Lukwesa ne Ciwa – The story of Lukwesa and Iciwa: musical storytelling of the Bemba of Zambia

Joseph Ng'andu and Anri Herbst

kapalakasha@yahoo.com; aherbst@protem.uct.ac.za

This article describes inshimi – a musical storytelling practice of the Bemba people in Zambia. It gives a general perspective on the whole practice and some details on the 'MUSIC'[1] as contained in the practice. The article further encourages the idea that inshimi *represents a nucleus of the 'MUSIC' practices of the Bemba people and therefore plays a vital role in the transmission of musical arts practices. Embedded in musical storytelling are educational principles that could and should guide musical arts education in Africa and the rest of the world.*

Introduction

The sun had just sunk below the horizon. The place is Kangwa settlement, an extension of Ng'andu village, located east of Mungwi Township and south of the Bemba chief's residence Chitimukulu in the northern province of Zambia. In the centre of the compound a fire is burning, acting like a magnet to the inhabitants of the Ng'andu homestead – Mr and Mrs Ng'andu and about a dozen of their grandchildren. Once all are gathered, the family negotiations commence and it is decided that Chilufya, a 13-year-old girl, will tell the first story of the evening – the story of Lukwesa.[2]

> *Katile akantu: Kaikele nge efyo* – 'there once existed a state of being, the state of being stayed as it was'.

As Chilufya, the storyteller,[3] opens with the phrase *katile akantu*, followed by all the participants' response, *kaikele nge efyo*, everyone understands that the story is about to begin and they must prepare themselves to participate. *Katile akantu: Kaikele nge efyo* are like magic words, opening the door into a world where anything is possible by stretching the everyday rules and events of humankind. By interweaving realistic rules and events into the mysterious world of *inshimi*[4] (stories that incorporate song(s) in their structure), a temporary, make-believe world is created.

Joseph Ng'andu re-entered the magic world of storytelling that he had experienced as a child when, during the years 1998 to 2002, he collected the *inshimi* of the Bemba people occupying much of the northern province of Zambia (see Fig. 1). The Bemba people are also found in the Luapula and Copperbelt provinces of Zambia and form 18% of the total Zambian population. IciBemba is also spoken in the southern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in southern Tanzania.

> [Ici]bemba is a Central Bantu language. The Bantu language family is a branch of the Benue-Congo family, which is a branch of the Niger-Congo family, which is a branch
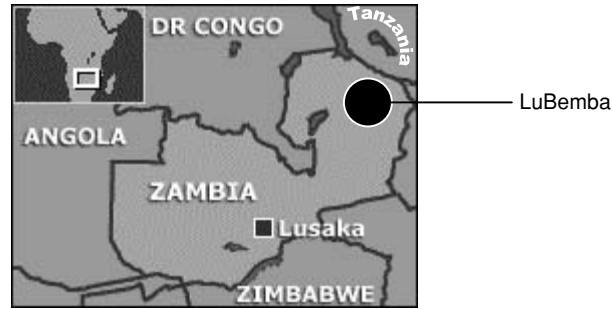
Fig. 1   Map of the approximate location of LuBemba

of Niger-Kordofanian. Most closely related to the Bantu languages Kaonde (in Zambia and DRC), Luba (in DRC), Nsenga and Tonga (in Zambia), and Nyanja/Chewa (in Zambia and Malawi).[5]

The purpose of collecting these stories is to conserve them as well as to analyse them from musicological and educational perspectives in the context of the traditional musical arts practices of the Zambian people. The value of *inshimi* lies, amongst other things, in carrying the soul, the essence of the Bemba nation,[6] forward from generation to generation. *Inshimi* are a record of the historical meeting of the inner and outer worlds of the Bemba existence.

African stories came about because the African community needed, designed and performed them to achieve certain ends in the process of organising, maintaining and modelling life and behaviour. Storytelling was and still is a practice used to express and transmit norms and values, traditions and social goals, as well as duties and obligations of members of the community conducted within the overall rhythm of community life. While stories are entertaining, they also embody the codes, ethics, values and admonitions that are meant to guide every member of the community through life in the social environment. Every African story, consequently, contains some elements of the African spirit, community or society. It truly exists within that context and reveals itself to other cultures only on its own merits and dynamism.

Apart from strengthening cultural identity, stories and the process of storytelling constitute a powerful way of continued self-expression that could reflect the process of acculturation: 'The use of story is to ensure that the main cultural messages are retained in living memories and that the rememberers are emotionally committed to those memories' (Egan, 1988: 97).

1   Institutionalised schooling in Africa: global vs. indigenous

Previous studies have indicated that formal school education and, by extension, formal school 'MUSIC' education in Zambia is facing serious problems (Ng'andu, 2000). This phenomenon is not only evident in Zambia, but is prevalent in most African countries. There is a gulf between the knowledge that the population and individuals acquire 'intuitively'[7]

42

through indigenous knowledge systems and what is advanced by the formal education establishment (global knowledge systems). To this dichotomy are added philosophical, psychological and methodological issues on musical arts education.[8] In Zambian communities, especially in rural settings, indigenous knowledge forms a fundamental part of what people know. It becomes problematic when indigenous knowledge systems conflict with global knowledge systems. This is not a dilemma faced by the Bemba people or communities of Zambia alone, but it is a worldwide dilemma that has been recognised by many researchers such as Egan (1988), Gardner (1993), Semali & Kincheloe (1999), Antweiler (2002), Herbst (2002: 56–72) and Kaewdang (2002).

