

Jolanta Galecka

Uniwersytet Gdański

E-mail: jolanta01@msn.com

ORCID: 0000-0003-1525-8912

Combining Storytelling with the Performing Arts of Natya Shastra to Support Comprehensive Development of Children: Reflections from India and International Comparisons*

Summary

There are multiple different narrative modes in the Indian tradition with stories told mainly through performances and the storyteller often seen as a teacher. Education in India often has to cater to diverse needs, respond to extreme challenges resulting – among others – from multiplicity of languages and cultures and lack of students' motivation, which are present in many other countries. I observed the endeavours of a non-profit organisation Katha in its real environment in New Delhi. I gathered the data on Katha's activities using mostly narrative inquiry focusing on Katha's specific categories which in turn revealed Katha's narrative approach – the most important initiatives are underpinned by the stories and the desire to allow children to take joy from reading them. I describe some of the similarities I observed in other educational projects in Brazil and Colombia in order to show their interconnectedness, the integration of the teaching and learning processes with stories, the holism of the endeavours, where all the activities are governed by the common goal of relevancy to the lives of the children and emotions forming an essential part of classroom activities. The observations made me realise that besides the teacher training and curriculum curation it was the engagement of the community that was the core of the success of Katha's activities enabled by the stories and storytelling.

Keywords: StoryPedagogy, stories in education, storytelling, education in India, Katha, Natya Shastra

* The publication was financed by the University of Warsaw.

Introduction – the study background and rationale

Though I noticed that majority of inspirations and solutions presented at educational conferences were coming from Western countries, I was able to observe intriguing educational initiatives elsewhere, especially during my work in one of publishing companies in Poland. Some of the best ones – like project GENTE (Ginásio Experimental de Novas Tecnologias Educacionais) in the slums of Rocinha (Rio de Janeiro) or the library project in the slums of Medellin (Colombia) – occurred in impoverished areas. When I received the invitation from Ms Geeta Dharmarajan¹ – the founder of a non-profit organisation Katha – to come over and volunteer for some time, I did not think twice. I learnt that education in India had to cater to diverse needs, respond to extreme challenges resulting – among others – from multiplicity of languages and cultures and lack of students' motivation. These challenges are present in Western countries as well and with the growing cultural diversification in the European countries I thought we might learn from Katha's practices.

When I first looked up Katha's website (Katha, n.d.)², I thought it was a publishing house in which content was of high importance. I soon realised that Katha was much more than that but without its own books Katha wouldn't be able to do all it has been doing for the past 33 years³ as they gave Katha the freedom of designing books⁴ they found "good" to shape children's "souls", to paraphrase Socrates' words (Plato, ca. 370 BCE/2004). Katha occupies itself with multiple initiatives directed mostly towards women and children from the poorest neighbourhoods which are very diverse. Most Katha's activities take place in the slums and people who live there come from all over the country, bringing with themselves different perspectives, needs and knowledge. The problems Katha deals with are often basic in nature: gender and economic

¹ Geeta Dharmarajan is an award-winning writer, editor, social entrepreneur and educationist, with over 48 published books, more than 450 articles and over 40 years of professional experience, having served at the India Today Group of Companies, The University of Pennsylvania and INTACH, before Katha. She conceptualised and developed Katha's StoryPedagogy and its curriculum that is the bedrock for all Katha reading and education programmes ("Leadership," n.d.).

² Stating "Where content is Queen".

³ Thanks to the support of Katha's donors and partners that cooperate with Katha, which may also taint the reports drafted for marketing rather than scientific purposes ("Partners," n.d.).

⁴ Similarly Rosana Mont'Alverne in Brazil founded a cultural institute and a publishing house, with multiple storytelling projects (Aletria, n.d.).

disparities, lack of access to education or equal opportunities and difficult living conditions with scarcity of safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene and they need to be taken into account together with education⁵. And even if these issues seem not applicable in the developed countries at first glance, they are all human-centric, therefore Katha's holistic approach can be generalised to the problems schools and students face in other countries (even United States, see: Aura et al., 2021). Many of the projects I visited in the impoverished areas in Brazil or Colombia had similar needs (see: Fundação Telefônica Vivo, 2016), though none of them catered to them so holistically, often concentrating on the educational aspects mostly (Gałęcka, 2021b; Castrechini Fernandes Franieck et al., 2014). The COVID-19 pandemic showed how important students' well-being, relations and human contact are in education and how difficult it is to sustain students' attention⁶. Still one might ask how education from impoverished slums can be applied in any way to the so called modern, developed countries. For one, Katha has a different perspective on what poverty means. They recognise SPICE poverties: social, personal, intellectual, cultural and environmental⁷, which they approach both separately and in regards to all the others. There are very few countries I could think of that could claim none of those poverties existing and Poland is definitely not one of them.

Observing Katha's complex and holistic practices I started to notice certain similarities with other projects I had seen before so I decided to gather as much data as possible to prepare an intrinsic case study (Stake, 2005). I took a pragmatic approach and concentrated on the practical implications of the research, using methods and techniques that best served my research needs (Strumińska & Kołodkiewicz, 2012). The few months that I had to understand all the intricacies of Katha's work were still not enough to grasp all the projects. Katha can best be described through its efforts, programmes and projects it

⁵ Education in India is handled by multiple NGOs that the government willingly relies on (EducationWorld, 2016). Their work often combines social and health services with education, literacy with happy environment or technology implementation (see Pratham, n.d. or Swamy, 2021).

⁶ These were repeating themes in the interviews I conducted with teachers in Poland.

⁷ They are connected to the same strengths or skills recognised as given by formal education. It was developed by Geeta Dharmarajan. The catalogue resembles varied dimensions of poverty identified by the World Bank, Habitat for Humanity or Sida (Sida, 2002) but mostly those provided by Wess Stafford (Compassion International, n.d.), which is rather coincidental as SPICE was developed in the early stages of Katha.

undertakes. However the amount of activities, constantly adapted models and revised approaches made it difficult for me to build a simple, unified model I could describe within a single article. At the same time it was quite easy to establish what Katha's main approach was – its uniqueness lies in the multiplicity of endeavours being interconnected with the original goal of its founder: the desire for children to read for joy and meaning, as everything Katha does is directed towards the reading, the love of reading and the ability to read for enjoyment. So, though the COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible to finish the case study as planned, I gathered enough data to share the core of Katha's practice, hoping that this example may one day be useful for more generic implementations in approaching educational projects in multicultural environments (Gerring, 2017).

Stories, storytelling and their power in education

Kathá is a form of narrative (Kapoor, 1992)⁸ classified as well as “that which is true” (Chatterji, 1986, p. 95) and in the rich Indian tradition it is one of the many story categories and storytelling styles, narrating ancient Sanskrit texts, making them understandable for the audience⁹. There are multiple different narrative modes in the Indian tradition (Ayyappa Paniker, 2003; Ramachandran, 2017). Despite storytelling being rich and ancient and Indian stories having an “influence on the fictional imagination of the west”¹⁰, “comparatively little has been written about the narrative discourse in Indian books” (Ayyappa Paniker, 2003, p. 4, p. 2).

