content to apply to our lives. In the socialization process and, as Rodari (1973) has explained, stories can mold groups of children into cooperative and imaginative learning communities where the teachers and children explore reality through their imaginations.

This is because storytelling involves creating imagination that evokes emotional and spiritual conviction. Therefore, the careful selection of stories and the approach used in telling them is important. In telling stories, the trainer should be his or her own critic, developing, as Sawyer (1942:35) puts it, "a love and propensity for the art." We learn best about people by hearing their stories and "owe it to each other to respect and learn from our stories" (Coles 1989:24).

The roots of spiritual and moral also lie in stories, even folk stories or fairy tales, as Murphy (2000) has illustrated from several of the Grimm brothers' fairy tales[3]. Taylor expressed it this way: "Many a story is sent out into the world as an act of faith" (2002:409). In his view, the moral dimension permeates every aspect of a story.

To summarize, when we tell stories, we generally want to:
- Illustrate some point
- Stimulate listeners to react (to feel something)
- Provide some piece of information
- Summarize significant events

STORIES AND MEMORY

Creating a story is a memory process, so if we do not tell the story soon enough, "the experience cannot be coalesced into a gist since its component pieces begin to mix with new information that continues to come in" (Schank 1990:115). We tell stories to remember them and telling a story makes it happen again. Schank distinguishes between a story based on memory and one passed on as a generalized event. The use of scripts is essential because we have a general storehouse of information in our memory but need to break up our daily experiences into component parts. Story-based memory contains memory encapsulating general world knowledge.[4] Our memory expresses our worldview, but this depends upon telling and retelling our stories over a lifetime. Telling dreams, for example, is a way of remembering them.

Zerubavel (2003) discusses the communal orientation to memory, by which new members of the community are oriented to its collective history. History is not only a product of the social nature of our memory and recollections, but it also reflects the way that our memory is packaged. We remember some things rather than others because of our mnemonic traditions. For example, the Zionist tradition relates the Jewish history in terms of persecution (2003:5). Similarly, the way we organize and pattern our memories provides the basic "history" for the stories we tell.

Schank believes that our memory contains a database of partial stories rather than whole ones and that from these partial stories we formulate a single unit in our memory. It follows that the more stories that we have available from our cultural databank, the more inventive we can be. People define themselves through their stories, as well as through the stories of others. Many people who are good storytellers know how to take advantage of this feature. The stories we live by and take for granted are primarily the ones we have learned from within our culture or subculture.

Haven (2007:68) contends that when we link content information into stories the listener lodges it in his mind and memory. "Human memory circuits don't seem to distinguish between real and false memories. That job is left to the reasoning power of the conscious mind." According to

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[3] Grimm's Fairy Tales by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm was first published in German in 1869. A Barnes and Noble Classics edition was published in 2003.

[4] Bradley McCallum, for example, points out how our culture preserves memory with monuments and memorials. See "Preserving memory: A study of monuments and memorials" at www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1993/1/93.01.06.x.html (last accessed January 2010).

Haven, vivid memories have four characteristics: 1) they break a script expectation; (2) they are consequential, i.e. have impact; (3) they involve emotional charge; and (4) they have value or meaning.

So what do we remember? We remember the gist of something and our interpretation of it. "Experiences not framed into story suffer loss in memory" because story structure enhances and improves memory of content (Haven 2007:69). People never capture anything literally, because it is filtered through their experiences. Further, according to Haven, "Memory champions remember by creating a story that provides context and relevance for meaningless information" (2007: 71). The greater the emotion associated with an event, the better the person remembers it. In all instances, using stories will enhance the memory and facilitate recall. However, "there are many instances where it is either not feasible or not appropriate to create and present stories. Not everything either can be or should be delivered in story form. However, it is always worth checking. When you can, the benefits are staggering" (2007:73).

Jenkins (2006:28) reminds us that although memory is a critical skill, it usually deteriorates with literacy. Many nonwestern cultures embrace story and song because of their contributions to memorization. We will return to this aspect later.

According to Kelber (2004:15), "In medieval culture, memory became integrated into prayer, meditation and moral philosophy, until early modernism proceeded to absorb it into dialectic and logic." Once this happened biblical criticism resorted to historical criticism and disregarded, for the most part, memory. It follows that memories are not always historically reliable—in particular "false memories" about abuse and so on. See also Olick (2004:5) on this point.

STORIES AND INTELLIGENCE

If it is true that people think in terms of stories and understand the world in terms of stories (Schank 1990:219), they can reveal various dimensions of intelligence. They provide comprehension by connecting new stories to old ones and coherency by explaining our expectations and discovering predictive rules based on past failures. This involves planning, executing plans, and creating plans to generalize, crystallize and elaborate our stories. We also learn to integrate imaginary scenarios in stories through conceptual blending (see Fauconnier and Turner 2002).

Skill-Check

The purpose and design of this first chapter has been to help you understand why stories are important so that you can discuss:

- ❑ How and why stories are used in other cultures, as well as your own
- ❑ How some particular stories have influenced you
- ❑ How cognition works through stories
- ❑ How stories are generally used in your culture, specifically in religious or political contexts

Kinds of Stories

There are many ways that scholars categorize stories. For example, "origin stories" tell how something first appeared, often based on resemblance. People's heads are round like a coconut, so there may be a story that tells how the first person originated by means of a coconut. In the account in Genesis, the author tells how God created man from the ground, as well as how the world began, so these too are origin stories. Christians believe the story in Genesis is factual and the story about coconuts and people's heads fictional, but not all stories are simple to classify as purely fictional or factual, and each encompasses varying degrees of perspective.

Scholars are generally interested in written literature. Oring (1986:18), however, examines verbal art and unwritten traditions to arrive at an "orientation" (not definition) of folklore. Bauman, ed. (1992) discusses expressive genres such as folktale, oral poetry, proverb, riddle, speech play, insult, gossip, song, dance, gesture, and others. Fieldworkers should note the folk classifications of stories within a particular society. A good summary occurs in Foley (1998), where authors outline various critical approaches to oral literature.

The concept of etic and emic (Pike 1957, 1967) is helpful in examining and discussing an overall view of stories. Within that framework, we see that the classifications Western scholars use follow their disciplinary tradition and are from their cultural perspective. To demonstrate the creativity of stories in another culture, I later provide some data from the Kewa language of Papua New Guinea (Franklin 1970a, 1970b, 1975a, 1977). It is obvious that words, expressions, and aspects of grammar provide the mental images that underlie and support the recognition and definition of any kind of story.

Objectives

> ➤ To outline the framework of etic and emic
> ➤ To discuss the names and classification of stories
> ➤ To become aware of the type of stories that occur in various languages
> ➤ To illustrate some Kewa terms used in stories

Preparation

Listen to several traditional stories and decide the main point they illustrate (their Big Idea, which we will discuss in the next chapter) and how you would initially classify them. Stories

often focus on animals, ghosts, battles and family heroes. For PNG, McElhanon, ed. (1974, 1982) documents a number of Papua New Guinea traditional origin stories. In addition, the two volumes edited by Slone (2001) represent over 1000 traditional PNG tales. When you listen to such stories, try to categorize them, for example, as ghost stories, old people's stories, spirit stories, war stories, genealogies, and so on. Note how such stories contrast with one another and the variations within a particular kind.

As a further goal, listen to three different kinds of stories, perhaps origin stories, conflict stories, and genealogy stories. If the teller does not give the story a title or name, try to supply one that highlights its main idea. Think about its purpose, as well as the manner in which the storyteller relates it. Can you find stories told mainly for amusement and entertainment? What about stories to teach children the way they should behave? Do some stories suggest certain relationships with dead relatives, with the spirits, or with God? What makes such stories effective? What specific words or expressions in the stories provide impact and hold interest?

Practice

Read and research the names of different story types (genres) then combine and conflate them into a list.[5] After you have done this, pick a particular kind of story and, with a partner, discuss:
- ❑ Other possible categories of stories
- ❑ Name(s) that scholars use to classify various kinds of stories
- ❑ Techniques that make a particular kind of story interesting or important
- ❑ The kinds of stories that are generally told to children
- ❑ The kinds of information most often included in children's stories

Facilitator Notes

ETIC AND EMIC

In Pike's linguistic theory (1967, 1982, 1993), there are two viewpoints, the 'emic' and 'etic', two dimensions from which to view the same story, resulting in two ways to describe it, and providing, as Pike said, "A stereoscopic window on the world." The detached observer has one view, the native participant has another, but both are necessary. The outside observer is attempting to understand the inside viewpoint and as he does so, moves back and forth from the objective etic categories that he has been trained to utilize to a subjective understanding of what the categories mean—their emic nature. The etic view is alien, cross-cultural, and prepared in advance as a typological grid. It is also somewhat absolute, often measurable, created by the analyst, while the emic view is domestic, mono-cultural, structurally derived, relative and contrastive in reference to a system, and discovered by the analyst (Pike 1967b:37-40 and 1990:85-86 for further discussion). Another way to think of the differences is that an analyst may use various discovery procedures (e.g., Longacre 1964 on grammar and 1996 on discourse)

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[5] Wikipedia, at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_genre (last accessed January 2010) has a list of literary genres. For definitions within general mythology and folklore, see http://www.ability.org.uk/mytholog.html (last accessed January 2010).

to outline the etic structure of cultural units, but he would need to write an ethnography or grammar to provide a derived emic understanding of them.

Etics, like sounds, are similar across cultures, while emics, like phonemes, are particular to a language. We impose etic grids on a language or culture as our starting points from which we attempt to derive emic conclusions. We then base our conclusions on the interpretation of the particular theory that underlies the etic grid, which is then subject to the recognition of emic differences that cultural insiders propose or acknowledge.

By applying these criteria to stories, we suggest that we need to view them simultaneously in terms of their etic and emic features. Pilch (2002:111), like Pike, notes that a Western researcher has to impose an etic interpretation on his information, but actually goes back and forth between imposed etic and emic perspectives until an understanding is reached. We can view stories as contrastive units; for example, parables have different forms and features than a poem. Each has a range of variation and are told or read from a particular context. The shared background and context of the teller and listener interpret the meanings, which they understand from that mutual perspective.

A story genre can be etic or emic, depending on how it is viewed. An emic set of stories will share enough features that cultural insiders will understand and interpret them in much the same way. We have to say "much the same" to allow for the range of variation that happens—no two speakers will tell or hear the story exactly the same, although for a unit to be emic they will need to negotiate and eventually understand the same general meaning for the story. Those kinds of stories that outside research 'experts' agree have the same characteristics will constitute a derived etic set of stories, e.g. those they classify as 'legends', 'fables' and so on.

GOSSIP AND PROGANDA

According to Fulford (1999:1), gossip "remains a folk-art version of literature." It is the back-fence discussion of experiences and events where the story has shape; it outlines and limits, while an experience can be expanded so that merges it with other related experiences (Fulford 1999:4). Television uses stories where the narrator has the power to be selective, even untrue, to produce the feeling of events that are actually happening.

Stories can be quite complex. While gossip is experiential and created on the spot, stories can become massive in scope. Note Arnold Toynbee, who set out to explain the meaning of human history and wrote his "master narrative," a work of history that draws upon thousands of facts to give "lessons" about human beings. A master narrative speaks with confidence yet it paradoxically is always being altered (Fulford 1999:35).[6] Fulford claims that every society builds a master narrative as its source of moral certainty, although recently the master narrative has come under deep suspicion. Education depends on narrative, even if universities want them to be neutral. This is because in telling a story it is difficult to avoid judgments, which create difficulties in the university setting (Fulford 1999:39).

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[6] Another example of a world meta-narrative is Daimond (1999), who attempts to outline the evolution of mankind in one volume, including New Guinea, where he did field work.

Another kind of story is propaganda, where the teller uses certain rhetorical and other techniques in a manipulative way to convince hearers of a particular point of view. Closely related are telemarketing techniques and persuasive discourse. Linguists sometimes call the latter type "horatory" discourse and contrast it with other more general types, such as narrative, procedural, explanatory, argumentative and conversational (for examples, see Longacre 1983).

NAMES FOR STORIES

Regardless of genre, stories have different applications. For example, Simmons (2001:4) maintains that authors use six basic types of stories to influence others:
- Who I Am—so the audience will know more about you
- Why I Am Here—so the audience can discern your intentions
- What your vision is—helping the audience "see" your dream
- What you can use in teaching—making sense of your new skills
- Values-in-Action: "A good test for yourself is to see how many stories you can come up with to demonstrate the values you profess to hold" (Simmons 2001:23).
- I Know What You Are Thinking: "If you name their objections first, you are that much closer to disarming them" (Simmons 2001:23). Such stories can neutralize concerns without engaging in direct confrontation.

Fulford claims that the genre of "urban legend" exemplifies the popular living form of folk narrative. In fact, in recent time it has replaced the tall tale and is widespread on the Internet, depicting a form of "self-generated journalism, a way of wrapping in a narrative package certain observations and anxieties…" (1999:68). Narrative journalism has no fixed rules except the danger of libel laws and is therefore often close to fiction. In such cases, storytelling is no longer an ambiguous art form, but has changed to a philosophical and personalized semantic maze.

Nevertheless, and despite such a postmodern semantic maze, we still recognize and classify stories by various names. In the Bible, for example, we read the "parables" of Jesus, which are short stories, somewhat symbolic, and often convey some particular truth or moral. In many cases we cannot be sure that a particular detail or series of events outlined in the parable actually happened. Such stories form what Lakoff (1987) has called *idealized cognitive models* (ICMs). In parables, listeners form their own mental images, which some linguists analyze in terms of their metaphors or families of metaphors (for example, Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Johnson 1987; and Sontag 1990. We can find an example of an ICM in part of Luke Chapter 15, which we can frame or interpret as SOMETHING VALUABLE IS LOST.

Osborne (1997) noted the diverse narrative forms that Jesus used, including:
- **Proverb**: Lk 4.32: Physician heal yourself
- **Metaphor**: Mt. 15.13: not every plant planted by the Father…
- **Similes**: Mt. 10.16: Sheep among wolves
- **Figurative**: Lk. 5:36-38: New wine in old wineskins
- **Similitudes** (developed similes): Mk 4.30-32: Comparing the Kingdom to a grain of mustard seed
- **Story Parable**: Lk. 10:29-37: Ten virgins
- **Allegory Parable**: Mk 4.1-9; 13-20: Sower and seed

SOME RECOGNIZED STORY GENRES

O'Flaherty (1988:25) says, "It is impossible to define a myth, but it is cowardly not to try." She points out that they are not lies, false statements or accounts that contrast with reality or truth. The origin of the myth or story is not in focus, but rather the cultural tradition that promotes it. The truth of a myth does not lie in its literal meanings, but rather in the interpretive process that arises from it. The myth is the echo of the past, a reminder to us of how things once were, as well as their implications for the future. Therefore, in a general sense, a myth is a narration (a story) of events and experiences that, as indicated, may be true or fictitious.

Haven (2007:79-80) defines a story as "A detailed, character-based narration of a character's struggles to overcome obstacles and reach an important goal." If the fictitious aspect is in focus, we may refer to the narration as a *myth, legend* or even a *tale*. Such stories may have a traditional point to them and, in the case of a *yarn*, an incredible (almost unbelievable) aspect as well. *Legends* are nonhistorical and unverifiable and handed down through generations, so that eventually they become apocryphal or even pseudo-historical. As already mentioned, *myths* do not necessarily refer to false stories. They may be abbreviated or detailed written and spoken records, passed down from generation to generation and based upon fact.

In a more general and literary sense, stories which are "true" (*nonfiction*) are contrasted with *fiction*. The former has an historical or factual basis. On the other hand, although the fiction author imagines the story, he or she often bases it upon one that is true. Scholars often refer to fictional writing by names such as *fairytale, legend, myth, folktale, fable, parable, allegory, novel, science-fiction, ghost story, Western*, *romance,* and so on.

Henry (1995) provides a collection of literary terms dealing with fiction. Nancy Lamb (2008, chapter 3), outlines various categories such as *general fiction, historical fiction, romance, mysteries* and *thrillers, science fiction, fantasy, autobiography* and *memoir*, and *literary fiction* that writers commonly use.

A "pidgin" language, such as **Tok Pisin** (PNG) also has a taxonomy of story categories that can be named, such as: *stori bilong tumbuna* (ancestral stories), *stori bilong bipo* (ancient stories), *stori bilong pikinini* (children's stories), *stori bilong meri* (women's stories), *stori bilong wokim ol kain samting* (stories on how to make things), *stori bilong singsing* (stories that are sung), *stori bilong wokabaut* (travel stories), *stori bilong graun* (common stories), *stori nating* (stories with no point), and *Baibel stori* (Bible stories).

Scholars such as Oring (1986) consider stories as *folklore* if they employ dimensions from sources such as *verbal art, unwritten tradition*, and *folklife*. In such cases, a definition is not necessary, rather we can see that story is an orientation including what is communal, common, informal, marginal, personal, traditional, aesthetic, and ideological. According to Larry Danielson (in Oring 1986:52), conventional genres for folklore include *narrative, music, ritual, medicine, dress, cookery, art* and *demeanor*.

Some storytellers transmit their stories by means of *songs* (Lord 1974) and *poems* (Finnegan 1977), while others by means of *movies, videos, dramas*, the *epic poem*, or other modes, where visual and auditory impact is the key factors.

Additional terms commonly used to categorize written stories are *novel* (such as a *historical novel*), *biography, memoir, record, narrative, history, account, autobiography, record, discourse, allegory, folktale, yarn,* and *version*. Rubin (1995) outlines memory in the genres of *epic*, *ballads*, and *counting-out rhymes (*Abrahams and Rankin, eds. 1980).

KEWA SPEECH AND BEHAVIOR CATEGORIES

Every language will have names for some of the varieties of speech types that we have noted. Kewa, for example (Franklin 1977), exhibits a rich taxonomy of speech types that are used in various kinds of stories. This includes a repertoire of speech and behavior categories used extensively to describe certain aspects of the stories and their storytellers. In the following table, In the table that follows, I have outlined some of the speech categories the Kewa use.

Some Speech and Behavior Categories in Kewa[7]

SOME SPEECH CATEGORIES	SOME BEHAVIOR CATEGORIES
lorae agaa 'discontinued talk' [cut-off talk]	ratu yawe kone 'anger [cooked behaviour]
agaa mana 'instructions'	ona maaulape kone 'homosexuality' [woman changed into behavior]
agaa mana mana 'minute instructions'	adawe kone 'hope'
agaa mea 'questions' [talk fetched]	kudiri kone 'secretiveness'
agaa mimamo 'feverish talk'	ona paake rume kone 'adultery' [woman stealing behaviour]
agaa yola 'lengthy talk' [pulled talk]	epe pawa pirape kone 'patience' [good, slowly, sitting behavior]
arere pi agaa 'arguments'	oro yaalo pirape kone 'living forever' [always sitting=living behavior]
asubaa agaa 'leader's talk'	wae puku pi kone 'evil/ stinking ways'
balina agaa 'European or white-man talk'	udipaa kone 'jealousy'
betene agaa 'prayers'	makuae kone 'understanding/ wisdom'
eke tole 'tongue tied'	epe kone 'goodness'
epe agaa 'good, acceptable talk'	wae abulape kone 'vengeance'
epe garulae agaa 'promises'	odo omape kone 'pity'
epe yaina pi agaa 'blessings' [good spell saying talk]	abana kone 'old ways'
ero agaa 'insults'	rope pi kone 'pride, rudeness'
Gotena agaa 'God's talk'	lotu kone 'religious'
imaa niti 'taboo talk'	rulae kone 'belief, faith'
koso lape agaa 'court talk'	kone mareka 'excitement'
kudiripu agaa 'secrets'	rawa pi kone 'competition, boastful'
kurakura agaa 'questioning talk'	oyae epame ome kone 'covertness'
lapedepe agaa 'confession'	kone rasa 'disobey'
makirae agaa 'deliberate deceit'	ona rasini meape kone 'divorce'
misini agaa 'mission talk'	puri mapalape kone 'encouragement'
mogo ne agaa 'unclear talk' (distant)	epe raba meape kone 'grace, helpfulness'
mumu ne agaa 'whispering'	yala polape kone 'indecency'
ora agaa 'true talk'	omape kone 'mortality'

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[7] The Kewa language is spoken by people from three dialect areas (East, also called Kewapi, West, and South, also called Pole) all in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea. The author and his wife did fieldwork in East Kewa for 8 years and in West Kewa for over 20 years.

pa agaa 'idle conversation' [just talk]	kone pogati 'proud'
pedo pi agaa 'flattery'	ropa pi kone 'proud'
rado rado ne agaa 'contradictions'	bipa kone surubea 'self-control'
redepo ne agaa 'straight or honest talk'	pupitagi nape kone 'sinfulness'
reka agaa 'initiated talk'	robaapara i kone 'conscience'
rekena agaa 'ten commandments'	orope ne kone 'procrastination'
remani agaa 'courting language'	mudu pirawe kone 'aspirations'
ribu raguna agaa 'ribu ceremonial language' [archaic]	ora lana kone 'dependability'
rome agaa 'trade talk'	sukilima kone 'stubborn'
rugula agaa 'interrupted talk'	kone laapo 'doubt' [two behaviors]
rumula agaa 'ritual pandanus language'	maraae kone 'ignorance'
saa pi agaa 'hidden speech/ parables'	kone mayolo ruba 'confused'
tisaana agaa 'teacher's talk'	kone rugula 'forget'
tutu agaa 'imperfect talk'	kone sa 'think' [put (one's) behavior]
wae agaa 'bad or indecent speech'	kone rolo rumua pea 'reluctant'
wae rero pi agaa 'curse' or wae yaina pi agaa	pedopu rana omape kone 'love, happiness' [throat happiness dying behavior]
ya(pi) agaa 'deceitful talk'	kone mea 'ask what one is thinking'
yada maluae agaa 'challenges'	yola mi kone 'reluctant'
yaria agaa 'agreed-upon talk' [planted talk]	
Yudaana agaa 'Hebrew language' [any language name could be substituted]	
maeyae agaa 'crazy/ disturbed talk'	
puri pane agaa 'instructions'	
tata ne agaa 'incoherent/ baby talk'	
peto ti agaa 'hoarse/ sorrowful talk'	
aana oraae agaa 'promise' Lit: stone touching talk	

TWO KINDS OF KEWA STORIES

The above table lists words and phrases that demonstrate how the Kewa people think and talk in their stories, which are an integral part of their. We can illustrate this further with two well-known kinds of stories, named the *remaa* and the *iti*. The former are any kind of tale or story, but generally personal and historical, while the latter are particular tales passed on from others, especially involving older events and myths. The following summaries of Kewa stories are based on my reviews and understanding of LeRoy (1985a, 1985b).

LeRoy's *Kewa Tales* (KT) contains the English unabridged texts that are translations of the Kewa (or Tok Pisin), as well as the notation he uses in the analysis of the eleven sequences (i.e., sets of similar texts) found in the stories and the various functions (i.e., ordered events) found in the sequences. In a complementary volume he provides an in-depth analysis of the tales is *Fabricated World* (subtitled *an interpretation of Kewa tales*, IKT).

LeRoy classifies his collection as tales (called *iti*, but also *lidi* in East Kewa) but not myths, because the Kewa see them as a fictitious type of literature. His theoretical position is that the tales reflect "a close connection to the cultural circumstances of their origin, but they cannot be reduced to them" (KT, xix). They are models for interpreting and clarifying other parts of the culture. By following the "structuralist method" LeRoy is able to screen out considerations that do not suit his purpose and identify their metaphorical nature.

According to LeRoy, Kewa tales (the *lidi*) can be distinguished from legends (*remani* or *remaa*) because the former are fictitious, but the latter are true. Part of his argument rests on the fact that his recordings of Kewa tales are all in the simple past tense and never in the remote past, which is largely reserved for legends. LeRoy claims "Tales are set in an indefinite past" but says, "this is made evident only at the tale's close" (IKT, 248).

KT gives examples of the kind of themes that occur in Kewa stories: good and bad brothers, improper brothers and sisters, jealous spouses and siblings, marriages to ghosts, tricksters, little men and old men, skin changing and other transformations, and broken promises and angry ghosts. These are common themes in PNG stories—see Slone and McElhanon.

LeRoy's appendixes provide an overview of the overall contents of the book by listing the sequences and functions in stories, including any chaining, embedding, or equivalence features and the frames for each of the sequences. He follows the structuralist approach in analyzing folk tales (most closely that of Propp 1968).

The second anthropologist who studied Kewa stories is Mary MacDonald. MacDonald worked as a Catholic missionary among the *Mararoko* (the name is after a village in the South Kewa area). *Mararoko* is the result of her PhD studies at the University of Chicago, representing her analysis and interpretation of 188 Kewa stories.

MacDonald's concern is with both the Kewa insiders' interpretations of the stories (the emic view) and her own as the scholar or analyst (the etic view). According to her, insiders tend to interpret through analogies and metaphors, but outsiders use the categories of their disciplines. She tries to move between the two styles of language and analysis, between the traditional and the Christian (mainly Catholic) forms of Kewa religion. Her methodology is one of participant observation, not so much of Kewa traditional ritual, but of indigenous storytelling.

The stories suggest that the "all-embracing metaphor pervading and uniting the culture" (p. 9) is exchange, mainly involving affines, ghosts, shells and pigs. The Kewa word *kaba* (p. 15) is what MacDonald says describes give and take, buying and selling, and it is therefore the communicative symbol of reciprocity.

MacDonald relies upon interpretation because Kewa people talk in a hidden manner. So do birds, insects and musical instruments. Often the metaphorical nature of communication comes out not only in songs and dances, but also in mourning, courting and trade negotiations. The text is therefore "situated in a social, cultural, linguistic, historical and psychological environment" (121). MacDonald comments upon the plausibility of psychological interpretations of the symbols recounted as themes in the stories. This internal structure of the text and its external references are the "idiom of exchange and change" (128).

MacDonald notes that in stories words and work combine in magic, taboos, spirit cults, healing and sorcery. In some cases, Christians have readily transferred aspects of spirit cults and healers into their social setting. Sorcery is another matter: it "belongs to a worldview in which those outside one's own group are not credited with the same rights," (161) acting as a social sanction and a process of justice.

She notes that the people are preoccupied with pigs. They form the main "carrier of meanings" (p. 179), both male and female, as exchange objects. In ritual, marriage, and in competitive festivals they form the main attraction in storytelling. One of the stories relates how pigs lost their power of speech. Narrators in Menakiri (297) and Kagopoiya (307) repeat stories that refer to *Puramenalasu*, the big pig that can talk. Pigs carry meaning because they are the principal mediators in exchange and negotiation, both with people and with spirits

Additional stories of Part 2 of her book include traditional stories and historical or personal accounts, sometimes mixed. MacDonald attempts to clarify the two genres by examining the Kewa words used to describe certain speech events. She agrees with LeRoy in calling the traditional stories or tales *tida* (*iti* in the West and *lidi* in the East Kewa), with the components of common interpretations and imaginative creations. The *ramani* (*remaa* in West Kewa) are accounts of true or real events and are historical or cultural in content.

The 188 stories generally include (1) the interaction of people with ghosts; (2) the ritual participation of people (usually men) with cult spirits; (3) the interaction of brothers, enemies, spouses and their affines; (4) hunters and their encounters with snakes, possums, cassowaries and flying foxes; (5) comments on the origin of people, animals and clans.

Her work complements that of LeRoy and further demonstrates the importance of stories and their values in the Kewa culture. They pose a question for storytelling in general—how are the certain cultural values encoded in Bible story themes?

For a summary of story themes and the number of times each occurs, note her index:

Ancestors = 37	Flying fox = 6	Marsupials = 30	Birds = 27	Blood = 19
Body = 70	Bones = 5	Cassowaries = 24	Children = 65	Clans = 35
Cooking = 35	Dance = 28	Death = 35	Eating = 50	Enemies = 31
Exchange = 6	Fish = 15	Food and food crops = 89	Forest = 97	Funerals = 7
Gardens = 68	Houses = 154	Hunting = 27	Killing = 35	Land = 28
Life/life cycle = 15	Light/heat = 18	Marriage = 20	Missions = 11	Money = 17
Moon and sun = 20	Net bags = 61	Person = 14	Pig kills = 28	Pigs/pork = 105
Plants =140	Power = 7	Rituals = 7	Shells = 40	Siblings = 71
Singing = 49	Smell = 16	Snakes = 48	Sorcery = 12	Spirits = 72
Stones = 27	Storytelling = 22	Talk = 32	Time = 115	Tok Pisin = 79
Trees = 89	Warfare = 11	Water = 59	Wealth = 12	Women = 83
Work = 45				

I have outlined Kewa stories in some detail to demonstrate how important it is to study the language and culture of a group for insight into their worldview. For other examples, see a number of my studies on related topics: Franklin 1967, 1970a, 1970b, 1975.

Although the notion of worldview is not always accepted, it is a powerful concept to study. Note Hiebert's (2008) definitive study on the subject, outlining their concepts, characteristics, contexts, and some methods for analyzing them. He divides worldviews into small-scale oral societies, peasant societies, modern and post-modern ones and concludes with suggestions on transforming worldviews to fit the Biblical pattern. Hiebert says, "It is arrogant to claim we fully understand the biblical worldview" (p.267).

Nussbaum (2005) demonstrates how Americans express their cultural values in terms of their common sayings. He lists 235 of them, claiming that the top one revolves around "success".

Skill-Check

To train others in storytelling, we should be able to talk about and classify different kinds of stories. For example, are there differences between a legend, a myth and a historical story? Are there differences in how the storyteller introduces each type of story? Are particular words or grammatical constructions unique to a certain type of story? Think about how you would go about constructing a folk story. Check your efforts with others.

What are the particular techniques and methodologies that you could use to differentiate:
- **legends**
- **myths**
- **parables**
- **proverbs**
- **epics**
- **ballads**
- **allegories**
- **cult languages**
- **folktales**
- **riddles**
- **puzzles**
- **songs**
- **poems**
- **counting-out rhymes**

The "Big Idea" in a Story

People tell stories for a purpose. Although it is often for entertainment, storytellers also want to get a particular point across. It is common for the storyteller to express a central point at the conclusion of a story, often its moral, i.e. the teaching lesson it contains. In the case of parables, the meaning or main lesson of the story is hidden, or left to be deduced. Sometimes analysts can determine the figures of speech and metaphors in a story in terms of their basic components. Wierzbicka (2001), for example, explicates and reduces the basic concepts inherent in the parables of Jesus to universal semantic primitives. By following her analysis, we can have a clearer idea of what Jesus really meant by the parable. Although such a detailed type of analysis is not in focus here, the storyteller does need to be aware of how the main theme can be determined and expressed using basic lexicon and structure.

It is common for stories to have a lesson in them, often more than one. The listener needs to be aware that they may be part of a larger narrative as well. In the case of folk stories or legends, the inherent or emic meaning may be difficult for an outsider to grasp, although an insider may see the point of the story quickly. If the main idea is clear to insiders, but outsiders do not grasp it, it will help if the insider recasts the story for the outsider. Lack of clarity suggests that the language and culture need more study.