Since the end of formal colonialism in Zambia and other African countries, notable efforts have been made to provide a Western-based model of education. However, Nzewi (2002: 18–27) has criticised these attempts as follows:

> As much as modern musical arts education is, myopically, a marginal subject area in the misguided African educational priorities, the teaching of the musical arts that is happening at all has wrong orientation and culture-alienating content. It is almost entirely an indiscriminate, mindless adoption of the Western ideas, models and materials of music education, with a few tokenistic-superficial African flavours. The African knowledge base remains unexplored and unadvanced.

It is vital that an education system be developed in which the conflict between indigenous and global knowledge systems is addressed and philosophical, psychological and methodological principles appropriate to the African continent are established. Storytelling is a practice that intuitively passes on indigenous knowledge in almost all areas of human intelligence, as discussed by Gardner (1991b: 77–8), Egan (1988) and Trostle-Brand & Donato (2000), and in the practice of storytelling are embedded possible ways to marry indigenous and global knowledge systems.

Because of the widespread use of stories in all cultures and the role that stories play in endorsing cultural identity and indigenous knowledge systems, the valuable lessons embedded in *inshimi* of the Bemba people should be investigated for their applicability to general education and 'MUSIC' education. It is furthermore argued that *inshimi* provide in microcosmic form the principles found in most African 'MUSIC' stories. Because of *inshimi*'s perceived intrinsic worth in general, further and in-depth analysis of these stories can provide seed ideas for further musicological study and musical arts education.

2 *Inshimi*: the Bemba practice of musical storytelling

Inshimi are stories that include 'MUSIC' in their structure, while *imilumbe* are stories without 'MUSIC' that are concerned with the transmission of Bemba mores. *Inshimi* practice has been selected because of its implications for the study of 'MUSIC' as well as for its perceived traditional role in the socialisation process of the whole community. Frost (1977: 33) defines *inshimi* as:

> Oral, fictional performances characterised by repetition of images. Often the image containing the major action of the performance is summarised in a song. The *Inshimi* focus on the system of mores, which constitute the basic values of the Bemba society: *umucinshi*.

In Bemba storytelling practices there are two genres: *inshimi* and *imilumbe*. Mushindo (1976: Preface) described the two practices as seemingly the same, but slightly different: '*Imilumbe* have no accompanying songs and are well liked by men, who tell them in the company of peers and boys to mark good and bad events alike. . . . Women also tell *imilumbe*, but they favour *inshimi* with their accompanying songs.'[9]

In *inshimi* the community engages in telling (performing) and responding (listening plus movement) activities as ways of displaying cognition, imagination and development of a variety of skills. According to Basilio Mwango Ng'andu,[10] *inshimi* are an ingenious way of teaching and learning about the world of spatial relationships, social dynamics, nature, religious beliefs and customs. *Inshimi* occupy such a crucial place in Bemba society that it can be said that they uniformly touch every person in the Bemba society. Not only is *inshimi* a vehicle for transmitting general knowledge in any field, but the genre also strongly relies on the song to act as the central developmental device.

The discussion of the structural elements of *inshimi* will draw from 20 stories collected by Joseph Ng'andu and will be discussed as they appear mainly in the story of Lukwesa, but reference will also be made to examples from other *inshimi*.

2.1 Subject matter and structure

Inshimi, like many other types of stories, follow a predictable story line. The story line is predictable because it was set 'in the beginning' – in prehistory. *Inshimi* generally open with the same opening two phrases, 'katile akantu: kaikele nge efyo'.[11] This is followed by a description of the setting, usually a village[12] or any other domicile, which leads into a carefully plotted element of instability such as travel (need for some of the characters to go on a journey), or a competitive event, and/or an intrusion by fabulous, supernatural or extraordinary creatures (*ifiwa*, as in the story of Lukwesa) which disturb the orderly everyday world. It is this state of disorder that prepares the stage for the introduction of the major event, usually a tragedy. A song is introduced at this moment and acts as a repetitive device that underscores the major event.[13] The major event is the central idea(s) or character(s) that are traditionally there and which by their mere mention conjure up specific cultural givens. *Inshimi* end with a closing phrase that is almost always the same: 'na kashimi kapela'. The end formula has slight variations, depending on the storyteller and the community, but the meaning and message remain the same:[14] 'and then the story ends'. The closing phrase serves a similar purpose as the opening phrase, only now in reverse order. It signals to the participants that the world of a particular story has come to a close and, since this phrase remains the same for almost all *inshimi*, the participants are able to recognise and accept its function of disengaging the community.

Fig. 2 represents only a skeleton structure of *inshimi* that can vary depending on the particular environment or context determined mainly by the teller and her audience. Variations usually occur in the main body of the story.