“The tendency to narrativise is perhaps inherent in every human being living in an interactive social group, and the stringing together of events is a natural psychological process” (Ayyappa Paniker, 2003, p. 18). Humans have been telling stories “to communicate knowledge and experience in social contexts” since “they developed the capacity of speech” (Zipes, 2012, p. 2) as

⁸ Raja Bhoja enumerated at least 24 categories of kathá in *Sringara Prakasa* in 11th century (Kapoor, 1992, p. 86).

⁹ And within Katha there are many styles, e.g. Kathakalakshepa that literally means “narrating the stories of ancient text in a comprehensive manner to the common people.” (All Good Tales, n.d.); see Kathakalakshepa (n.d.) for more types of storytelling styles.

¹⁰ *Kathasaritsagara* (Ocean of Stories) (Ayyappa Paniker, 2003, p. 58) or *Panchatantra* influenced the world literature (Chandiramani, 1991).

we are “story-telling animals” (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 216) and “each human life tells its story” (Arendt, 1998, p. 184). Apparently because “(w)e seem to have no other way of describing ‘lived time’ save in the form of a narrative” (Bruner, 2004, p. 692). Stories are also “meant to give order to human experience” (Fisher, 1984, p. 6) since narratives bring self-understanding, the explanation of the “who” (Arendt, 1998; Ricoeur, 1994), self-constancy (Ricoeur, 1990) and the benefits of “self-confrontation” (Kirkwood, 1983, p. 67) to human life and experiences and they are our best tool to build one’s identity with personal and narrative (Ricoeur, 1990) as “(we) consider human lives to be more readable when they have been interpreted in terms of the stories that people tell about them” (Ricoeur, 1994, p. 114). Stories also help conceptualise human actions and give them a certain “order” (MacIntyre, 1984). “(S)stories function as a powerful tool for thinking” (Herman et al., 2005, p. 349) and “cognition is fostered” through language and story (Zipes, 2012). “Telling a story (...) is deploying an imaginary space for thought experiments in which moral judgment operates in a hypothetical mode” (Ricoeur, 1994, p. 170). Narratives capture our mental processes integrating our “attention, imagery and feelings” (Green & Brock, 2000, p. 701).

Stories help build relationships as the act of storytelling often recreates a parent-child relationship between speaker and listener (Kirkwood, 1983) and can enable a dialogue with community (Alonso & Murgia, 2018). Storytelling often induces deep listening¹¹ that forms an in-depth relationship between the listener and the teller but also between the listener and the story – its characters, actions, values, emotions and beliefs. Sharing stories can evoke empathy and our prosocial behaviour (Johnson, 2012), and allow people to gain insight into themselves (Goodson & Gill, 2014). Storytelling can also have health benefits, increasing oxytocin and decreasing cortisol (Brockington, 2021) and can even be used for therapy (Barreto & Grandesso, 2010).

Stories provide a holistic and emotional experience and dialogic encounters, bringing understanding of the self and providing “the major link between our own sense of self and our sense of others in the social world around us” (Bruner, 1986, p. 69) through widening of our horizons¹². They have transformative potential, opening people up to invite the unknown. “(T)he

¹¹ Which is similar to the demands of hermeneutical experience which “has its own rigor: that of uninterrupted listening” (Gadamer, 2004, p. 461).

¹² Gadamer believed hermeneutical experience to surpass world travelling and immersion in a foreign language when it comes to widening one’s horizons and “thus enriching its world by a whole new and deeper dimension.” (Gadamer, 2004, pp. 391–392).

major function of language is to manipulate the attention of other persons – that is, to induce them to take a certain perspective on a phenomenon” (Tomasello, 1999, p. 151).

Reading Gergen, Gadamer, Ricoeur, Arendt, MacIntyre and others allows us to see that there is a deep relationship between life and narrative, with the narrative providing some sort of perspective, bringing structure, order, meaning and a better understanding of one’s life. Such a powerful tool should have a prominent place in education (Lucarevski, 2018). Especially when you take into account the characteristics of narrative synthesised by Kenneth Gergen (2005)¹³ that allow for “a sense of coherence and direction in life events. Life acquires meaning and happenings are suffused with significance” (p. 4). A story can be vague and broad enough to accommodate a lot of needs, goals and environmental conditions. This allows for swift changes, quick adjustments and quite an easy yet effective training of the new (teaching) recruits regardless of their background. A prerequisite however is a solid scaffolding that holds everything in place, allowing for the stories to fill the gaps, whatever they might be in a particular moment, place and condition. For an egalitarian and mass education it seems to be a perfect fit.

The need for narrative approaches in education or their usefulness is not a new phenomenon. It’s been pointed out that a “careful analysis of the teacher-student relationship at any level, inside or outside the school, reveals its fundamentally narrative character.” (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 71), “(t)he relationship between the teacher and the learner is the key to narrative learning” and “(i)n facilitating narrative learning, the teacher and the learner both share their understanding, knowledge, worldviews, values and personal experiences” (Goodson & Gill, 2011, pp. 123–124). “(T)he activity of storytelling has an impact on participants’ interpersonal relationships, empathy, and sense of ‘connectedness’ in the classroom. Therefore, telling stories aloud (...) needs to have primacy in classrooms” (Mello, 2001, p. 12). Storytelling can “be used as an effective teaching tool in a language classroom” (Mokhtar et al., 2011, p. 163). Storytelling can also “help convey science by engaging people’s imagination and emotions.” (Martinez-Conde et al., 2019, pp. 82–85). They also provide a “safe and nonthreatening” world (Nell, 2002).

¹³ An “established goal”, “outcome of significance” or “valued endpoint”, events selected that are relevant to that endpoint and “typically placed in an ordered arrangement” and characters typically possessing “a continuous or coherent identity across time”, providing an explanation “by selecting events that by common standards are causally linked” and employing “signals to indicate a beginning and ending” (Gergen, 2005, pp. 2–4).

Jerome Bruner's (1986) narrative mode of thinking, structured "in the mode of story and narrative" (p. 88), assigning meaning to our experiences, is based on common knowledge and stories. This mode being equal and complementary to the paradigmatic mode, is however, marginalised at schools (Bruner, 1986). Bruner was hardly alone in this observation. Freire (1970/2000) was even harsher, stating that: "(e)ducation is suffering from narration sickness" (p. 71) where "(t)he students are not called upon to know, but to memorize the contents narrated by the teacher" (p. 80). When we add that "storytelling is among the most common of communication acts" (Kirkwood, 1983, p. 59), it brings a logical (as well as narrative) conclusion that the schools should be filled with stories if we indeed cared about learning. "(U)nderstanding learning from the life narrative perspective can enable us to develop pedagogical strategies that facilitate the individuals' journey through life's nuanced implications, ambiguity in meanings of activities, contradictions and dilemmas. Learning thus takes place in this space of inquiry, questions and questioning, which only an unfolding and coherent narrative can serve to respond. In and through such emergent narrative, we develop a sense of who we are, how we have become and where we are heading" (Goodson & Gill, 2014, p. 37), "narrative interpretations as the fruit of critical inquiry can unfold knowledge and understanding that is robust and satisfying" (Goodson & Gill, 2014, p. 90).