In examining the main idea in a story, we should think first of the hearers, those who may have some compelling reason for retelling the story. They need to understand the main ideas of the story and decide, in turn, if their audience can restate them. If not, the storyteller will need to make some adjustments or elaborate the main idea.

In examining and retelling Bible stories, it is important to recognize that the given name or title of a story may be quite different from the theme or main point of the story. For example, the name of the story in Luke 10:25-37 is commonly called "The Good Samaritan," but the point of the story is to illustrate who really should be considered a "neighbor."

Objectives

> ➤ To help students determine what the Big or Main Idea(s) is in a number of stories.
> ➤ To provide students practice in making clear what the Big Idea is in a story.

Preparation

Listen to or read several different kinds of stories to try to understand how an author goes about presenting the Big Idea most effectively. Examine several traditional stories to determine their main idea. Such stories often reveal important cultural viewpoints.

Practice

Consider three different kinds of stories, perhaps: a Bible story, a legend or myth (for PNG, consult McElhanon 1974, 1982 and Slone 2001), and someone's personal story. Following this, decide:

❑ The big or main idea for each story (if there is only one)
❑ Clues that inform you of the main theme or point
❑ How and when the author introduces the main idea
❑ Any minor or smaller ideas in the story

Facilitator Notes

"There are just three essentials to a good story: humanity, a point, and the storyteller" (J. Frank Dobie, quoted in Maguire 1998:137). The storyteller constructs scenes but must be sure to connect them every time. Maguire states that it takes twenty-three minutes to communicate a scene in sufficient detail for the hearer to understand it well. He uses an activity called "stepping stones" (commonly called storyboarding), where sketches or notes are outlined that depict systematic progressions in the development of a story. We can focus a particular technique as we tell our story by:

• Adding dialogue
• Appealing to all five senses
• Adding interesting facts or allusions
• Building in repetitions
• Planning appropriate pacing and inflection

Jeremias (1972) notes that in the original context of the parables we see that Jesus compels his hearers to come to a decision about himself and his mission. The parables are full of "the secret of the Kingdom of God" (Mark 4.22), in other words, the Big Idea is to depict what he calls "an eschatology that is in the process of realization" (1972:230). He contends that when we attempt to recover the original significance of the parables, it is evident that all the parables of Jesus compel his hearers to come to a decision about his person and mission

Jeremias also comments on the translation of the parables into Greek by noting the representational changes and embellishments that took place. The degree to which translators do this depended upon the churches influence in such things as OT folk story themes, audiences, and the horatory use of parables. Jeremias gives additional comments on allegorization in stories, noting how these have influenced the interpretation of the Big Idea in parables, such as:

• Now is the day of salvation
• God's mercy for sinners
• The great assurance
• The imminence of catastrophe
• The challenge of the hour
• Realized in discipleship
• Exaltation of the Son of Man
• The consummation
• Parabolic actions

FOUR GREAT STORIES

Griffith-Jones writes that we must hear the concerns of the Gospel writers. He claims they "discovered possibilities of which we, their later readers, have almost completely lost sight" (2001:11). He bases his observations on a comment of Jesus when he asks, "Who do you say that I am?" In his concise summary, Griffith-Jones sees the Big Idea in each of the Gospels as follows:

- **Mark** is written in a simple Greek style that was abrupt and unadorned. "In Mark's stern, stark story we hear a rebel speak" (5). Just as immigrants to the US have needed to master English, it was important for missionaries like Mark to master and write in Greek. Mark's work has traces of an Aramaic accent because his stories were first told in that language, then later translated into Greek.
- **Matthew** finished his account ten years after Mark. "Matthew builds his gospel in careful sections of miracles and teaching" (6). He highlights prophecies and their fulfillment. Tradition says Matthew wrote the manuscript in Aramaic; however, much of the story is drawn from Mark.
- **Luke** writes for Gentile followers in two books. The Gospel opens in the Jerusalem temple with Jesus not yet born and ends decades after his death with Paul as a missionary in Rome. Luke "has the historian's eye for the great sweep of history and for its most telling detail" (7).
- **John** casts his narrative differently, building long and riddling conversations between Jesus and others. "John is a mystic, a poet. He has an insight to convey that is almost too deep, too bewildering to speak of" (7)

In each case, the author presents the actions of Jesus according to his own perceptions of what happened. It follow that there are variations in the stories, but not in the main theme or idea.

THE BIBLE AS NOVEL

We should be able to tell from the contents page of a book the Big Idea that an author has in mind. For example, Wangerin's (1996) lengthy book treats the Bible as a novel where he suggests a number of Big Ideas, as well as the principle characters who voice them. He divides the Bible as novel into eight parts, each with supporting cast and important place or character markers, such as: the ancestors; the covenant; the wars of the Lord; kings; Prophets; letters from exile; the "yearning"; and the Messiah.

Bailey (1976: 55-56) summarizes the Big Idea of the Prodigal Son story as "[we] must become a neighbor to anyone in need, even enemies," because self-justification is doomed to failure. The story provides a dynamic concept of neighbor and further demonstrates that God's sovereignty is not bound. In a more recent publication (2003), Bailey equates the story of the prodigal son with Jacob and finds 51 points of comparison and contrast. As Steven C. Barton (in Longnecker, ed., 2000:211) states, "The fundamental moral-theological point … is compassion for the lost…." This makes repentance and restoration possible.

THE "BIG IDEA" IN TRADITIONAL STORIES

Examining the traditional stories of any country is helpful and necessary to build our knowledge of the vernacular language and culture. For example, by examining the two-volume set of legends edited by McElhanon and the motif index given in Slone (2001), we have a general outline of what is central in the cultures. Slone's stories are from folktales in *Wantok* Newspaper and are representative of the traditional values and Big Ideas found in PNG.

THE "BIG IDEA" IN AN ORGANIZATION

Stories that represent an organization's values are critical, especially to passing those values on from generation to generation. Stephen Denning (2005) shows how administrators can do this effectively. Furthermore, telling and using stories will not only transmit knowledge, but also build trust and promote vision.

Even the name of an organization can convey its purpose and Big Idea. Ramzy and Korten (2006:171) observe, "For many organizations, the drive to use story in branding emerges at a critical moment—a time of endings and beginnings. A time of renewal." Further, "Developing a brand story can be a powerful experience. It is like alchemy—part science and part art, part logic and part intuition, part reason and part emotion." Most organizations have particular brands—ways they are recognized—by insiders and outsiders. For example, the SIL International web site (www.sil.org) summaries its brand story as "By facilitating language-based development, SIL International serves the peoples of the world through research, translation, and literacy."

We need to know how to connect our legacy with our audience by looking for patterns and themes in the stories we collect and then find creative ways to deliver the stories. In other words, administrators must live the story.

Silverman (2006:193) reminds us that executives who tell stories are the most effective and that storytelling falls under the umbrella of leadership. She gives a harsh suggestion: "People want to understand who you are. Put away the PowerPoint!" There are a number of things that administrators can do to improve their presentations:
- Link stories to the organization's strategic plan with its big ideas
- Know the corporation's vision and strategies
- Integrate visionary stories with training
- Take the initiative and model the stories
- Be creative in communicating the stories, with books and articles on Big Idea topics
- Coach people how to communicate stories
- Elicit stories that focus on strengths and successes throughout the organization
- Be patient and make sure hearers understand the Big Idea

In the Bible, one Big Idea states, "without a vision the people perish." In other words, someone must have a conviction to help others in need and then do something about it. In most organizations, the leaders most often provide the vision and they can do it best with stories. Denning (2005:19) catalogs a number of mistakes to avoid in organizational storytelling:
- A negative tone
- Telling personal stories in a "traditional fashion"
- Using success stories without knowledge to back them up
- Not confronting untrue rumors
- Using detailed scenarios to create a belief in a different future

Skill-Check

Ask someone to tell or read you the parable of "The Laborers in the Vineyard" (Matthew 20:1—16). Bailey (2008) calls this "The parable of the compassionate employer" to bring focus on the employer rather than, as has been traditional, upon the employees. Notice also Micheal P.

Knowles (in Longnecker, ed., 2000:303), who claims, "The identity of the laborers is less important than the character of the landowner, and what it implies about the character of God." Scholars have interpreted he laborers variously as the Pharisees and outcasts in general, the disciples, or the disciples that followed Jesus for longer or shorter periods.

In the light of these comments:

❑ Explain the Big Idea of the parable
❑ Explain why you decided it was the Big Idea
❑ Discuss how to ensure that the Big Idea is presented when the story is retold

Story Audiences

Storytellers tell their stories to a variety of audiences, each representing a wide range of backgrounds and ages. Some stories benefit from visual dramatization and may appeal more to children. Other stories may interest married couples, singles, farmers, city workers, and so on, but any audience will benefit if the storyteller adopts appropriate metaphors and styles. When there is a mixed audience, it may be necessary to tell the story with variations that take into account the backgrounds of several sub-groups. In fact, Schank claims (1990:195) that "Each subculture has its own official stories" and a person who knows them has the means of getting what he wants from the subculture.

For example, note the wide range of Bible translations, each appealing to diverse audiences. Some critics have derided free translations like *The Cotton Patch* versions (Jordan 1968, 1969, 1970, 1997). However, Jordan's intent was "to cross the time-space barrier and talk to us not only in modern English but about modern problems, feelings, frustrations, hopes and assurances; to work beside us in our cotton patch or on our assembly line, so that the word becomes modern flesh" (168:7). Eugene H. Peterson has translated the Bible "in contemporary language" a version called *The Message*. In his original introduction to the New Testament (1995:10), Peterson outlines his style: "This version of the New Testament in a contemporary idiom keeps the language of the Message current and fresh and understandable in the same language in which we do our shopping, talk with our friends, worry about world affairs, and teach our children their table manners. The goal is not to render a word-for-word conversion of Greek into English, but rather to convert the tone, the rhythm, and the events, the ideas, into the way we actually think and speak." Both Jordan and Peterson were clear about their intended audiences.

Objectives

This chapter will examine issues of story audiences and give ideas on how best to assess their needs by:
- ➢ Examining the nature and viewpoints of an audience
- ➢ Discussing how the audience impacts and relates to the story
- ➢ Determining appropriate stories for the audience
- ➢ Examining how stories and language can hold the audience's interest and imagination.

Preparation

Choose two or three short parables or stories and imagine two different audiences that will hear the stories (e.g., children and university students). What vocabulary or settings can you

emphasize or modify for each audience? How can you be sure that the audience understands the main theme and purpose of the story? For example, how would you change the vocabulary and introduction of characters in women or children's stories so that they would be different from a men's group? What adjustments and cultural illustrations would you change if the audience consisted mainly of older people or only of children?

Practice

Telling stories to different kinds of audiences is one way to improve your storytelling technique. Thinking about the particular audience will help you decide on appropriate metaphors and illustrations that contribute to the mental pictures the audience forms of the story. For practice:
- ❑ Choose two stories (one a Bible story and the other a traditional tale)
- ❑ Tell the stories to two different audiences
- ❑ What adjustments can you make to the "original" story?

Now take a story that is common in at least two of the Gospels and recast it for different audiences. Imagine that in your own culture you are telling the story of the feeding of the 5000 (Mat 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-14) to these groups of people:
- ❑ People in a rest home
- ❑ A teenage Sunday School class
- ❑ A group of children in a nursery
- ❑ A group of university students
- ❑ A professional group, e.g., teachers, doctors, lawyers, etc.

How have you adjusted and adapted the story, taking into account the background, understanding, and application for the audiences? Have you used cultural analogies? For example, the kind of food offered, where people sit, the items they bring, and so on, could change for each group. Does one Gospel account seem more fitting than another in respect to your audiences? How can you put this skill into practice when teaching people of other cultures about audiences? For helpful hints and discussions on telling stories well see, in particular, Truby (2007) and Wacker and Silverman (2003).

Facilitator Notes

Although storytelling by using animation is interesting to children as well as adults, it is not a simple skill. Wellins (2005) outlines what is necessary to use this mode for storytelling. Adults and children also are attracted to "ghost stories" and similar tales (see Yashinsky 2004). One of the most helpful books on techniques for telling stories to children is by Greene (1996). She outlines the kinds of stories best suited for special needs children, young children and young adults and provides techniques on presentations and communication.

Steffen (1996:34) uses the analogy of a four-legged stool to remind storytellers of several points to consider when using stories in other cultures. On the stool, one leg is the "anthropological leg," which "respects the mariner's [other cultures] worldview, values, and social environments."

This leg aids the storytelling facilitator to know what kind of background information is necessary and most helpful for the audience. The other "legs" are the pedagogical, theological, and curricular.

We have already mentioned Denning, who comments on how storytelling contributes to organizational change when directed towards a particular audience. He notes that "Time after time, when faced with the task of persuading a group of managers or front-line staff in a large organization to get enthusiastic about a major change, I found that storytelling was the only thing that worked" (2001:xiii). He believes that the standard management manual has too much theory and relies almost entirely on analytic thinking. It tells us to fix the systems, re-engineer the processes, enhance the quality, streamline the procedures, reform and flatten the organizational structure, and analyze things in terms of grids and charts. We develop plans to program individuals to operate like so many obedient computers. Instead, Denning challenges us to hone our interpersonal mechanics and build skill inventories.

David Armstrong, of Armstrong International, also believes that the power of stories underlies successful management and leadership. His book (1992) includes stories about self-management, core values, policy, heroic people, troublemakers, service, partnerships, creativity, leadership, innovation, as well as other topics.

Stories can only be adapted for audiences if the teller of the story knows something of their background, interest and needs. The audience can aid any adaption and revision by retelling the stories.

Sawyer (1942) also emphasizes that the storyteller must learn to discriminate by evaluating the selection of stories and knowing the audiences. In doing so, the introduction and climax are the most important parts of a story and intricate stories involving many characters and digression are difficult to tell. Stories can stir courage, love and beauty, invoke reverence, mercy and loyalty but, "the form [must be] simple, complete; the subject matter universal; the language forceful, pictorial" (1942:157). Retelling the best stories contribute to "a feeling of at hominess with words, [and] provides that final weight that swings the balance in favor of the storyteller" (1942:160).

Stories can be cross-cultural. Amaladoss, for example, gives examples of how to best refer to Jesus in a Hindu society and claims "The choice of a particular image depends on how a person or group relates to Jesus, their attitudes and perspectives" (2006:9). To Buddhists meditation or mindfulness and *karuna* (compassion towards suffering) are important, so Jesus is represented as a *bodhisattva*—a liberated soul, one that depicts liberation. The concept of Jesus the "*guru*" is particularly relevant in Indian cultures and languages. Not only is the *guru* the teacher, but he instructs and trains his disciples spiritually and demonstrates his teachings personally by the way he lives. People in other cultures and societies will form their own images of Jesus and refer to him with vernacular terms.

Song (1984) uses a number of folk stories and fairy tales to illustrate how stories can represent aspects of Asian theology. He outlines seven stages for what he calls dialogical conversion:
- The room on the other side (evaluating other worlds and other persons)
- Search for the familiar in the unfamiliar (going beyond external things to reach the internals)

- The room is different (rejecting boredom and engaging new things)
- Writing our own story in strange lands (exhibiting patience with interfaith dialogue)
- Blessed ignorance (looking at things from different perspectives)
- Bilateral agreement ("Words of the heart—this is what faith is about" p. 137)
- Dialogical conversation (reevaluating concepts, interrelationships with God, humanity, nature)

THE PATIENT'S STORY

Robert Coles, a psychiatrist who taught at Harvard, recounts that hearing stories contributed to his understanding of how the physician should relate to the patient (his audience). He recalls how his family's habit of reading played a dominant role in his life. For those interested, outcomes of his work on "psychiatric anthropology" are in his *Children of Crisis* series.

For Coles the importance of a patient's story is crucial in understanding how the person feels in relation to their illness. Patients want doctors to hear their stories so that the doctor can understand them better. Cole's supervisor wanted the patients' stories repeated, so Coles put aside simply formulating the medical problem and listened to the events in the patients' lives. He held off on his interpretation of the illness and concentrated on the variations of the stories. The things the patients expressed helped him to get to know them. Coles relates that his supervisor wanted him to worry about omitting details in the messages and not brush them aside. This could happen if the doctor rushed to a conclusion about the patient's illness (1989:21).

A person can hide the treasure of his or her life in their childhood. However, often physicians' minds are made up from the start of a consultation and they simply go along with their "diagnostic and therapeutic regimen" (1989:24). Physicians, in Cole's view, owe it to each other to respect and learn from each other's stories.

In order to have meaningful interaction with our audience and provide them with some degree of help, we need to know what they think. We do not know the particular help that a story might be to someone. As Coles notes, "When Jane Austen wrote *Pride and Prejudice* she could not have known its possible value for Americans caught up in racial conflict" (1989:40). The reader must enter into the story with his imagination for it to become "his" story.

Coles discusses the books that began to give him directions. He mentions Tolstoy and Dostoevsky in particular as authors who did not have any reluctance in raising religious and philosophical questions. Although college students are forever trying to find a direction for their lives in the political currents and crosscurrents, they must negotiate in secular educational institutions. This is different for a doctor, for as Coles observes, "Someone approaching death can help the doctor to a reconciliation with the inevitable, as opposed to that fury of distracted busy-work that can mask an attending a physician's despair as he or she sees the losing battle to be nearing its end" (1989:94). Coles claims that if doctors took the time to read poems they could find a better picture of what happened in a patient's life than if they spend their time trying to find the right words for a headache or chest pain. He believes there are correlations between what doctors believe and how they act (marriage, morals, etc.) and practice medicine.

Examples of other challenging books that readily come to mind are the novel on Jesus by Wangerin (2005), the collection of stories by Colson (2005), and the anthologies by Yancey (2001, 2004) and Muggeridge (1983).

FAIRY STORIES?

Some audiences may be surprised to find the roots of spiritual stories in fables and myths. Murphy (2000:3) reports that the Grimm brothers thought of fairy tales as remnants of ancient faith expressed in poetry. One of the brothers, Wilhelm, was a gleaner. He collected and re-expressed the religious faith found in poetic tales from three ancient traditions: Classical Greco-Roman, Norse-Germanic, and Biblical. He was also a fluent reader, student, and storyteller in three languages. The brothers were professors and librarians who studied literature, philosophy, the history of words, stories, and languages. William wrote that his reason for telling fairy stories was to awaken the thoughts and feelings of the heart. Murphy provides additional evidence of the spiritual interest and motivation the Grimm brothers had for the stories.

While it is true that some children's stories may be difficult to tell, Niemi and Ellis (2001:11) point out that the path to understanding is often "not a straight line, but a journey into imagination." When storytellers incorporate values into behavior in the context of parables, fables, and so on, children learn what is important in life. Families "suffer prejudice, economic hardship, illness, accident, and untimely death," so stories provide a means of understanding and coming to grips with these (24).

ORGANIZATIONAL STORIES (AGAIN)

Springboard stories (Denning 2001, 2005) are stories to promote changes in an organization and have certain characteristics[8]:
- They are told from the point of view of a protagonist that is in a predicament
- The change proposal in the story is aimed at solving the predicament
- The story should be plausible, even familiar, and be told as simply and briefly as possible
- The story should spark new stories in the minds of the listeners, but not details
- The listener's minds should be encouraged to race ahead, to imagine further implications
- The story is only as good as the underlying idea being conveyed
- If the idea in the story is bad, telling the story may reveal its weaknesses
- Intuition will help reveal if you are giving the wrong information in the story
- Conversations will debate the feasibility of the change idea
- Every teller or listener may be an "expert" who has a different idea of what is best

BIBLE STORIES FOR CHILDREN

Books in this genre are numerous, but here are a few examples:

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[8] SIL has numerous "springboard stories". Note, for example, Kenneth Pike's story on how Townsend prompted him to write his Phonetics textbook. There was a predicament (Townsend needed the book to train missionaries), a change proposal to solve the predicament (Townsend thought that Pike could do it), and the story is plausible, even familiar (He didn't want to do it): It also sparks new stories (of how others benefited), and so on.

The Jesus Encyclopedia (2005) is an example of a resource that provides background for children's Bible stories. It has a comprehensive introduction into every aspect of Jesus' life: the historical background into which he was born; the stories of his birth; his ministry as a teacher, preacher and healer; his death on the cross and the stories of his resurrection that inspired his followers to spread their message of faith, hope, and love all over the world. The text, consisting of fifty-eight chapters, is simple to read, with a wealth of carefully researched illustrations, maps, diagrams, and photographs.

A cartoon format also often appeals to children and some publishers use this format to depict the everyday life of the people in Bible times. Information may include the people, their food, eating, family, teaching, houses, towns, villages and travel. Such books outline the faith and religious life of the people, illustrating places, climate, flora, fauna, time, slavery, Jerusalem, war, neighbors, Romans, Palestine, and many other facts.

Mihalic (1973), an expert in Tok Pisin of PNG, used the comic format for translating a number of OT Bible stories.

The Illustrated Bible for Children is a basic set of fifty-seven Old and thirty-nine New Testament stories accompanied by reproductions of paintings. It includes an index and references, followed by a Palestine map at the time of the Lord, as well as the missionary journeys of Paul. Like many such books, it is useful for compiling and illustrating a set of stories for children.

Rembrandt: The Old Testament (1996) has sixty eight-reproductions of Rembrandt's [Rembrandt van Rijn] works, including color oils, drawings, and black and white etchings. The paintings introduce audiences to some of the classical paintings representing scenes from the Bible. There are hundreds of Bible story resources intended for children that are on-line, many containing helpful materials.

We can also turn the situation around and ask, "What are the stories that children tell?" in an attempt to understand them better. Children tell stories to make emotional sense of the world, to become part of the culture, to make friends, and to understand who they are (Engel 1995). By allowing them to retell Bible (and other) stories we learn that they are often like the stories they tell.

FAMILY STORIES AND THEIR AUDIENCES

Pratt and Fiese's book (2004) focuses on the family in the context of interpreting the wider world, so that stories often support, guide, or even stifle the process. They refer to the "ecological context of the family" with its paradigms, myths, stories, and rituals. One such example is the "rags to riches" motif.

"Stories are always for someone" (p. 7, quoting McAdams 1999—*Personal narratives and the life story*), but the cultural context will determine the conceptions of what the child is likely to learn from the story. During the first two years, the child's symbolic capacities develop allowing him to identify self and have a capacity for a personal autobiography. The coherence of the life

story develops on into adulthood and cultures will use stories for different purposes. For example, the Chinese use stories to teach moral lessons while North Americas give emphasis to creativity and autonomy.

Between adulthood and maturity, the three distinct stages are intimacy, generativity and ego integrity (Pratt and Fiese 2004:15). Narratives vary according to method, medium and meaning making. The way that families tell their stories, (the medium) reflects a kind of practicing, as well as denoting variations of style in family life and relationships. The reflection of the self (its meaning) varies in different cultures.

PERSONAL STORIES AND AUDIENCES

Maguire (1998) suggests applications and hints for personal storytelling that are applicable to vernacular story telling. He encourages readers to think of storytelling as a painting instead of a photograph and suggests exercises to help. Personal storytelling, for example, engages us by:

- Investing our lives with more meaning. (**Exercise**: Think of a person who is a mystery to you: Why are you curious about him or her?)
- Connecting us vitally with others. (**Exercise**: Identify two groups to share with and describe some significant event in your life.)
- Developing creativity. (**Exercise**: Identify a meaningful period from your past family; what information do you lack? How can you supply or imagine what is missing?)
- Strengthening humor. (**Exercise**: Think of a particular story and tell what happened and how if affected you.)
- Increasing courage and confidence. (**Exercise**: Keep a journal and reflect on how the story began, and the significant moments or milestones in the story. Who are the major and minor characters and what are their points of view? What are the possible endings or sequences?)
- Rendering our lives more memorable. (**Exercise**: Recall an event and tell why it was difficult and what you learned from it. Include some specific details.)

Skill–Check

Have two people listen to stories that you have prepared for two different kinds of audiences. Check the stories by:

- ❑ Asking them about the main point of the story
- ❑ Asking them what scenes are remembered best
- ❑ Asking them if there are words, expressions, illustrations, or other parts of the story that might be changed
- ❑ Discussing the kind of audiences that participants expect to encounter in telling stories
- ❑ Apply any of Maguire's exercises (see above) that you can

CHAPTER 5

Telling Stories

We enjoy hearing stories told by a good storyteller, but what makes a storyteller "good," and how does this judgment vary from one culture to another? It is possible to take a story that is of average interest and tell it so that it "comes alive," capturing the attention of the audience throughout the telling. This can even happen when teachers retell textbook materials to students in ways that help them remember the important principles of the lesson. A pastor has the same principle in mind when he or she takes a difficult passage from the Bible and illustrates it with various kinds of stories.

This chapter will examine some of the techniques and principles used by recognized storytellers and help students' solicit examples of stories told by "good storytellers."[9]

Objectives

- ➢ To learn how to tell a story effectively, so that the audience retains the story accurately and can retell it well
- ➢ To encourage participants to outline those features of a story those are the most important, and then illustrate the points by telling stories

Preparation

Examine a number of stories from Luke, the storyteller-historian, and determine what makes his stories effective. Note in particular how his stories presuppose certain cultural knowledge and experience—if you are to understand the story well. Remember that a story should not sidetrack the listener or reader from the main point of the story. Rhoads (2004) reminds us that storytelling, as reflected in the Bible, was a performance.

A number of years ago, Victor Turner (1987:21) noticed a shift in "theoretical emphasis" in anthropology from competence to performance, an emphasis on the insights gained from studying symbolic systems such as myth, ritual and other forms of interpersonal community behavior. We can also note this shift in linguistics where, although theoretical linguistics is still a dominant theme, sociolinguistic insights have helped us see the functions of language in many domains.

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[9] Volume 10 (2000) of the *Journal of Biblical Storytelling* includes valuable articles about storytelling. Tony McCaffrey outlines a practical method of teaching storytelling that captures both the visual and verbal imagination, including gap tales, animation dubbing and imagination resources. These are discussed further in his book (McCaffrey 1996). See also Donald Davis (1993) for a helpful and practical collection of hints on telling stories.

In a linguistic organization like SIL, we learn how to logically arrange data in a system, then analyze and manipulate them. We do not so much reflect and contemplate, but rather we prize intellectual activity to theorize, speculate, illuminate, demonstrate, explicate, and so on. We think of intellectual activity by means of analogy and vision, exemplified with our digital imaging technology. We believe, to some extent, that we are outside of the world of objects and can observe them impersonally (although Pike taught us that we must move back and forth from the outside view (etics) to the inside view (emics). We are arriving at the state where we may soon believe that we can manage language programs technologically, making it difficult to ask and answer questions about ourselves. To quote Gay (2008:71), "we still tend to think of education as a process of arranging, cataloguing, and transmitting information." In short, it is difficult for us to think in terms of story.

There are many "nonverbals" used in storytelling: gestures, pauses, the loudness and softness of the voice, and so. We cannot always recover these features from the "original" stories, so we must try to determine the intention of the speaker. The writers of the parables demonstrate intention in a number of ways, but primarily by speech acts (using warnings, commands, exhortations, etc.) Consider how to best use gestures, pauses, and so on in telling your story.

You will best interest the audience in your story by carefully preparing the opening. Note their response as you begin the story. Are you using pauses in your delivery and do your voice and body gestures tell the tale with you? Note how various storytellers perform and how they are relaxed and have obvious enjoyment when telling their story.

Practice

Choose a partner and tell him (or her) a story that you know well. Add background and other information that is not in the original story but would seem to fit well without distorting its central theme (its Big Idea). Be sure to:
- ❏ Use your voice to show surprise, anger, or other emotions
- ❏ Use your body (if this is culturally appropriate) to emphasize points
- ❏ Try to tell both shorter and longer versions of the story
- ❏ Have your partner do the same with you
- ❏ Discuss what would help you (or others) to tell your stories better
- ❏ Use some speech act verbs to add force to common verbs, such as *say, ask* and *tell* (Franklin 1992)

Facilitator Notes

Danoff (2006), who uses stories for educational purposes, provides observations on the teacher as storyteller, storytelling and classroom culture and other matters. Barton (1986) also includes a chapter on storytelling in the classroom. For examples of how storytelling in the Bible added to the enjoyment and emotions of the hearer, see Licht (1986). Licht speaks of the dual nature of the OT Biblical storyteller: mimesis, in which the narrator adds his verbal skills to help the reader or hearer captivate the emotions of the event, and on the actual history of the event.

What include stories in an educational setting? Liz Warren (2008:124-126), following LynnAnn Wojciechowicz, outlines nine good reasons for having storytelling in a curriculum:

- It stimulates learning
- It builds literacy skills
- It encourages critical thinking
- It strengthens the imagination
- It promotes emotional development
- It creates classroom community
- It builds cultural awareness and understanding
- It builds character
- It is a fun way to learn

Facilitators should encourage each person to learn to listen and reflect on their own story, as well as that of others. They should discover a story of their own and then tell it in various settings, avoiding simplified and "overdone" features. Participants should reflect on how best to use their own experiences in telling their story.

Although we do not pursue storytelling as a profession, professional storytellers provide valuable insights, writings and websites. If you live in Texas, start by examining the website: http://www.tejasstorytelling.com/. (last accessed January 2010). See also Steward (1995) for stories from the Texas Storytelling Festival.

For an example of a professional storyteller, note Margaret Read MacDonald, who tells stories to "10,000 children each year as a children's librarian with the King County Library System in Seattle," and runs workshops for teachers. Her book is "a litany of the reasons people need to hear story" (1993:10). She says that storytellers can learn the story in one hour by selecting a story that they are eager to learn. They should then concentrate, memorize key bits, analyze the story into episodes, say it aloud, repair it, tell it through, evaluate it, and then practice it. In a later book (2006:ix), MacDonald reminds us that the master storyteller also has to have certain abilities, such as being able to remember, shape tales, conceptualize and having a large enough repertoire to satisfy the audience.

Performance criticism is an emerging methodology that studies the life of the early church to identify features of the storytelling event, such as noting the performer, audience, material setting and social circumstances, It studies, in particular, collections and compositions to see how the oral storytellers performed in the early church. Oral culture was the context because manuscripts were not central to the life of the early church (Rhoads 2004). Stegemann and others (2002) examine the social and political perspectives that provide background for a number of stories in the New Testament. Jeffers (1999) explores the background of early Christianity.