2.2 The setting

The setting of *inshimi*, even though it might only be an imaginary one, establishes a place that is similar to the one where the story is being told. The participants can relate to it as it
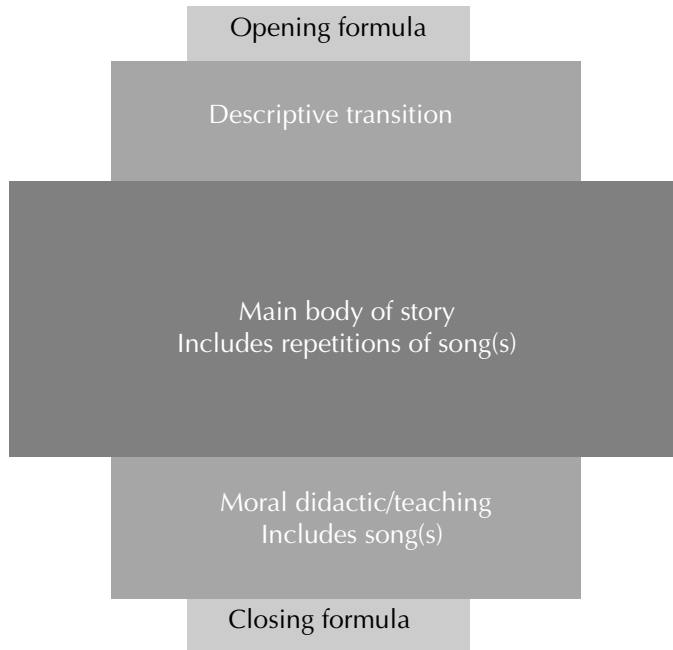
44

Fig. 2   Archetypal structure of *inshimi*

depicts the local conditions. *Inshimi* usually take place in the evening, when all the day's work has come to an end and the evening meals and chores are over. According to Bemba lore, if *inshimi* are told during the day, one's father will turn into *mukolwe* (a cockerel)! The venue for the telling is usually the homestead of an elderly woman, or the compound of the grandparents, depending on weather conditions. The setting and audience are usually stable and the storyteller is aware of the needs and capabilities of her audience.

2.3 Development of the plot

A created state of disequilibrium is important to the plot of *inshimi*. The basic conflict and resolution are generally simple: an obstacle comes between the central character and desired object. One of the following scenarios is frequently found:

- A stronger entity takes away or prevents a weaker entity from obtaining or achieving a desired object;
- Difficult conditions lie in the way of marriage to a beautiful woman in the community;
- A conceited woman does not find the right marriage partner or marries *iciwa*,[15] as in the Lukwesa story (see Appendix A);
- There is peer ridicule, because an individual does not fit into the norms of society, e.g. a woman who cannot give birth.

45

3 The 'MUSIC' in *inshimi*

The song is a developmental device which underscores and summarises the major image of a story. It facilitates audience participation, and it provides a mnemonic device for the community to learn the elements of a culture and aesthetic linkages between the people and other objects found in the story. Apart from the structural and thematic developmental roles that songs play in *inshimi*, there is strong reason to believe that they also represent, from a musicological point of view, a microcosm of Bemba musical arts practices. The performance of a song in *inshimi* is an authentic musical tradition of the Bemba musical arts practice and embodies the musical concepts fundamental to Bemba 'MUSIC'. In the singing, moving and clapping that are a part of *inshimi* are the explicit and implicit presentations of interrelated musical as well as spatial concepts and practices that present a nucleus of Bemba traditional musical arts practices. The song reveals, rather than explicitly stating, the feelings of characters without the necessity of analysis or description. The text of the song in the story of Lukwesa is a summary of the issues addressed in the story. The other important function of the song is that it is a musical example and genre that presents all that is 'MUSIC' in the cultural context of the story. In this section the essential musical concepts and characteristics found in the songs of *inshimi* will be analysed with reference to the song 'Mpungu malela' ('Hovering bird')[16] (see Fig. 3) from the story of Lukwesa as a way to illustrate the general elements of songs in *inshimi*.

3.1 Performing the song

The songs are performed as part of a story. The 'MUSIC' consists of a song accompanied by clapping. The clapping is designed to bring out the beat and *umukonkonsho*,[17] but a regular pulse can also be clapped at the same time. Drumming and dancing may be introduced depending on the dynamics of the moment and the participants. Everyone present is expected to participate in the telling of the story, especially in the performing of the song.

Inshimi use the song ('MUSIC') as the major developmental device, but the story itself can be said to be music because it behaves like music when viewed in its totality. The narrative line behaves as a melody which is organised in time by a set pattern of song entries. The song entries break up the narrative, creating an overall pattern that contributes to the overall rhythm of the story. At each entry the song either introduces a new mythic image or propels the previous one forward. In many stories the song is repeated each time a new character is introduced. When feelings are organised into patterns, the story then becomes music.

The storyteller moves and gestures. At times much of the body moves and at other times it is just a head nodding or a hand gesturing. The audience moves in sympathy. These movements together and connected to the narrative and the music are the dance of *inshimi*. In some cases this dance may manifest itself where either the storyteller or the audience or both dance to the story melody and rhythm. In a similar vein, Scheub (2002: 81) writes: 'The human body, in its relationship with other human bodies, can become a metaphor, and, in the process, can also become the poem in the story.'

Lelo naya kumwesu uko nafumine, mpungu malela
Today I am going home, where I came from, *mpungu malela*
Ndeti nafyala umwana nafyalila mukanwa kobe, *mpungu malela*
Whenever I have a baby, it ends in your mouth, *mpungu malela*
Uyu wena wakulela naba mayo, *mpungu malela*
This one is for my mother and I to nurture, *mpungu malela*

Fig. 3 The song text and notation of 'Mpungu malela' ('Hovering bird'), with English translation

The storyteller has a good grasp of the collective as well as the individual histories of the participants. The participants also have an idea of their collective knowledge and skills. An individual may have specific story content that is not known to the others, but all participants in *inshimi* have a role to play in bringing a story into reality. In *inshimi*, the participants know what to do, they know why they do it and they know the outcome. The telling of *inshimi* is constrained by conventions that make the story sensible and that will allow all to participate in the story-making using features they know and identify as *inshimi*.