"Indian civilization has always attached great value to knowledge" (Kapoor, 2005, p. 11), which is not, and has not been, a repository of the few as "(a)long with the learned, scholarly tradition, there has always been a parallel popular tradition of narration (...)" (Kapoor, 2005, p. 29). India had stories told mainly through performances (Venkatraman, 2011). A performance in India does not separate acting from dancing, singing (Verma, 2011). The performers in India learnt to use their bodies: gestures, facial expressions, movement of the eyes, hands, feet, neck and head, the tone of voice, the music, costumes, masks and puppets¹⁴. Similar aids were suggested for classroom effectiveness by Aïex (1988). We do not know what "hierarchy of primacy is between speech, song, dance, and drawing" (Bruner, 2006, p. 99) and even though each of them can symbolise the same thing, they do so differently. And a recent study exploring the effectiveness of instructor's gestures showed that students who saw the instructor use structure gestures

¹⁴ The combination of these elements were used in NAVE programmes, e.g. Night of the Masks, Physics in Comics, Through Words or Tell a Story (Lopes et al., 2020).

outperformed the other groups on an inference test, which would suggest that structure gestures help students mentally organise the content of a lesson according to its macrostructure (Pilegard & Fiorella, 2021). John Niles found singing and “storytelling practices” essential to the role of stories in society, noticing that “oral narrative can influence both thought and behaviour” (Niles, 1999, p. 34), since storytelling is “a form of somatic communication, hence a powerful vehicle for ideas and emotions” (Niles, 1999, p. 34). The increasingly necessary art of telling (or singing) stories is also recognised in other countries (Bedran, 2012).

Every human being is a storyteller (Niles, 1999). Narratives are everywhere in countless forms according to Roland Barthes and “there nowhere is nor has been a people without narrative” (Barthes, 1977, p. 237). The storyteller in India is often seen as a teacher who is familiar with ancient texts in Sanskrit or proficient in classical music. A text is often a multiplicity of layer upon layer of signification – Indian narrators often “try to coax the reader to wind his way into the core of a text” (Ayyappa Paniker, 2003, p. 5). In Katha stories are embedded into basically every bit of their practices. In this article, I focus on the most important initiatives and what underpins them all – the stories and the desire to allow children to take joy from reading them as I found them highly beneficial for human learning (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Methodology

I observed the endeavours of Katha in its natural settings (Hijmans & Wester, 2010), and gathered the data on Katha’s activities using mostly narrative inquiry focusing on Katha’s specific categories (Creswell & Poth, 2018), which in turn revealed Katha’s narrative approach (Clandin & Rosiek, 2007). Narratives come in many forms and sizes (Riessman, 2008) – “a single situation can sometimes sustain a narrative” (Ayyappa Paniker, 2003, p. 25), “(a) narrative may be oral or written and may be elicited or heard during fieldwork, an interview, or a naturally occurring conversation.” (Chase, 2005, p. 652); they can also be visual (Verma, 2011) “(i)n the performing and graphic arts of India too, the encrypting of narratives was a common device” (Ayyappa Paniker, 2003, p. 23). I accompanied various employees and volunteers in their daily journeys and activities, I listened to their personal narratives that often changed to lengthy stories (Riessman, 2002) and tried to make sense of

various situations (Bakker, 2010), obtaining a deeper understanding of Katha phenomenon (Clandinin et al., 2016). People working for Katha come from different parts of India, so they use English on a daily basis and so do Katha's employees and volunteers. I could participate in conversations and meetings, review documents, talk to employees, or listen to the interviews that Geeta Dharmarayan gave over the years. The recordings were made available to me. I went to the same schools several times to observe their daily activities and to talk to students, teachers, school and vocational programme principals. I also participated in some research interviews conducted by Katha employees. Additionally, I spoke with women in the slums¹⁵, with the former slum dwellers educated by Katha and with Katha volunteers. All that gave me a picture, which I then supplemented with shared documents, reports, scientific research, opinions, videos and articles on the Internet (Gałęcka, 2021a). As a result, a comprehensive image was created not only of the organisation itself and its numerous activities, but also of its pedagogical approach and the social changes it implements. I do realise that my participation created some of the meaning I am sharing here (Mishler, 1986), I did try to participate in the flow of what was already going on, limiting my questions to the minimum and showing my open curiosity rather than an intent to study, hoping for "genuine discoveries" (Riessman, 2008, p. 24).

I do realise that the documents I collected are selective, incomplete and can be tainted by the fact that most of them were a part of marketing packages that are often provided to the partners and donors in order to obtain the necessary funds. I need to take into account that I was a guest, and a white female, so not only did my presence alter the behaviours of those I observed but the respondents might have been polite not wanting to leave negative comments. The students I talked to knew I came from Katha – their benefactor, so they were being nice but many of them were young so I am hoping they were sincere in their satisfaction I observed. Also the fact that Katha's beneficiaries come from impoverished areas influences their perspective on Katha's undertakings. However it was not enough to open the school, the beginnings were not easy for Katha as the parents could not afford to send their children there¹⁶. When Katha started its work the environment in

¹⁵ Often through volunteers or Katha employees. Recorded with the consent of the interlocutor and translated with the support of the students who lived in my dormitory.

¹⁶ Geeta Dharmarajan (2010) provides the story of realising Katha's mission "to enhance the joy of reading".

India wasn't "too conducive to education" ("StoryPedagogy," n.d.), yet as I am writing this article their impact is impressive (though in Katha's approach "numbers come second and changes in people's lives come first"¹⁷):

- 2,474 slum communities were served,
- 1,862 school partnerships formed across 17 states of India,
- 475,159 grassroots women impacted most positively,
- 10,402,655 children and youth brought into the joy of reading¹⁸.

And the life changes are substantial. I was able to meet with some Katha Lab School (KLS) graduates who were able to move their parents out of the slums, starting their own business, speaking English and making their own life (more: Gałęcka, 2021a, 2021b). I also participated in the interviews where children from KLS were asked what they thought about the school, what could be improved or changed and what they liked most. Some of the kids loved the art projects, many loved the theatre performances they were preparing, the boys talked about robotics and computers. The small children really enjoyed the meals provided by the school and the older ones valued the chance to learn English as this gives them more opportunities to earn money in the future. As I observed the children on the corridors and inside the classrooms I saw them happy and focused. They eagerly answered questions though they probably wanted to show off in front of me. They were also open to talk which was not the experience I had in two public schools I visited where nobody spoke English and people (including children) were generally cautious of me. I talked to many Katha students about their experiences but one sentence is still ringing in my head: "I don't like Sundays cause I cannot come to school". This article outlines what it is that Katha does that induces such statements.