In the storytelling performance, the storyteller must set the stage by preparing the audience. MacDonald (1993) suggests beginning with an appropriate pause, then carefully constructing an opening bridge to the story. While communicating, observe the audience carefully. She advises us to revel in the use of language and develop our own style, use gestures that are natural, and end the story with confidence. "I refuse to even discuss technique with my students until they have had experience in shaping a tale through repeated telling." In evaluating performance, "We are about joy; not art" (1993:27). MacDonald concentrates upon:

- **Communication**: Seeing the audience and being aware of their needs and responses

- **Delivery**: Pausing before beginning and ending the story skillfully and effectively
- **Scripting**: Letting the language flow easily
- **Control**: Relaxing and enjoying the sharing
- **Experience**: Deciding when to tell the story again

The storyteller should critically examine stories and avoid simplified and overwritten ones. "My colleagues sometimes suggest that those elaborate, soul-searched, personal stories and the hard-honed literary pieces which they construct and perform for adults are a higher art form, somehow on a different plane from the work of simply telling stories to children." "Nonsense," she says, "Art is judged by the ear and the heart." (MacDonald 1993:80.) It may turn out that a simply told parable is better than "elaborately developed twenty-minute recitations."

Think of story as an event and plan for its desired effect by:
- Meeting the audience through introductory comments
- Encouraging audience participation
- Teaching others to tell the story
- Telling the story wherever possible
- Finding written stories, but evaluating your discoveries (MacDonald 1993:64)
- Finding a storyteller whose style matches your own
- Starting a story bank
- Defending the story
- Listening, identifying with the hearers and reflecting upon the storytelling process
- Networking with other storytellers

Again, why tell the story? What are the values of storytelling? According to MacDonald, we should be convinced that stories broaden our awareness of other cultures by helping us to see ourselves better. Storytelling also gives a sense of our belonging to a group and allows us to think, in particular looking for:
- Happiness, with laughter and rhythmic responses
- Wonder, as stories unfold
- Self-discovery
- Quiet solitude
- Companionship
- Building understanding
- Creativity

"I truly believe that the power of storytelling is the one best hope we have to improve the communities we live in and the people we love." (MacDonald 1993:104)

TRANSFERRING IMAGERY IN STORIES

Storytelling involves the transfer of imagery with varieties of expression, humor, pauses, and rhythm, as well as repetition. Lipman (1999:41) notes, "Imagery is the internal representation of actual or fanciful experience."

The storyteller can always begin with a personal account to highlight what the ideas of a particular story are. Then he or she can add a poem, dramatize some point, or sing it for effect.

We do not know what impact the interaction of an audience with a story will be, but many authors remind us that we cannot overestimate the importance of a personal story.

We have recounted how C.S. Lewis (in Hooper, ed. 1982), always began his stories by having mental pictures of it. His Narnian books and science fiction books began with him seeing mental pictures and he gives many valuable comments on how this helped him in writing stories for children. Children (or adults) should be encouraged to use pictures, even drawing their own, to supplement and complement their stories. For additional examples, see Robert Coles (1964) and his *Children of Crisis* series for elaboration and examples of this point.

Ruth Sawyer was a great storyteller who shared her rich experience and joy in her classic book (1942), in which she also relates eleven of her best-loved stories. She compares the art of storytelling to the days of guilds when the worker was teacher, director, and inspirer of the apprentices. They lived for their work—the rightness and beauty of it. One of the characteristics of the masters was that they kept trying, all the while gaining experience. Sawyer further explains, "The art of storytelling lies within the storyteller, to be searched for, drawn out, made to grow" (1942:26). It involves:

- Creative imagination
- Evoking emotion
- Spiritual conviction
- Careful selection of stories
- Embracing emotions, imagination and folk-wisdom
- Sharing one's heart and spirit
- Studying in solitude and silence for understanding
- Being one's own teacher and critic
- Depending upon the power of creation

Sawyer says that storytelling involves a sense of spiritual conviction. She calls storytelling a "folk-art," one that promotes emotions, imagination and folk-wisdom. The most important component of storytelling, however, is experience. The storyteller needs experience to demonstrate a love for storytelling, a pride in telling the story, and how to tell the story with physical vigor and faith. Sawyer does not compromise with the trivial and mediocre storyteller and she wants no commonplace performances. Storytellers must learn to listen to their voice, control their breath, and carefully choose the words and figures of speech that they use.

THE ANTIQUITY OF STORIES

Sawyer looked at the inspired, traditional storytellers of the past and discovered that what was initially narrative later became entertainment. Her observation was that "Out of growing imagination came the impulse to exaggerate and idealize" (1942:53). The use of prose and metrical narrative began to be distinguished and literary forms like the ethical tale in fables, allegories, parables and legends began to unfold.

According to Sawyer, the first challenge to the art of the storyteller began in writing stories that no longer belonged to a particular person. She outlines the history of the storyteller, from the first Pharaoh, through the Gypsies, pilgrims and crusaders, the conquering Romans, the historical tales, and so on. In many cases "A master owned certain stories which no apprentice would tell

without his permission" (1942:66). The apprentice had to know the tales before becoming a master storyteller. MacDonald (2006) interviewed and studied the stories and lives of ten storytellers. She also notes their styles and the responsibilities that they feel and share.

Unlike many other storytellers, Sawyer encourages storytellers to memorize the story but then forget about the mechanics so that the story is extemporaneous. Again, note that she sees experience as the most important aspect in storytelling. It includes:

- Assimilation, by repeated telling, and therefore trial and error
- Having a pride in what is told, so that one speaks with physical vigor and faith
- "the grace of God and the power of imagination" (1942:88)
- Not compromising with the mediocre by giving commonplace performances
- Using drama for effect

PERSONAL BACKGROUND OF THE TELLER

According to Sawyer (1942:107), any storyteller can enrich his or her background by prayer, meditation, self-denial, human service and even nature. For example, a storyteller should find the best music to build background on and not be concerned solely with amusement, education, distraction or pleasure. Rather, the storyteller should be concerned with some hidden aspect of beauty and truth that lies within the story. In addition, a storyteller seeks for a shared intellectual understanding and spiritual conviction. The storyteller needs "To know good English, good form and good substance, one must be familiar with good writers" (1942:110), so Sawyer suggests that the storyteller also write at least one original story every year. Writing is therefore an important dimension to assist in storytelling. Hills (2000), gives advice and illustrations about writing short stories, which contrast, for example, with novels and sketches.

Many storytellers discuss enhancing their story by certain exercises, such as closing the eyes to visualize objects and imagine them in the story. Use such things as directness, simplicity, elusiveness, dramatic interpretation, intonation, enunciation and charm but above all, integrity, to excite the listeners (127). Creative art at times involves communication between God and man and children are often the most innovative communicators. "I am conscious of nothing that might be called technique; but there are specific things to be accomplished by every storyteller and definite ways to accomplish them" (Sawyer 1942:131). This involves two main things:

- **The voice**, by learning to listen to it and controlling the breath
- **The words,** by cultivating a rich vocabulary so that the story is not memorized. Allow pictures, not words, to provide the continuity for the story.

Sawyer summarizes her work by saying that storytellers should:

- Practice with their voices to reduce tension, using vocal warm-up
- Control performance anxiety by having a support team
- Note the layers of attention and know the changes expected in the listeners
- Keep attention flexible by connecting to the moment
- Balance the details with the goals and know what matters most

ON STORYTELLING STYLES

Lipman (1999) claims that there is no "right way" to tell a story because there are locally preferred styles. We should ask, "Who are the recognized storytellers? What makes the storyteller appreciated?" The storyteller is part of a triangle that consists of the teller, the audience and the story. His transfer of imagery includes oral language, varieties of expression, characterization and humor, pauses and rhythm, as well as repetition. The storyteller learns how to transform images so that the hearer can image sights and sounds.

Lipman discusses the transfer of imagery using:
- Varieties of expression, such as humor, pauses and rhythm, as well as repetition
- Sights and sounds
- Kinesthetics, to provide the feeling of a character and emotion

The storyteller also has a relationship to the story that:
- Provides plot, actions, characters and their development,
- Demonstrates moral clarity, with suitable ending lines and general commentary
- Allows a natural process of informal telling
- Discovers the meaning of a story and how to best state that meaning
- Discovers the structure by outlining, using time-lines and other tools
- Includes memorization, although the storyteller should not begin by memorizing

The storyteller has a relationship to the listeners that includes:
- Noting fuzzy situations, where one must sense expectations
- Seeing telling as a beneficiary, as well as helper
- Uniting, inviting, offering, and acknowledging the listener and teller
- Planning an opening, such as a participatory song or story
- Developing a rehearsal buddy, home audience and other practice audiences

GETTING STORY IDEAS

One of our resources is what Sawyer (1942:55) calls our "inner storyteller". Our mind works by having us tell someone a story. When we learn to read our own mind, we are never short of material. In her terms, we "loaf" and invite our "soul" to restimulate the kinds of personal memories that make good stories. Why do we see the image? How did we feel about it before and of what does it remind us?

Greene and Fulford (1993) provide a number of questions to help us develop stories, focusing on such things as our family and ancestry, the house we grew up in, elementary and school, our neighborhood, and so on. Fulford later (2000) gives additional advice and illustrations on how to develop our family stories.

Maguire reminds us that memory legwork involves a number of things, including remembering family history. He gives several examples of what storytellers can do to improve their stories (1998:92; 96-97; 100-101):
- Concentrate on the decision-making episodes in our lives
- Interweave the real with the possible—the bittersweet liberating movements
- Note important emotional events

- Examine a photograph for expressions on faces, postures, clothes, the surrounding environment and ask questions about the photo
- Note childhood stories and legends in our family, dreams, first meetings, experiences, significant people, places and events
- Actively explore recollections from some family members

STORYTELLING POWERS IN ACTION

To Maguire (1998) "embodying a story," means doing things with it that we would not ordinarily do on a regular basis. This requires commitment, practice and experience. He believes that the storyteller should memorize certain phrases and scenes for each tale. Some of his suggestions on learning a story include:

- Do not use a written text—even if it means not telling a perfect version of what is on paper
- Think about your tale often and review it out loud every three days or so
- Make mental notes of things you can see, hear, smell, taste or feel that can add to the tale
- Tell the tale to yourself to add peace, enlivenment, celebration, and so on.
- Consider individuals or groups that might enjoy the story
- Contemplate additions, substitutions, etc., that could be made, such as related memories, incidents or images of characters in the tale, facts or historical events related to it, and analogies and examples that can be added
- Do the same with deletions and condensations
- Tell the story as if you had twice as long or half as long

Maguire notes that the most common mistake in telling a story is speaking too fast. The storyteller should choose the right time and environment to tell the story, using a firm, low-pitched natural voice and varying the pace and tone of the voice for emphasis. Included should be gestures, body language, and maintaining rapport with listeners. Early in the story, refer to the ending, but allow the story to come to a gentle, but definite, close. Gradually slow the pace and use special emphasis on the final few words.

Steffen's main concern, on the other hand, is to connect storytelling (from the Bible) with ministry. He understands that myths and stories play an important role in the development and transformation of worldview and presents a "Storytelling Analysis Worksheet" to help storytelling facilitators (1996:24).

Steffen discusses the terms *storybook, storyline, storyteller and storysmith*. In Bible stories the storyteller should carefully outline the landscape, in that ninety five percent of the Bible takes place in an area one hundred-fifty by fifty miles. The storyteller can point out, for example, that tribal, peasant and kingdom heritage influenced the history of Israel (Lingenfelter 1992). Listeners need an adequate knowledge of the backdrop (history, setting, and context) of the Bible stories to view it as a whole story, rather than as fragmented pieces.

When entering a foreign (Steffen calls this "mariner") context, storytellers need to collect life stories, proverbs and analyze them from the outsider's perspective. This provides a contrast between the storyteller's own land and that of the Bible. An awareness of paradigm shifts in new generations, universities, neighborhoods, or even evangelism, will assist the storyteller to do a better job.

For additional clues on telling stories, including selection, planning, preparation and presentation see Greene (1996) and Lipman (1999), who outlines the four tasks of the storyteller as uniting, inviting, offering and acknowledging.

One of the primary concerns of facilitators and teachers should be to mentor others in storytelling. Maldeerez and Bodóczky (1999) outline role-playing exercises to help students develop skills in learning while Johnson and Ridley (2004) outline carefully all that is involved in the mentoring process.

Skill-Check

- ❑ Outline some techniques that storytellers use in their cultures
- ❑ Outline how you will prepare before you tell a story
- ❑ Outline what kinds of props and materials might make your story more effective
- ❑ Outline how you will tell stories to children

For example, tell a story of two brothers from the perspective of either brother, or from that of the storyteller. Introduce the brothers differently, provide cultural information about them, and so on. Determine the mental images that will help you tell the story.

Constructing Stories

Storytellers compose their stories differently from language to language and even from speaker to speaker within a language. However, considered from a linguistic point of view, within any culture there are ways to compose stories to make them more acceptable and attractive. This includes the introduction of characters, the inclusion of background and supplementary information, and the development and conclusion of the story. Writer's Digest has published a number of books to help writes, for example, Rosenfeld (2008) on scenes, Kress (2005) on characters, emotion & viewpoint, and Bell (2004) on plot & structure.

Different speakers can tell the same story with varying degrees of attraction by using nonlinguistic features, such as expressions and gestures. We have mentioned some of these features, but we will now also examine techniques that help vary the content of a story, including the use of metaphors and other figures of speech.

Gestures are also very important. Shiell (2004) outlines how they were used in the book of Acts. They had rhetorical significance in speeches, illustrating such things as exiting a carriage, ending a statement and turning to leave, and nodding yes and no (a backward nod). Gestures also accompanied defeat (as in boxing by pointing the index finger upward), pity (by kneeling), to reinforcing a curse (by shaking out a cloak), saying farewell, praying, showing appreciation (by clasping the hands), and so on. Constructing stories is therefore a combination of verbal and non-verbal forms.

Objectives

To construct a story that meets several criteria:
  ➢ It is natural, one that could be told in a village to a general audience
  ➢ It has a setting, as well as events and characters
  ➢ It includes adequate supplementary information, so that the story's purpose is clear
  ➢ It can be retold from various perspectives
  ➢ It takes into account how to begin and end appropriately

Preparation

Choose a short folk story and modify it so that:
  • You can easily recall and retell it
  • A friend of yours could retell it
  • A pastor or priest could retell it
  • A child could retell it
  • Another storyteller you know could retell it

In each case, determine any variations that apply to the introduction and cohesiveness of the story. In the case of each audience, what vocabulary (e.g. metaphors) might be changed? What appropriate and helpful figures of speech or idioms can be included? Suppose there is an audience where people are not familiar with the culture in the story: What background information would help them understand the story better?

Practice

Make up a story, then:
- ❑ List the characters involved in the story (human and otherwise)
- ❑ Determine the sequence of character introduction
- ❑ Try another order of introduction and determine if it is better or worse
- ❑ Provide additional background information
- ❑ Add additional figures of speech
- ❑ Retell the story as if it happened a long time ago
- ❑ Retell it as if it has not yet happened

Facilitator Notes

Kistemaker's study of the Good Samaritan (2002:166-169, from Luke 10:25-37) has supplementary information that helps the listener better understand the story. He includes a description of a theologian confronting Jesus and wanting to debate the semantic implications of "neighbor." Kistemaker notes that the Jew saw himself as the center of the world, surrounded by his immediate relatives, kinsmen, and then all those who claimed Jewish descent or who were converts to Judaism. The word "neighbor" therefore had a reciprocal meaning: he is a brother to me and me to him, defining a circle of self-interest and ethnocentrism. By drawing such lines, the Jews could ensure the well-being of the insiders and deny help to outsiders.

It follows that to develop a story adequately it may be necessary to provide additional information for the hearer. For example, in the story of the Good Samaritan the storyteller can point out that the road from Jerusalem to Jerico was only twenty-seven kilometers or (seventeen miles) long, the area was mainly uninhabited, without vegetation and marked by limestone cliffs and gulleys. It was also an area of regular crime. The people portrayed in the story (apart from the robbers) are the wounded and robbed man, the priest, the Levite, the Samaritan and the innkeeper. The Samaritan is the favorite of the story because he had no regard for race, religion, or class distinctions. In any particular culture, the first century Palestine setting of the events and the characters will be quite different from that of another culture.

For further story background, you can point out that the Jews considered the Samaritans as half-breeds who occupied the land of Israel during the Jewish exile. Their Bible was the five books of Moses and they had built their own temple on Mount Gerizim. An example of the Samaritans in the OT occurs in II Chronicles 28:5-15, which tells of the people in Jerusalem and Judah during the reign of King Ahaz. These people were led captive to Samaria. (See also Hosea 6:9.)

The application of the story shows that one cannot draw the line as to who is a neighbor. The person beaten is a Jew, the hero a Samaritan. The application of the story is timeless because the teller can easily substitute occupations, nationalities, and races. However, the storyteller should not go as far as the patristic exegetes (especially Augustine), who interpreted the parable symbolically. The victim was Adam, the robbers were the devil and his angels, the priest and Levite depicted the priesthood and ministry of the OT, and the Samaritan represented Jesus. Further, the oil was comfort, wine an exhortation to work; the inn was the church, and the two coins were the two commands of God. Despite being careful about allegorization in the story, we can take into account the various interpretations.

Bailey (2008:284-297) also provides a study of the Good Samaritan parable. He suggests seven main points of ethical and theological content: (1) eternal life is a gracious gift; (2) the process of becoming a neighbor; (3) the limits of the law; (4) attitudes on racism; (5) Jesus the teacher; (6) Christology, where Jesus is talking about himself; and (7) a demonstration of the meaning of the cross.

There are many examples of parable interpretation that allow cultural contextualization to assist in highlighting the main point of the story clear.

FIGURES AND IDIOMS

Osborne (1997) questions the so-called difference between a pure parable and an allegory. Scholars explain the difference as a contrast of a single point vs. multiple ones. However, many parables have multiple thrusts, for example:
- Good seed and good or bad seed: the sower in Mk 4.3-9 has different positive results
- Bad seed and good seed: the tares in Mt. 13:24-30 are either positive or negative
- Good harvest and good and bad fish in Mt. 13:47-50 for the general harvest
- Good vine and vine and the branches, depicting the good and the bad: Jn.15:1-8

Osborne (1997:235-249) also discusses parables and the idioms or figures that Jesus used:
- Proverb: Lk 4.32: "Physician heal yourself"
- Metaphor: Mt. 15:13: "Every plant not planted by the Father…"
- Similes: Mt. 10:16: "Sheep among wolves"
- Figurative: Lk. 5:36-38: "New wine in old wineskins"
- Similitudes (developed similes): Mk 4.30-32: Comparing the Kingdom to a grain of mustard seed
- Story Parable: Lk. 10:29-37: Ten virgins
- Allegory Parable: Mk 4.1-9; 13-20: Sower and seed

Clinton (1997) has constructed a series of hermeneutical studies. They include historical background, structure and theme, context and grammar, words, Hebrew poetry, parables, types, symbols, and prophecy. He also examines simile, metaphor, metonymy, as well as relationships and classification procedures―stories often include all of these features. In working with figures and idioms, he suggests listing them, then providing definitions in our own words to differentiate them. We can look for figures in Scripture and note how commentators capture their essence, outline our own conclusions, and describe any patterns that occur. By using maps, overview, preview, feedback and exercises, we can provide satisfactory background knowledge for any story.

The use of a figure in a story increases the power of a word by drawing special attention to a particular point. Figures are pictorial uses of words that often depart from the normal patterns. For example, in Romans alone, Bullinger (1969 [1898]) lists 235 examples of figurative language.

Metaphors help us move beyond a literal construction or interpretation of a story. Borg (2001:41) reminds us "Metaphor is linguistic art or verbal art." The use of metaphors in stories will enhance the story because "Metaphor is poetry plus, not factuality minus" (41).

EXERCISES IN CONSTRUCTING STORIES

Rodari, who was born in 1920 and died in 1980, was a prolific contributor to the reform movement in Italian schools. He felt that children should be "encouraged to question, challenge, destroy, mock, eliminate, generate, and reproduce their own language and meanings through stories that will enable them to narrate their own lives" (1973:xix).

Rodari helped children in Italy learn to imagine and tell stories. In the Foreword, Herbert Kohl claims that the imaginative exercises in the book suggest a new role for the teacher. The exercises were tested and eventually instituted as the core for teaching young children in the schools of Reggio Emilia in northern Italy. The goal of this work was to mold schools into cooperative, imaginative learning communities in which teachers and children engage in the imaginative exploration of reality…. The teacher is an active participant who brings exercises and ideas to the learning situation. The teacher does those exercises along with the children, challenges the students, and brings work to the point where it can be shared (1973: ix, x).

Rodari wanted to help children invent their own stories, serving as the basis for theater, puppet play, comics, films and cassettes, games, etc. The following headings refer to some sections in his book and summarize a few of the exercises he used in constructing, expanding and telling stories.

The stone in the pond: analogy of the ripple effect
- Find all the words that begin with /*s*/ but do not continue with /*t*/: *seminar, silence, system*.
- Find all the words that begin with /*st*/: *stag, stamp, stem, start, stop, stink*.
- Find all the words that rhyme: *bone, tone, phone, cone*, and *drone*.
- Find all the words that come close in meaning: *rock, pebble, marble, brick*, and *granite*.

The exercise is to find words that can function as words in the memory, e.g., *brick > sick, tick, lick, stick, click, nick, kick….* The associations in the story are composed using one's imagination. Another exercise consists of listing the letters of a word vertically, then using each letter to initiate the parts (e.g., beginning sentences) of a story.

What would happen if…
In this exercise, the technique of "fantastical hypothesis" the storyteller interacts with a protagonist, e.g.:
- What if everyone in Sicily lost his or her buttons?
- What if a crocodile appeared as a contestant on a TV quiz show?

Old games

- Use clipped out headlines and mix them to obtain news about absurd, sensational, or amusing events
- Q and A routine using a series of Questions that include a sequence of events forming a narrative
- Children read answers aloud for a stories that ask questions such as, what did he do? What did he say? What happened in the end? etc.
- Children may draw pictures that depict scenes, etc.

How limericks are made

Roderi claims that limericks are "an organized and codified genre of nonsense" (1973:26). The structure of a limerick is:

- First line is the protagonist
- Second line points out characteristics
- Third line amplifies the characteristics
- Fourth line realizes the actions of protagonist
- Fifth line is the final point or extravagant epithet
- Variations can occur: protagonist, attributes, reaction of others, final epithet
- Basically 1st, 2nd, and 5th lines rhyme with each other and 3rd rhymes with the 4th

Making mistakes in the story

- Using "Yellow" for "Red" Riding Hood
- Using mistakes for therapeutic effect by establishing boundaries between the world of real and fantastic things
- Alternatives or parodies can only be initiated and developed at certain points
- Little Red Riding Hood in a helicopter
- Reverse the tale: Little Red Riding Hood is bad; the wolf is good, etc.
- Reverse the starting point and go backwards

The cards of Propp (1968)

- Breaking the fairy tales down into the component parts
- Structure of the fairy tale repeats the structure of the ritual
- Thirty-one functions with variants and internal articulations (p. 45)
- Make a deck of Propp cards with the functions or motifs on each card
- Use these to set up, multiply, reduce, extend, order, or recompose the images
- Give children three objects and invite children to invent and act out a scene with them

The Child who reads Comics

- Child has to attribute conversation to characters
- Child must attribute and represent voices
- Child must recognize and distinguish surroundings
- Entire course of the story is reconstructed in the imagination

Imagination, Creativity, School

- A mind where creativity is cultivated in all directions
- A mind where creativity is synonymous with "divergent thought"
- A mind that asks questions, discovers problems, prefers fluid situations
- A mind capable of making autonomous and independent judgments
- A mind that rejects what is codified
- A mind that reshapes objects and concepts without being hindered by conformity

Rodari uses various exercises to draw out the creativeness of children, including those we have briefly outlined. His work echoes that of Robert Coles, who used the pictures that children drew to understand their feelings and problems. We again draw attention to the *Children in Crisis* series (1964) of Coles, as well as the work of Barton (1986), who discusses reading stories aloud to create experiences with children. We can see how Rodari used word play to draw out their creativeness. In the case of storytelling in endangered languages, the work of Rodari and Coles may provide methods of involving children creatively in constructing stories in their own languages.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

When constructing and examining Bible stories, storytellers can develop questions such as the following: What does the theme of "lostness" represent in the parables of Matthew 13? If someone replies, "the Kingdom of God," we can ask "why?" This approach follows William Labov, who gave a plenary talk at the Georgetown University Roundtable in March of 2008 called, "Where should I begin?" He uses "why" questions to decide on where a narrative begins. The narrator identifies the "most reportable event" but the narrative cannot begin with that event.

In other words, what does the phrase "the Kingdom of God" mean to an average listener in a pagan or post-Christian context? What kind of cultural images and metaphors would be appropriate in the cultures of PNG to represent the Kingdom of God? Wierzbicka (2001) is an excellent discussion on what represents the basic cross-cultural semantics in the "Kingdom of God," provides a semantic explication of it. She condenses the range of interpretations into two broad categories: eschatological (distinctions between this world and the world to come) and noneschatological or ethical. According to her (p. 19), "the core idea behind the metaphor of the kingdom of God is that of people living with God," both in this world and the one to come.

For a general background on defining narrative, especially how the storyteller can change and manipulate it, note in particular the work of Fulford (1999). Often in traditional stories, the historical events have been re-created. Of course, this happens with contemporary authors as well. We have mentioned how Arnold Toynbee attempted to explain the meaning of human history by writing his "master narrative." See also Jared Diamond (1999), who reconstructed the history of human societies, based on his analysis of the spread of guns, germs and steel.

Linguistic frames are helpful in creating variations to a story. Kenneth Pike outlined what he called "experimental syntax" (1962, 1963, 1986) to demonstrate the constraints and creativity of syntactic variation in language learning, linguistic analysis and poetry (Pike 1988). Note, for example, this simple story:

The little girl went to the garden. She went to fetch some sweet potato. She dug it up with a stick, filled her bag, and took it to her mother. Her mother was pleased. Later the hungry pigs also ate some of the sweet potato.

Now we re-construct the same story, but have:
- The mother tell the story
- The little girl tell the story
- Her brother tell the story

- The pig tell the story
- The father tell the story the little girl told

FURTHER HINTS

Mooney and Holt (1996) edited a book in which more than fifty professional storytellers share their advice on finding and shaping stories for performances. Some hints:
- Find the story you like most in a compelling version
- Outline the important parts and decide on what you want to emphasize
- Use your own words and images
- Imagine the story but stay true to the author's intentions
- Record and listen to your story
- Research the cultural context
- Give proper credit and acknowledgements when you introduce the story

Skill-Check

You should be able to examine a story and:
- ❑ Identify how the main and minor characters are introduced
- ❑ Describe the characters and how they could be modified
- ❑ Discuss how background information was introduced and why
- ❑ Retell a story based on one that you have constructed, but tell it from a different point of view ("This is a story that my grandfather told me," etc.)

You can also examine someone else's story and suggest how to adjust it to help the listener understand it better.

Bible Stories

For a chronological approach to telling Bible stories, see www.chronologicalbiblestorying.com (last accessed January 2010). We suggest that the participants decide on the stories that are most relevant for their cultural situation. For teaching purposes, we have used are a number of the parables and sayings of Jesus. We assume that they have cross-cultural applications and speak to basic human needs.

Knowing how to tell, as well as "retell" stories well, is one of the goals of this book. We have attempted to provide a "storytelling methodology" that can be useful for trainers, facilitators, consultants, participants or trainees. The fieldworker needs to know how to retell Bible stories, researching the information the listeners already had in Jesus' day that was outside the present day listener's worldview. For example, what did a "bruised reed" mean at the time (and what does it mean to most English speakers today)? We need to ask people to identify good storytellers because, in any culture, it is naïve to believe that everyone can tell stories well. We also need to determine how to enhance the stories effectively and appropriately when people retell them in other cultures. This approach includes outlining the general purpose for the stories, noting the audience, and so on. All of the chapters we have discussed so far come into play to aid in this goal.

A story is not necessarily a "good" story (from a cultural or vernacular point of view) just because it is a Bible story. We can see this by examining and listening to various Bible stories for children. Some authors do well in conveying the story themes, while other authors do not. The storyteller should tell the stories effectively, so that people want to hear or retell them. Although people should want to hear Bible stories as much as a traditional story, this is often not the case. For example, in the West, Christians are more likely to watch a movie or TV than they are to listen to Bible stories, despite how well storytellers tell them.

We reiterate that one of the most usual and profound methods that Jesus used when telling stories was the use of parables. As Yancey reminds us (1995:95), "[T]here are no fanciful creatures and sinuous plots in Jesus' parable; he simply describes the life around him…. The parables served Jesus' purposes perfectly. Everyone likes a good story, and Jesus' knack for storytelling held the interest of a mostly illiterate society of farmers and fishermen. Since stories are easier to remember than concepts or outlines, the parables also helped preserve his message: years later as people reflected on what Jesus had taught, his parables came to mind in vivid detail." Parables were the most effective methods of teaching that Jesus used.

Objectives

- ➢ Selecting and retelling Bible stories

➢ Enabling participants to retell them easily and accurately
➢ Discussing the differences between Bible stories and other types of stories

Preparation

Select some Bible stories as well as some traditional stories and listen to them. Then learn one or two of them well enough to retell it from memory—but do not memorize the stories. It may help to select a Bible story that has been adapted for children (see, for example, Pierson 1997). For assistance, read (or listen to) versions of the Bible story in the trade language enough times that you can retell it with confidence to others.

Facilitators should also read the Bible in popular versions in order to have a sense of the flow of the Bible. Hinckley (1991) provides a complete narrated version of the Bible.

John Walsh (2003) outlines a number of steps in preparing to tell a story, particularly Bible stories. He reminds us that not only has our culture changed in the way we receive information, but also how we remember it. The analytical listener (and teacher) responds to the order of the presentation, but other kinds of the listeners respond to pictures and illustrations.

Facilitators should also become familiar with Bible background information, such as that provided by Jeffers (1999), deVaux (1965), the Millers (1966), and Ryken et al. (1998).

Practice

For an illustration on how to study and outline a Bible parable before telling it, note Bailey (1976), who analyzes four parables and two poems in Luke. His studies are indispensible tools, in particular his recent books (2003, 2005) on Luke 15 (the Prodigal), as well as his studies *Through Peasant eyes* (1980) and *Jesus through Middle Eastern eyes* (2008).

Consulting authors such as Bailey is a method of ensuring an adequate background and understanding for a parable before presenting and retelling it to a class. As a facilitator, you should be able to demonstrate various study methods.

Choose a participant and tell the person the parable of the Good Samaritan. Overseas workshop students can of course do the same exercise in their vernacular. Before retelling the story, talk it over with your partner and discuss:
❑ Does anything seem to be missing in the story?
❑ What information could be supplied to help the hearer better understand the parable?
❑ Are there other Bible stories to tell in conjunction with this one?
❑ Can you combine this and other Bible stories into a larger meta-story?
❑ What makes this Bible story different from other stories?
❑ What is the main purpose of the story?

Facilitator Notes

I begin with a discussion of translation on the one hand and storytelling on the other. Materials in this section include cultural information and background on ancient Israel. Remember, in particular, that good stories begin with images (Lewis 1984; Lewis, in Hooper ed., 1982), so the storyteller profits from a mental picture or a series of pictures before attempting any new adaptation or rendering of the story.

CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE "STORYING"

Chronological Bible Storying (CBS) is a popular and well-documented method of recording and telling Bible stories. Apparently first initiated as a missiological method by New Tribes Mission,[10] it is now part of the strategy and training of the International Missions Board (Southern Baptists), Wycliffe and others—in an effort now called OneStory.[11]

To highlight and illustrate CBS, the IMB has produced a series of audio CD chapters that attempt to answer the question, "How can I make disciples of those who do not read or write?" One set, called "Following Jesus: making disciples of primary oral learners" contains six audio chapters with "a world class team of eight specialists in communicating Biblical truth," including host Dr. Avery Willis. It outlines the ten-step process they use for evangelization and discipleship as follows (abridged and simplified here):

- Choose Biblical principles
- Define cultural worldviews
- Identify bridges, barriers and gaps between worldviews
- Select Bible stories
- Build stories
- Tell stories
- Dialogue stories
- Apply stories
- Answer stories
- Tell others stories

Although missions often focus upon "chronological" story telling as the most logical (and, we might add, Western) way to present the Bible, some societies do not order events in the same

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[10] New Tribes Mission (NTM) states: "Unreached people groups have no concept of the God of the Bible. So Bible teaching begins at the same place God began with His chosen people: at the beginning. Chronological Bible teaching presents a foundation for understanding Jesus' death and resurrection." See http://www.ntm.org/about/methods.php?page=methods&io=1 (last accessed January 2010).

[11] Originally called Epic Partners, but now OneStory, the coalition "partnership includes Campus Crusade for Christ, the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Trans World Radio, Wycliffe International and YWAM, and involves other Great Commission agencies, churches and individuals.." Its main thrust has been to use Chronological Bible Storying to communicate God's Word and plant churches among unreached people groups that are 'oral learners'. See http://www.onestory.org, (last accessed January 2010). J.O. Terry of IMB maintains that the chief factor for using orality to introduce God's Word is that the method can easily spread among a people. There are also books that focus upon the use of Bible stories to teach doctrine. See also, for example, Perry (1997).

historical and chronological manner that we do. Rather, people remember stories because of the characters and events in them, not only because of historical chronology. Similarly, many of the stories that Jesus told had no direct link to historical events. In addition, the Gospel authors do not always present the same story in the same order. Chronology is useful, but it is not a universal worldview.

TRANSLATION AND STORYTELLING

The translation of the Bible involves criteria and standards that scholars uphold as well as debate, accounting for the proliferation of versions, especially in English. Translators generally claim that their version most accurately represents the Greek and Hebrew text and they generally provide an introduction telling how they went about the translation process. For example, the *New Living Translation Version* (Tyndale House, 1996) published a booklet of 64 pages that lists the translation team, samples of the translation, questions and answers about the work, and compares it to the *King James* (new and old), the *NIV* and the *Living Bible*. It outlines the translation philosophy and methodology, noting that it was translated especially for clarity and readability. The rationale behind the use of several kinds of textual footnotes is also given. Similarly, the New York International Bible Society published a booklet of 23 pages in 1978 that outlined the background and character of the NIV over the decade of its research and translation. The criteria given for making the NIV (p.12) was: "faithfulness to the Word of God as set forth in the most accurate texts of original languages of Scripture; giving the meaning of Scripture as effectively as possible in contemporary English suitable for private and public use; and provision of a translation as free as possible from denominational or theological bias. Of these principles, the first is basic and, indeed, governs the other two."

Generally, translators agree that the NT version "closest" to the Greek in terms of word or form is a literal translation. Those translations that differ considerably from literal ones are "free" translations, sometimes called "paraphrases." Biblical storytelling can also be quite literal, where the teller accounts for every part of the story in the textual version, or it can be quite free, where there is considerable latitude for contextualization involving cultural analogies. When it comes to compiling and using stories that are found in the Bible, there is an almost inexhaustible list of resources, again depending upon theological or denominational viewpoint, audience (radio, TV, DVD, live, etc.), age level, purpose (e.g. baptism and confirmation preparation), and so on.

Stories are not always "logical" in our Western sense and, when they are not, listeners often question them. For example, in eliciting a story that was comprised of a string of genealogies from some Kewa men, after several generations the progenitor of clan men and founders was suddenly a fruit bat. Now if the progenitor had been a gibbon, the trail might still have been "scientific" and logical, according to some "accepted" anthropological theories. However, there are no gibbons in Papua New Guinea and although the head of the fruit bat may look somewhat human, we do not accept that relationship as logical or true. Nevertheless, the explanation and conclusion are part of the Kewa story.

Traditional stories in Kewa are like that: they have characters and events that are often "unusual" and illogical (to us). However, the stories also have an art form of their own. As we look at

them, many questions crop up: Are these stories meant to be "true" or are they "legends" or "myths," and what is the difference between these and other genres? How long have the stories been in existence and can we correlate them with any natural events? How are they passed on (who tells them and when) and why? These questions are crucial because we can only understand any translation story in terms of the underlying cultural worldview.

It is my observation that translators rely upon both exegetical arguments and stories when they examine certain passages. The translator will attempt to "explain" what the passage means, but the "stories" that follow from the hearers will tell how the passage was understood or misunderstood.

CULTURAL BACKGROUND: ANCIENT ISRAEL

Matthews and Benjamin (1993), and the classic two-volume set on Ancient Israel by Roland de Vaux (1965 [1961]) provide background reading for understanding and constructing Bible stories. Jeffers (1999) outlines some background of early Christianity in respect to the Greco-Roman world of the New Testament and Meeks (2003) describes the life of the early urban Christians in respect to the Apostle Paul. Numerous books describe the anthropology of the people in Bible times—for example, see Malina (1981, 1986, and 1987), Stegemann, et al. (2002), and Stambaugh and Balch (1986).

The following summary of Matthews and Benjamin (1993) provides some indication of the scripts and expectations of members of the Jewish society at the time of Jesus and before. The paragraph on "Protocol for Storytellers," is particularly relevant in understanding the values of storytelling in the society at that time. As we shall see later, stories also provide clues about values in a society.

History was almost meaningless for the people of the biblical world. Consequently, the two most common genres in the Bible are story and law, not history. History and story do not exclude other, but they are different. For their close relationship and interpretative correlation see, for example, Byrskog, who writes, "The subjective elements of interpretation are thus essentially the means by which a historian makes sense of his own reality" (2002:263, italics as in original). "The historian is a scientist; the storyteller is an artist. Both make only limited observations of all that occurs in their worlds" (Matthews and Benjamin 1993:xix). The people of the ancient world viewed their culture as:
- Ancient and eastern, not modern
- Changeless, not changing
- Agricultural, not industrial
- Limited, not renewable
- Communal, not individual
- Aging, not youthful, which was a blessing
- A world of story, not history
- Established religions, not religious pluralism

Matthews and Benjamin outline the anthropology of villages for people of Biblical times that includes.
- **Politics**: the power of a father, mother, monarch or virgin to protect and provide for a village or state

- **Economics**: the power of a farmer, herder, midwife, priest, or slave to work the land and bear children
- **Diplomacy**: the power of a host, chief, legal guardian or prophet to make war or trade with strangers
- **Law**: the power of an elder, widow, or lawgiver to solve problems between neighbors
- **Education**: the power of the wise, the fool, and the storyteller to hand on culture to the next generation

Their information includes traditional views of the following:

- Protocol for fathers of a household
- Protocol for mothers of a household
- Protocol for farmers in village work
- Protocol for owners and herders
- Protocol for midwives
- Protocol for hosts and strangers by the fathers of households in a village
- Protocol for chiefs
- Protocol for legal guardians (when there was no legal heir)
- Protocol for elders (assembly of elders)
- Protocol for widows (when dispossessed)
- Protocol for monarchs
- Protocol for virgins
- Protocol for priests
- Protocol for slaves
- Protocol for prophets
- Protocol for lawgivers

We note especially the storytellers' protocol. They handed on traditions by telling stories regarding the foundation of the state, the nomination of monarch, as well as coronations and covenant renewal. They celebrated the ancestors of the state, helped the monarch to react at times of crisis, such as in death, and looked for solutions to their problems based on experience (Matthews and Benjamin 1993:240). Law and story are the most common genres in the Bible, but storytellers did not compose the Bible in the same way that modern authors write books. Originally, they developed stories orally and adapted them to specific cases. The variance was restricted and limited to reduce the variation between one story and the other. Storytelling today is still a part of the initiation of new members into the community and the ability to tell a story is a requirement for membership. The weekly preaching and teaching carried on in temples, churches and mosques, has the strongest impact on the way believers understand their faith and tell their stories. "Each generation of believers must learn the ancient craft of the storyteller in order to face the new challenges and the unique crises of their own day" (Matthews and Benjamin 1993:252).

THE STORYTELLER'S COMPANION TO THE BIBLE

Abington Press has published an excellent resource set of materials on Bible storytelling.[12] The volumes have overviews that contain the text of the stories, followed by comments on the stories, and finally a retelling of the stories. Unique to the stories are sidebars with traditional and ancient stories (midrashim/parallel stories, told by rabbis). These Jewish forms of interpretation provide a way of "interpreting the Bible that involves the imagination and speaks to our

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[12] Volumes in print are: *Genesis* (1991), *Exodus—Joshua* (1992); *Judges—Kings* (1992); *Old Testament Women* (1993); *Old Testament Wisdom* (1994); *The Prophets I* (1996); *John* (1996); *The Acts of the Apostles* (1999); *New Testament Women* (1999); *Stories about Jesus in the synoptic Gospels* (2005); *The parables of Jesus* (2006); *Daniel and Revelation* (2009).

experience" (Williams 1992:18). Most of the volumes give examples on how to retell stories in a format that is relevant today.

Each volume includes an identical short section on learning to tell Bible stories, called a "Self-directed Workshop." Condensed, the advice is to begin by:
- Read the story aloud at least twice
- Pay attention to where and when it took place
- Note who the characters are
- Note the important objects in the story
- Note the general order of events

Next:
- Close your eyes and imagine the story taking place
- Look back and make sure you have not left out anything important
- Try telling the story
- Read the comments on the story
- Examine how you would tell the story differently
- Read the midrashim that accompany each retelling
- Practice and revise—each time you tell the story it will be a little different

BIBLICAL NARRATIVES

Alter (1981:178), in his study of OT Biblical narratives, concludes (from the Joseph story) that "a basic biblical perception about both human relations and relations between God and man is that love is unpredictable, arbitrary, at times perhaps seemingly unjust…." He further notes that literary studies at large have branched into two divergent directions: elaboration of formal systems of poetics on the one hand and "text virtuoso exercises of interpretation" on the other. He suggests that in reading biblical narratives we should be concerned about:
- *Words*: their choice alone or in phrases, revealing thematic saliency and significance, in particular noting the thematic keywords
- *Actions*: the recurrence, parallels and analogies, as well as causal chains
- *Dialogue*: demonstrating that God made man in his image
- *Narration*: noting how omniscience and unobtrusiveness combine to break time-forms by insertions, forward jumps, summary pauses, and the slowing of tempo

Vernacular stories can also be the first step in developing an interest in the Bible and can employ various tools, such as dramatization, pictures, and recordings. In some cases, they will lead naturally to requests for audio and video materials. The nature of these will depend upon the interest of the people and the infrastructure to support and train vernacular speakers.

THE PRODIGAL SON

According to Bailey (1976, 2005), the basic exegetical problem for the parables is a cultural one. He overcomes this by discussing the cultural aspects with Middle Easterners, examining the ancient literature, and consulting Oriental versions of the Gospels.

Oriental exegesis is recovering the culture by consulting the Middle Eastern lifestyle of the peasants. It is also profitable to see how the Oriental exegetes described the texts.

Past attempts are in terms of what Bailey calls:

- "a view from the saddle," where observations and insights were made in passing
- "a view from the study window," where things are measured, diagrammed, photographed, charted, and recorded
- "the view from the single village," which is in general piecemeal and partial

It follows that telling a Bible story well is not simply reciting it. Rather, telling it well requires coupling the cultural information and understanding of the listeners with the events of the Bible. Wright (1992), in a section of his book called "Literature, story and the articulation of worldviews," discusses the nature of stories, including an analysis of narrative structure. He claims that when the early church leaders told stories about Jesus they were not random selections of anecdotes. Rather, people retold them with "a sense of an overall story into which they might fit, or of a narrative shape to which such smaller stories would conform" (1992:78). In Paul's writings as well, the arguments and statements are expressions of the "*essentially Jewish stories redrawn around Jesus*." (1992:79, emphasis in the original).

Shiell (2004:1) comments, "Early Christian authors wrote their works anticipating that they would be performed publicly." Reading a text presupposed a skilled reader, the filter through which the audience interpreted the text. This was "Because lectors were widespread in the ancient world, they followed a generally recognized pattern in performance of gestures, vocal inflection, and facial expression" (2004:6-7).

STORIES ABOUT BIBLE TRANSLATION

Stories from the Bible are important, but so are stories about the Bible—and they are numerous. The well-know stories of John Wycliffe (Hall 1983) and William Tyndale (Daniell 1994) vividly remind us of the cost of translating the English Bible. Stories about people getting the Bible for the first time can be multiplied around the world―for examples, see Maberly (1971) on Tibet, Anderson (1987) on Judson in Burma, and Hiney (2000), who mentions the translation work of Morrison (Chinese), Tyndale (Bengali), as well as many others.[13]

Skill-Check

To carry out this assignment and exercise, participants will need to know basic information about the Bible and its main characters. Encourage the participants to:

- ❑ Choose several parables that they can retell in their language
- ❑ Discuss why they chose the particular stories, i.e., how they believe these Bible stories will be helpful
- ❑ Tell one or two of these stories to a facilitator
- ❑ Discuss how to change or modify one of the stories
- ❑ Consider aids that might also assist them (pictures, drama, etc.) in telling the stories
- ❑ Demonstrate how at least one such aid would be helpful in a particular story

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[13] For an exhaustive list of Bible translations, see http://www.biblesociety.org/index.php?id=22, (last accessed January 2010), where 2,479 different languages and dialects are noted as having at least one book of he Bible as of December 21,2008.

Examining Stories

Although stories may have a natural and expected range of variation, it is important to learn to check them for content and, especially, for accuracy. When do degrees of variation diminish or detract from the main point of the story? In Bible stories, in particular, the range of variation will be subject to careful scrutiny and extended discussion. It is therefore important that storytellers consider the principles that govern variation, especially when adding new information to traditional stories.

This chapter will examine issues such as:
- ❑ Determining the basic text of a story
- ❑ Noting the exegesis for a story
- ❑ Noting techniques involved in checking the structure of a story
- ❑ Providing background or supplementary information

Objectives

- ➢ Checking characters, plot structure, accuracy, and style
- ➢ Checking for necessary supplementary information
- ➢ Noting how the teller of the story contributes by being one of the main checkers
- ➢ Outlining items to consider when checking a story

Preparation

The facilitator should choose a well-known Bible story (such as the story of the sower in Mark, chapter four) and note variations when different people tell it (or as it occurs in the different Gospels). Also, if there is a well-known traditional origin story, such as how humans, pigs, or some other animal or vegetable originated, have several people tell that "same" story and note the variations. Participants should also listen to several people tell the same Bible story from memory.

Practice

The more stories that you hear and retell, the easier it will be to determine how the stories differ when told by different people for different audiences. Stories differ because people have backgrounds, theologies, experiences, and perceptions that influence how they retell or interpret the stories. The perspective of the teller and the situation in the story are key issues. Now attempt the following:

- ❑ Tell three people the same short story
- ❑ Have each of them retell to you
- ❑ How did their version differ from the story you told
- ❑ How were they the same?
- ❑ The key points you examined
- ❑ What would make the story easier to remember?

Facilitator Notes

Checking Bible stories is not a simple matter. For example, Bailey (1976:41) comments on three aspects of a parable that come into focus:

- The telling of the parable
- The listener's response
- Reflection on the content of the response

He then outlines the literary structure of Luke 15:11-32 as follows:

A There was a man who had two sons
1   A SON IS LOST
2   GOODS WASTED IN EXPENSIVE LIVING
3   EVERYTHING LOST
4   THE GREAT SIN (FEEDING PIGS FOR GENTILES)
5   TOTAL REJECTION
6   A CHANGE OF MIND
6'   AN INITIAL REPENTANCE
5'   TOTAL ACCEPTANCE
4'   THE GREAT REPENTANCE
3'   EVERYTHING GAINED RESTORED TO SONSHIP
2'   GOODS USED IN JOYFUL CELEBRATION
1'   A SON IS FOUND

B Now the elder son was in the fields
1   HE COMES
2   YOUR BROTHER—SAFE A FEAST
3   A FATHER COMES TO RECONCILE
4   COMPLAINT I (HOW YOU TREAT ME)
4'   COMPLAINT II (HOW YOU TREAT HIM)
3'   FATHER TRIES TO RECONCILE
2'   YOUR BROTHER—SAFE A FEAST
1'   [MISSING]

Bailey (2005) has completely revised and elaborated upon his earlier book. He also attempts to read between the lines of the story by writing a play that provides "a sanctified imagination, reading in only that which will both be faithful to traditional Middle Eastern village life and will illuminate the theological and emotional content of the parable" (2005:92).

Borg (2001:ix) reminds us "Conflict about the Bible is the single most divisive issue among Christians in North America today." How ironical! Borg recommends a historical-metaphorical approach to the Bible because the Bible is clearly metaphorical in many of its stories and plots.

In fact, the plot structure of a story will vary according to certain well-know themes. For example, the editors of the ***Dictionary of Biblical imagery*** (Ryken, et al. eds., 1998) provide a taxonomy of plots that indicates certain clusters in four large categories:

- Archetypes, indicating initiation and journey
- Narrative conventions of reversal and recognition
- Narrative genres, including battle and love stories
- Those based on subject matter, such as terror and sin

People read stories of the Bible according to their own understanding of the translation, but they are often uninformed of their particular English (or New Testament) cultural interpretation. For example, Wierzbicka (2006) points out that the words *right* and *wrong* in English have cultural underpinnings. While every language seems to have words for *good* and *bad*, the same is not true for *right* and *wrong*. She concludes that people's moral, intellectual and conversational uses of *right* are entrenched ways of thinking that reflect attitudes, values and worldview. Other European languages do not have equivalents for the Anglo words *right* and *wrong*.

According to Wierzbicka, there is also a direct link between *right* and *reason*, whereby speakers of English talk of the *right decisions*, the *right choice*, or the *right solution*. *Right* is therefore a neutral ground between what is *good* and what is *true*. However, there is a growing asymmetry between what is *right* and what is *wrong* such that "English-speaking people are increasingly reluctant to call any personal opinion wrong" (2006:85). Wierzbicka relates this to the democratic viewpoint of many speakers of English, who value freedom of thought and expression more than the identification of something as *wrong*. How we use *right* and *wrong* in English is part of our folk philosophy and worldview and may very well carry over into how we interpret and tell stories.

The perspective of the teller and the audience(s) will influence the choice of words that a teller uses. Pike (1982) uses the analogy of particle, wave and field to discuss multiple perspectives and viewpoints. As mentioned in Chapter 2, he also discusses the viewpoint of the "insider" (the emic view) and "outsider" (the etic view). The dimensions of etic and emic are helpful in discussing other aspects of a story, such as the terms 'accuracy' and 'truth'. However, in Pike's view (1993:77) in human nature the person "is beyond logic, whether in life, in language, or in philosophy." What the teller or listener of a story considers proven or true can lead to emotional discussions about the nature of a story.

Facilitators should be able to discuss what a teller can add to a story without distorting its "history" or accuracy. We should know, for example, what is meant by a "meaning-based" translation (Larson 1998), compared to a "literal" one. How do cultural dynamics come into play and how can cultural redemptive analogies and contextualization improve stories? When someone is preaching a sermon, certain "extra" information is legitimate. For example, music or dance, drama and readings often facilitate the understanding and recall of a story. If someone eventually writes or publishes the story, various formats will include pictures, glossaries, indexes, footnotes, section headings, and so on. All of these can be relevant and helpful information because they provide background and history for understanding the story.

People with various perspectives and denominational orientations and convictions may also add details to a story. Editors can help check and clarify what basic information the reader needs before publishing a story. However, publishing a story is different than retelling it.

Because storytelling can lead naturally to literacy (Danoff 2006), facilitators should discuss the nature and purpose of retelling and then writing stories. For example, how can folk stories, novels and allegories legitimately supplement the Bible story and be helpful to readers and listeners?

BACK TRANSLATIONS

Translation checkers consider that a back-translation of Scripture passages, e.g., from the vernacular into English, is an effective way to check the exegesis. Certain constraints apply: the back translation must be grammatically free (not a word for word rendering), idioms are not translated literally, and a native speaker who has not done the translation should do the back translation. However, a back-translation is not as useful in checking oral naturalness, depending as it does upon certain written conventions. Nevertheless, a spontaneous oral back translation (a retelling) of a story can be helpful to the facilitator, although certain assumptions underlie the use of any back translation, such as:

- The back translation reveals the accuracy of the translation
- The back translation reveals points of style and cultural viewpoints
- The back translation can point out problems of collocations and grammar
- The back translation will reveal the basic meanings of the source text
- The literalness of the back translation will reveal "holes" in the vernacular translation
- The back translations can highlight the story's theme

There are, however, certain things that a back translation does not do very well:

- Reveal any vernacular grammatical and semantic nuances
- Suggest alternative lexical choices
- Provide common metaphors or idioms
- Display naturalness
- Reveal emotions
- Signal coherence
- Reveal ethnocentricism and cultural blind spots

A UNIVERSAL SEMANTIC LANGUAGE FOR CHECKING?

Wierzbicka (for example, 1992, 1996, and 2006) has written extensively on the use of a universal semantic language as the basis for understanding a text. Her theory operates on the principle that there is an underlying set of "culture free" and primitive semantic categories that a speaker calls on before translating a particular sentence or text into another language. Her book on the sayings of Jesus in the parables is relevant to our discussion on checking meaning in stories. Although we have not adopted her terminology and semantic explications in this book, understanding her concerns on translating are important. She notes, for example, that using metaphors in translation without discovering their basic meanings can undermine the understanding of a story. The following paragraphs summarize a few of her major contributions and concerns.

In her study of the Sermon on the Mount and certain parables, She (2001) raises the important question "What did Jesus mean?" rather than the more cautious one, "What did the biblical authors mean?" Most commentaries spend their energy on answering questions about what Jesus did, who he was, and what he said. To answer her own question about what Jesus meant, Wierzbicka examines a number of parables and ethical aphorisms from the Gospels. She states that the most important criterion is "coherence," which presupposes some semantic analysis. Her book is also a "study in the semantics of religious language and in the interpretation of religious metaphors" (2001:5). Both are relevant in examining Bible stories.

This set of universal concepts used in explicating the exegesis of the parables launches what Wierzbicka calls "semantic exegesis." Her Natural Semantic Metalanguage employs the universal human concepts, a relatively small set of conceptual primes. Her goal is always to reduce the words and their meanings to definitions that an analyst (or exegete) cannot further refine, i.e. to 'primes'. Primes are concepts like *good* and *bad*, *do* and *happen*, etc., that cannot be made clearer by defining them further, so that a sentence like "I did something bad," cannot be further explained or defined with more basic words.

There are other important reasons why her approach can be helpful in examining a story (such as a parable told by Jesus). One is her view that the "intended Gospel message was universal rather than culture-specific," otherwise what would be the point of the Great Commission? Although Jesus was a Jew and grew up in a Jewish cultural context, "For this message to be clothed in new garments, it has first to be stripped of its old ones," that is, from its Palestinian metaphorical context (2003:12).

EMOTIONS AND KEY TERMS

Scripture translation and Biblical storytelling often include what translation scholars call "key terms." As an example of some, Wierzbicka (1992, Part 1) discusses the differences between Russian and English with key concepts like *soul, mind*, and *heart*, as well as *fate* and *destiny*. In her contrast of *soul*, for example, she demonstrates a much wider scope in Russian than its English equivalent. This is because in Russian the word represents the "national character" of the people. On the other hand, in English, scholars have reified *mind* as an objective category of thought so that it contrasts sharply with *soul*. She illustrates clearly the differences in cultural outlook between people speaking different languages. This means that story examiners should take note of cultural viewpoints. In the case of *soul* and *mind* in English and Russian, Wierzbicka summarizes the difference as follows: "the orientation of the old English *soul* was, above all, metaphysical and ethical; the orientation of the modern English *mind* is, above all, epistemological; the orientation of the Russian *duša* is, above all, phenomenological and ethical" (1992:60).

Wierzbicka addresses a question relevant to translators and storytellers, "Are emotions universal or culture-specific?" These issues are important to language learners, particularly those who work cross-culturally and are concerned with translation and nontrivial communication. Regarding the question on the universality of emotions, she concludes that "Different systems of emotion terms reflect different ways of conceptualising emotions, and conversely, any cross-cultural similarities in the conceptualisation of emotions will be reflected in the ways different

societies converge in the labeling of emotions" (1996:134). Only a rigorous semantic analysis, worked out with a metalanguage will reveal the similarities and differences. In coming to this conclusion she illustrates how the metalanguage can be applied to a number of emotional concepts, including *disgust*, *shame*, *embarrassment, anger, compassion, boredom, fear*, and several others in a number of languages. However, in specifying these English words the assumption is that "they can only be identified in a culture-independent semantic metalanguage" (1996:176). Only then can analysts compare the concepts in a consistent and illuminating manner and know how storytellers are using them.

Recently (2006), Wierzbicka presents a powerful argument on how language and culture are interrelated. Native speakers often do not understand the cultural assumptions they have when they use their language in a cross-cultural context. Fieldworkers and translators probably do not have to be convinced of this fact. However, in checking translations, the assumption is that "anything can be translated into any language" and we therefore accept the English back translation word or expression as accurately representing the source language words and expressions. The analysis of key terms is in terms of their Greek (or other source language) "meanings," but not in terms of the basic semantic primitives that underlie them. If translators and translation checkers would follow Wierzbicka, they would be better qualified to understand the cultural assumptions and scripts are in stories, not only in the case of key words, but also for other semantic domains.

DISCOURSE AND CHECKING

Discourse analysis plays a significant role in both translation and stories. Longacre (1983), Larson (1998), Beekman and Callow (1974) and others have written extensively on the subject. Wallace Chafe places discourse into the context of one's conscious experience in speaking and writing. The picture on the front of his book (1994) is symbolic: Two men, dressed from an earlier century are standing on a rock outcrop above a canyon, with a stream below and wooded hills beyond. They are in conscious discourse, out of context spatially and temporally, yet the scenery has not changed perceptibly over the generations. The picture is a reminder of Chafe's contention that "The twentieth century has focused its attention on matters quite remote from relationships between language, consciousness, and time." We must "restore conscious experience to the central role it enjoyed in the human sciences a hundred years ago" (1994:4). In the parables, for example, today's generation does not understand the various features of a rural Palestinian agricultural worldview.

Students who have studied under Longacre will see many similarities with Chafe, including the idea of discourse topics. These are chunks larger than intonation units (i.e. clauses) and have topics that include one referent with a "point of view." Chafe discusses the universal versus culturally determined properties of a discourse schema that includes orientation, complication, climax, denouement, and coda. All of these features are important in examining stories.

Chafe also discusses what he calls "displacement" by examining the nature of immediate and displaced consciousness in conversational language. He distinguishes between what he calls introverted ideas, those that people remember and imagine, and extroverted ideas, those that people perceive, act upon, and evaluate in their consciousness. We expect both to take place in

stories. Applying his work on discourse can also provide a basis to stimulate storytellers to take advantage of the rich imaginative consciousness of native speakers.

Metaphors are particularly relevant in parables and in checking stories. Cognitive linguistics and psychology can also contribute greatly to our understanding of the meaning of a story. Rather than discovering and outlining a text vis-à vis propositional analysis, we should ensure that the participants understand the conceptual framework that lies behind their interpretation of the story. Lakoff (1987) and others have studied how humans categorize the world around them using, in particular, metaphors. Earlier, Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) studied the use of metaphors in everyday life. Additional materials that follow up the topic are by Mark Johnson (1987) and Lakoff and Turner (1989). The latter book deals with poetics and metaphor.

To reiterate, the materials by Lakoff and his colleagues suggest that we cannot understand meaning solely by a propositional analysis. Rather image schemata are a model to represent the meanings that we experience in the world. The cultural experiences of the speaker and hearer find their way into the meaning of a story. This is especially important to note in telling, hearing and checking stories.

Lakoff claims that categories of language are best described by using four types of cognitive models: 1) propositional, which specify elements, their properties and the relationships among them; 2) image-schematic, such as trajectory; 3) metaphoric, which are mappings from other models to one domain. (For example, the conduit metaphor models how communication is mapped from our knowledge to objects in containers); and 4) metonymic, which transfer a function from one model to another.

Lakoff's points are relevant for checking storytelling because they show how introspection and analysis reveal the cultural insider's cognitive map of information. Facilitators can note the processes that underlie the interpretation of meaning in stories.

CHECKING "HISTORY"

We have demonstrated briefly some methods that can be helpful in examining stories. Each author has presumed that discovering the history of words and stories is important. However, what happens if the whole notion of "history" is different in another culture? For example, Schuster (in Lutkehaus, 1990) claims that two Greek words underlie the English definition of history. The first, *historeo* refers "to know something by one's own experience" and the activities for obtaining that knowledge. The second, *historia*, always includes the meaning of narrative. The processes of history therefore started with "stories" and unconnected narratives of various kinds that were combined into *history*. Schuster develops this concept further in his study of the history and migrations of the Aibom people along the Sepik River area in Papua New Guinea. He emphasizes:
- Not assuming that the Western concept of history is used
- Traditional history includes what has been called mythology and folklore
- Traditional history does not use chronological data or prehistory
- The mythical includes statements with historical value
- Western chronology is linear and proceeds in logical steps
- Western chronology calls for a conceptualization of time that may be quite different than one's experience

- Western chronology suggests an uninterrupted flow without beginning or end and requires abstract notions of time segmented into months and years
- History is the organized way that cultures conceive their past
- Space is, for example, 'the hill', where history becomes geography
- Totem is the conceptual framework used to unite the nonhuman and prehuman past
- Nonchronological history is represented by features such as: 1) the first born; later, earlier and later; 2) iterative, not duplication or repetition; 3) parallelism, what takes place at another conceptual level

It seems, then, that chronological history (written) and mythical history (oral) overlap but are not the same, a concern to keep in mind in any approach to storytelling. A more overarching and helpful view of "history" is given by Zerubavel (2003) who reviews various cultural concepts of time, showing that it can be viewed in terms of progress, decline, zigzagging, ladders and trees, circles and rhymes, mountains and valleys, or legato and staccato.