3.2 The relationship of text, language and message to 'MUSIC'

In general, *inshimi* carry didactic messages about *imiteto* – the mores of the Bemba community. The songs are a soundscape – a sound canvas upon which the emotive narrative pictures are painted by the storyteller and interpreted collectively and individually by all participants, expressed by Egan as 'acoustical rhythm' (1988: 100). In the story there are two musics taking place, at times simultaneously: one of the musics is the structure and performance process of the story, the other is the song itself.

3.2.1 The relationship between text and 'MUSIC'

The texts are treated syllabically and influence both the rhythm and the melody of the 'MUSIC'. Melodic and rhythmic movements are generally text-bound in that the movement of the pitches follows the tone contours and syllabic duration frequency of the spoken word. The rhythm is also based on the text in that the long and short syllables of the text influence the durational rhythmic values. In Fig. 4 the words *mwana*, *kobe* and *mayo* have a longer

Fig. 4   Syllabic relation to duration

first syllable and this is reflected by a longer note (crotchet), but the shorter second syllables are reflected by a quaver. The spoken rhythm of the text *mpungu malela* is also reflected in the melodic rhythm.

There is always a pulse cycle that fits with a designed syntax of the text, which forms the natural structural boundaries of the sections of the song. It controls the phrase lengths (cycle lengths), while the syllable lengths account for the rhythm duration values. Often the phrase endings are indicated by longer duration values. The melody is text-bound in that the syllabic movement and the tonal (pitch) levels influence the melodic movement. The pitch contour often reflects the tone levels of the spoken word.

3.2.2 The relationship between language and 'MUSIC'

The Bemba language is tonal and therefore words have their own natural up and down pitch movement. The way in which a word is pronounced influences its meaning: for example, depending on how the word 'Bemba' is pronounced, it can either mean *language* or *sea*. This tonal nature of the language influences the melodic contours of the songs, which usually follow the inflections of the spoken word. Further research is in process to provide scientific proof of these observations made by Ng'andu.

The natural syntax of the language influences the phrase lengths of the tune. In some cases this rule may be broken where other considerations such as the musical needs take precedence. There are also 'meaningless' words (sometimes called mnemonics) that are used onomatopoeically for specific rhythmic and melodic needs. The tonal nature of the language has musical implications. The pitches are carefully chosen to keep the musical sense, but at the same time comply with the implied word-tone direction.

Phrase lengths are determined by the syntax of the language. For example, in 'Mpungu malela' the phrases are organised in six-pulse cycles, but the third phrase, beginning on the word *ndeti*, has been modified to fit the needs of the message carried by the text and ends up being nine pulses. The syntax controls the phrase lengths (cycle lengths), while the syllable lengths, as already indicated, account for the rhythm duration values.

3.2.3 The relationship between message and 'MUSIC'

The acoustical rhythm created by the song and the underlying story-music is important, because it draws the participants from ordinary living into the temporary state of the story. The combination of emotion and music results in a metaphor which allows for a subconscious understanding. The rhythm of the story is created by the interplay between the narrative and the song. It creates an imaginary scene where it is possible for the inner and outer being to meet.

3.3 Form

Most of the songs of *inshimi* are in the call-and-response form, which has several varieties. Most common is a repeated pattern or varied leader's calls answered by

fixed choral responses. 'Mpungu malela' uses a fixed response to a changing call. The text, rhythm and melody of the call change each time the call is repeated, while the response (*mpungu malela*) remains exactly the same throughout the performance. This is true of most of the songs from *inshimi*. There is no set relationship between the length of the leader's call and that of the response, but there seems to be a suggestion that length and complexity of these sections are dependent on a number of factors:

- age of performers;
- level of virtuosity of the performers;
- purpose for which the song is intended.

Older people tend to tell elaborate *inshimi*, which in turn contain relatively complex structured songs. This seems to be due to the fact that older people have better linguistic and musicological skills acquired over a lifetime of participation in *inshimi*.

3.4 Time-related factors

The basis of durational structure in Bemba traditional 'MUSIC' practices is an interaction of at least two rhythm patterns, one organised in twos, the other in threes. The combination of these two patterns produces a resultant (*umukonkonsho*) upon which other structures such as the melody are built or performed. Even when the 'MUSIC' is performed without instrumental accompaniment, as is the case with *inshimi* songs, performers will create the second rhythm force through some aspect of their performance, such as clapping or just slight nodding of their heads.[18] This is the same phenomenon that is created by a mother when she sings and moves her baby, as described by Ng'andu (2000: 24–5) and Nzewi (1999: 72–87). Hansen (1982: 37), in reference to the Xhosa people of South Africa, called the phenomenon 'physiologically generated polyrhythm'.

The rhythm is also based on the text in that the duration of the syllables of the text determines the durational values of the rhythm. The rhythm is based on the interchange of sounds that are one pulse and two pulses in length. In some cases this rule may be broken where other considerations have to be taken into account, such as the musical needs.