¹⁷ Quote from one of the conversations I had with Ms Dharmarajan.

¹⁸ Those figures on May 29, 2020 were respectively: 1,142; 1,157; 399,500 and 9,649,567 (Katha, n.d.), which shows the progress. However, I was unable to obtain a satisfactory explanation for the way those numbers were calculated. This is probably the biggest weakness of my study as I had to rely on whatever was provided to me in this aspect and some of those numbers seemed to have been prepared with marketing in mind. Nevertheless, I noticed first-hand that Katha provided support to multiple communities and schools as I was not even able to visit them all during my stay.

StoryPedagogy as the common link of Katha's projects and undertakings

Ms Dharmarajan had studied both Freire and Bruner among other Western philosophers to which she added a few-thousand-year-old tradition of Indian arts¹⁹ and its ways to create performing arts in order to enable the understanding of messages that one wants to pass forward, which had been described in a Sanskrit treatise on performing arts (as well one of the most essential texts on drama, dance, music, arts and fine arts in India) – Natya Shastra²⁰. It contains a very detailed description of the performing arts. Performing arts of India are all interconnected and they have been used for educational purposes. Comparisons are drawn between Indian narratives and the Indian temple and palace architecture and village structures (Ayyappa Paniker, 2003), poses used in the performance and the temple iconography (Verma, 2011). Everything is intertwined.

The idea of storytelling as a pedagogical tool is not unique for Katha (Bhati & Aggarwal, 2021; Hofman-Bergholm, 2022; Kuyvenhoven, 2005; Landrum, Brakke, & McCarthy, 2019). The pedagogic approach developed by Geeta Dharmarajan called StoryPedagogy²¹ uses all the components she had learnt and imbibed from Natya Shastra traditions. This framework of teaching connects all the activities under one common umbrella: the reading, prevalent in all Katha's undertakings, is built on stories and StoryPedagogy stems out from those stories, and revolves around them. Despite the rich tradition of stories and storytelling in India²² not only aren't the stories embedded in children's education in India but – as Ms Dharmarajan realised – children do not read well (or at all) mainly because the reading offered at school is not relevant to them. The lack of relevancy is one of the main culprits of the resulting lack of reading skills, which in turn causes lack of engagement. One

¹⁹ Geeta Dharmarajan learnt classical dance since she was 7. Classical Indian dance tradition has three aspects, *Nritta* – pure dance, *Nritya* – dance showing expressions and *Natya* – acting in the form of dance. A typical classical dance combines all three and narrates a story from one of the ancient texts (Verma, 2011).

²⁰ The word *Natya* means the activities of *Nata*. *Nata* is somebody who performs, passes on a message through gesture, speech, dance, singing, even playing an instrument. *Nata* is the person who communicates and the whole activity of that *Nata* is called *Natya* (Gupt, 2020).

²¹ Written this way in all Katha's materials.

²² With every state or even district having their own style of storytelling (Ramachandran, 2017).

cannot enjoy reading while struggling to decipher the letters, words and their meaning. And since stories entertain, stimulate our imagination, preserve culture, teach, provide continuity, reconcile us to the life we lived, point out the wonder as lived and make us look beyond ourselves (Venkatraman, 2011), they are relevant.

As Ms Dharmarajan often states, the difference between traditional school (textbook) approach and a story-based one is that schools usually provide the answers, and the stories usually lead to questions. Stories rarely – if properly designed – provide ready-made solutions or one-sided outcomes and they allow for multiple perspectives, unlike schools. So one of the first quests Katha embarked on was to design great books, that would touch on Big Ideas – important life issues, interesting topics that could poke children imaginations. The stories showed empowered girls and women, talked about environmental and health issues, about the importance of education, about math, geography, physics and many other school subjects embedded in everyday situations, helping them to regain their space in the society (Verma, 2011). And of course – just like *Natya Shastra* specifies – the books and the stories within them were not created with words only (Gupt, 2020). The pictures, the art²³, the book design, and everything around the books were thought through carefully²⁴ and adjusted to the local needs. Slowly but surely this approach brought the development of a full-fledged education design.

StoryPedagogy forms an umbrella protecting and guiding all the main initiatives: Katha Lab School (KLS), I Love Reading Programme (ILR) and Katha School Quality Enhancement Programme (SQEP). The content stories published by Katha Vilasam (the publishing house) feed into the integrated learning in KLS, the iterations of the integrated learning in SQEP and the holistic development of the language skills (ILR). StoryPedagogy also forms the connections and enable the interactions among teachers and students within the school interventions as well as help form the identities of girls and women within the community interventions (Galecka, 2021a).

According to Katha, a traditional approach enables the continuation of the circle of exploitation: when the school does not care about child's engagement (especially in the areas where every pair of hands counts towards

²³ Katha uses a variety of Indian art in their books, inspired by the multitude of Indian ancient traditions and the characters look like locals.

²⁴ I remember a book, where the picture of God was portrayed as an elderly woman. In India there are female deities but gods are male and a masculine pronoun is always used so it was a powerful image.

possible earnings), then the schools are basically empty²⁵. The programmes developed in Katha target those children in particular and the main three are:

- Katha Lab School,
- I Love Reading Programme,
- School Quality Enhancement Programme.

Within those programmes Katha is active both in the schools (school interventions) and the communities (community interventions). Connecting educational work at schools with the work within communities turned out to be crucial to progress. Ms Dharmarajan quickly discovered that it is the work within the community that determines educational success.

Katha Lab School (KLS)

An effective connection with a community requires assessing its actual needs. Each community may have different needs and different struggles even if they are adjacent to one another. And Katha Lab School was built in the 8-slums cluster of Govindpuri in New Delhi, where – despite huge poverty, diversified needs (including disputes among the clusters) and the resulting devaluation of traditional education – Katha managed to impact over 100,000 children through various programmes offered in KLS (“Katha Lab Schools,” n.d.). The programmes also demonstrate the close connection to the communities, where the actual needs were addressed even if they were not – at first sight – directly connected to education. As a result a crèche was established to cater to the needs of the families, allowing older kids to participate in school activities instead of taking care of their younger siblings. Nutrition was provided to the youngest children and to those in need and the on-site kitchen provided a regular job to a few women from the community, a source of knowledge on healthy eating habits, an opportunity to buy cheap, healthy and locally made food, and a place to learn cooking skills. Apart from cooking classes, other entrepreneurial skills are being taught like dressmaking or tailoring. The life stories of successful graduates are pinned to the walls providing a valuable trigger for other students. Theatre classes are provided on regular basis with a professional acting teacher. Art classes are a huge part

²⁵ Which is exactly what happened in one of the schools Katha took under its management (Kilokari Tank in New Delhi): about 40 (out of 200) kids were regularly attending, as compared to 170 coming now.

of the curriculum. And all those innovative practices developed and “tested” in this school form the basis for other Katha’s initiatives.