EXAMINING PARABLES

According to McKenna, parables are the "arrows of God," where the first "arrow" was John the Baptist. His was "a practice parable to get us used to the stories that Jesus will tell" (1994:11). Somewhat more broadly, Sider (1995) identifies "story" as the essential feature of a parable Sider suggests that "story" is the essential feature, i.e. one or more characters are involved in a plot. Internal features such as structure and commentary are important, but external features guide the interpretation of the parable as well, such as the situation and use of traditional symbols.

Stories that begin with "The kingdom of god is like…,"[14] such as Mt. 13:43—45, include a man who finds a treasure hidden in a field and then sells everything he owns so that he can purchase it. He buries the treasure again to guarantee ownership because the one who owns the field owns the treasure. McKenna notes (1994:16) that parables may make us feel we are missing something crucial. Likewise, Jesus seemed frustrated when listeners did not understand his stories and act on what they heard. His stories included hard sayings, such as wealth getting in the way of justice and the kingdom of heaven. We may focus on the small details and not understand the Big Idea of the parable, a crucial point in helping people retell the stories.

Because parables are dense with information, McKenna says we can start with almost any detail or image to look deeper into its meaning (1994:31). For example, what makes the seed grow? Do we do it? The seed represents the Word of God in us as the field (not the footpath), and as such represents all of life. We should:
- Not take parables personally, but let the them question us
- Remember that the seed is the word of God, the treasure hidden in the field which the plants need
- Realize that on many larger issues there is not much of a yield
- "If this seed has been sown in us for years, then sooner or later we must become the sower and go out into the world and the other fields, and sow there what has been sown in us…"(1994:42)

McKenna states that we often insist upon interpreting parables in the Scriptures to conform to our experiences and situations. We want them to endorse our own cultural values even in cases

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[14] Hagner (in Longenecker, ed. 2000:109) points out that the beginning formula reflects an underlying Aramaic saying that is to be understood as "it is the case with…as with…."

where the kingdom comes in a context of violence, fear, injustice, and war and terror. We tolerate and rationalize these things, "even using the gospel to further our culture's influence on us and others" (McKenna 1994:122).

Other parables examined by McKenna include:

The first and the last (Mt. 20:1-16) demonstrates how people who have lived among the poor know how to take care of one another. Entrance into this group requires restitution of balance and inequality. "A good deal of the initial practice of the virtue of poverty is connected to material possessions, reputation, connections, lifestyle, choice of neighborhood, job and social status, the existing structure, even within the church" (McKenna 1994:74).

The good seed and the weeds (Mt. 13:24-30) suggests that there does not need to be any violence or struggle until the harvest, when the growing cycle is complete. "We have lots of practice with the weeds all around us, sharing the same ground, the same sun, water, time and cultivation" (McKenna 1994:46).

The parable of the fishing net (Mt. 13:47-53) illustrates "how the kingdom comes in the presence of violence and opposition, in relation to money, greed, selfishness and economics, politics, racism and social biases and classes, both personal and communal" (McKenna 1994:53). The parable also:
- Undermines existing structures, relationships and attitudes
- Reveals the teller's frustration about those who do not make choices or change
- Is confrontational, coming up and in from underneath, like the kingdom
- Questions us about our commitments and allegiances, like all parables do

The sheep and the shepherd (Mt. 18:12-14) is a parable about wandering sheep. In McKenna's view the least of the 'sheep' are those not protected by law, without insurance, shelter, education or basic care.

The widow and the unjust judge (Lk. 18:1-6) teaches that we pray most fervently when we are at the end of our rope. We should consider that we are the judge and that God is the widow because:
- The judge is corrupt and uncaring
- God is after us
- Prayer is concerned with others getting justice and mercy
- We as children of God are in collusion with the unjust judge

McKenna depicts Jesus as the last arrow and the archer. Concerning Jn. 5:19-27, she says, "Jesus *is the parable of God*" (1994:162, my italics) because he is the apprentice of God. Jesus, as storyteller and parable maker "turns upside down the image of God: from dominance to justice and tender-hearted mercy, from warrior-king to widow in search of her rights, from the singular God of the chosen people to the God who chooses all peoples, especially the poor and the cast-aways and the lost sheep…." (1994:164).

These story parables have their "explanations" interwoven and their applications regularly take place in a variety of other cultures and traditions.

NOTING DIFFERENT KINDS OF PARABLES

Stein (1981) discusses parables and attempts to classify them as: a) clearly parables, b) extended comparisons, and c) possible parables. He comments on their interpretation throughout church history—including modern interpretations and examines parables from three main perspectives:
- The historical setting of the parable
- The point of the parable in the *Sitz im Leben* (the perspective or worldview)
- The interpretation of the parable

Stein concludes (1981:34-36) that Jesus taught in parables to:
- Conceal the message from "those outside"
- Reveal his message to the insiders (and those outside)
- Disarm the listeners

When investigating parables:
- Seek the main point of the parable, not the details unless it is absolutely necessary (1981:56)
- Seek to understand the context in which the parable was told
- Seek to understand how the evangelist interpreted the parable
- Seek what God is saying to us today in the parable (1981: 70)

Osborne (1997) also discusses the meaning and use of parables, (as well as riddles) within the background of wisdom and prophecy. He notes that Jesus was preparing citizens for the Kingdom, not helping the young to learn as responsible members of society.

Joachim Jeremias comments on "allegorization" and believes that the translation of the parables into Greek involved a change in their meaning and that there is "pleasure" in the embellishment of them. He also believes that "folk-story themes" have influenced the parables and that the "primitive Church" related parables to their own situation, using allegory instead of a horatory approach. He concludes that by the addition of general conclusions the parables acquired a universal meaning (1972:113-114). We can pay heed to the warning by Ryken (1989:13) that "not all truth about aesthetic issues will be contained in the Bible."

Examining parables for content and accuracy must take into account aspects of cultural background and discourse setting. This requires additional knowledge that the facilitator or teacher should provide storytellers, as well as procedures for checking stories.

ON CHECKING STORIES

Checking and testing a written translation should be different from checking or testing an oral rendition. In the former, we check how well the translator adheres to a source text; in the latter we test the how well the hearer understands the story. The properties that we test overlap in some cases but are different in substance and outcome in others.

They are different in substance because the translator is not free to alter the written, static source text. He or she must translate into the receptor language all and only all of the information that is part of the source text. However, a storyteller may alter a story based on a text because the re-

told oral version belongs to the teller. In such cases, the storyteller is involved in a dynamic performance, and does not need to adhere exactly to a written manuscript.

What are the properties of an oral story? For a start, I suggest the following:
- Re-structuring the lexicon, grammar, or syntax
- Drawing on key analogies in the target culture
- Acknowledging dependency upon appropriate cultural memorization
- Providing and commenting on the cultural setting
- Encouraging dramatization
- Grasping the main idea or theme
- Introducing and keeping track of characters
- Noting and encouraging audience reaction and interaction
- Provoking and discussing imagination
- Noting creativity and spontaneity

I will now examine each of these briefly (aided from a discussion by Euan Fry 1999: 7-27).

Vernacular re-structuring and coherence. It may turn out that the storyteller will take the conclusion of the story, as given in the text, and foreshadow it first in the oral version. In such cases, verses from the written text will not necessarily be chronological because the oral discourse structure of the vernacular language may be quite different from that of the source text. The story structure depends on how the storyteller decides to tell the story, drawing from a repertoire of lexical items, keeping the main points and theme intact, and generally introducing them according to his or her intuition and creativity. Tellers do not recite the story or text from memory, but rather re-structure and re-tell it according to their underlying pragmatic constraints.

Cultural metaphors and analogies. Throughout the New Testament Jesus used analogies that were clear to people who lived in first century Palestine, but who were also familiar with the Jewish religious culture. Often when people hear stories in the vernacular, they may be unfamiliar with sheep, vineyards, and grain fields and need cultural analogies. This will help place sheep as animals similar to pigs (in size—in Papua New Guinea), vineyards as particular kinds of gardens, and allow cultural perspectives on the nature of grain (seeds), fields (open areas) and many other items.

Metaphors can rarely be translated directly from one language to another and retain the same cultural significance. For example, when we read in Genesis 4:12 that the soil had "opened its mouth" to receive Abel's blood, we would need to know if indeed the soil in a particular language and culture could have a "mouth" and it if did not, what could be an equivalent phrase and meaning. Suppose that speakers of another language said that Cain had polluted the ground with the blood of Abel and that nothing would now grow on it as a result. Would such an interpretation violate the meaning of the verse? Listeners form images as they listen to stories and soil with a "mouth" would form a particular image in their imagination.

Memorization. When we talk about a verse or section of the Bible, we think of a person repeating or reciting it exactly. We can call this lexical and grammatical memorization. In storytelling, on the other hand, the teller memorizes images and from those images tells the story. This allows the audience to be a part of the story because they build appropriate key images of the scene (e.g. "a dry and empty place where people did not live," rather than "a desert") and the

characters (e.g. "the giant Goliath, who was as tall as a mature banana tree and whose spear was the size of the trunk of a full grown banana tree, but as heavy as an oak"). Storytellers can draw upon cultural images to remind them of the story and its sequence without memorizing a text.

Setting. All of us have geographical and social maps of the areas and places where we have lived. The longer we have lived there and the more we have experienced at the locations, the more dominant the setting will be in our memories. Mountain dwellers in Papua New Guinea will not find much meaning in the setting of Lake Galilee, nor will the Jordan River evoke any particular context for desert people. In stories, storytellers can make the settings explicit (e.g. "the Jordan River, which is about the size of our Kagua River and also floods at certain times of the year"). In translations, pictures often help define such places.

In the New Testament context, people generally live in houses and some groups live in villages. However, the mental image of the house and village in other countries will depend upon their own cultural setting. The storyteller can bring out certain crucial differences in the story that are implicit in the text. For example, when Jesus heals a paralyzed man (in Mark 2.1-12) and men lower him on a stretcher through a hole in the roof of the house, the image is impossible unless we know something about the construction of the houses and even stretchers at that time. In translating the text into a language and culture where the people build houses with small pitched roofs, translators may insert a picture to clarify the setting. In telling a story about the text, the teller can explain the setting immediately.

Dramatization. There is no dramatization in a static translation. However, when someone retells the text there is some performance, so there is dramatization. In such cases, the teller is free to improvise, using props, gestures, vocalization, in short anything that will make the story come "alive" to the audience. Some storytellers use music, others use dialogue, but in each instance they are attempting to enhance the story and make it a part of the listener's imagination and understanding through drama.

The Big Idea. The Big Idea or, as some storytellers refer to it, The Most Important Thing, may be the theme, the interdiction, the violation, the consequence, or the moral of the story. The storyteller will vocally or dramatically underline the Big Idea and, when this happens, the listeners can better grasp why someone told the story in the first place. For this reason, the storyteller tells the story with episodes that highlight the main idea and theme of the story. Translators provide the same effect with section headings, footnotes, and other literary devices (underlining, bold, italics, quotation marks, em dashes, spaces, etc.).

Character. In translation characters are kept track of by grammatical (subject, verb, tense, mode, etc.) and syntactic markers (agent, object, patient, etc.) in the text. Storytellers, on the other hand, heighten the story with building up the dramatic entrance, performance, or exit of the character, by describing how the character looked. For example, they may say, "he had a pale face, a pointed nose, and uneven protruding upper teeth," or he wore "a shabby cloak with long tears along the sleeves," etc., or even something about his temperament, "he scowled and stuck out his tongue to show anger," etc. Characters become vivid in storytelling because the teller can pretend to become the character.

Audience. The audiences in translation and storytelling can be the same but the affect upon them will differ according to the mode of each. When we read a text aloud to a literary audience, they usually follow along the text, noting omissions, difficulties in pronunciation, or other faults. On the other hand, the storyteller's audience will enjoy the performance and keep their attention on the teller. The reactions of the audiences are also different—the one is reacting to a reading and may indeed say "amen" here and there; the other is reacting to the performance and will cooperate and commiserate with smiles or tears when appropriate. If we imagine a continuum of an audience's "aliveness" and "deadness", the former will often correspond more to a story told and the latter more to a story read.

Imagination. Checking what the listener imagines in a story is easier that doing the same with a translation. In the former case, the storyteller is expecting the listener to imagine scenes they evoke from the telling of the story; in the latter case, the translator does not want the reader to evoke scenes that are not clear from the text. Of course, this may happen, and when it does, the listener makes implicit a number of meanings in the text. When Jesus sent the disciples out two-by-two (Mark 6:6-13), he told them not to take a bag or money, nor extra clothing. The storyteller can easily explain that Jesus wanted the disciples to depend upon the people where they were going to care for their hospitality. The translator can fill in this information as well, but it will often overload the text (e.g. a translation such as"Jesus wanted the people who heard the teaching of the disciples to give them the food and lodging that they needed" would probably be considered overloaded).

Creativity. If translators become too creative (and no one can define exactly where the limit lies), they have given us a "paraphrase". Even in a paraphrase, the translator is not encouraged to substitute a pig for a sheep, regardless if the translation is in cultures where there are no sheep. A storyteller can blend stories and use creative analogies to get the main point of the story across, for example by referring to an animal that the people find familiar.

But what is creativity? Is it some independent activity of the mind, and if so, what is the mind? I think of creativity as an act of thinking and acting outside of the way of our normal mold (e.g. the "script" that we follow in most of our cultural activities, such as dressing, going to bed, showering, eating, driving, and son on). We all operate within certain cultural constraints and we do not usually deliberately upset our cultural guardians. For example, some of us might like to work in an open space with all offices integrated and inter-connected, but our organizational culture might delegate us to independent closed working stations. On the other hand, let us reverse the situation: we may desire privacy and the organizational setting is for open cubicles. Unless everyone in the culture agrees, such changes are difficult to enact. Therefore, creativity and creative thinking have certain cultural boundaries that we have to recognize.

How can the creativity people have in storytelling honor the Spirit of God? How can we know what is "the best way" to do storytelling, or that it honors God? Just because we are sincere or conscientious does not seem to be the answer. Somehow, we need to know that the Holy Spirit within the storyteller is in agreement with his or her human spirit—theologically, that the Holy Spirit somehow indwells their spirit. (In some contexts of the Bible, spirit or mind can refer to the same part of us. In storytelling, we can creatively worship God with our body, soul, spirit and strength.)

Spontaneity. Sometimes when a storyteller is relating a story, there will be an episode he or she tells that may provoke a spontaneous comment. Often audiences will react spontaneously when something in the story awakens their imagination and response. Of course, listeners can react spontaneously to a text that someone is reading by saying "amen", gasping, clapping their hands, or showing some other unexpected response. However, the storyteller is not surprised by spontaneous reactions to the story—such responses are expected and show personal involvement.

Skill-Check

Listen to a story told to you by a participant and practice retelling it. As a facilitator, you may want to ask questions such as the following:
- ❑ At what points in the story has something been added?
- ❑ At what points has the added information detracted from the story?
- ❑ When can you add information to the time-line?
- ❑ How can you add information, e.g. by means of flashbacks, character intrusion, flash forwards, rhetorical footnotes, pictures, etc.?
- ❑ Who can best add the materials (the author, the storyteller, etc.)?
- ❑ What questions can you ask to ensure the accuracy of the story?
- ❑ What general features can you check in the story?

Stories as Art Forms

Bible storytelling in particular, but storytelling in general, seems to fit well within the criteria of fieldwork as art. Here the literal or propositional meaning is not what is in focus, as in translation. Rather, it is the capacity to see "what counts" in the story and experiment with how the meanings of that story can best and most appropriately be represented in the culture.

Stories in song (or songs in stories) are a part of most cultures of the world. In the Bible, the Psalms are the most vivid examples of this art form. In some societies, epic poems put the story in a form that is both creative and easier for the teller to remember than a straight narrative style.

There are creative people in every society, so writing songs or drama is not surprising. Just as Charles and John Wesley left a legacy through songs and sermons, other cultures have people who can be encouraged to pursue this avenue of creativity. In fact, early Christian rhetoric capitalized on dialogue, story, parable, poem, with images, symbols and myths (Wilder 1999). According to Wilder, Christian imagination has to meet the new dreams and mythologies that are coming into play. Without imagination, participants may find the doctrines hollow and the ethics legalistic. Wilder claims, "the greatest theologians ha[ve] always been shot through with the imagination" (2001:3), e.g. Augustine, Calvin and Jonathan Edwards.

The facilitator notes give some background on the way cultures around the world use imagination in their poetry and songs.

Objectives

> ➤ To encourage storytellers to strengthen the content of their stories by composing songs and drama
> ➤ To consult with experts, such as ethnomusicologists and play writers
> ➤ To alert storytellers to the potential of poetry and drama. [15]

Preparation

The facilitator should recite or sing a number of songs, or write down some songs that illustrate a theme in a story. Think of some well-known songs, both religious and secular. Notice, for

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[15] The Ethnomusicology department of SIL International offers courses (See http://www.sil.org/training/requirements_music.htm on the training required for consultanagts and http://www.gial.edu/courses/ethnomusicology.htm on the Ethnomusicology and Arts Courses offered at the Graduate Institute of Linguistics. Information on researching music within cultures, encouraging musical creativity and assisting in the development of music applications can be found at both websites (last accessed January 2010).

example, how certain groups of people sing mourning songs, birthday songs, children's songs, songs for special occasions (athletes, the military, etc.), and so on.

Practice

Listen to three different kinds of songs: a children's song, a well-known church song, and one sung at a traditional occasion (New Year's Eve, for example).

- ❑ What helps you remember the song?
- ❑ How does singing a story differ from telling one?
- ❑ How can you introduce a particular song?
- ❑ Who can best introduce the song?
- ❑ How many parts are there to the song?
- ❑ Does someone "own" the song?

Facilitator Notes

Alter (1981) outlines a literary approach to the Bible (OT), taking into account sacred history and the beginnings of prose fiction, type-scenes and conventions, narrative events, dialogue, characterization, reticence, repetition, and other formal features. Later (1985) he examines more closely semantic parallelism, rather than simply the phonetic and syntactic elements of the text. His studies on poetry examine the book of Job, Psalms, prophecy and poetry, as well as the poetry of wit and the "garden of the metaphor."

Lord (1974) discusses and illustrates how the composition of oral narrative poetry is a natural outcome of music content. The oral poet learns to compose and transmit the songs orally. A composition does not need to match a particular Scripture text.

When Lord says, "The tale's the thing" (1974:68), he refers to groups of ideas that form the theme of the song. The theme is a grouping of ideas and in epic poetry, the singer always has the end of the theme in mind—he knows where he is going.

Rubright is an educator who views stories and their applications in many different classroom settings. She motivates teachers to tell stories and engage the students. For example, arts specialists can use storytelling, drama, movement, music, and other experiences to release tension and relax children. Such stories can promote inventive thinking and problem-solving skills and expand the imagination. They also help establish esteem and self-confidence and increase concentration and recall through listening, as well as acting as a springboard to reading and writing activities. Rubright notes, "By their nature, the arts are experiential, engaging, and involving" (1996:xiii). In summary, arts specialists who use storytelling, drama, movement, music, and other experiences can help students:

- release tension and relax children
- promote inventive thinking and problem-solving skills
- expand imagination
- broaden their knowledge base
- encourage spontaneity

- generate innovative, creative responses
- provide environments for different learning styles
- stimulate interactive and cooperative learning
- increase self-esteem and self-confidence
- enhance self-expression
- appreciate aesthetic principles
- increase concentration and recall through listening skills bring content areas to life
- create interdisciplinary bridges
- modify negative behavior patterns
- provide opportunities to explore diverse cultural heritages
- act as springboard to reading and writing activities

ORALITY AND POETRY

Ong (1982) studied the differences between orality and literacy, claiming that humans first used oral speech and became literate in its history in certain groups,

Lord (1974) had already demonstrated how that oral style is relevant to certain features of a vernacular language. When an oral style changes to a written one, people may say that it is better in terms of quality. However, Lord claims, "When a tradition or individual goes from oral to written, he or it, goes from an adult, mature style of one kind to a faltering and embryonic style of another sort" (1974:134).

Oral epic song is narrative poetry that has evolved over many generations. The singers of such tales did not know how to write, but built formulas and formulaic expressions using themes (Lord 1974:4). The oral poet learned the songs orally, then compose and transmitted them orally as well. His performance did not depend upon oral memorization. In such cases, what is important was not the oral performance (presentation) but rather the composition during the oral performance. Lord claims that calling such compositions "folk epic" is not helpful because it is derogatory and equates the poetry with fairy stories and children's tales.

The oral poet is the composer of tales, while the singer of tales is not only singer, but also a performer. They represent different aspects that take place at the same time. The singer is a creative artist who is contributing to the tradition of oral poetry (Lord 1974:26).

Lord outlines two things that his singers had in common: illiteracy and the desire to attain proficiency in singing epic poetry. There are three stages in the process:
- The singer sits aside as others sing, laying the foundation, listening and absorbing, applying, then singing before a critical audience
- The singer begins to sing with the rhythm and melody that he has learned, but stays within the limits of the learned patterns. His problem is fitting his thoughts and expressions into a rigid form. He imitates others and his competency is judged by being able to sing one song all the way through for a critical audience
- Training ends when the singer's repertory is large enough to furnish entertainment for several nights.

He states, "Poetic grammar of oral epic is and must be based on the formula" (1994:65). Formulas, or groups of them, provide a means for telling a story in song and verse. As we have

mentioned, Lord describes how groups of ideas become the theme of the song but are not a fixed set of words, The singer's task is to take the theme and adapt it to the song as a whole, binding the song together.

Bards and singers never sang their songs the same each time, so when someone finally wrote the songs they put them into a fixed form. A poet might be able to read and write, but he was still an oral poet. Becoming a "literary" poet refers to a technique of composition, so it is a different process than oral literature. According to Lord, the seeds of the literary are already present in the oral style. The change form oral to written styles is different because to some critics the written was traditionally better than oral style. Lord's conclusion is that becoming literate can work against creativity, at least in the use of poetry and song in storytelling.

Finnegan also makes strong claims about the importance of oral poetry: "Oral poetry is often ignored or relegated to folklore studies, special ethnographies, or underground cultures" (1977:2). Her contention is that oral poetry falls squarely within the field of literature and that there is no clear-cut line between oral and written literature. This point is important in seeing how poetry fits into storytelling.

Finnegan reminds us that oral literature is common around the world. Some forms of it are:
- Epic, the long narrative poems with the main emphasis on the heroic
- Ballad, a sung narrative poem
- Panegyric odes, in praise of rulers and notables
- Lyric, which includes psalms, hymns, songs that accompany drinking, work songs, spirituals, lullabies, laments, and so on
- Others, such as chanted sermons, dialogue verse, prayers, curses, street-cries, etc.

She provides a number of criteria to help decide if something is poetry within oral literature:
- Rhythm or meter, depending upon culturally defined perceptions
- Heightened language, metaphorical expression, musical form or accompaniment, structural repetitiveness, prosodic features like meter, alliteration parallelism
- Delivered in a manner and mood that sets it apart from everyday speech and prose utterance (1977:25)
- The local [or emic] classification: praise poetry, hunters poems, or festival poetry
- Performance: "…an oral poem is essentially an ephemeral work of art, and has no existence or continuity apart from its performance" (1977: 28)

Chanting is another form of speaking or singing. It generally has a restricted pitch range and we recognize it best from Christian church liturgies such as the Gregorian chant. It originated in monasteries and the priests sung them at specified times each day. In some of the modern day choruses, the praise leaders chant the lines of songs. Chants are not unique to literate societies, however, as Alan Rumsey demonstrates in Highland cultures of Papua New Guinea (Rumsey 2005).

According to Ong (1982:40), redundancy, such as is common in songs and poetry, is natural in the thought and speech of people in an oral society. However, with writing the mind slows down and interferes with this natural redundancy

POETIC STYLE

Bauman (1977) discusses "verbal art as performance," and views performance in relation to what he calls its nature, in particular the audience interaction and reaction. He refers to the way in which the performance takes place as keying, including special codes and figurative language, parallelism, and other special features. There are also performance traditions that influence style, depending upon the event, the act, the role of the performer and the genre that is used.

According to Finnegan (1977:107), the material itself does not always define structural units, such as lines, verses, stanzas (even poems) She notes the striking and elaborate use of metaphor in Polynesian poetry, where "a poem often moves on two levels, the overt one perhaps a description of nature…, the inner one conveying *some hidden meaning* of love, or insult, or historical claim" (1977:114, italics added). "The search for one touchstone of 'oral style' thus turns out to be fruitless… [b]ut in conclusion, I emphasise again the importance of *performance* in oral art" (1977:133).

How do style and performance enter into the poetry? Hedrick (1994) analyzes parables as "poetic fictions" that were invented for particular occasion. He sees them as ordinary stories that Jesus created and gives some early interpretations before moving to modern ones.

Finnegan suggests that the social nature of style adds several further dimensions to poetry, such as:
- In oral poetry the most marked feature is repetition
- The prosodic process includes the beats and meter, the notion of rhythm
- The functions of parallelism
- The physical accompaniment to rhythm may be less prominent
- The use of imagery and symbolic language
- The use of hyperbole and poetic irony
- The use of allusion and poems of address
- Conventions on delivery, dramatization and individuality

How do performers compose oral poetry?
- Memorization is a key ingredient
- By noting the effect that the audience has upon the performance
- By improvisation and freedom
- By repetition and the use of formulae
- By deliberate and protracted composition, devoid of the performance
- By means of dialogue songs or poetic duels (Finnegan 1977:85)

Oral literature is found all over the world and is therefore all around us, including ballads and folksongs, or even kinds of children's verse and should be exploited in storytelling.

The modes of transmission of oral poetry turn out to be complicated and not neatly confined to two distinct traditions, one oral, and the other written (Finnegan 1977:168). Furthermore, classifying a poem as folk, oral, or popular (noting style or expected origin) does not give any automatic information about its likely mode of distribution and transmission.

Who are the poets, that is, who composes and performs oral poetry? There are varieties of people and occasions for poetry and song. Often they take place in relaxation after work (Finnegan 1977:243). Other times include work parties, singing sessions, sporting events, church services, etc. In traditional village settings, such as communal festivities and special occasions, there is generally singing.

Robert Alter has written on a literary approach to the Old Testament that takes into account the basic conventions of ancient Mediterranean poetic style, which seemed to avoid narrative and focus on "song, dirge, oracle, oratory prophecy, reflective and didactic argument, liturgy" (1985:27).

It turns out that rhythmic speech "plays a large part in all religions from their earliest beginnings" (Wilder 1999:89), so storytelling by poetry is very old. A good poem, according to Wilder, combines certain conventions with novelty; improvisation is valued, but so are the known linguistic structures.

POSTMODERN AND EXPERIENTIAL STORYTELLING

Miller (2003) gives a number of examples that demonstrate how the present generation is visually oriented in storytelling. Not only do they look for symbols and imagery to represent and depict a story, they also become part of the retold stories. Miller is a young church leader who seeks ways to communicate to new generations, but to do so "we must be willing to change how we tell the old, old story."

Worship in such cases is an experiential and personal encounter with spiritual interpretations of sound, light, and other emotional enhancing features. Participants go on several "journeys" to experience the stories of Jesus, acting out and responding to mentors who guide them.

Wilder (2001) challenges his readers to link contemporary issues with biblical stories. His experience was in examining "postwar" poetry, but also came from his pastoral sensitivity. His writings on the relationship of religion to modern poetry and literature searches for an enjoyment for hearers in their faith. "The church today has widely lost and all but forgotten the experience of glory which lies at the heart of Christianity" (2001:8). As storytellers, we do not want our audiences to have such an experience.

Theater "demands trained, costumed, and often masked performers enacting narratives" (Schechner 1992:272). Michael Mel's (1996) autobiographical thesis on storytelling drama for the Melpa or Hagen culture illustrates this well. He applies certain key concepts of a story by means of theatre and drama. His work is imaginative and personal, both in terms of the process and development of a theatre play, but also because Mel's responsibility is to research and report on his work, yet at the same time direct the operation.

Mel refers to the *Mbu* throughout his thesis, which is set within the structure of the Melpa people in the Western Highlands of PNG, with key concepts of: the *Mbu Iamb*, the individual, or "seed person"; the *Pugl Iamb*, authority, or the "root person"; and the *Mbu Kola*, the boundary, or the "seed place." The symbolism revolves around the *Mbu* "the individual," who, through a process

of *Mbu Ugl* (knowledge, but literally "things that are done with seeds") arrives at various stages of *Nanga Noman* (thoughts or behavior). Listeners relate the forms of knowledge through songs, dance, chants, drama, and in other ways.

Mel calls the *Noman* the "brains" or "mind," and places it within a paradigm of *Noman Pila*, *Noman Tekim*, and *Noman Kond*, all related to thinking, feeling, knowing, relating, and living, therefore "symbolic notions of temporal experience."

Mel is confident that his viewpoint of the *Mogei* worldview reflects an emic framework (p. 31 and elsewhere). His use of the *Mogei* lexical images is projected into the drama framework, with the following terms central:

- **Na**: the individual students, other persons, and their responses
- **Iamb**: the relationships, discussions and interactions that take place
- **Kola**: the project, department and institution
- **Mbu**: the overall discourse, ideas and understanding

The *Mbu* then sprouts and grows, as it becomes Mel's story. Mel's own storytelling revolves around his experiences of teaching and researching drama at the Goroka Teachers College. His work with students and the *Raun Raun* theatre is highly interactive, where the storyteller portrays the feeling that he and others have as they "discover meaning" through the process of putting on a play called *Mani Tok* (literally, "money talk"). The theatre becomes the performers' way of "playing around with reality." Through the process of drama, Mel and others are attempting to identify themselves. The self-identity process, which merges drama and song, can be an important component in the storytelling process.

ART

An added dimension of performance and stories is art. We have already mentioned how Robert Coles used pictures that children drew to help them tell their personal stories. Examining artists of the fourteenth century, Jules Lubbock reminds us that "Once upon a time [reading a picture as well as a book] was probably the dominant mode …[and] Narrative was considered to be the most difficult and prestigious branch of painting" (Lubbock 2006:xi).

Toelken (1986:149) notes that folksongs differ from commercial songs. Singers regularly modify folksongs. However, singers of commercial songs resist modification because they own the songs.

As early as the middle of the third century AD there were images in the tombs of the catacombs that include stories of the Old and New Testaments, such as the Fall of Man, Crossing the Red Sea, The Raising of Lazarus, the Last Supper, the Resurrection and many more. Such pictures refelected eyewitness accounts and helped teach Christian doctrine.

For ideas on the kind of stories that "embody spiritual truth" and illuminate Christian doctrines, see Mosley (2000). In a striking dramatization, he portrays portions of the Bible that deal with the use of garments, demonstrating that "showing" complements merely "telling".

Bailey (2005) has written a one-act play in four scenes on the two sons of "The Prodigal Son" parable. His thesis is "If 'story' is a serious mode of theological language that effectively creates meaning, then emotion and drama cannot be ignored" (2005:14). Bailey uses Arabic script as art for titles to his chapters.