3.5 Melody

The melody in *inshimi* songs usually starts high and descends using a combination of developmental devices such as stepwise motion, thirds and fourths. The range is usually narrow and within an octave, and pentatonic as well as heptatonic scale systems seem to be dominant. 'Mpungu malela' uses intervals of thirds as well as stepwise motion in its tentative rise at the beginning and gradual descent (most evident in the second phrase starting on the word *ndeti*) through a range of a sixth. It uses all the tones in this range, suggesting a heptatonic scale. There is a leap of a sixth at the end of the first phrase and the beginning of the second and also at the end of the second phrase and the beginning of

Fig. 5   Harmonisation in thirds in the response of 'Mpungu malela'

the third. This is significant punctuation as it clearly signals the end of one structure and the beginning of another. There is an interesting use of downward leaping intervals at phrase ends such as the examples found on the words *mwana* (bar 6), *kobe* (bar 8) and *mayo* (bar 12). This melodic movement seems to be for the same purpose, but the first one on *mwana* is a fourth while the other two are thirds. This is significant in that it points to the influence of the tonal language on melodic movement.

3.6 Harmony and texture

The songs are harmonised predominantly in thirds with occasional fifths, but sixths and tenths are used in cases where some performers cannot use the thirds. The texture is generally a combination of monophonic and homophonic: monophonic in the call sections as they are performed by the storyteller and homophonic in the response sections with participants spontaneously taking up harmonic parts. 'Mpungu malela' can be harmonised in the response (see Fig. 5) but most often it is sung in unison, as this best invokes the loneliness and distress implied by the text.

4   Implications for musical arts education

The African continent is seeking a solution to its education problems and *inshimi* seem to provide an answer as they resonate with the progressive educational ideas of Aristotle,

Dewey and Piaget – not to mention current theories such as Gardner's (1991a) theory of multiple intelligences and Egan's (1988) story form model. *Inshimi* as an oral practice has demonstrated its viability as a form of education especially for children. It is a valid form which should not be replaced by literacy systems, but instead provide a foundation for all education.

Inshimi uses imagination, integration, interaction, repetition and metaphor to socialise Bemba communities. Sessions of storytelling involve some or all of the following: singing, drumming, dancing and dramatisation. These activity areas are central to an effective musical arts programme. It is noted that the story can be seen as music in a poetic manner, but it is the performance of the song that brings out all the above four activity areas and allows all to participate actively.

4.1 Philosophical and psychological issues

Inshimi approaches musical arts education from both the praxial and aesthetic philosophies. *Inshimi* as a concept is an artefact which can be contemplated, but it is also a practice that comes alive only in performance by the Bemba community. It can furthermore bridge the perceived divide between indigenous knowledge systems and global knowledge systems by connecting intuitive and logico-mathematical systems. Below are some broad discussions and suggestions for practical use of *inshimi* in musical arts education:

- The pedagogical philosophy of *inshimi* seems to be a very well-balanced combination of the praxial and aesthetic philosophies of 'MUSIC' education. The performance of *inshimi* teaches through practical participation while the entity of *inshimi* contains substantive materials that can be studied aesthetically.
- *Inshimi* intuitively teaches many aspects by integrating the 'inner' person to the 'surface' person. *Inshimi* enables the Bemba (especially children) to explore and integrate the inner self, described in Bettelheim (1975: 97–102) as the three languages *id*, *ego* and *super ego.*
- Musical stories develop concentration and memorisation.
- Musical stories take the sting out of the repetition so often used in modern teaching to reinforce certain concepts. In the Lukwesa story the song is performed four times in the context of the story. Younger children enjoy hearing and performing stories repeatedly, thus practising music and language skills without noticing it.
- Musical stories still appeal to young people 'whose minds quickly grasp the images and forces behind the verbal message and whose motor muscles and creative minds can turn out almost anything, sometimes beyond the ken of the adult from the musical art' (Okafor & Ng'andu, 2003: 189). The learning starts in fantasy which eventually turns into reality. *Inshimi* should be the foundation for the education of a Bemba child because according to Hughes (1988: 30–40), ownership of stories enables ownership of their deeper consciousness embedded in the totality of the story (text, songs, gestures, etc.).

4.2 Conceptual implications for musical arts education

The use of *inshimi* and its pedagogical principles would broaden possibilities in approaches to musical arts education. It is not in the scope of this article to pursue all the avenues, but to highlight a few conceptual *inshimi* principles as pedagogical principles for musical arts education. Below follow some conceptual aspects of the *inshimi* practice:

- *Inshimi* approaches teaching and learning from an integrated and holistic view. Knowledge is approached through the act of performing as a set of integral or interlinked concepts. For example, all concepts of music are presented at the same time and in relation to each other and also in relation to all knowledge that a community may deem necessary to teach and learn.
- *Inshimi* practice is interactive: the whole community interacts in *inshimi* in that everyone formulates the objectives and all participate in the teaching and the learning. *Inshimi* by their nature contain intrinsic objectives.
- *Inshimi* differentiates participants by ability: each of the participants is able to selectively use only those parts of the materials that are suitable for their current level of development *within the context of the whole*. For example, a child may concentrate on the musical content of a *cisungu*[19] song while an older participant, who may already know the musical concepts, may gain from the didactic message of the song text.
- *Inshimi* use imagination, integration and metaphor to socialise communities.
- *Inshimi* can bridge the current gap between intuitive and logico-mathematical teaching and learning systems and are therefore useful in connecting our inner and outer selves. This attribute helps children make a transition from childhood into adulthood.