I Love Reading Programme (ILR)

ILR – a reading and school transformation initiative – is Katha’s flagship programme (“ILR government schools,” n.d.) as it represents the engagement of a story, its educational qualities, the joy of reading and the empowerment through the stories, all in one diversified initiative. The impact is huge: in 122 slums, 80,000 children have regularly been coming to learn to read²⁶ despite having tough life and many competing obligations. They have plenty to choose from as Katha has already published over 500 books so far. Apart from the traditional, printed format, technology has been aiding all the reading initiatives, with Padhopyarse.net – a repository of resources, Katha Khazana app with stories and games for kids and Katha books on Kindle (“Kindle E-Books,” n.d.).

The ILR programme feeds into many initiatives, most importantly the 300M initiative, which aspires to build the capacity for all 300 million children in India to read well as well as for fun and meaning (“Katha 300M,” n.d.). 300M falls within Katha’s intensive cooperation with government schools, which aims at spreading Katha’s approach among all the children and improving the level of educational attainment through enhancing their quality, which brings me to the third programme run by Katha – the SQEP.

For those who love reading there is Katha Utsav – a multistage, well-organised series of events, competitions, conferences, workshops, etc. where the children who are natural storytellers, learn to write like professionals, and their stories get published (“Utsav,” n.d.). This competition growing in popularity also helps spreading Katha approach.

School Quality Enhancement Programme (SQEP)

SQEP is “a complete school transformation programme to bring qualitative positive changes in teaching-learning practices” (“SQEP,” n.d.). Katha develops

²⁶ A study on the effect of ILR curriculum in schools concluded that the attendance jumped from a mere 59% to 89.33% – an overall increase of 30.33%. Overall retention of 100% was also observed in this period (“ILR Communities,” n.d.).

model schools, working with the government and brings its model programmes into government schools. The work in KLS was appreciated by the government so much that Katha was asked to manage several schools which faced closure and were located in impoverished neighbourhoods. Five schools were taken under such management: the schools were repainted (with characters from stories painted on the walls), remodelled (on a very tight budget) and restructured. Gardens were built where kids could learn gardening, the basics of market dynamics, enjoy fresh produce in their meals, acquire healthy eating habits and learn maths among other subjects. I have already witnessed what colours and creative space arrangement can do to educational engagement of both students and teachers (e.g. Escuela Nueva in Medellin, Instituto Lumiar and Politeia Democratic School in Sao Paolo, apart from GENTE and NAVE), especially when close attention is paid to a bigger picture. In Katha this is achieved through the connection between school and community work²⁷.

School and Community Interventions intertwine with one another. If a person is not educated, they are going to stay fixed in the vicious circle of exploitation. This is why Katha cannot concentrate on working in the school settings only but needs to spread within the communities because they both feed into each other. And the community work is in fact what brought the immense success to all Katha's undertakings. Stories help immensely with this undertaking. They are easy to share even among the parents without any education²⁸. The work within communities has double purpose: to help the development of children, empower them (especially women and girls) and improve their educational attainment, and – on the other hand – to spread the knowledge about Katha's approach. Each person touched by Katha becomes its ambassador to increase the impact.

²⁷ It is also worth noting that Katha employs a varied group of people including artists, accountants, managers and scientists among others. This allows them to jump start many of the initiatives which are then continued by the engaged community.

²⁸ Community Owned & Operated Libraries (COOL) are set up in people's homes – a set of books and magazines moving around "in a suitcase" allowing families to share common stories the child had learnt at school.

Capacity Building – Teacher Training and Curriculum Curation

The first thing that one notices when entering Katha's offices are the teachers. Many of them fill different rooms: the mentors²⁹, the trainees, the helpers, the guests (I could not always figure out who is who as the mentors become trainees and the trainees or helpers may become teachers at a particular moment, depending on the issue at hand)³⁰. Katha pays special attention to teacher training (which was one of the aspects I found similar to other projects I had visited³¹). Limited resources often bring creativity. Teachers learn how to use a variety of tools that would engage children in the learning experience through stories, music, dance or theatre and how to use their facial expressions, hand gestures, tone of voice and other *Natyan* resources to engage them in the Active Story Based Learning. And those resources cost little to nothing.

Katha does not believe in “teaching” teachers but in showing them and then letting them work with lots of feedback. And feedback is one of the elements that is missing the most from the teacher's education and that prevents many of them from achieving mastery. The goal is to make sure the teachers become independent as soon as possible. All Katha initiatives involve teachers or mentors as they are the ones who will impact the children most, either directly or through the communities. Making sure they are better equipped to make the lives of the children better. Because at the end of the day what Katha is trying to do is to find out what will make the child come to school the next day and what it is that is going to make the child smile when they enter the classroom. And the teachers need to learn just that.

In the school year of 2019/2020 Katha has been working for 12 months within 200 MCD Schools (Municipal Cooperation of Delhi). Every school is visited once a month. During those visits a live demonstration is conducted in each one of the grades (primary school grades 1 to 5), in front of the teacher of that grade and with the students present, on StoryPedagogy – how it works,

²⁹ Katha mentors (trainers) are the teachers trained by Katha.

³⁰ I witnessed a similar approach in the GENTE project I mentioned earlier, and at the NAVE school (NAVE, n.d.). It was explained to me that it was almost impossible to find teachers with the experience they wanted to create in the projects so they needed to “be made”. Another similarity were the colourful interiors and paintings on the walls.

³¹ GENTE and NAVE I mentioned earlier, and Insituto Lumiar in Sao Paulo.

how it is done, how it is supposed to work with the children, what is the way a teacher is supposed to behave³².

The beauty of Katha's approach also lies in the integrated curriculum which is "sewn" together by the stories published by Katha and by their careful immersion within the traditional curriculum. Each year a new theme is chosen and the teachers link all academic and co-curricular lesson plans and activities to this theme, coordinating the activities across subjects. When Katha wants to teach math they are also teaching concepts of English and environmental science. The learning is integrated (with subjects interwoven with the themed stories) and the approach holistic. Thanks to the practical approach in teacher training which allows for a lot of freedom on the teachers' side combined with the natural effect of embedding stories within education, there is nothing very complicated at work here. Katha has prepared demonstrative compilations showing the different ways specific subjects may be related together with particular stories or life issues for the teacher's use. The rest comes with practice, reinforced with feedback and regular meetings among the teachers practicing Katha approach.

The activities are governed by the goals of relevance to children's lives and their empowerment to solve real-life problems by bringing the most crucial community challenges (e.g. water, sanitation, health, eating habits, women empowerment) into the classrooms. Since human experience has narrative foundation and humans pursue a "narrative rationality" from infancy, we are essentially "symbol-using" storytellers (Fisher, 1987). Stories can therefore be used for any subject as nothing that is being taught within the school curriculum falls out of human experience. Everything, including math, physics and other science subjects form part of it and some people even claim that they are simply different ways of communication³³, of organising our thoughts and being able to understand others³⁴. Putting them into stories can bring

³² To use expression, body language the entire classroom space and all the materials at hand including of course the books published by Katha. Because the child is constantly observing and absorbing everything that the mentor is providing.