We should encourage the use of art in our storytelling—allowing storytellers to illustrate their stories with creative images and icons.

In summary, according to Ryken (1989), the arts provide:
- A picture of reality
- The imaginatory element
- The interpretation of reality
- The role of perspective
- The need to interpret
- Beauty of form
- Understanding of human experience
- An enlargement of the range of experiences
- Social functions
- Entertainment
- Creativity

Skill-Check

As a facilitator, sing, recite a song, or compose a short play and then:
- ❑ Discuss the feelings that participants had from hearing the song or watching the play
- ❑ Discuss what feelings you expected from the song or play
- ❑ Discuss how a song or play conveys the true essence of the story
- ❑ Discuss or illustrate how plays enhance stories and songs

Recording Stories

In this chapter we refer both to the mechanics of recording a story and to the particular kinds of stories that should be recorded, such as oral histories.

Objectives

- ➤ Discuss what kinds of materials can be recorded
- ➤ Discuss some of the media available to do the recording
- ➤ Give practice in recording a story

Preparation

For those interested in recording Bible stories, there are many resources available, for example Global Recordings (http://globalrecordings.net/au/index.html, last accessed February 2010), also called Language Recordings and Gospel Recordings, specializes in recording Scripture stories.

The facilitator should be aware of the range of materials he or she can record in the vernacular and develop templates that assist in recording them. Stories may include Bible stories, legends, songs, and oral histories. In particular, the facilitator and student should be familiar with recording oral histories, such as options for an interview, then preserving the stories that result from such a project.

Sitton, et al. (1983) designed their book specifically for in-service and pre-service teachers, and as a practical guide to aid others. It grew out of the *Foxfire* book series, which are anthology collections from *The Foxfire Magazine*. In the collections the students' portrayal of the culture of Southern Appalachia changed misconceptions about these "hillbillies." The students worked to document and preserve the stories, crafts, trades, and the personalities of their families, neighbors, and friends. For additional examples of oral history projects and interviews that resulted in stories, see Cross and Barker (1992).

Rosenbluth (1990) points out that few people today know much about their families' histories, although in many other societies the older people and grandparents are the storytellers. However, with our emphasis on youth, we ignore or stereotype older people. Stories provide some degree of permanence because they are a way of remembering what happened to us. Telling stories also have therapeutic value as well as healing value for those who tell and hear the stories.

Practice

There is nothing more embarrassing that forgetting some vital piece of equipment or template for recording materials. The facilitator or recording technologist should be familiar with the technical items necessary for recording (see, for example, Grimes 1992).[16]

In addition to the technical aspects of actually recording the vernacular data, the facilitator will need a template of items, including:

- Bible stories in the trade language
- Wordlists
- Sociolinguistic data, such as maps and census materials
- Questions for interviews that include oral history

Facilitator Notes

There are many potential stories that a fieldworker can help develop. Sitton, et al. (1983) suggests the following areas for study and recording:

- An oral autobiography
- A living history from community informants
- An oral history of the home neighborhood
- A memory book
- The origins of local place names
- Oral history of schools
- Oral histories of local buildings [or land]
- Oral life history in general (it may come from anywhere)
- Topical focus
- Chronological focus
- Family life focus
- Folk and popular artists
- Family genealogies
- Family archives
- Mainstreet oral history
- Local industry history
- Immigrant oral history
- Environmental history
- Trades and professions
- Significant local events
- Institutional or organizational histories
- Traditional crafts
- Political structures, meanings, folklore

Cross and Barker (1992) have edited a collection of stories told from the viewpoint and experiences of those who live in eight African countries along the Sahel. They are excellent examples of how a project can be set up with interviews in various languages. The people cover a wide range of tribal, economic and social groups, including refugees, pastoralists, farmers and fishermen and initially involved only the stories of ageing men and women.

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[16] The Ethnomusicology Department of SIL International offers a course at GIAL tht gives instructions on recording music, in particular. See http://www.gial.edu/courses/ethnomusicology.htm for their course LD 4202, Audio and Video Tehniques for Fieldworkers (last accessed January 2010).

Linguistic courses may include "Field Methods," which deals primarily with data gathering, storage and analysis but relies on recording stories (texts) as well. SIL resources give various clues on procedures and using materials—for example, the SIL website has information on programs such as FieldWorks Data Notebook, Linguist's Shoebox, Speech Analyzer, Speech Manager, Speech Tools, and LinguaLinks Lexical Database and Interlinear TextTools. Libraries of reference materials are also available on-line from a variety of sources.

Wolcott (1995) does not regard fieldwork as a particularly creative art, nor as a systematic science. He leaves it hanging between the two, combining the elements of both art and science. Wolcott invites an artistic approach toward fieldwork that may be instructive to storytelling facilitators and fieldworkers. "The real genius in fieldwork lies in knowing how to answer the seemingly simple question: *What counts*?" (1995:18). The challenge of Wolcott is to preserve, convey and celebrate the complexity found in fieldwork. He provides several definitions of "art" based on the *Random House Dictionary,* including: a collection of some kind; a genre, such as dance; a school or college; principles or methods of a craft or trade; a skilled workman of a craft; a branch of learning or study; or to artificiality or trickery in behavior. Storytelling is a genre and involves art and the collection of materials.

FIELDWORK

Fieldwork is everything that one does from the outset to the completion of the study. More narrowly, it is the research process when the fieldworker is "in the field." One aspect includes emotion, such that one can discuss "doing fieldwork" and "borrowing fieldwork techniques." The latter refers to technique—figuring out how to record and convey to others one's experiences and observations. A list of topics to cover in a training program would include observations on all aspects of the culture, including recording the physical environment by means of photography and video. It also includes constructing and testing interviews, data management, finding resources, thematic analysis, computer skills, translation and back-translation processes, statistical measures, sampling theory, etc. (For details, see Wolcott 1995:71-72).

A further valuable resource is The Human Resources Area Files, a collection of ethnographies and other data based on the cultural categories first suggested by Murdock (5th edition 1987). For details see http://www.yale.edu/hraf/ (last accessed January 2010).

The way we compile and represent our work is important. We should demonstrate a profound interest in the people and their cultures and languages. A good example is Randall Prior, who has edited a series of books (Prior 1998, 2001, 2003) to represent the community and church leaders in various parts of Vanuatu. He examines the history of his mission, including early attitudes and teaching on cultural matters. These include customary dress, medicine, bride price and marriage, magic, pig killing, spirits, land and land disputes, burial of the dead, feasting, kava drinking, and other matters. He conducted workshops with local leaders to discuss and clarify a number of these topics. Often the leaders framed their "solutions" in terms of stories.

The analysis of data and its interpretation are not synonymous. We can teach fieldwork procedures, but fieldworkers also must learn to use intuition (Wolcott 1995:31). All art involves the joint activity of a large number of people and, in the case of storytelling, they are able to recognize the extraordinary natural ability of the storyteller.

Fieldwork also involves gaining and maintaining rapport, reciprocity, tolerance for ambiguity, and personal determination, coupled with faith in oneself. Wolcott (noting Homans, 1962) says, "Research is a matter of strategies, not of morals" (1995:160), certainly a questionable statement. He also quotes Keesing and Keesing, who claimed "Nobody who followed the scientific method ever discovered anything interesting." (1995: 161). For a personal and somewhat humorous account by an anthropologist who worked in Cameroon, see Barley (1983).

Walcott encourages fieldworkers to focus their analysis, review it regularly, and capitalize on bursts of cultural activities. This includes casual or conversational interviewing, such as gathering a life history. In storytelling interviews, the fieldworker needs questions that are short and to the point, revolving around a few big issues.

Fieldworkers in a mission context are sometimes weak in theory as well as in writing up and reporting on their activities. However, rendering the work into suitable form and media can help others understand the project. A good habit is to set aside a time each day for writing and to begin the exercise early in fieldwork. Writing is a disciplinary activity that may seem daunting to a facilitator at a storytelling workshop. However, it is necessary for those who wish to become storytelling scholars to document their work.

BIBLE STORIES AND FIELDWORK

The Wycliffe Bible Translators International is a partner with a group that initially embraced the "Chronological Bible Storying Method."[17] David Payne outlined the contributions that he felt SIL could make to the movement as follows:

- Helping others glean relevant academic information
- Helping others have cultural awareness in selecting suitable Bible stories
- Helping others be culturally aware when using the methodology
- Training on the use of the key terms used in Bible stories
- Training in translation principles
- Providing comprehension testing
- Providing consultant review
- Incorporating mother-tongue speakers, as well as expatriates into the storying approach

Many organizations use chronological storying methodology to support their goals of evangelism and church planting. In such cases, the local community is responsible for the stories by:
- Translating particular passages that underlie selected stories

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[17] Payne is (2010) the SIL International Coordinator for Oral Bible Translation and Chronological Storying and is responsible for the primary training. His focus and that of Wycliffe International (and SIL International) was to work with the Iinternational Mission Board (Southern Baptists), Campus Crusade for Christ International, Youth With A Mission and Trans World Radio to have a combined storytelling effort. The partnership arrangement has changed by the focus remains the same.
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- Developing oral stories from the translated passages
- Training others in translation principles so they can craft and test stories
- Checking stories prepared by others for integrity and naturalness
- Facilitating awareness of orality and storying
- Training mother tongue speakers to craft and test stories
- Facilitating mother tongue speakers to use the stories in evangelism and church planting

Dr. Grant Lovejoy, formerly an Associate Professor of Preaching at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been one of the leading proponents of the Chronological Bible Storying (CBS) methodology. His study guide helps "listeners to discover the meaning and significance of the biblical story." Lovejoy gives extensive historical to the development and current uses of the CBS methodology.

FIELDWORK AND SMALL LANGUAGES

In the case of very small languages in the Pacific, CBS may prove difficult because:
- It utilizes stories mainly for evangelism and church planting, whereas in the Pacific both of these activities have already been done extensively by missions and churches
- It usually concentrates upon a set of preselected stories, not necessarily those suggested by the community
- It generally demonstrates storytelling from a Western historical (linear) perspective
- It sticks closely to a written text, which many of the storytelling participants cannot use
- Its goals may not take into account the intricacies of the languages and cultures of the people
- It suggests that nationals in many societies cannot think abstractly and do not analyze
- It allows little in the way of embellishments
- It has no component of language documentation

These comments deliberately point out some of the differences between CBS and the storytelling methodology outlined in this book. The traditional and historical perspective of SIL has been to function as a nonsectarian organization, emphasizing:
- A focus on academic and educational aspects, as well as spiritual
- A promotion of the inherent worth of each culture group and language
- A concentration on the vernacular languages, irrespective of size
- A record of the cultural and language data in the vernacular languages

In other words, although CBS and SIL have similar interests in storytelling, their goals are historically somewhat different.

DOCUMENTATION

We have briefly mentioned some of the materials that fieldworkers should collect in their storytelling work. For additional help, note the handbook by Crane and Angrosino (1992) to help fieldworkers implement and document various field projects.18 Language documentation has taken on a certain set of requirements and dimensions—see Simons and Bird (2003).

More recently, language documentation has been a research prize, particularly work on "endangered languages." Sometimes it seems that an endangered language is simply one that

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[18] See also http://www.loc.gov/folklife (last accessed January 2010) for information and examples on collecting, documenting and storing materials.

has a good possibility for a fieldwork grant. Such grants are supposedly based upon a proposal that includes the population of the language group, its location, some peer and university backing, as well as the personal credentials of the investigator. Nevertheless, the research proposals for endangered languages often depend largely upon the reputation of the people submitting them. It follows that the documentation concentrates on those features that interest mainly the researchers. They collect information by means of a trade language that they and the people under study already know, or sometimes using the vernacular languages. Linguists traditionally document features of the phonology, grammar, syntax and discourse, with a lexicon, a brief descriptive grammar and some texts. However, linguists do not always have a goal of cultural documentation, except as a by-product of their linguistic analysis because cultural documentation and language documentation are not the same.

Note, however, the work of Steven Bird and Gary Simons and their goals for documenting vernacular languages.[19] The documentation involves three stages: 1) audio capture; 2) Oral annotation; and 3) Transcription.

Cultural documentation can concentrate on cultural categories (for example see Murdock's outline of cultural materials), in which case it is a collection of facts about the culture made by outsiders. Cultural documentation can also be done by visual means—photos and videos of people and their houses, artifacts and rituals. There may be some voice-over information and "explanation" as well. A third kind of documentation is demographic—noting the number of people, houses and other objects in the village; taking pictures of festivals and peoples; noting the social units and their relationship; and so on. Cultural documentation through stories should include biographies of the storytellers, as well as recording their stories.

Harrison (2007) emphasizes that when researchers or others write the stories in a language they become fixed and are an "impoverished" form of the spoken varieties. As languages "die", there are no longer storytellers and an important part of the tradition is lost forever. Recording stories on audio and video tape preserves them in a static form, which is about all that can be achieved with endangered languages.

OTHER AGENCIES

A number of agencies around the world record language data for religious purposes. As already noted, the web site of Gospel Recordings (now under the Gospel Recordings Network) records Bible stories. Their website provides links to many resources and agencies that are also interested in recording stories and scriptures.

The Scripture Union in Australia offers booklets in English for fieldworkers to translate and print in vernacular languages. This implies some on-going literacy program in the languages.

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[19] See http://boldpng.info for more detail on the general goal that Bird outlines: to "record and transcribe indigenous languages of Papua New Guinea using voice recorders…. The work is being done by university staff and students who speak the local languages." Bird hopes to see the collection of 100 languages over a one year period. Simons has coauthored a number of papers with Bird that are referred to on the website.

Consult http://www.shellbook.com for its new emphasis on recording materials for not only literacy efforts, but also for community development projects.

Skill-Check

As a facilitator, practice recording a standard word list in a vernacular language and a short oral history from a friend. Then:
- ❑ Examine the list to see where you need additional information and
- ❑ Determine, in the case of a word list, what IPA symbols you will use[20]
- ❑ Practice checking recording levels on your machine(s) in the oral interview

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[20] Free downloads of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) can be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Phonetic_Alphabet#Free_IPA_font_downloads (accessed January 2010).

CHAPTER 11

Using Stories

There is no doubt that there has been a storytelling revival in America (Ross 1996). As indicated throughout this book, storytelling is now a widely used and accepted technique in many organizations. In addition, the sociolinguistics department of SIL International outlines a training track at the intermediate level that includes "Scripture use" courses. Such courses have natural applications to storytelling and orality.[21]

I will also comment on a common assumption in missionary strategy, namely that a written approach, rather than an oral one, should be the default introductory program in Bible translation field projects. This underlies the once natural but still pervasive bias of organizations against adopting an oral approach as a legitimate language project strategy (Franklin 2007).

Objectives

> ➤ Discuss the difference between storytelling as a language development strategy on the one hand and simply telling stories on the other hand
> ➤ Discuss how to use Bible stories in various contexts
> ➤ Promote family and organizational stories
> ➤ Promote storytelling as an avenue of language development

Preparation

Outline some of the most simple, reliable, and culturally appropriate ways to use recorded and retold stories. Be prepared to tell and retell a number of stories taken from recorded audio resources. Use some stories specifically recorded for children, for special occasions, or suggested for other groups of people (Pierson 1997; Greene 1996; MacDonald 2006).

Practice

Skilled storytellers remind us that the way to have stories used is simple: tell them and have them retold. Their focus is on using the story. Scripture use, by definition, has traditionally emphasized the written or audio text (often for memorization), rather than the oral medium.

> ❑ Choose a story and tell it to your peers
> ❑ Explain how you have utilized the storytelling methodology
> ❑ Listen to someone retell your story and discuss the process

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[21] The Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics offers a Master's Degree in Language Development with an emphasis in Scripture Use. See their website at http://www.gial.edu for details.

Facilitator Notes

STORYTELLING AND TELLING STORIES

The on-line WordNet Dictionary gives two quite different senses for the word "storyteller." On the one hand, it is "someone who tells a story," with synonyms of "narrator, teller," but on the other hand it is "someone who tells lies," with synonyms of "fabricator, fibber."

The two quite dissimilar meanings should warn us that storytelling is a two-edged sword. To distinguish between the two senses, we use "storytelling" in this chapter to refer to factual narratives and "telling stories" for the more fanciful or fantastic ones, but not necessarily lies. There may be considerable overlap at times as well, so it is wise to consider the sense distinctions, which we represent as:
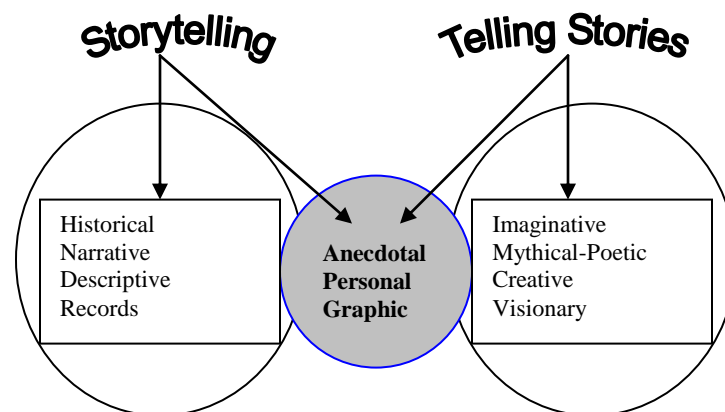
Storytelling, when tied closely to Scripture narration, should include commentary, exposition, exegesis, inferences, and deductions. These are all part of the storytelling scene.

To be effective, the storyteller includes aspects of the features represented in both the circles above. As represented in the left circle, storytelling is more like translating. Telling stories, represented in the right circle, is more like a free interpretation. The translator can go slow, do research from records and history and translate narrative. The interpreter, on the other hand, has to do everything orally, including imitating style, as the story unfolds. There is no time for research while telling stories.

Telling stories is creative and imaginative because the performer must keep the audience in mind. It involves interaction by paraphrase, rewording, restating, and performing. The one who tells stories well is therefore often an entertainer as well.

Storytellers, on the other hand, are encouraged to plan their stories, and construct them in culturally appropriate ways, keeping in mind the worldview of the audience. A key part of the

Chronological Bible Storying methodology (see also Chapter 7) is a ten-step approach that includes the following:

- Identifying the biblical principle to be illustrated
- Being aware of worldview issues
- Taking into account the bridges, barriers and gaps that will result from the story
- Selecting the story
- Crafting the story and later discussing it
- Telling the story in a culturally appropriate manner
- Dialoging with the audience about the meaning of the story
- Giving guidance on how to obey the lessons of the story
- Establishing some kind of accountability
- Encouraging groups to reproduce the story

USING PERSONAL STORIES

There are many ways that we can use both storytelling and telling stories. We can involve our immediate family, relatives, close friends, staff, trainees, clients, business associates, bosses, as well as the community. We can use stories that are spiritual or educational, determining in each case parts that may be interesting to the group and faithful to the story.

Peter Kreeft is an author who has constructed stories using the dialogue method, introducing people who tell their story from a particular point of view and then interact with others with different views. In one book (1982), he has a conversation between John F. Kennedy, C.S. Lewis and Aldous Huxley, all of whom died on the same day. In another book (1987), Socrates and Jesus discuss matters of current concern from our Western society. In both books, the dialogues discuss points of conflict and interest. They also demonstrate a style anyone can use in telling stories. Along a similar line, Zacharias (2001) has published an imaginary discussion that involves the teachings of Jesus and Budda.

Family storytelling times include birthdays, bedtime, holidays, hiking, and suppers. "Inside the world of story, our minds run free—to do what children do when they are drawing—to color beyond the lines, all over the page" (Maguire, 1998, quoting Jimmy Neil Smith). Maguire also comments on forming storytelling groups and suggests ground rules for them. He gives some clues for "taking the telling leap," that is, using the stories by:

- Giving special care to develop and embody personal stories
- Respecting the value of the story, the teller, the telling and the listener
- Committing to storytelling ventures
- Identifying the potential problems and issues
- Keeping in mind personal concerns and listeners' enjoyment
- Seeing it as a homespun art, knowing your mind may go blank at times
- Remembering that listeners won't even notice if you leave something out
- Refraining from replying to interruptions
- Doing your storytelling in the spirit of giving a gift
- Knowing why telling personal stories is important
- Keeping a notebook and an image file
- Finding the place for telling the story
- Knowing how to listen to other people
- Listening to tapes or CDs of storytellers

STORIES ACROSS GENERATIONS

Greene and Fulford (1993) provide a useful series of questions for gathering family histories and preserving them. These are helpful for a fieldworker who is just starting and perhaps unsure about the categories and topics to include.

Michael W. Pratt and Barbara H. Fiese (2004) have edited a book that studies family stories throughout various stages of people's lives. Their book recounts recent psychological research and theory on family stories. The content and coherence of family narratives links the process of telling to aspects of development. "The messages inherent in these stories serve to socialize children into gender roles, reinforce moral lessons, consolidate identity, and connect generations" (2004:xi). They include studies from developmental psychology, personality theory, and family studies. The family is the context for interpreting the wider world and, during its life cycle, stories are an intimate part of the process. The book studies and describes how families "support, guide, or sometimes stifle" (2004:3) the process.

Fiese and Pratt (2004: 401-418) also studied metaphors and their meanings in family stories and found that the elements of family stories across the lifespan are:
- Lifespan> Medium> Meaning> Metaphor> Coherence
- Childhood> Reminiscence> Sharing everyday memories is relational> How do I learn to behave>Narrative & social competence
- Adolescence> Dialogue> Synthesizing experiences> Who am I?> Coherence of personal identity
- Adulthood> Prosaic> Relationship histories> What do others mean to me?> Coherence across immediate family relationships
- Older adult> Epochal> Family preservation> What does my life mean to others?> Continuity across family generations

Dubrovin (2000) discusses how stories can effectively take place between generations and outlines techniques of how to "unlock" the stories of people.

USING ORGANIZATIONAL STORIES

We have mentioned Denning's books (2001, 2005) as examples of how leaders can tell stories to promote vision and trust. Although storytelling does not replace analytical thinking, it does supplement it with new perspectives. It does not neglect abstract thinking nor demote experimentation and science. Denning understands that there is academic hostility to the narrative. His "springboard story" means using a story to help an audience grasp how an organization or complex system can change. Springboard stories have certain characteristics:
- They are told from the story of a protagonist in a predicament who proposes a change that is meant to solve the predicament
- The story is plausible, even familiar and is told as simply and briefly as possible
- The speed and conciseness of style in the story are key components
- Stories are meant to spark new stories in the minds of the listeners, not details
- Listener's are encouraged to race ahead, to imagine further implications
- Stories are not a panacea, but are only as good as the underlying ideas being conveyed
- A story can be used as a way of explaining the idea at the outset
- If an idea is bad, telling the story should reveal the weaknesses
- Intuition will tell you if you are giving the wrong story
- Every expert has a different idea of what change is best

Denning suggests that we should use the true story as far as it goes, but then we should extrapolate. He notes that an idea cannot easily enter into a listeners' basic perceptual framework unless they have helped to create it (Denning 2001:39). In an organization, everyone needs to know what is going on because there is a real risk in ignorance. "People are less interested in the overall program than in having autonomy to do their own thing" (Denning 2001:44). Organizational resistance is often not from the idea of change itself, but involves how insiders react to the process of change. Denning suggests that people simply tell their story about what they are doing and how and why it will be or is successful, and allow listeners to draw their own conclusions about the implications for their own situations (Denning 2001:80). The problem is not information transfer—the listeners already have most of the information they need, but they need to see how their knowledge is part of a potential solution.

There is a big difference between two groups getting along (as in many partnerships) and coming to a level of understanding together. The outcome of a presentation depends on what story the participants tell to each other and to their colleagues. It is the shared stories that hold the organization together, and the structures and management are simply tools.

Denning (2001:127, 150, 156) also comments on drafting the springboard story to use it most effectively. The parameters he suggests are:

- **Strangeness**: violate the listener's expectations in some way, such as with divergent opinions, unpredictable data, sudden emotion, new characters, or unexpected relationships
- **Comprehensibility**: embody the idea enough to spring the listener to a new level of understanding by focusing on the big picture by letting go of structure and instructions
- **Informal storytelling**: create multiple opportunities for informal storytelling by knowledge fairs, with interaction between the storyteller and the listener
- **Testing**: volume or quantity do not stir groups; instead, the story must be interesting and have meaning
- **Immediacy**: launching into a story at the outset has proved effective, even when it is not a direct answer to the question that has been posed
- **Serendipity**: telling multiple stories can help enhance the chances of the audience imagining and filling in the missing elements
- **Sensitization**: delineation of ongoing problems can help an unreceptive audience to see the relevance of a springboard story
- **Urgency**: where time is short, the whole weight of the argument may be placed on the story instead of having a team write a report, review it, redraft it, then send it somewhere and months later have a response

The problem an organization involves making its stories invoke the right leap of imagination, so the storytellers need rational analysis and testing. Storytelling, rather than translation for small languages, is a conceptual leap for many fieldworkers.

Additional elements for developing the Springboard Story (Denning, 2001, Appendix 1) are:

- It should be relatively brief with "minimal texture"
- It should be intelligible to a specific audience and inherently interesting
- It should spring the listener to new level of understanding
- It should have a "happy ending"
- It should embody the change message
- It should encourage listeners to identify with the protagonist
- It should deal with a specific individual or organization

USING STORIES TO CHALLENGE OTHERS

Silverman's book (ed., 2006) was published in connection with the National Storytelling Network (NSN), http://www.storynet.org/) and is based on interviews with 171 of its members, representing some 72 organizations. The authors divide the book into three parts: **Part I** focuses on how respondents used stories in work functions; **Part II** addresses their application to organizations; **Part III** provides advice and research to make stories used more deliberately in organizations. Her book has valuable information related to storytelling and using stories, so I outline it in some detail here.

The purpose of the book is to "increase the visibility and influence of story work in organizations, specifically its practical applications to… marketing and market research, finance, customer service…, project management…, organizational change, building teams and teamwork and dealing with specific issues" (xviii). The primary audience is those who are interested in moving organizations to a higher level of performance, including business owners, executives, and senior leaders.

In the *Introduction* Sylvia Lovely challenges leaders and administrators to share information and knowledge effectively with employees by connecting all levels of an organization by storying. She believes this is critical in the Conceptual Age, in which people are more interested in the quality of their lives than with data. Her "secret is to integrate right-brain qualities of imagination and innovative thinking with left-brain analytical thought" (xxviii).

Chapter 2 is by Marcy Fisher: *Put your money where your mouth is: unleashing the power of people through stories.* Fisher says that we should think of stories as a management tool (19): "Some of our storytellers work with an external coach; some even participate in theater and improvisational groups to hone their story skills." Story use needs to be conscious, and purposeful and considerate of those hearing it (22). To take this seriously, any organization would give training to their storytellers so that they can convey their "tribal knowledge." A relevant question of Fisher's is "How can media go about in selecting the right story for impact and art?" Fisher notes that stories illustrate a company's practices, such as staff retention, employee recognition and customer experiences. In particular, organizations should turn "techno-speak" into a story.

Chapter four, by Lori Silverman, puts the claim about stories very clearly: *You get what you give: leadership in action through stories.* Her claim is that "When people remember a story, they remember its intent" (47). She relates how one supervisor mentors more than a hundred associates a year—supervisors and VPs. He also mentors employees through stories. This is because "Using carefully selected stories in mentoring allows leaders to learn from others' life experiences" (50). However, to use stories there must be an organizational culture without a lot of fear, not one that is excessively hierarchical. Their model on communicating strategic information is to identify the message, select and develop a story that reinforces it, determine when and where to tell it and then solicit feedback on the message through practice (53-54). We need to consider the question of what story best makes our point. Small groups can practice with stories, identify their main ideas, and in this way formalize the storytelling process and teach it to leaders.

In **Chapter 7** North McKinnon voices a common refrain: *We've never done it this way before: prompting organizational change through stories.* Pat Duran begins with suggestions called *Using metaphors to craft a common vision.* The main points are:

- Begin by brainstorming the issues and identifying the elements that must change
- Identify some metaphor, for example, folk tale, classic journey, etc. that the team can relate to, then study it and make a list of its key elements
- Let the team discover and connect situational elements to the metaphor with a play, skit, art, song, etc.

Part II of the book is *How organizations are using stories strategically.* It begins with **Chapter eight** by Michael Margolis called, *The sky is falling: when difficult times call for a new story.* The author believes that constructing purposeful stories can lead people out of difficult times, which should be encouraging to us. Again, stories help define our corporate culture: What story attracted us to the organization? Can we relate a peak experience of our time with the organization, with examples of a person(s) who demonstrated irresistible leadership? Who is the most passionate person we have met in the organization? What were the attitudes, core values and guiding principles in stories that inspired and guided us? We can tell stories of transitional times, of fear, loss and pain in change by asking the staff to explore and contribute stories that address such issues. Then we need to institutionalize the stories as part of our organization's culture.

In **Chapter 9**, *Why are we here? Stories that define us,* Evelyn Clark encourages us to preserve the history of our organization with archives. We can do this by collecting stories from current leaders and by listening to stories that people want to share. It follows that leaders should be encouraged to relate their personal experiences, feelings and lessons and to retell favorite stories that will keep the legacy alive.

Lori Silverman is the author of **Chapter thirteen** of **Part III**: *Moving stories into and across the organization.* Her chapter *"It pays to be a pioneer: blazing a trail for stories"* reminds us that executives who tell stories are the most effective and that storytelling falls under the umbrella of leadership. She gives a harsh suggestion: "People want to understand who you are. Put away the PowerPoint! " (193). Administrators can do a number of things to help this happen, such as: (1) link their stories to the organization's strategic plan; (2) know their vision and strategies; (3) integrate their stories with training; (4) take the initiative by modeling stories; (5) be creative in communicating stories and hand out books and articles on topics; (6) coach people how to communicate stories and elicit stories that focus on strengths and successes; and finally, (7) be patient and allow the process of story to unfold—"If it is right, people will embrace it" (201).

USING STORIES FROM ORAL HISTORY

Bible stories do not need to be the single goal for endangered languages. Rather, the project design can include stories that fieldworkers can elicit in oral history. Thompson (1978) is a classic text on the method and meaning of oral history. He examines problems of evidence, the social function of history, and suggests how to collect and use oral materials. Vansina (1961) provides a study in the historical methodology used in studying oral traditions. Managing such a project includes preparing for the interview, knowing appropriate approaches for interviewing, keeping interview progress sheets, and structuring the interview.

Lanman and Wendling (2006) is a great resource for researching and following the fundamentals of oral history. They include almost two dozen personal essays by educators who have applied oral history in their teaching, with practical suggestions on curricula, community support, and educational standards.