4.3 Model for classroom use

Apart from the practical application of music stories, the archetypal structure introduced earlier could serve as a model on how to teach musical arts content:

- **Opening formula** – identifying the importance of a musical arts topic such as dancing, storytelling, singing, etc., and then determining the aspects relevant for the learner.
- **Descriptive transition** – a short description of the topic which might be achieved by using the principle of binary opposites.[20] For example, if the topic is singing, dynamics, timbre, etc. are described and demonstrated.
- **Main body** – several ways could be engaged in the development of the subject matter. Imaginative repetition of key performance-based aspects similarly to how a song is interspersed in a story engages the child's mind and develops and improves memory as well as performance skills.
- **Concluding didactic** – a resolution of the activity of the main body based on the principle of binary opposites.
- **Closing formula** – this ending formula should include an evaluation of the level of learning.
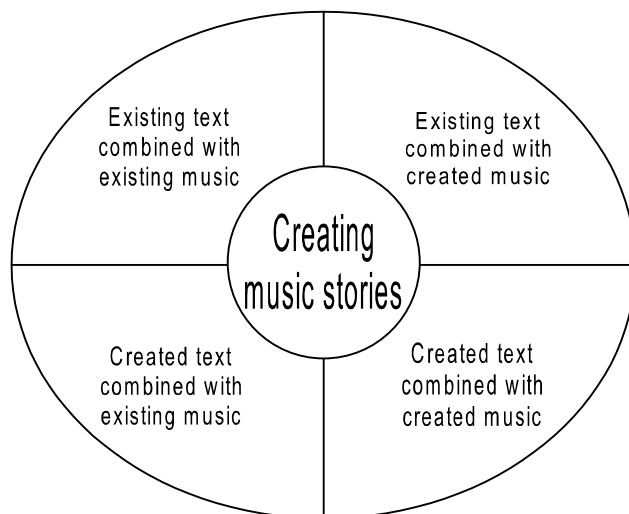
Fig. 6   Ways to create music stories

Musical storytelling in the classroom can take several forms. The most obvious is to facilitate (tell and perform) existing music stories from the local community and others collected by, for example, Hugh Tracey (1986). Music stories can also be created to develop specific music concepts and skills chosen by the teachers. Fig. 6 shows different ways to create stories for classroom use. Songs can be accompanied on available instruments by the participants while singing the songs, or, alternatively, a group of participants can form the instrumental group that accompanies the other participants. The adult narrator can also be replaced by one of the children in repeated performances. Children should also be encouraged to create their own stories. Apart from giving them a chance to be creative, their stories can give the teacher an indication of their musical, linguistic and social development. Recordings of stories created not only provide the 'concluding didactic' but also the 'closing formula', as they offer the opportunity to discuss, evaluate and refine elements presented in the story.

5   Summary and conclusion

This article has described *inshimi* through an outline of its components. In so doing it has revealed the potentialities and implications of this practice as a tool for education in general and 'MUSIC' education in particular. The emphasis has been on the problem of bridging informal, intuitive and indigenous knowledge, gained mainly in childhood and from home environments, and formal, school and global knowledge, which is gained later mainly through the education system.

54

The 'well-established' logico-mathematical and linguistic conceptualisation of educational development has been challenged by theories such as the theory of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1991a) and the story form model (Egan, 1988). Unfortunately, these theories have not filtered down to teaching practices and the older Western ideas of education are still influencing formal school education in Africa.

Inshimi organises learning and teaching in the story form model, which uses the binary opposites approach (Egan, 1988: 8, 15–16, 26–8) within a holistic framework. A storytelling approach has room to incorporate the present assembly-line model (Egan, 1988: 33–8),[21] with its dominant known to unknown methodology. *Inshimi* allow for deep understanding by letting the mind grasp the total picture and only eventually and gradually breaking this picture into its component parts. In *inshimi* there is embedded an organic approach that draws on principles of learning that are embedded in as well as stimulating imagination. This seems to be a natural way of learning and teaching. Learning and teaching 'MUSIC' through *inshimi* is a practice of the Bemba people that can be extended and developed for use in the schools of Zambia, Africa and the world. Storytelling is a universal practice and therefore a natural solution not only for the problems facing Bemba education, but for those of the world in learning and teaching what is deemed important – in this case 'MUSIC'.

A story is a structural abstraction inculcated through repetition into human memory. It is a way of thinking, an organiser of information and ideas, the soul of a culture, and the mythic and metaphoric consciousness of a people. It presents a prehistoric and historical thread of human awareness, a way in which all people can know, remember and understand. *Inshimi* provides a mirror that shows the Bemba community the truth about itself. Through *inshimi* the community transcends the experiences of daily living and finds out individually about the enduring spirit that rises above the little events of the community's existence. In *inshimi* the Bemba people embrace their humanity, because, while they are experiencing the storytelling, they can accept pain, find justice and experience victory.

It is suggested that the characteristics contained in *inshimi* are also found in its 'MUSIC'. It is furthermore suggested that the practice of the 'MUSIC' of *inshimi* functions in the same way as *inshimi* on a microcosmic level. Bemba *inshimi* 'MUSIC' practices, like other Bemba traditional musical practices, function within the cultural norms of the community. The songs in *inshimi* present the basic fundamentals of Bemba musical arts practice and emphasise the rhythmic basis of the 'MUSIC'. In its simplicity the 'MUSIC' reveals the elemental structures of pulse, beat, melody, harmony and texture. Songs like these have been used outside *inshimi* and hold the promise of being valuable musicological resource materials.