³³ And liberating narrative from literary forms allowed it to "invade" other fields (Herman & Jahn, 2005, p. 344).

³⁴ It is often quoted – presumably after Galileo Galilei – that "Mathematics is the language in which God has written the universe." Narratives provide order, bring meaning and offer insights about the world or about human experiences.

connections and meaning to otherwise often dry and rote approaches to teaching those subjects³⁵.

Studies conducted by Diana Arya and Andrew Maul (2012) showed that “(s)tudents exposed to the scientific discovery narrative performed significantly better on both immediate and delayed outcome measures” (p. 1022). The authors argued that one of the reasons behind the results was that “personal reader-to-text connections result in greater attentiveness to conceptual content” (Arya & Maul, 2012, p. 1030). They suggested that “the SDN (narrative account of the scientific discovery process) exposes the readers even more to the humanness of science, which encourages greater invested attention on the part of students, in that the readers have the opportunity to vicariously experience the scientific journey of discovery. This increased interest and attention can facilitate deeper understanding and recall of the pertinent information” (Arya & Maul, 2012, p. 1030). Nevertheless “researchers argue that narrative is largely neglected in science learning and instructional practice” (Arya & Maul, 2012, p. 1022).

Since the whole purpose of Katha’s activities is to change the orthodox (disengaged and irrelevant for children) pedagogy, curriculum curation is very important. Ms Dharmarajan has curated the original curriculum, designing it with her extensive knowledge of all the books authored and the public curriculum. This serves as a framework that is being revamped constantly by Katha mentors with the feedback gathered from the fieldwork. Everything that Katha does is interlinked with a bigger picture: the development of the love for reading, reading for fun and meaning. I saw the stories being performed by teachers as well as the students. Children were visibly engaged. I watched theatre preparations and performances, multitude of students’ artwork lying or hanging around everywhere. The students were actively participating in the classes and their attitude showed they enjoyed it. However I have to take into account the fact that their alternative was pretty daunting³⁶. Students from one of the KLSs took me to his home after I had a bite of his lunch and complimented his mother’s cooking. Only then did I understand the change

³⁵ In one of the schools in New Zealand narrative materials have been used to support science learning in New Zealand’s *kura kaupapa Māori* schools for example. It was found “that narrative can easily become ‘faction’ rather than ‘fiction’ when the story’s primary purpose is to teach science” (Gilbert & Hipkins, 2005, p. 1).

³⁶ Working on the street, being in a room made of tin, not having much to eat, not having a bathroom.

that Katha was providing: his dwelling was a small tin, there was no floor, no beds, his mother spoke only her local language, father was absent, yet this man was a nice, a bit shy but well-spoken. The few Katha alumni I managed to interact with also spoke decent English but what set them apart from other poor-background people who constantly hassled me on the streets, was their rather withdrawn attitude, more typical to Western countries, and good manners. This may be the result of frequent visits paid to KLSs by foreigners (including Prince Charles in 2013) as Katha's efforts have been universally recognised ("Awards," n.d.).

Conclusions

I do realise that there are "other possibilities, interpretations, and ways of explaining things" (Clandinin et al., 2016, p. 46) than what I presented here. Watching Katha in action I tried "to inquire into experience, to inquire into the stories" (Clandinin et al., 2016, p. 15) that the people I met lived and told and I couldn't help but notice multiple connections with many practical approaches that I had already witnessed around the world. The attention to community needs and holistic approach were similarly pronounced in the GENTE project and in Escuela Nueva³⁷, the importance of different art forms were especially significant in Instituto Lumiar (Lumiar, n.d.) and Politeia (Politeia, n.d.), the attention to surroundings and teacher training – in GENTE, NAVE and Politeia to name a few. I found StoryPedagogy approach with its umbrella-like design similar to Universal Design for Learning, where the goal is to use a variety of teaching methods accommodating diverse needs of the learners, to remove any barriers to learning and give all students equal opportunities to succeed (UDL, n.d.).

When I was trying to design a succinct picture encompassing the workings of Katha, I came up with an upside down pyramid, with the efforts spent on the community at the top. Those efforts, even if seemingly indirect to education attainment are in my opinion essential. By engaging community they engage the learners, their peers and their parents. And these efforts are combined and strengthened with the integrated approach to learning, with the curriculum that is designed for life rather than for testing purposes, the content filled with

³⁷ Even the website holds similarities: <https://escuelanueva.org/en/>

stories covering Big Ideas, the classroom practices participative and engaged and the assessment holistic and continuous³⁸. And stories help with that, acting as natural glue and a filler. Reversing the focus and adapting the approach to the actual needs of the people, putting community first and curriculum as the second was in my opinion most significant. I wonder if the reason for such adaptability arises at least partially from the fact that the needs of the community are so easily visible and – to an extent – so basic. Now, that I have been interviewing teachers during pandemic, I noticed how important the connection to the community was for them. Teachers who were able to form closer connections to parents, often reported remote teachings as more bearable compare to those who struggled on their own³⁹. The same goes with teacher cooperation, which in Katha – considering the way they are trained, helping one another – forms another basis for a more general wellbeing. Teachers in Poland valued cooperation with other teachers during lockdowns as they struggled with the technological problems of remote teaching⁴⁰.

In order to make a difference in education, you need to include people in it, so that education can become a valued part of their lives. Stories, being very egalitarian, make it all possible. Unfortunately, as Eisenhardt (1991) pointed out, “(r)esearch that must fit into the page limit of a journal article is necessarily limited in scope and story detail” (p. 626). And so I had to leave out a lot of details from the context and patterns I chose and saw (Lilienfeld, 1978). Even Eisenhardt (1991)⁴¹ agrees that “storytelling is a wonderful and necessary first step as well as a terrific way to persuade and entertain readers” (p. 626). I am hoping that this article is the beginning of my comparative journey in search of idiographic examples of meaningful and holistic approaches to education.

³⁸ With colour coding applied with detailed criteria, which allows for an easy, comprehensive and child-friendly assessment.

³⁹ Often having parents against them as there were multiple media campaigns targeting teachers in Poland.

⁴⁰ Katha had its own struggles due to lack of equipment among its students and their parents. Still, they managed to transform many of the books into audio or even video storytelling but that is yet another story to tell.