The interview itself includes (Douglas et al. 1988):
- Language and culture learning as prerequisites
- Ethical obligations noted and carried out
- Delimiting the community for study
- Establishing self in the community
- Pre-interview practicalities: equipment, identification, questions, extras
- Beginning the interview: environment, seating, arranging equipment, scheduling
- During the interview: tape, recording levels, difficult words noted
- Ending the interview: review, final identification, photographs, and documents
- Collecting informant profiles, biographical questionnaires
- Knowing what is on the tape: information sheet, brief summary, evaluation
- Numbering the interviews: by year, subject matter, geographical location
- Indexing: all names, interviewee' names, subject
- Making summaries of tape contents: tape side, counter number, contents, profile
- Following a style guide: general notes, punctuation, ellipsis, quotations, brackets
- Auditing the interviews
- Deciding on what to preserve and its quality
- Depositing the collections
- Archiving the data: master-tape, protection, storage, lending, carrying

It seems clear that if we are telling what we believe is God's story, we should also extend the courtesy to listen and, where possible, record the stories told in oral cultures and pay particular attention to the lives of the tellers. Margaret Read MacDonald (2006) has done this with ten traditional tellers and thereby provides an important example of how fieldworkers can not only collect the stories of good storytellers, but also obtain their personal story as well. Similarly, Collen McElroy (1999) recorded stories and poems in Madagascar and interwove them with her own fieldwork story.

Some storytellers may in fact be telling stories and therefore fanciful, but they will reveal attitudes and values that are of importance in learning the language and culture.

STORIES AND LITERACY

Literacy is not "natural" and it changes as society changes (Meek 1991). However, there is no doubt that being literate and having literature are defining characteristics of "educated" societies. Without literacy, it would be impossible to sustain information, make observations, prove experiments, and convince other educated people about the nature and worth of one's task. However, the designation or classification of a society as oral can be pejorative, and conjure up images of people who are socially and psychologically handicapped. On the one hand, without literacy they cannot read or write, achieve human rights and make other choices. They may become even further handicapped in urban settings because they cannot fully participate in mundane tasks, such as reading a menu, passing a driver's test, or reading the daily newspaper.

It follows that many believe that members of oral societies have nothing to offer to a larger literate community or nation.

It is our contention that we need to acknowledge and support oral societies apart from an interest in evangelism, church planting, literacy or translation. To do this, we can note that the participants of oral societies do not always need to acquire literacy in order to function well. They know how to reason, debate, count, name, trade, dance, fight, worship and perform acts that require memory, wisdom, understanding and awareness to a degree that often far surpasses people in literate communities.

One way to support oral societies is to acknowledge the expertise that the people in the society have, for example, oral histories that researchers can record and study. Fieldworkers can record and help preserve such records for the people, demonstrating appreciation and respect for their cultures and knowledge.

Having the Bible in a written form and reading it well are of course different. See Davis and Hays, eds. (2003) on the creative aspects of reading Scriptures well. Andreas Holzhausen (1975) has noted how Bible stories can aid in an initial translation program.

Although we have the Bible in written form, it is a collection of stories and histories that were passed on orally from one person to another, one group to another, or from one church to another, long before (and after) they were written down. Consequently, church councils gave the writings formative and definite approval so that they have a special sacred status. Nevertheless, we recognize that some of the stories differ in their written versions, just as they must have differed when Jesus or others first told them (Griffin-Jones 2001). Further, when Jesus or NT authors quote the prophets or writings from the OT, they seldom quote their sources "exactly."

STORYTELLING AS AN ORAL APPROACH

Storytelling is a natural part of oral societies and is the place where fieldworkers should begin. This is because the art and practice of storytelling is as old as humankind is and each culture that is viable has storytellers. Since people first started talking to each other, recounting their experiences, they have told their stories.

In traditional oral societies people do not have a dictionary or encyclopedia to refer to—they rely upon mental, not written or literate images. Nevertheless, although storytelling seems to be natural in every society, storytellers can improve their techniques and teach others. Stories are of course more attractive and enhanced by good methodology and pedagogy (MacDonald 1993, Maguire 1998, Sawyer 1942), regardless of the particular culture. In addition, in many instances their moral cultural values are implicit (Murphy 2000, Bailey 1976) in the cultural knowledge and setting.

However, once we introduce literacy into a society, a more elaborate and widely acclaimed method of telling a story evolves. Because oral societies "explain" the world through "folk" descriptions, often their accounts are discounted as mere stories or myth. As I have noted, we may infer that the people in such societies have little to offer because we are expecting and waiting for someone to write down their oral stories. However, once this happens, changes take place immediately. They move from something that has been "experienced" to something that

can be "proven" as true or false. Although we accept this dichotomy, Kelber (1983: xvi).reminds us that an integration of the propositional and experiential views of the Word is possible: "We like to think of textuality as the principal norm of tradition, whereas I wish to show that speaking was a norm as well, and writing often a critical reflection on speech, and also a transformation of it….This book aims to broaden biblical hermeneutics by developing a sympathetic understanding of both the oral and the written word, and by studying ways in which one acts upon the other."

Concentrating on the written mode often ignores the fundamentally oral nature of communication in small societies. This is not to say that we should not assist people in their quest for "education" by providing schools that teach students how to read and write. However, statistics indicate that some 70% of the world's population represents people who are either illiterate or functionally illiterate (they read poorly and without good understanding). We should not ignore this important part of any society.

Furniss (2004) explores the context of oral communication and what is necessary and peculiar to it, regardless of whether literacy is absent, restricted or general. He is also concerned about the issue of persuasion as a dimension of much of oral communication so his book also examines the cultural parameters of oral communication and the social context that embeds the events. Furniss provides a model (pp. 168-9) that moves from the oral communicative moment (entailing listener and speaker location and experience, but built upon memory, text, recording) to the frames and speech event, which are ways of speaking (styles, genres, expectations, norms). His contexts for the speech event and frames are religious, political, economic and social (involving status, gender, class and group affiliations).

Stories, when translated, involve several additional challenges. MacDonald (compiler and editor, 2008) presents several techniques for story translation, including comments from tellers who have used bilingual telling of various kinds. A number of authors contribute with chapters on tandem telling, storytelling without translation, performing in a second language, presenting tellers of other languages, and nurturing tellers who have halting English skills.

USING STORIES FOR PEACE AND HEALING

Cross-cultural work inevitably leads to conflict. However, stories can often help establish reconciliation and understanding between groups, perhaps even their theological differences. Furniss (1996) asks if it is valid for expatriate missionaries to construct an African theology. His reply is affirmative if such a theology transmits the theological reflections and insights of the African people. For example, Jesus Christ continues to live among African people as the 'African Freedom Fighter,' 'Chief Diviner-Healer,' 'Chief Medicine Man,' 'Conqueror of Evil Powers,' 'Eldest Brother-Intercessor,' 'First-born Among Many Brethren,' 'Liberator,' 'Our Guest,' 'Protective Hero,' Proto-Ancestor,' and 'Victor Over Death'" (1996:15).

Elmer (1993) notes how storytellers have established this practice in Africa by using parables, legends, fables, proverbs, forms of role-play, allegory, and stories. [In Africa] "Storytelling is a refined and sophisticated art, part of an intricate oral tradition, used to instruct, socialize, confront and direct" (p.100).

We have mentioned Robert Coles, who saw stories as indispensible for a doctor's diagnosis. Traditional healers often see narratives as an aid to healing, for example, Mehl-Madrona (2007),

and Mellon (1992), who also discusses storytelling as a healing art and encourages readers to explore the wisdom that lies within such stories.

The Transformational Language Arts (TLA) is an organization and education program. It also underscores the value of stories in healing, identity and therapy. Mirriam-Goldberg and Janet Fallman have edited a book (2007) about the program.

Skill-Check

Discuss with someone:
- ❑   How the features and contributions from an oral society can be preserved
- ❑   How literates can complement storytellers who cannot yet read or write
- ❑   How literacy can complement storytelling
- ❑   How stories can further your organizations goals

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter I respond to some comments and objections that I have had about storytelling substituting for translation. I do this by summarizing each point, then follow with my observations and answers. Sanneh (1995) used this format to show how Bible translation positively influenced traditional cultures and languages.

Recall that my first interest in storytelling was because of the needs of small and endangered language groups in the PNG and the Pacific, groups that were unlikely to have the published Scriptures. I include comments that support both the work of storytelling and Scripture translation, emphasizing that the two should be complementary and not in competition. I base my comments and answers from an exchange I had with a senior SIL translation consultant in 2002. I have used the comments with his permission because I feel they represent general comments and criticisms I have had from a number of SIL members since I first proposed a storytelling model for small languages.

Objectives

> ➢ Alert storytellers to common objections and questions about Bible storytelling
> ➢ Discuss the problems and objections and suggest some answers
> ➢ Recognizing pitfalls of storytelling if it is seen as a substitute for translation in every case

COMMON OBJECTIONS

Comment One: Some have the understanding that storytelling is a "devil's advocate" presentation, pushing people to think through where the "limits" might be in V2025 by going overboard. [22] The idea seems to be that SIL is responsible to God to reach every language with the gospel by 2025, and that by using storytelling we are saying "Anything is better than nothing, and we have only 20+ years to get it all done. Here's a quick-and-dirty shortcut way." Some were shocked to hear that it was an honest proposal.

Answer One: When I was the Vice President of Academic Affairs for SIL International, their Conference passed a motion in 1999 that encapsulated the essence of V2025. As an international officer, I began to think about the goal (mainly in the context of the Pacific, which I know something about) and to take it seriously. The questions that came to me were:

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[22] Throughout, the abbreviation V2025 is the SIL International and Wycliffe International (and affiliated organizations) shorthand code for the vision of completing the entering of every language group that needs a translation project by the year 2025.

- What does it mean to "start" a program with every language that needs Bible translation?
- What does it mean to "need" a Bible translation program?
- Does this vision refer to "all" languages, even those that are very small?
- What have the results been to date with small languages in PNG and the Pacific?
- Based on past SIL history, what is the likelihood of starting translation programs in small languages?
- Are there other ways to initiate programs besides the traditional one of assigning additional people to a language?
- Could administrators assign a team to several languages?[23]
- Could administrators suggest an introductory program that relied initially entirely upon stories?
- Could teams initiate storytelling as a legitimate project?

I began to read about storytelling, coming across a vast amount of literature with which I was unfamiliar. Several points were immediately obvious to me and relevant to PNG and the Pacific:

- These are primarily oral cultures
- The small languages are endangered, that is, surrounded by social and economical factors that could lead the young people out of their traditional language areas
- Most of the populations will never read (with meaning) literature of any sophistication in their own languages, such as the New Testament

SIL had worked (at that time) in only six languages of less than 500 speakers in 45 years. I felt that using stories could help determine attitudes towards the vernacular and provide motivation to use it. People telling stories in their languages (particularly children) would also give some evidence of language viability, at least in that setting.

This led to further considerations, such as:

- How do people traditionally tell stories?
- The Gospel and Bible stories could be told in the same way
- How could we teach people to retell Bible stories?
- A workshop could help people use stories to examine:
- The main idea behind the stories
- How stories are constructed and could be checked
- The background and supplementary information needed in a story
- Adapting stories for different audiences
- The use of songs and drama as stories

Comment Two: Wycliffe and SIL members believe deeply that the Scripture is the accurate record of the Word of God; it informs us on salvation and it guides our daily lives to live in a way that pleases God. Without a print translation in the vernacular, how does one have any authority to go back to when opinions differ? Of course church evangelists, catechists, pastors, and Christians may play a part with their family members, neighbors and strangers and tell them about the joy of knowing the truth about God. However, when differences of instruction appear, where does one turn for 'the truth?' When differences appear, God told us to 'search the Scriptures.' That requires a hard copy, not just a story.

Answer Two: In PNG and many other countries there is already hard copy in the major languages. The hard copy that is being used and read (when this happens) in PNG is the Tok Pisin Bible. This is because:

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[23] Some publicity sources in SIL, Wycliffe, and The Seed Company call these a "cluster project." I proposed a similar strategy much earlier for PNG (Franklin 1975b), but it had little response or interest at the time.

- There was no vernacular Bibles or Scriptures at all in 95% of the small languages of PNG
- Even when people have the vernacular Bible, they use the Tok Pisin Scriptures
- A hard paper copy presumes and requires an infrastructure of literacy, printing, distribution and supervision that is difficult to pursue and sustain with small language groups
- The Tok Pisin Bible is the source text for the majority of the church members in small languages
- Tape-recording Tok Pisin Bible stories provides an adequate and working 'hard' copy

Comment Three: When God wanted the growing number of children of Israel to stay free from varying interpretations, He told Moses who carefully wrote down God's laws. Later, after years of neglect, what brought the Jews back to proper worship and honoring of God and knowing his laws was reading aloud the Word of God to all the people. That situation refreshed everyone's minds about the spiritual situation they were in and it told how they were to show their change of hearts. They did not go searching for the storyteller to retell what he had heard about God doing from Creation to that present day. Few were literate, percentage-wise, but the words of God were carefully copied and preserved. The written record was the norm.

Answer Three: There is a lot of debate about the original written word of God, and even when we accept a particular translation as accurately representing what God said, what happens?
- The commentaries provide a proliferation of interpretations
- There is continuing argument and debate over the smallest detail
- The written text makes it easy to argue, debate, quarrel over versions by those who are "educated"
- We tell our children stories about Daniel, but we don't read to them from the book of Daniel (unless it is simplified and abridged)
- The Bible stories have always been retold and passed on orally

Comment Four: Jesus quotes the written record as the agreed authority as to what God had said in the past. It was not Jesus' word against some other rabbi's. He did not quote the rabbis, but rather the written record. Preservation of the inspired record requires someone to pass it on in written form. The form by which people hear it has many possibilities, but there must be a written, unchangeable standard. If it is not in a group's own language, then "the few" too easily can misguide "the many," whether accidentally or purposely. Although Paul was a "letter writer" (Stirewalt 2003), he relied heavily upon the oral report of his emissaries when they delivered the letters.

Answer Four: Jesus did not always quote the OT verbatim and neither do other NT writers because:
- The words of the prophets were transported into the context that the NT author thought would serve best in his illustration or argument
- It took several centuries to sort out the books that were the "Word of God" and the criteria established, while agreed upon by church councils, does not come from the Bible itself
- When biblical authors quote Jesus they do not tell the same details in their stories
- If Jesus considered his stories unchangeable, would he not have written them down himself?
- When he sent out his disciples they had latitude to retell the stories according to situation and audience

Comment Five: Oral storytelling can too easily change the "original text." Again, that may be accidentally or purposefully. Why else would languages have veracity markers? A hearer wants to know just how reliable the words of the speaker are, how trustworthy the person is who is telling the story. This is especially critical for "new" information. Why should I trust it if I don't know or have trust in the individual telling me? A written text stands, regardless of the teller in

any one situation. Without a written record, on what grounds would Christians oppose homosexuality, especially by preachers of the gospel? Our western culture's situational ethics would have as much ground as any other view. BUT THERE IS A WRITTEN RECORD OF RIGHT AND WRONG!

Answer Five: There is no doubt in my mind that the Bible is the written record of God's right and wrong. However, I also believe that God speaks directly to his people in various ways, but by means of the Holy Spirit, correcting, convicting and enabling the hearers, especially if they do not have the written word. When we put the emphasis upon a certain text as the "original text" we must remember that:
- We are assisted in understanding the text because of punctuation, section headings, footnotes, pictures, indexes, maps, outlines, lexicons, concordances, commentaries and other supplementary help
- Scholars and publishers provide background information, that allows conventions such as paragraphs, italics, indenting, proper name capitals, footnotes, cross-references, and so on to help the readers
- The trustworthyness \ of the notes, dictionaries, commentaries, etc. vary
- Bible school or seminary education should not be necessary to understand the essential message of the Bible—at least John Wycliffe did not seem to think so! (See Hall 1983.)
- The Koran is "trustworthy" to the Muslims, the Book of Mormon to the Mormons, the Jehovah Witness Bible to their adherents, and so on. It doesn't matter that critical analyses such texts show problems-- people accept the texts as given from God

Comment Six: Although you gathered some small languages from around Amanab and Hauna and encouraged the course participants to tell Bible stories in their vernaculars, there is no one to verify how those Tok Pisin versions came out in the vernacular. (On the other hand, did the participants tell their Bible stories in vernacular to the other speakers of their language at the course?)

Answer Six: At Amanab, we had several speakers from each language and some speakers knew more than two languages. We could not tell, of course, if their renderings in the vernacular were completely accurate. (I sent their retold stories in the various languages to translators for comment, but received none.) The participants understood Tok Pisin well—certainly as well as most of the translation assistants that SIL translators commonly use. We could therefore assume that the retold versions would be as accurate as any first draft work, and that they will certainly sound more natural.

Comment Seven: In some areas of PNG evangelists have had a year, perhaps two years, of Tok Pisin Bible School, but key terms in Tok Pisin still are translated poorly. By working on the key terms in translation, the meaning of terms they may have been using Sunday after Sunday became clear.

Answer Seven: Searching and settling on key terms often takes a lot of time and revision. After over forty years, Kewa speakers are still using variants for some of the key terms. We know that in PNG languages the use of verbs or verbal variants is common and that abstract nominal categories are not, so that words like love, hope, faith are expressed as actions. I would think— but have no proof—that storytellers would naturally use event words and expressions and that the hearers would begin to understand what the key terms are conveying. Words express and represent ideas—the way people think; key terms do not show what an English or Greek word is supposed to mean in the vernacular.

An additional point is that Jesus explicated key terms like Kingdom of Heaven by stories. He said "The Kingdom of Heaven is like….," then expounded faith, repentance, forgiveness, and other key terms in the stories. He didn't explain what prayer means by discussing the semantic components of the term from Aramaic, Hebrew or Greek. Instead, he told stories about prayer and how to pray.

Comment Eight: Relationships take time and although the chronological storying method is excellent, it is only a start. When a person is staking his eternal destiny on what someone told him, first, it is the credibility and relationship with the person who told him, but then there has to eventually be an ultimate source that does not even rely on the person who told him. At first, it is the Scripture in some other language that the teller has access to, but eventually it has to be in the language of every believer. God has said that the game must be played by his rule book, so let's not plan to teach only the games' highlights and not give them the rule book in a language that touches their hearts.

Answer Eight: Nonstory tellers may perceive good storytelling as "quick and dirty," but gifted storytellers craft their stories carefully and understand clearly the audience impact the stories should have. Bible storytellers must know the Bible well enough to use those stories that are most helpful to culturally critical situations. This is not automatic and depends mostly upon the work of the PNG churches that have taught the storytellers. However, there are hundreds, even thousands, of faithful pastors and churches in PNG to draw from. I hope that stories in the vernacular will lead them from tape-recorded stories to written stories, even if the stories when written reach only a small percentage of the population. They may then want Scripture booklets of the kind Scripture Gift Mission puts out, then perhaps a translation program. That will require trained writers and translators, supervision and the infrastructure that I mentioned earlier. Realistically, we must say that this is not happening with very small languages and is unlikely to happen. I will not comment on comparing the Bible to a "rule book," except to say that seems to be one of the problems in PNG. You obey rules because you have to, not necessarily because you want to.

Comment Nine: The big strategy in Branch history was one-team-per-language-family―get going in one language of the group, then interest and draw into training MTT's of other key languages of that family. The work done by the first team could serve as a translation pattern for the other, related languages. Obviously, it hasn't worked that way, certainly not in PNG, if anywhere in SIL. For those clusters in which multiple NT's have been done it has taken the SIL translator as catalyst and guide to take what may or may not have been progressing at all and see to it that it reached the necessary end of a hard copy of all that had been drafted.

Answer Nine: I concluded four years as director in 1976 and I had pushed the language cluster approach (even publishing an article about it—Franklin 1975b). Although it has not worked, except for a few cases, this is partly because some SIL translators maintain that nationals cannot get the publication process completed without outside help, such as SIL needs to provide. I understand that position, but am not convinced it is without remedy. The cluster approach requires a technical infrastructure of computers, email, and supporting technology.

Comment Ten: Translators will keep on listening, watching and praying. We do not have to do translation the way we have always done it, but let us be sure new ways still reach the same desired ends. Perhaps there are different assumptions as to the desired ends of WBT/SIL's work.

Answer Ten: What are some of the desired ends that I have for storytelling? One encompasses, in particular, *truth* (L'Engle 1993) and in the process provides:
- A precursor to translation and literacy
- A concomitant approach with translation and literacy
- An explanation and amplification of translated parts of God's word
- An avenue for people to tell the stories they need and want in their own languages
- An avenue for using their common language, just as with traditional stories
- Listeners who get excited about the story, convicted by it, apply it, and want to retell it
- A desire for translation and literacy programs
- A cultural perspective for their Christian lives
- A new way for traditional fieldworkers to think

BANDWAGON OR BAND-AID

"Getting on the bandwagon" is an idiom that refers to people joining or showing an interest in something that is fashionable and even one in which they previously had no interest. They may do it to improve their image, because it is popular, or just because they like to play in the band and ride on its wagon. The phrase referred originally to the wagon at the head of a parade on which the band played.

A "band-aid" is a strip of adhesive tape with a piece of gauze in the middle and we can use it for superficial wounds. It is a simple way to fix what may turn out to be a complicated problem, with the realization that it may not be the best answer in the long run. We know that band-aids are not suitable for yaws but, short of anything else, we may have to plaster them over the sore. As an idiom a "band-aid approach" refers to something that is a quick and short term solution, but generally requires future attention.

There is nothing wrong with riding on a bandwagon, in fact there is often attention drawn to the people who ride on one. In my view, storytelling today is like a bandwagon: bystanders notice it far more than the horses or tractor pulling it.

For cuts and scratches, there is nothing like a band-aid. They can either cover the sore or cut until it heals, or provide temporary help until we can find something more appropriate. There are certain kinds or varieties of storytelling that are more like band-aids than bandwagons.

We need band-aids and bandwagons, but we also need hospitals and doctors. Doctors understand the basics of disease and know when simple hygiene is adequate and when hospitalization may be necessary to eradicate the problem. Providing band-aids may treat the symptoms, but not the root cause. Of course, for any disease it is important to consider the individuals and try to help them in any way possible. In the case of stories, the media is *not* the message—whether a we consider it a bandwagon approach or a remedial band-aid.

IN CONCLUSION

Thinking in a new way involves a paradigm shift, a shift of habits of the mind, in fact, and according to Margolis (1993), a particular and identifiable habit of mind. It turns out to be critical for the emergence and contagion of new ideas. There is evidence that what binds together a certain community (such as SIL) are certain habits of mind. However, they do not seem reasonable to someone who is not a member of the community and who therefore lacks certain critical experiences. Margolis reminds us that there is always some logical or conceptual distance between the new idea and what preceded it.

Storytelling and all of its associated technology and methodology is an attempt to help people understand that Jesus wants to establish his Kingdom among all people groups. The evidence of being a part of his Kingdom is how we live and relate the story to one another. The Bible tells us about God's Kingdom and personal stories are some degree of proof that we understand and exemplify it.

I concur with L'Engle (1993:103) who said that we do not need faith for facts, but we do need it for truth because every search for truth is a story. Myths last because they are true to the human condition. What stops people from reading is not TV as much as a fear of the story, which requires imagination and may be unexplainable. "The storyteller is a storyteller because the storyteller cares about truth, searching for truth, expressing truth, sharing truth."

Skill-Check

As a facilitator, pretend to be a "devil's advocate" and with a friend:

- ❑ Argue for storytelling as an alternative approach to translation (begin with small language groups)
- ❑ Argue that translation should be done without recourse to a storytelling approach

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Appendix A: Some Story Components[24]

Socio-Cultural Context

Worldview

Stories

Kind of	Purpose of	Parts of

Genre	Features	Personal	Community	Structure	Mode
Folklore	Imagination	Family	Values	Linguistic	Speaking
Myth	Memory	Emic	Solidarity	Pragmatics	Singing
Legend	Metaphor	Identity	Emic	Plot	Drama
Oral history	Preservation	Teller	Audience	Location	Epic
Parable	Motifs	Creativity	Constraints	B,M,&End	Poetry
Allegory	Embellish	Integrity	Checks	Recite	Visual

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[24] According to the the theory set forth in ***Dramatica*** (Phillips and Huntley 1996) a conceptually complete story (called there a Grand Argument Story) has these qualities: structure, dynamics, character, theme, plot and genre. All of these are included in the model I propose.

Appendix B: Workshops and Courses

This section briefly summarizes two pilot storytelling workshops held at Amanab in the Sandaun Province (October 15-22, 2002) and at Hauna, in the Sepik Province (December 8-12, 2003). I also outline some parts of the graduate course I have taught at the Graduate Institute of Linguistics (GIAL) for several years.

AMANAB WORKSHOP

The Amanab District is a part of the Sundaun Province in Papua New Guinea (PNG)—on the northern coast and bordering Papua (formerly Irian Jaya) to the west. According to the 2000 census, there were 185,741 in the Province and the Amanab Rural census division indicated 9,579 in the general vicinity. The linguistic situation consists primarily of language and culture groups that are quite small and diverse. The Province as a whole has a small per capital gross income, and Amanab would be in one of the poorer areas. A map prepared by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) lists twenty languages that SIL has been involved with, including the multi-translation language project near Aitape. There are over 100 languages in the Province, and by 2010, SILmembers had assisted with the completion of eight New Testaments.[25]

The "town" of Amanab consists of a small airstrip, the Christian Missions in Many Lands (CMML) station, a small "hospital," several additional government departments (public works, a primary school, a vocational school), and four churches (Seventh Day Adventists, Catholic, Charismatic, and the Brethren), as well as assorted other buildings. There are also two small trade stores located near the airstrip. At one time, a road ran from Amanab south to Green River, but this is now impassable. We held the course at the Amanab Mission Center, using their four classrooms, several "dorms," and a three-bedroom house.

Fifteen men participated in recording stories and several created songs (or already knew songs) that they appended to their stories. At the conclusion of the course, we gave each of the men tapes of their stories and songs, and later sent them a complete set of stories from their particular language. The four language groups represented were: 1) **Awai** (also called Amanab), 2) **Angor**, 3) **Glefe** (also called Kwomtari) and 4) **Dra**. The men were from three churches: CMML, Catholic (two men from the **Dra** language) and SDA (one man). The language of instruction and interacton was Tok Pisin, which demanded concentration due to dialect and idiom differences.

Fifteen participants gave a written assessment (in Tok Pisin) of the course, answering these questions:

- What parts of the course were most helpful?
- What more would you have liked to do in the course?

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[25] For the SIL map of the area see: http://www.sil.org/pacific/png/maps/Sandaun_small.jpg.

- How do you expect to use what you have learned?
- What can someone do in the future to help you?

Here are summaries of some of the answers:
- Stories are good because they are for everyone, not just the people who can read and write
- We need to learn and use Bible stories
- Stories have a main point that we need to make clear
- Bible stories, when told orally, have to be remembered
- Stories are good because they can be passed on from one generation to the next
- Stories are good because "we don't sit around reading our Bibles together, we talk," and Bible storytelling fits into the cultural patterns
- Stories should be told well and this requires practice
- We would like to record many more stories
- We would need tape recorders in some places that do not have them

HAUNA WORKSHOP

The second workshop took place at Hauna, in the East Sepik Province, from December 8―12, 2003. Four clans of about 700 live at Hauna: the *Waun, Soman, Auna* and *Mayo*—who are the owners of the land. The venue was the Sepik Christian Ministries and participants came from the AOG (Assemblies of God); PIM (Pacific Islands Ministries); and SCM (Sepik Christian Ministries) SIL has worked in about 30 languages in the Province and assisted in completing New Testaments in 18 languages.

Students—17 men and one woman were from the languages of **Swagop, Kubkain, Chenapian, Sepik-Iwam, Wario, Pei, Nein/Sinein** and **Usok**. The language groups, except for Sepik-Iwam, all had fewer than 360 speakers.

We conducted the workshop entirely in Tok Pisin. I began the first day with the story of Nathan and David from 2 Samuel as an illustration of how a story can have a powerful effect on the hearer, then used it as an illustration of how to tell a story.

I outlined the essential aspects of what we would use in every story, consisting of the:

❑ *As bilong story* (the purpose of the story)

❑ *Bun bilong story* (how the story was constructed)

❑ *Bilas bilong story* (things added to the story for effect and interest)

Comments from participants indicated that the course would help them:
- Better prepare Sunday School materials
- Compose songs from Bible texts
- Set out a story and dramatize it
- Be better prepared to tell a story to an audience
- Tell good stories

We recorded a wordlists in each of the languages, including some cultural data. For example, the ancestors of **Pei** were from Wainame in the mountain area and one man had gardens there now. He gave us a remnant of the old body part counting system: fingers, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder, ear, eye, with a cross over point at the nose. It turns out that **Usok** and **Wario** also have the system—a very old "Papuan" system.

FOLLOW-UP

On April 27—29, 2004, two SIL men visited several of the villages where participants in the Hauna workshop lived, including Hauna (Sepik Iwam), Chenapian (Senapian), Wogamus (Kubkain village), Walio (real name Wasiak), Pei, Nain, Sinen, and Usok.

The uniform reaction was that they want another course, but longer (at least two weeks) and they also want orthography help for writing stories. There was also a strong desire for cassette tape players to play the stories they had written and recorded on audio cassettes. Only Hauna has the equipment to play these stories.

Many of the participants had not retold their stories to anyone, although the man from Sinen told them to his family. Many people implied that if they had tape players, they would play them a lot for others to hear. The groups are at various stages of "readiness" for beginning literacy workshops such as an Alphabet Development Workshop. For **Usok, Sinen** and **Nain** this could be some time away, but **Kubkain** and **Chenapian** they are ready now to try orthography design. Running literacy and translation courses with people from these language groups will take much time, patience, and perseverance. The communities want literacy, so it is a matter for someone to design courses that are appropriate for their basic literacy needs. Finally, while expensive, transportation to the various remote groups is not impossible. The main cost for future courses will be plane tickets for staff from Wewak, and fuel for transportation on the Sepik and Leonard Shultze Rivers.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE WORKSHOPS

- ❑ **Storytelling as a subject and art**. No one had to be convinced about the value of retelling Bible stories, but the differences between simply retelling a story and restructuring it where necessary was a learning process. Most participants were not accomplished storytellers, but all showed a desire to improve their storytelling abilities.
- ❑ **Memorization**. It was difficult for most of the students to remember the stories. Some wanted to use notes or keep their Tok Pisin Bibles open, but I suggested that their audiences would, for the most part, simply listen to the stories, so they should as well, and learn not to take notes and read.
- ❑ **Enjoyment and articulation**. When I evaluated each of the fifteen storytellers, I told them what I looked for: enthusiasm about the story, good audience contact, the flow of the story (at least how it seemed to me), and so on. Participants recognized that storytelling for enjoyment was a positive value.
- ❑ **Group interaction**. Because of cultural patterns, group interaction along critical lines was virtually impossible. While hearing the stories, many men lowering their heads so they would not seem to be criticizing those from other areas.