The description by Cancel (1981: 52) of the acquisition of *inshimi* skills and concepts contains the African philosophy and approach to education in general, and musical arts education in particular:

> All performers learn by watching and participating in narrative sessions. Many evenings, from childhood to adolescence, are spent at home, listening to relatives and friends performing. Plots, images and the techniques of composing narratives are observed, attempted and refined in a congenial atmosphere of constructive commentary.

Appendix A: The story of Lukwesa[22]

Patile akantu, kaikele nge efyo.

Once upon a time,

Kwali imfumu, yalifyele umwana umu-suma. Awe uyu mwana alekana abaume. Aleti fye uwaisako akana, uwaisako akana.

there was a chief who had a beautiful daughter. The daughter refused suitors. She turned down all who proposed.

Kwaisa isa ne ciwa nacifwala bwino, ne njinga iyipya cileisa no kwisa. Awe caisa fika nokwali umwana wamfumu, caikala. Awe umwana wamfumu asumina neco ciwa.

There came *iciwa.*[23] It was well dressed and had a bicycle. It reached the chief's daughter's place. The chief's daughter agreed to *iciwa*'s proposition.

Lukwesa nokuya camusenda. Nomba kandume yakwe akati nkonke? Akana. Ati nkonke? Akana. Baleya fye neco ciwa babili.

Lukwesa then left with *iciwa.* The young brother asked if he could go along. She refused. He asked again. She refused.

Kandume yakwe kakonka no kukonka. Baleti fye balolesha kunuma, kabelama mufimpukusa. Balolesha kunuma, kabelama mufimpukusa. Awe baleya fye, iciwa cile mubepa fye ati njikala kumushi kanshi ninshi cikala mumpanga. Baleya no kuya baleti balolesha ko, kabelama. Baleya fye, baenda mumpanga iyitali banaka. Ati: isa twikale pano pene tukule ko umusakuta emo tulelala.

The young brother followed them. When they would look behind he would hide in the bushes. They continued going and *iciwa* lied to Lukwesa that it stayed in a village, but it stayed in the wilderness. As they went, when they looked behind the brother would hide. They travelled a very long distance and were tired. *Iciwa* told its spouse that they were going to build a lean-to and that is where they will spend the night.

Bakula no musakuta baikala. Kanshi ninshi apo pene epo caleikala. Baikala. Cileti fye ubushiku ngabalala cabuka caipaya inama ishingi. Umukashi alebuka asanga fye nacipaya inama ishingi. Awe umukashi ati nokuti: pano pene apo muleipaya inama epo natuleikala muleipayako inama tulelya.

They built a lean-to and stayed. This in fact was where *iciwa* stayed. They stayed. As they slept in the night *iciwa* would wake up and go and kill a lot of animals. When the wife woke up in the morning she would find a lot of animal carcasses. Then the wife said: we should stay here so that you can continue to kill animals for us to eat.

Kandume yakwe kafika no kufika. Awe bwaila nokwila, balala. Nomba lilya balala kumacaca caima caipukumuna, casangukila muciwa. Ninshi umwukashi nalala talemonako. Kandume yakwe ekalemona. Na kafimbana nakumutwe kalemona uko caima caipukumuna casanguka iciwa. Nomba kalaumfwa umwenso. Awe casanguka iciwa cayaikata ne nama ishingi. Caisa tulika na mu ng'anda.

The younger brother then arrived. Then it was night. They slept. When they were asleep in the early hours of the following morning it transformed itself into the *iciwa.* The woman was asleep and did not see. The younger brother witnessed the transformation. He covered his head but continued to observe and got frightened. It turned into *iciwa* and went and killed a lot of animals and came and heaped them in the house.

Lilya Lukwesa aleisa mukubuka, asanga nacipaya inama na ciyipukumuna cili na mumuntu, nacilala no kulala.

Awe ulucelo lilya caya mumpanga, kandume yakwe kashala kayeba Lukwesa ati nawishiba ulya waupwako ciwa. Akana ati efyo nakwebele ati wikakonka. Nomba walabepa ubufi auti ciwa? Awe ati awe kanshi capwa lelo ubushiku kumacaca wise ubuke, ndekukakilila akasaka kucikondo nganaisa kutinta ubuke, uleisa mona ifyo cicita.

Awe apo pene bwaila no kwila, balala. Nomba kumacaca kulya caisa buka, caipukumuna casanguka iciwa ninshi cafuma mumpanga ne nama. Awe bwangu bwangu kandume yakwe katinta na kasaka kucikondo. Abuka, alolesha nomba ninshi Lukwesa umwenso wamwikata, wamwikata elyo iciwa caisa calalolesha pamwana aciti; indye uyu? Ati talanona. Indye uyu? Tala nona. Nomba Lukwesa umwenso wa mwikata. Ala fwaya ukuti apo pene eme, nomba nga asunkana cimumone ninshi cile mulya. Awe balala fye ifyo fine. Chipukumuna casanguka no muntu.