⁴¹ Her preference for multiple-setting studies is just one of many approaches (Steenhuis, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018), as case studies can be multi-paradigm, have different goals (Hassard & Kelemen, 2010), methods of data analysis, etc. (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

References

- 300M (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved September 28, 2021 from <https://www.katha.org/300m/>
- Aiex, N. K. (1988). Storytelling: Its wide-ranging impact in the classroom. *ERIC Digest* Number 9. Retrieved March 05, 2022 from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED299574>
- Aletria (n.d.). O Instituto Cultural [Website article]. Retrieved March 05, 2022 from <https://www.aletria.com.br/pagina/o-instituto-cultural.html>
- All Good Tales (n.d.). Storytelling traditions across the world: India. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://allgoodtales.com/storytelling-traditions-across-the-world-india/>
- Alonso, E., & Murgia, V. A. (2018). Enseñar y aprender con narrativa transmedia. Análisis de experiencia en una escuela secundaria de Argentina. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, 33, 203–222.
- Arendt, H., & Canovan, M. (1998). *The human condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arya, D. J., & Maul, A. (2012). The role of the scientific discovery narrative in middle school science education: An experimental study. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(4), 1022–1032.
- Aura, I., Hassan, L., & Hamari, J. (2021). Teaching within a story: Understanding storification of pedagogy. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 106, 101728.
- Awards (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved September 28, 2021 from <https://www.katha.org/awards/>
- Ayyappa Paniker, K. (2003). *Indian narratology*. New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts & Sterling Publishers Private Limited.
- Bakker, J. I. (2010). Interpretivism. In A. J. Mills, G. Durepos, & E. Wiebe (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of case study research* (Vols. 1–2, pp. 486–493). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Barreto, A., & Grandesso, M. (2010). Community therapy: A participatory response to psychic misery. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 4, 33–43.
- Barthes, R., & Duisit, L. (1975). An introduction to the structural analysis of narrative. *New Literary History*, 6(2), 237–272.
- Bedran, B. (2012). *Arte de cantar e contar histórias*. Nova Fronteira.
- Bhati, A., & Aggarwal, N. (2021) Adaptation and application of Indian stories in classrooms. In L. G. Phillips, & T. T. P. Nguyen (Eds.), *Storytelling pedagogy in Australia & Asia* (pp. 53–74). Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brockington, G., Moreira, A. P. G., Buso, M. S., Da Silva, S. G., Altszyler, E., Fischer, R., & Moll, J. (2021). Storytelling increases oxytocin and positive emotions and decreases cortisol and pain in hospitalized children. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 118(22). <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2018409118>
- Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (2004). Life as narrative. *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 71(3), 691–710.
- Bruner, J. (2006). *In search of pedagogy*. Volume 1, New York: Routledge.
- Castrechini Fernandes Franieck, M. L., Günter, M., & Page, T. (2014). Engaging Brazilian street children in play: Observations of their family narratives. *Child Development Research*, 2014, 1–11.

- Chandiramani, G. L. (1991). Preface. In *Panchatantra Pandit Vishnu Sharma*. Rupa Publications India Pvt. Ltd.
- Chase, S. E. (2005). Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 651–679). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Chatterji, R. (1986). The voyage of the hero: Self and other in one narrative tradition. In Veena Das (Ed.), *The word and the world: Fantasy, symbol and record* (pp. 95–114). Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland spaces and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 35–75). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Clandinin, D. J., Caine, V., Lessard, S., & Huber, J. (2016). *Engaging in narrative inquiries with children and youth* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Compassion International (n.d.). The types and characteristics of poverty. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://www.compassion.com/poverty/types-of-poverty.htm>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, Ch. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Deniston-Trochta, G. M. (1998). The meaning of storytelling as pedagogy. *Visual Arts Research*, 24(2), 27–32.
- Dharmarajan, G. (2010). Inspiring slum children through education: a story from Delhi [Blog post]. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://bernardvanleer.org/ecm-article/2010/inspiring-slum-children-through-education-a-story-from-delhi/>
- Dunbar, I. M. R. (2004). Gossip in evolutionary perspective. *Review of General Psychology*, 8(2), 100–110.
- EducationWorld (2016). 26 NGOs enabling Indian education. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://www.educationworld.in/26-ngos-enabling-indian-education/>
- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1991). Better stories and better constructs: The case for rigor and comparative logic. *The Academy of Management Review*, 16(3), 620–627.
- Fisher, W. R. (1984). Narration as a human communication paradigm: The case of public moral argument. *Communication Monographs*, 51(1), 1–22.
- Fisher, W. R. (1987). *Human communication as narration: Toward a philosophy of reason, value, and action*. University of South Carolina Press.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), 219–245.
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans.). New York: Continuum. (Original work published in 1970). Retrieved from <https://envs.ucsc.edu/internships/internship-readings/freire-pedagogy-of-the-oppressed.pdf>
- Fundação Telefônica Vivo (2016, May 16). Escola sem fronteiras: conheça o projeto GENTE, modelo de inovação na educação no Rio de Janeiro. Retrieved March 15, 2022 from <https://fundacaotelefonicavivo.org.br/noticias/escola-sem-fronteiras-conheca-o-projeto-gente-modelo-de-inovacao-na-educacao-no-rio-de-janeiro-2/>

- Gadamer, H.-G., Weinsheimer, J., & Marshall, D. G. (2004). *Truth and method*. London: Continuum.
- Gałecka, J. (2021a). Dbłość i troska o lokalne społeczności kobiet jako element podejścia pedagogicznego organizacji Katha w Indiach. In J. Kozłowska, & M. Iwaniuk (Eds.), *Rodzina, prawo i kultura w zglobalizowanym świecie* (pp. 133–151). Lublin: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Tygiel.
- Gałecka, J. (2021b). Bieda jako czynnik wymuszający pozytywne innowacje w edukacji. Prezentacja innowacyjnych projektów edukacyjnych ze slumsów Brazylii i Indii. *Facta Ficta. Journal of Theory, Narrative & Media*, 8(2), 59–81. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://factafictajournal.files.wordpress.com/2021/12/facta-ficta-nr-2-8-2021-edukacja.pdf>
- Gergen, K. (2005). Narrative, moral identity and historical consciousness: A social constructionist account. In J. Sträub (Ed.), *Narration, identity and historical consciousness* (pp. 99–119). New York: Bergham Books.
- Gerring J. (2017). *Case study research: Principles and practices* (2nd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gilbert, J., Hipkins, R., & Cooper, G. (2005). *Faction or fiction: Using narrative pedagogy in school science education*. Paper presented at the Redesigning Pedagogy: Research, Policy, Practice conference, Nanyang University Institute of Education, Singapore, 30 May – 1 June 2005. Redesigning pedagogy: Research, Policy, Practice, 1–16. Retrieved from https://www.nzcer.org.nz/system/files/14292_0.pdf
- Goodson, I. F., & Gill, S. R. (2011). *Narrative pedagogy: Life history and learning*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Goodson, I. F., & Gill, S. R. (2014). *Critical narrative as pedagogy*. Bloomsbury.
- Green, M. C., & Brock, T. C. (2000). The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(5), 701–721.
- Gupt, B. (2020). *Natyashastra-1* [Course description]. Retrieved September 15, 2021 from <https://cisindus.org/course/natyashastra-1/>
- Hassard, J., & Kelemen, M. (2010). Paradigm plurality in case study research. In A. J. Mills, G. Durepos, & E. Wiebe (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of case study research* (Vol. 1–2, pp. 647–652). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Herman, D., Jahn, M., & Ryan, M.-L. (2005). *Routledge encyclopaedia of narrative theory*. London: Routledge.
- Hijmans E., & Wester F. (2010). Comparing the case study with other methodologies. In A. J. Mills, G. Durepos, & E. Wiebe (Eds.), *Encyclopaedia of case study research* (Vol. 1–2, pp. 176–179). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Hofman-Bergholm, M. (2022). Storytelling as an educational tool in sustainable education. *Sustainability*, 14(5), 2946. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14052946>
- ILR communities (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://www.katha.org/work-with-government/ilr-communities/>
- ILR government schools (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved September 28, 2021 from <https://www.katha.org/ilr-government-schools/>