- ❑ **Repetition by different writers**. Repeating the story from the perspective of the different writers of the Gospels or conflating the stories (as in the feeding of the 5000) helped the students focus on the main themes in the stories.
- ❑ **Repetition by different participants**. Repeating the story from the perspectives of the participants of the story was also helpful, e.g., telling the Good Samaritan story from the view of the participants, namely, the robber, the man who was robbed, the priest, the Levite, the Samaritan, the innkeeper, even the donkey. These perspectives were enjoyed and showed the speakers how they could adjust the stories according to audience, etc.
- ❑ **Drama**. Participants enjoyed dramatizing stories, but needed constraint so that there was not too much time spent on unimportant details (for example, the little boy with the three loaves and two fish argued with the disciple about taking his lunch from him).
- ❑ **Children's stories**. Telling stories to children was helpful. One memorable scene took place after a man told a particular story to the class. I then asked him to tell it to his son (who was about six or eight). He turned to his son, turned his back to me, and slowly and softly retold the story, to his son's obvious delight, using appropriate gestures and intonation.
- ❑ **The Big Idea**. Instead of recounting the Big Idea of a story, often the response was to give the story a name. For example, "This is a story about three different kinds of ground," instead of, "This is a story that shows that good ground always produces something good."
- ❑ **Animation**. Animation, such as the use of one's hands, etc., came naturally to only a few participants. Many looked out the windows as they told their story, looked at the ceiling, stood sideways, did not talk clearly, etc.
- ❑ **Imagination**. Participants caught on to the fact that they all had mental pictures that they formulated before or as they told the stories.
- ❑ **Meta-stories**. We discussed joining stories with similar themes, e.g., the story of the wise man who came to Jesus and asked him what he might do to have eternal life is similar to Nicodemus coming to Jesus at night and asking a similar question.
- ❑ **Creativity and spontaneity**. The participants were creative and strengthened their stories with songs. Spontaneity was related to knowing and practicing the stories.
- ❑ **Recording**. When recording the story, the participants appreciated the fact that they could sit at a table with a lapel mike. No one could see them shaking!

Storytelling accommodates the oral approach and allows the 70% of the population who cannot read (and may never) to understand clearly the stories from the Bible. People can become familiar with the stories before translation begins and can therefore identify with the translated materials more quickly. Furthermore, stories are natural renditions of the translated text, but are not subject to the same constraints because they do not claim to be translations. Storytelling gives purpose to a translation project because everyone (not simply the church pastors or leaders) can be involved in telling the Gospel story.

Storytelling should therefore be a part of the SIL translation strategy. I had thought that it should be foremost in small language groups that do not have any materials, but I now see that it can be effective in areas where translators have just started or completed a project. It is not "high-tech." Although we taped stories and used some videoing to show storytellers how they looked to an audience, storytelling does not rely on either technique to be useful. Of course, recording the

stories does provide some constraints that prevent wild divergence from a base story. It can also be an important part of language documentation.

THE GIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Oral Tradition and Literature (Language Development 5357) has had no official prerequisites, although some anthropology background is helpful.

The goal of the course was to enable students to outline and discuss basic aspects of storytelling and apply them (for more details see www.gial.edu).

Although storytelling is often for entertainment, it is also an art form and a disciplinary study.[26] This introductory storytelling course incorporates contributions from a variety of disciplines and topics that are particularly relevant to orality. I applied material for the course from linguistics, cultural anthropology, mythology, folklore and the performing arts, which it complements. We taught students to understand and support the oral dimensions of a society, even if those societies become literate and had translated materials available. The content of the course was practical as well as theoretical. The theoretical component explores the communicative dimensions of storytelling, such as the social and cultural knowledge necessary to interact with people of another culture and transmit information. The practical aspects involve the students telling and critiquing stories, both in class and in a public setting.

GENERAL COURSE CONTENT:

- ➢ Understanding storytelling in its cultural setting
- ➢ Understanding the perception and power of storytelling
- ➢ Exploring imagination and memory
- ➢ The theoretical nature of etic and emic
- ➢ Exploring myths and legends
- ➢ Understanding genres and story structures
- ➢ Understanding folklore and folklore analysis
- ➢ Examining themes, motifs and the 'Big Idea' in stories
- ➢ Recording oral histories
- ➢ Telling and re-telling stories of various types
- ➢ Developing performance according to audience

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[26] A discipline has content that contrasts with other areas of study, for example, storytelling contrasts with courses in literature, theatre, or rhetoric, but may include variations of these, as well as components of oral and mythological history. Although there are various studies that interact with storytelling, we are concerned with the oral aspects of communication in indigenous societies. For graduate courses and degrees offered in "storytelling", see, for example The Graduate Instute (www.LEARN.edu), which provides courses in Performance Arts, Literature and Linguistics, Mythology and Folklore, Cutlural Anthropology, and History and Sociology and East Tennessee State University for an M.A. in Reading/Storytelling (See: http://www.etsu.edu/stories/).

➢ Understanding how management can work through stories

➢ Using metaphors in stories

➢ Exploring semantics and pragmatics through a story

➢ Developing Bible storytelling

➢ Noting missiological methods of storytelling

➢ Exploring storytelling in drama, music, poetry and visual means

➢ Relating storytelling to components of fieldwork, e.g. language learning and analysis

➢ Understanding storytelling as a precursor and complement to literacy and translation

➢ Understanding how storytelling contributes to language documentation

METHODS FOR ASSESSING OUTCOMES

- Attendance (see requirements in student handbook)

- Class participation

- Presentations, quizzes, and written reports

- Graded assignments, including:

    o Crafting stories for class presentation

    o Crafting a story for public presentation

    o Conducting and recording an oral history interview

    o A paper of 12-15 pages (double spaced) on an approved orality topic

    o An annotated bibliography on 20 storytelling/orality topics, with no more than 5 from the Internet and each comprising 50-100 words

    o Three book or internet reports/critiques of from 150-250 words each (but not the same as those annotated)

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
- Guest speakers
- Class interaction and exercises
- Oral presentations
- Web and library research

GENERAL CONTENT OF MODULES

Generally, students' story presentations were each Friday and their public presentation was at a later time in the bimester.

1. The nature of storytelling and stories:

- o They are inherent aspects of culture
- o They are the way people learn and remember
- o They are helpful for memorization
- o They demonstrate aspects of worldview and values
- o They demonstrate replicable techniques
- o They are crucial to linguistic cognition
- o They help us get to know the storyteller
- o They contribute to all aspects of field work (e.g. language learning, culture learning, linguistic analysis, precursors to literacy and translation)

2. The value of stories

- o We can investigate aspects of moral development
- o We can explore how morals are placed in stories
- o We can discover values in family stories
- o We can discover values in folk stories
- o We can determine how much "history" is in stories
- o We can preserve aspects of oral tradition with stories
- o We can develop friends through stories
- o We can observe healing through stories

3. Imagination and storytelling

- o Images are related to stories
- o Images develop from stories
- o Accessing mental images in stories
- o Developing the emotional aspects of stories
- o Discussing the role of creativity in stories
- o Humor in stories
- o Theology and religious imagination
- o Crafting imaginative stories

4. Memory and stories

- o Symbols and story
- o Story cloth, and scarf
- o String figures, pictures and beads
- o Remembering
- o Games and stories
- o Crafting your own story

5. *Genres*

- Storytelling genres around the world
- Common themes and motifs
- Ballads, epics, and counting-out rhymes
- Narratives
- Types of stories
- Plays and drama
- Poetics

6. *Folklore (legends and myths)*

- The general terminology used in folklore
- Frames and scripts in folklore stories
- Some examples of folklore analysis
- Some examples from the Kewa language
- Some examples from PNG stories
- Worldview and values are reflected in folklore

7. *Recording oral histories*

- Reviewing the necessary equipment
- Process and techniques
- Metadata and archiving
- The interview process
- Release forms
- Use of non-print media
- Family stories
- Life cycle stories
- Legacy stories

8. *Metaphors and other figures of speech*

- Recognizing metaphors and blends
- Conceptual metaphors
- Compiling families of metaphors
- Biblical metaphors
- Metaphor and allegory
- Feelings and metaphorical images
- Using metaphors in stories
- Figures of speech
- Proverbs and metaphors

9. Story selection and audience

- o Selecting a story, site and audience
- o Story audiences determine style and selection
- o Children's stories
- o One story and many audiences
- o Culture and audience
- o Role selection and assignments
- o Practicum

10. Storytelling and performance

- o Crafting a story
- o Introducing events and characters
- o Tracking and describing plots
- o Developing the Big Idea
- o The BRIO (Brief Reminder of Image Outline) and the MIT (Most Important Thing)
- o Body language
- o Intonation and charisma
- o Props and media
- o Professional storytellers

11. Biblical storytelling

- o Facts and embellishment
- o Recitation
- o History and exegesis
- o Dramatization (visual and vocal)
- o Non-western approaches and accounts
- o Scripture use and misuse

12. Bible stories

- o Chronological Bible Storying
- o Textual recitation
- o Literal to free storytelling
- o Methods and perspectives of various agencies
- o Story selection and performances
- o Worldview and application

13. Songs and Drama

- o Creativity and the Arts
- o Songs and the Bible

- o Songs and stories
- o Poetry and stories
- o Drama and stories

14. *Story structures (oral and written)*

- o Participants and referents
- o Pragmatic parameters
- o Story focus
- o Style
- o Plot and structure
- o Themes
- o Characters, emotions and viewpoint

15. *Socialization and storytelling*

- o Children's stories
- o Social contexts for stories
- o Recording a child's story
- o Values and stories
- o Intergenerational stories

16. *Storytelling and management*

- o Conveying organizational history and values
- o Remembering our roots
- o Researching an organizational tradition
- o The legacy of stories in an organization
- o Appropriate use of technology

17. *Storytelling and literacy*

- o The tongue or the 'pen'?
- o What happens when a story is written
- o From oral to written in cultures
- o Visual literacy and storytelling
- o Animation and storytelling
- o Story shellbooks® and other materials

18. *Semantics, pragmatics and storytelling*

- o Lexical meanings
- o Determining story contexts
- o Parables and their meanings
- o Semantic components

- o Cultural hermeneutics and meaning.
- o Ethnosemantics
- o Ethnopragmatics

19. *Storytelling and translation*

- o How storytelling and translation differ
- o How storytelling and translation overlap
- o Checking stories for "accuracy"
- o Adding information to stories
- o Back translations and interpretations
- o Checking storytelling: some strategies

20. *Language viability, storytelling and application*

- o Storytelling and language viability
- o Storytelling as a research paradigm
- o Documentation and stories
- o Retelling by children (in particular) and viability
- o Reviewing storytelling in general
- o How and when will I do it—a plan for the future

21. *Review and wrap-up*

- o Review of the contents
- o What did I learn well?
- o What can I apply immediately?
- o Resources for storytelling
- o National Storytelling Network
- o Network of Biblical Storytelling, International
- o Universities with graduate programs
- o Links to resources on the web
- o Current issues in storytelling
- o Evaluation of the course

Appendix C: A Beginning Storytelling Glossary[27]

I list here a number of words or phrases that are important and helpful in defining aspects of storytelling. This collection is a preliminary reference guide—a starting point for students and facilitators.

Accent—a particular way of speaking in a story to give the listener some idea of a character's background, especially in reference to his/her language, e.g. 'Irish accent' (See also dialect).

Allegoresis—mental process by which we understand that something we hear or read calls into mind something from another work (Rabkin 2007).

Allegory—a kind of story where people and places are used figuratively to represent literal items, e.g. 'seed' for the 'Word of God'.

Alliteration—the repetition of the beginning sounds of words.

American myth—archetypical story where an out-group (depicting men with no law and survival skills, e.g. the American west and the frontier) threatens an in-group (typically a social institution) (Rabkin 2007).

Analogy—when similar traits between two different objects or events in a story are compared, e.g. 'innumerable people' compared with the 'sands of the sea'.

Animal tale—"Supernatural, marvelous, or moral feats are represented as within the capability of man through his own superior cleverness or by sheer good luck. There is no higher power involved or needed" (Powlison and Peckham 1997).

Antagonist—the character in a story who is opposed to the protagonist.

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[27] For sources see: Alter, 1981; Bauman, ed. 1992; Finnegan, 1992; Greene, 1996; Haven, 2007; Henry, 1995; Hiebert, 2008; Hirsch, 1987; Hirsch, Kett, and Trefil. 1988; Murdock, et al. 1987; Oring, ed. 1986; Philips and Huntley, 1996; Pickering, 1999; Powlison and Peckham, 1997; Rabkin, 2007; Richards, Platt and Weber, 1985; Ritchie, 2003; Rosenbluth, 1990; Rubin, 1995; Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman III, General eds. 1998; Saville-Troike, 1982; Sloane, ed. 2001; Webster's New World College Dictionary, 4th edition,. 2001; Wilder, 2001 [1976]. See also the web site at: http://www.virtualsalt.com/litterms.htm (last accessed February 2010).

Anthology—"a collection of stories by different authors" (Henry 1995:13).

Antonym—a word that is opposite in meaning from another, e.g. 'large' vs. 'small'.

Aphorism—a concise statement of a principle or truth (similar to an adage, which is often metaphorical).

Archetype—a universal category in a story that includes generic and idealized concepts or experiences that occur in life; it provides a pattern throughout the story, or set of stories, e.g. hunger, thirst, death, forces of nature, plants, animals, buildings, food, are archetypes.

Argument—framing a story or part of it in such a way that participants try to convince each other of their particular point of view—contrasted with common dialogue by Tannen (1998).

Attitude—how the speaker or hearer agrees or disagrees with any part of the story.

Author—the person telling or writing a story.

Autobiography—a written account of one's own story.

Background or Grounding—information that lies outside of the story itself, but which is necessary for interpreting the meaning of the story. (See also **Setting**).

Ballad—a song or poem that tells a story.

Biography—a story about a particular person.

Caricature—humorous or satirical exaggeration of some aspects of a person.

Chanting—a word or group of words is a story repeated over and over, often in poetic form.

Character—a person in a story or literary work.

Cliché—repetition of a word or phrase resulting in the loss of its original meaning.

Climax—high point of a story, usually near the end.

Coherence—the relationships between sentences in a story that link their meanings.

Comedy—a story that ends happily.

Communication act—the exchange of ideas or information between a speaker and the hearers in a story.

Communication—components include genre, topic, purpose or function, setting, participants, message form, message content, act sequence, rules for interaction, and norms of interpretation (Saville-Troike, 1982).

Communicative competence—the total set of knowledge and skills that speakers bring to a situation (Saville-Troike, 1982:23). These include linguistic knowledge (verbal, nonverbal, patterns, variants and their meaning according to situation), Interaction skills (perception, selection and interpretation, norms, strategies), cultural knowledge (social structure, values and attitudes, cognitive map/schema, enculturation processes).

Communicative function—includes categories that are expressive (feelings), directive (requests or demands), poetic (aesthetic), phatic (empathy and solidarity), and metalinguistic (references to language itself).

Concept—the general idea or meaning that a story or part of it forms in a person's mind.

Connotation—the emotional attitudes that someone has about a particular word or phrase.

Consequence—the result of failing to achieve a goal in the story.

Convention—the widespread acceptance of some form or function.

Counting-out rhyme—sayings that decide which child will have a particular role in an activity.

Couplet—a pair of words that rhyme in sentences in a verse.

Creative—expressing a story in such a way that it evokes emotion and feeling in the hearers.

Culture myth—include accounts of a culture hero and mythical explanations of culture traits.

Culture—the set of beliefs, habits and attitudes that are expressed by people in a story.

Cycle—a series of events repeated in a story, e.g. the familiar one, two, three times that an event happens in a story.

Dance—culturally prescribed movements that express excitement and happiness in a story; people usually dance in twos, fours and groups.

Debate—in a story, people who express opposing points of view.

Denotation—the central or core meaning of a word in a story.

Dénouement—the part that comes after the climax, the resolution to the story.

Dialect—the particular variety of speech represented in a story, e.g. a 'Southern dialect'.

Dialogue—conversation between characters in a story.

Diegesis—conversation between characters in a story as reported by the narrator.

Dilemma—the point in a story where the character decides to change or not

Direct speech—what a person in a story is reported as actually saying.

Discourse—a general term for a story; it usually teaches or explains something. Finnegan (1992:14) says the term is used as an umbrella to cover all forms of verbal communication in a particular society.

Domain—an area of the culture or society where a particular variety of speech is used, e.g. the 'rap culture domain' of a story.

Double-entendre—a word or expression that can be understood in two different ways.

Drama—a story acted out by characters.

Dramatis personae—the cast of characters in a story.

Elements—includes how people express ideas, the dimensions of verbal expression, the interpretation of researchers, separating verbal from other communication forms, divorcing oral texts from writing, and developing a vocabulary to deal with these issues (Finnegan 1992).

Emic—a story that is domestic, mono-cultural, structurally derived, relative, contrastive in reference to a system, and discovered by the analyst. (See Pike 1967a:37-40 for discussion and amplification.)

Empathize—being able to imagine or share the feelings of someone in the story.

Epic—a long, narrative poem that forms a story, with the emphasis on the heroic.

Epigram—short and often humorous statement that is presented as a general truth.

Epilogue—the follow-up to a story.

Episode—dramatized incident in a story without any break in it.

Episodic plot—tying a story's scenes and events together in a simple chronology.

Essay—a short story on one subject that shows the author's point of view.

Ethnography—a descriptive study of a particular group of people, often written in story form.

Ethnosemantics—folk descriptions of what things mean and how they are related.

Etic—a story that is alien, cross-cultural, and classified in advance by a typological grid. It is somewhat absolute, often measurable, and created by the outsider as analyst. (See Pike 1967a:37-40 for discussion.)

Euphemism—a word that sounds nice and takes the place of one that doesn't sound nice.

Exposition—summary details that provide background information.

Fable—a brief story that teaches a moral or lesson; it often involves animals that talk.

Fairy tale/story—generally ancient make-belief stories that embody a lesson; often elves, fairies, dwarfs and leprechauns appear in the story. "The supernatural, marvelous, and moral are treated as belonging to a make-believe or fantasy world. May be used either to reinforce or undermine moral values according to manner or presentation" (Powlison and Peckham 1997).

False memories—something that did not happen, but which has been referred to and reinforced so often that the person 'remembers' that he/she took part in it and makes a story about it.

Fantasy—the author tells something that is unreal and asks the audience to believe in it.

Farce—bizarre happenings that are also comical.

Feedback—any information from the hearer that signals an understanding or misunderstanding about the story; commonly facial expressions are used.

Figures of speech—semantic categories of non-literal meanings, such as simile, metaphor, metonymy, that are used for special effects in a story.

Flashback—information that happened before the story began.

Flashforward—information revealing an event that has not yet happened in the story.

Folklife—includes stories that employ dimensions from a number of fields: verbal art, unwritten traditions, and folklifes.

Folklore—includes manners, customs, observances, superstitions, ballads, proverbs, and so on from past traditions (Bauman 1992:29). Oring (1986:18) considers folklore an 'orientation' that includes what is communal, common, informal, marginal, personal, traditional, aesthetic, and ideological.

Foreshadowing—to represent or prefigure something before it happens in a story, e.g. introducing a character or object that will play a prominent part in the story at a later time.

Forewarning—an indication in the story that the consequences are becoming imminent.

Formal speech—when the speaker is careful to give 'accepted' or 'educational' pronunciation and grammar.

Frames—in a story a group of actions in which one event, action, or actor is (potentially) substituted.

Gambit—when a speaker uses a word or phrase to signal an opinion, e.g. 'From my point of view…'

Genre—speech types that a community considers as the same; generally genre refer to literary categories, such as romance, history, western, detective, and so on. There are basic or generic categories, but various sub-types as well (such as humor, ritual, urban legend, insult, gossip, argument, with each defined on the basis function and performance).

Gossip—informal stories about other people that include their private affairs.

Heuristic—using a story as a teaching procedure so that the hearer will personally discover something.

Humorous tale—"The supernatural, marvelous, moral socially proper, etc., are held up to ridicule or disparaged in a humorous way; or social political, religious, verbal ambiguities, or patently improbable or impossible doings are reported for their entertainment or shock value" (Powlison and Peckham 1997).

Icon—a replica, such as a painting or picture, that has a special meaning in the story.

Idiom—a group of words that when used together have a different meaning than each of them separately.

Image—any object in a story that the teller or hearer can picture from their experiences and that usually evokes an emotional response.

Imagination—an aesthetic experience that allows the speaker or hearer to believe that something is happening, even if they are not physically experiencing it.

Implication—the relationship between two or more items in a story, e.g. introducing a giant implies strength.

Inner speech—speech for oneself, that is within one's own mind.

Insult—saying something or doing something that deliberately offends someone.

Interdiction—a warning or statement in the story for the purpose of changing the direction of the character or event.

Interlocutors—the people who are actually involved in conversation in the story.

Irony—discrepancy between what really is going on and what should be going on.

Jargon—a special contrived language used by a particular group.

Jump tale—a story with an unexpected ending that makes the hearer "jump" or be afraid.

Lampoon—a deliberate and humorous attack on a famous person or story.

Language—the system of structured human communication, e.g. the English language.

Legend—embodies aspects of history, with presumed cultural heroes and genealogies traditionally passed down, in the same way as myths; (It is often difficult for an outsider to distinguish between a myth and a legend.) "The supernatural is acknowledged and credited with specific unusual happenings related to a specific person or locality. It explains or validates some person, place, or object, or cautions about or expresses premonition of danger, death, other-worldly spirits, teaching the danger of the numinous" (Powlison and Peckham 1997).

Lesson plan—the list of objectives that a teacher has and the activities and materials necessary to achieve them.

Lexical field—an organized set of words and expression, e.g. the set of kinship terms used in a story.

Lexicon—the words of a language, as contrasted to the grammar of a language.

Limerick—humorous five line verse.

Literate—the ability to read and write in a language.

Lyric—a story, such as a psalm, hymn, or song used for special occasions.

Main character—tee central person that acts as the focus of the story.

Malapropism—the accidental but humorous substitution of one word for a similar sounding one, e.g., prostate for prostrate.

Maxim—a general, common sense statement that is proverbial in nature. (See **Proverb**.)

Memorize—the conscious process of committing a story to memory; rote memory, i.e. repeating verbatim, is one common method.

Memory—the capacity to think about or recall something that happened in a past story; memory is often referred to as 'short term' and 'long term'.

Metaphor—an implied comparison, e.g. an animal with recognized bad habits compared to those of a particular person.

Metonymy—a figure in which a part of something stands for the whole, e.g. the 'head' to represent someone who is in charge of everyone else.

Mimesis—when the narrator adds something to the verbal part of the story to help the hearer captivate the emotions of the act and be convinced of its reality.

Mnemonic system—a cultural way of remembering, such as visual, rote, or using objects.

Monologue—one character giving a long speech.

Morality tale—To uphold or teach ethics and morality in conjunction with or apart from a religious base or belief in the supernatural"(Powlison and Peckham 1997).

Motif—a particular theme or pattern that is repeated throughout a story, for example, conflict and resolution, reversal (rags to riches), heroic (and often fictional) people, battle stories, love stories, and so on.

Myth—incorporates cultural viewpoints and ideology into a story and gives an interpretation to the nature of both, often making a division between the so-called natural and supernatural world. Myths may be essentially true stories that reveal archetypes found in folklore and other types of stories. "The supernatural is acknowledged and credited with the origin (in a bygone era) of the cosmos as it was in a former state or as it is now. It is explanatory, validational, and often instructional in religious values" (Powlison and Peckham 1997).

Mythological epochs—refer to specific ages, e.g. the "Golden Age", "Age of the gods", "Age of animals" (Powlison and Peckham 1997).

Narrative medicine— insiders who use stories as healing agents.

Narrative—a story that is an account of some event or experience. (See **Stories**.)

Narrator—the person who relates a story, not necessarily his/her own.

Novella—a story with a compact or pointed plot.

Numskull tale—" A group or groups assumed by the performer and/or audience to be of lower status than themselves [and] is depicted as responding irrationally to a variety of circumstances. The purpose is to put down the other group by innuendo and slur" (Powlison and Peckham 1997).

Oral history—a collection of memories and personal stories, usually gained through recorded answers to specific questions, following accepted standards. "Memory is the core of oral history, from which meaning can be extracted and preserved." (Ritchie 2003:19.)

Oral literature—includes proverbs, sayings, riddles, stories, myths, fables, plays, songs, prayers, homilies, sermons, personal testimonies, dreams and cultural symbols. According to Finnegan (1992), it emphasizes the literary or artistic aspect, allows for creativity and allows differentiation within a culture and with other cultures. It has parallels with literature, provides a comparative term, but carries its own insights and problems.

Oral poetry—poetry that is known and recited as a story, but has never been written down.

Orality—the study and function of spoken language.

Oxymoron—when two words or phrases seem to contradict each other (e.g. "military intelligence").

Parable—a kind of story that teaches by means of hidden meanings, often spoken in religious contexts.

Paraphrase—expressing a particular word or phrase using other words or phrases while retaining the same meaning.

Parody—a story whose style is created as a deliberate imitation of another well-known style.

Performance criticism— a new method of biblical criticism that analyzes the performance event as the site of interpretation, including the dynamics of performance, the influence of place and circumstance, and the experience of an audience. It includes historical criticism, narrative criticism, reader-response criticism, rhetorical criticism, orality criticism, social science criticism, speech-act theory, discourse analysis, and ideological criticism.

Performance—(a) rhetorical and aesthetic techniques of delivery, as well as audience and implies a rejection of the counter-term 'text' (Finnegan 1992); (b) telling a story before an audience using their acquired knowledge about the subject.

Periphrasis—rhetorical term that refers to a roundabout way of speaking in a story.

Personification—granting non-humans the ability to speak and think in a story.

Phenomenology—philosophical approach representing intensional acts of the consciousness, i.e. focusing on some particular aspect of a story.

Plot—the way a story is planned or developed.

Poetic justice—where virtue is rewarded and vice or wrong doing is punished.

Poetics— historical tales and stories that composers arrange by using "unusual" phonological (e.g. chanting) and semantic features.

Poetry—language that typically uses patterns of meter and rhyme in a story. Some kinds are ballad, elegy (mournful), epic, lyric, ode, and sonnet.

Polemic—a story with controversial overtones.

Politeness—using appropriate cultural manners, such as social or physical distance, when telling a story.

Polysemy—a word that has two or more meanings, e.g. 'head' of a person and 'head' of the class.

Pragmatic—the contextual, non-textual, aspects of a story, i.e. how the setting and context helps define the meaning of the story.

Presupposition—what the speaker assumes that the hearer already knows about the story.

Prominence—the most important or featured idea or character in a story.

Propositions—statements or declarations that are assumed to be true.

Protagonist—the one who causes something to happen to the antagonist.

Prose—ordinary writing in a story.

Proverb—a short cultural saying about something in one's experience; it is easily remembered and important.

Proxemics—the physical distance between people during a story.

Pun—a humorous substitution of words.

Recitation—retelling a story that has been committed to memory.

Register—a variety of speech used by a particular group of people with the same interests, e.g. the speech used among missionaries.

Rhetoric—a story or talk that impresses people because of the fine words and expressions used; generally refers to written style.

Rhyme—similarity in sounds between words.

Riddle—a short but mystifying question posed as a problem to solve.

Ritual—a series of actions that people regularly carried out; often in a religious story or setting.

Role—the part taken by a person in a story, e.g. teacher, trickster, etc.

Satire—an element of exaggerated humor in a story to point out someone's foolishness or bad character.

Schema—the setting of a story and its episodes, i.e. the events that take place in a coherent fashion. (See also **Script**.)

Scripts—a set of meaningful actions that is regularly repeated by the actor(s) in a story.

Semantics—systems of meaning for lexical and grammatical items that are based on patterns and context.

Setting—the time and place in which the story takes place.

Simile—the same as metaphor, but with literal comparative words, such as 'like' or 'as' are added.

Speech act—utterances that are understood based on either their literal or propositional (locutionary) meaning or those understood by means of the effect they have on the hearer (illocutionary force).

Stereotype—a fixed set of characteristics that people believe represent someone else or some other group.

Stories—not everything is a story, but a common set of attributes lead Haven (2007:79-80) to this definition: "A detailed, character-based narration of a character's struggles to overcome obstacles and reach an important goal". Haven claims that dictionary definitions of story and plot are virtually the same because we "have no other word than story for the subcategories of story" (p. 19). Words such as tale, fable, parable, legend, epic and so on, are a generic type of speech with many subtypes, depending on their social function and emic meanings. Stories may be myths or legends, proverbs and riddles, and within these subtypes other kinds occur, such as hidden speech, secrets, insults, speech acts, and so on. These same sub-types can occur within other genres, including songs and plays.

Storyform—"the structural and dynamic skeleton of a story" (Phillips and Huntley 1996:358).

Storyteller—the person who relates or tells the story.

Storytelling—"By 'storytelling,' I mean simply the telling of anecdotes, happenings, the events of a person's life" (Rosenbluth 1990:6-7).

Structure—"The general framework into which the plot of a work [story] is organized" (Henry 1995:280).

Style—the variation that a speaker gives to a person in a story, e.g. casual or formal are two types. (See also **Register**.)

Subplot—a separate, but not independent part, of a story.

Symbol—an object or name that is used to stand for something else.

Synonym—a word that has nearly the same meaning as another, e.g. 'lie' and 'fabricate'.

Syntax—how words combine in sentences.

Tale—a story that usually involves some kind of adventure.

Tall tale—an exaggerated story that is about extraordinary things.

Taxonomy—classification of items into groups, sets, classes, or sub-varieties of them. A taxonomy of speech types might include lectures, sermons, debates, and so on.

Text—a divisible part of spoken or written language. (See also **Discourse**)

Theme—the main idea or subject in a story.

Theopoetic—the interplay of Biblical or Bible-based language with poetry (Wilder, 2001).

Topic—the part of a story that names the main person or idea that is discussed.

Totemic myth—a story that explains the origins of a clan or another group of people by tracing it back to a certain plant or animal.

Tragedy—a story where the main character meets with disaster.

Trickster tale—a traditional story that has a trickster as the main character, e.g. Brer Rabbit. "Supernatural, marvelous, or obscene feats presented as the activities of culture heroes, transformers, or tricksters for the purpose of explaining the facts of life as they are and showing the consequences of intelligent, immoral, or irrational behavior" (Powlison and Peckham 1997).

Trope—a classical and fundamental distinction used for figures of speech that involve embellishment in stories.

Type scene—an elaborate set of tacit agreements between the teller and the audience about the story (Alter 1981)

Type—a character in a story who represents a particular social class.

Urban legend—an unsubstantiated belief that becomes a story and is passed along among people.

Verbal art—includes folktales, myths, legends, proverbs, riddles, even songs and poems, as well as tongue twisters. Sometimes the term folklore includes these as well. (Finnegan 1992)

Verse—using language in a way that is different from ordinary speech.

Work song—a genre of folk song associated with manual labor.

Worldview—our belief system, which is influenced by the past and present levels of culture, including the intersection of surface and core features. However, "We must realize that ultimately meaning in our lives is found not in an understanding of our human structures, but in human stories," (Hiebert 2008:31).

Index