- Johnson, R. D. (2012). Transportation into a story increases empathy, prosocial behavior, and perceptual bias toward fearful expressions. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 52, 150–155.
- Kapoor, K. (1992). Theory of the novel: An Indian view. *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics*, 15, 1–2, 85–97.
- Kapoor, K. (2005). Indian knowledge systems nature, philosophy and character. In K. Kapoor, & A. K. Singh (Eds.), *Indian knowledge systems* (Vol. 1). Indian Institute Of Advanced Study, New Delhi: D.K. Printworld (P) LTD.
- Katha (n.d.). [Website]. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://www.katha.org>
- Katha lab school (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved September 28, 2021, from <https://www.katha.org/katha-lab-school/>
- Kathakalakshepa (n.d.). Chitrakathis [Website article]. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <http://kathakalakshepa.in/chitrakathis/>
- Kindle e-books (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved September 28, 2021 from <https://books.katha.org/kindle-e-books>
- Kirkwood, W. (1983) Storytelling and self?confrontation: Parables as communication strategies. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 69(1), 58–74.
- Kuyvenhoven, J. C. (2005). In the presence of each other: A pedagogy of storytelling. Retrieved March 05, 2022 from <https://open.library.ubc.ca/soa/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/831/items/1.0055624>
- Landrum, R. E., Brakke, K., & McCarthy, M. A. (2019). The pedagogical power of storytelling. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, 5(3), 247–253.
- Leadership (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://www.katha.org/leadership/>
- Lilienthal, R. (1978). *The rise of systems theory: An ideological analysis*. New York: John Wiley.
- Lopes C. C., Uller, C, Meirelles, F., Sarmento, F., Fischberg, J., Trotta, K., & Saraiva, R. (2020). *e-NAVE: Innovative pedagogical practices guide*. Rio de Janeiro: Oi Futuro. Retrieved from https://oifuturo.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/e-nave-1_ingle%CC%82s_versa%CC%83o_web_pgunica.pdf
- Lucarevski, C. R. (2018). *The role of storytelling in the development of pronunciation of Brazilian learners of English as a foreign language*. Retrieved March 15, 2022 from https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/bitstream/handle/1828/9267/Rezende%20Lucarevski_Claudio_PhD_2018.pdf
- Lumiar Institute (n.d.). [Website]. Retrieved September 28, 2021 from <https://saopaulo.lumiar.co/en/>
- MacIntyre, A. C. (2007). *After virtue: A study in moral theory*. Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Martinez-Conde, S., Alexander, R. G., Blum, D., Britton, N., Lipska, B. K., Quirk, G. J., Swiss, J. I., Willems, R. M., & Macknik, S. L. (2019). The storytelling brain: How neuroscience stories help bridge the gap between research and society. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 39(42), 8285–8290.
- Mello, R. (2001). *Building bridges: How storytelling influences teacher and student relationships*. Retrieved March 05, 2022 from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED457088>

- Mishler, E. G. (1986). *Research interviewing: Context and narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mokhtar, N. H., Halim, M. F. A., & Kamarulzaman, S. Z. S. (2011). The effectiveness of storytelling in enhancing communicative skills. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 18, 163–169.
- The Natya Shastra. Ascribed to Bharata Muni* (M. Ghosh, Trans.). (1951). Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal. Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/NatyaShastra>
- NAVE (n.d.). [Website article]. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://oifuturo.org.br/en/programs/nave/>
- Nell, V. (2002). Mythic structures in narrative: The domestication of immortality. In M. C. Green, J. J. Strange, & T. C. Brock (Eds.), *Narrative impact: Social and cognitive foundations*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Niles, J. D. (1999). *Homo narrans: The poetics and anthropology of oral literature*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Partners (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://www.katha.org/partners/>
- Pilegard, C., & Fiorella, L. (2021). Using gestures to signal lesson structure and foster meaningful learning. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 35(5), 1362–1369.
- Plato (2004). *The republic* (C. D. C. Reeve, Trans.). Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Pub. Co. (Original work published ca. 370 BCE)
- Politeia School (n.d.). [Website]. Retrieved September 28, 2021 from <https://www.escolapoliteia.com.br>
- Pratham (n.d.). [Website]. Retrieved March 05, 2022 from <https://www.pratham.org/>
- Ramachandran, N. (2017). *Lore of the land: Storytelling traditions of India*. Penguin Books India Pvt Ltd.
- Ricœur, P. (1990). *Time and narrative*. Vol. 3 (K. Blamey, Trans.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Ricœur, P. (1994). *Oneself as another* (K. Blamey, Trans.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Riessman, C. K. (2012). Analysis of personal narratives. In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Holstein, A. B. Marvasti, & K. D. McKinney (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of interview research: The complexity of the craft* (2nd ed., pp. 367–379). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) (2002). Perspectives on Poverty. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from <https://cdn.sida.se/publications/files/sida646en-perspectives-on-poverty.pdf>
- SQEP (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved September 28, 2021, from <https://www.katha.org/sqep/>
- Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 443–466). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Steenhuis, H.-J. (2015). Iterative-Pragmatic case study method and comparisons with other case study method ideologies. In K. D. Strang (Ed.), *The Palgrave handbook of research design in business and management* (pp. 341–373). Palgrave Macmillan.

- StoryPedagogy (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved September 28, 2021 from <https://www.katha.org/storypedagogy/>
- Strumińska-Kutra, M., & Kołodkiewicz, I. (2012). Studium przypadku. In D. Jemielniak (Ed.), *Badania jakościowe. Metody i narzędzia* (pp. 1–40). Warszawa: PWN.
- Swamy, V. K. (2021, November 18). 10 NGOs rejuvenating education in India. Giveindia. Retrieved on February 15, 2022 from <https://www.giveindia.org/blog/top-10-education-ngos-rejuvenating-education-in-india/>
- Tomasello, M. (1999). *The cultural origins of human cognition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- UDL (n.d.). The UDL Guidelines. Retrieved September 28, 2021 from <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>
- Utsav (n.d.). [Website section]. Retrieved September 28, 2021 from <https://utsav.katha.org>
- Venkatraman, N. (2011). Living stories: Storytelling traditions of India (a movie) [Video file]. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgcCsh_8f50
- Verma, A. (2011). *Performance and culture: Narrative, image and enactment in India*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Zipes, J. (2012). *The irresistible fairy tale: The cultural and social history of a genre*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.