Awe ulucelo bwaisaca, Lukwesa aya, na kung'anga mukufwaya umuti wakuti akailemo. Aya no kuya ninshi iciwa calimwipaile uyo wine umwana akwete. Akwata naumbi ati nomba aya kung'anga mukufwaya umuti. Ati uyu muti usende. Umbi ukayebika kwifwe, umbi kubutala, umbi mumpanga. Nga cafumapo, mu kambe no kuya. Awe abula no muti umbi ayabiika kwifwe, umbi kubutala, umbi mumpanga. Awe Lukwesa bayamba no-kuya, munshila baleya fye, baleya fye. Nomba iciwa cabwela mumpanga, caisa-sanga tabalipo. Cayamba ukwita ati: Lukwesa! Umuti uuli kwifwe wayasuka ati:

When Lukwesa woke she found that it had killed animals and it had already transform-ed itself into a human form and was asleep.

In the morning when *iciwa* went into the wild, the younger brother told Lukwesa that her spouse was *iciwa*. She refused and said this was why she was opposed to him coming because now he was fabricating this story of *iciwa*. He then told his sister that he would tie a string to her toe and will pull it to wake her up in the night, so she could see for herself what it did.

Then it was night again. They slept. Then in the early morning hours *iciwa* got up and transformed itself and went and returned with animal carcasses. Then the brother quickly pulled the string on the sister's toe. She awoke and saw and got very frightened. She was frightened when *iciwa* went to the baby and said: should I eat this one, then turned away saying, he is not ready. She was so frightened that she wanted to get up, but realised that if she did *iciwa* would eat her. She remained as she was, pretending to be asleep. *Iciwa* transformed itself into the human form.

Then it was morning, Lukwesa now went to a diviner to get *umuti*[24] to help her leave. *Iciwa* had killed her child, but she got an-other one. The diviner gave her *umuti* to take with her. She was instructed to put some of it where they drew water, the other in the storage barn and another in the bushes. When *iciwa* was away they were to depart for their home. Lukwesa did as in-structed and they departed. Upon its return *iciwa* began calling for Lukwesa. Then the *umuti* at the river answered – singing:

'Mpungu malela' (see. Fig. 3)

Awe iciwa caya kwifwe. Caita, caita. Awe camona Lukwesa taliko. Caita, Lukwesa! Uuli kubutala wayasuka:

Then *iciwa* went to the river. It called and called, but Lukwesa was not there. It called again and *umuti* in the storage barn answered:

Repeat the song

Awe iciwa cabwela kwifwe caya kubutala. Cafwaya, casanga Lukwesa taliko. Caita, Lukwesa? Ati mukwai! Ine ndeteba inkuni mwe. Walaimba:

Then *iciwa* left the river and went to the storage barn. It searched and found that Lukwesa was not there. It called out: Lukwesa? *Umuti* in the bushes answered that it was gathering firewood and started singing:

Repeat the song

Awe Lukwesa uko baleya fye. Cileti iciwa caita, umuti wayasuka kwifwe. Chaya kwifwe – walayimba:

Meanwhile Lukwesa and brother were just going. When *iciwa* would call *umuti* would answer and sing the same song:

Repeat the song

Iciwa cafwaya kwifwe cafwaya. Casanga Lukwesa taliko. Nomba caumfwa icipyu, aciti kankonke fye uku kumushi limbi kuti naya. Cakonka ulubilo cabutuka, cabutuka, cabutuka, cabutuka, cabutuka. Caitako, Lukwesa? Caumfwa fye ku ng'anda ati; mukwai naine ndebansa amale. Awe aciti bushe mbweleleko? Aciti: kandeya fye, calaya fye. Caya musanga.

Iciwa looked at the watering place. It found that Lukwesa was not there. It felt frustrated and decided to go to her village just in case she had decided to return there. It followed – running. It ran, ran and ran. It called out: Lukwesa? An answer came from the house: I am getting millet. It became undecided – it wondered whether or not to go back, but decided to continue towards the village. It caught up with her.

Nomba Lukwesa aumfwa ati uku kunuma kuleisa ifintu. Alolesha ko amona cili mukwisa. Asha akuba intoyo, akuba intoyo ishingi, pantu iciwa calitemenwe intoyo. Caisafika calalya, calalya, calalya, calalya. Lukwesa kulya aleya fye ulubilo, ale butuka fye, ale butuka fye. Lukwesa afika na kumbali ya mushi.

Meanwhile Lukwesa felt that there was something coming behind. When she looked behind she saw it. She then cast a lot of *intoyo*[25] on the way because *iciwa* liked them very much. When *iciwa* got to *intoyo* it started eating them. It ate, ate and ate. In the meantime, Lukwesa continued running away and soon was close to her home.

Iciwa capwa intoyo cayamba ulubilo. Alolesha kunuma amona cili mukwisa. Asha akuba intoyo ishingi mumusebo. Iciwa caisa mukulya. Lukwesa aleya fye, aleya fye. Mpaka afika na pa ng'anda. Bati no kuti Lukwesa wayenda shani? Alondolola fyonse ifyo ayendele.

Iciwa finished *intoyo* and started running. She looked back and saw that it was coming. She cast some more *intoyo* on the road. *Iciwa* again stopped to eat *intoyo*. Lukwesa continued going until she reached her house. They asked her about her journey? She explained her circumstances.

Pati kashimi kapela.

And thus ends the story.

Notes

1 The term 'music' in its contemporary Western cultural usage is not adequate to denote all the practices that the Bemba people would use to refer to music. Therefore 'MUSIC' will be used to convey musical arts practices that are part of the *inshimi* practice such as *inyimbo* (songs), *ukutota* (clapping) and *ukucinda* (dancing). Minette Mans suggested the term *Ngoma* in the context of Namibia (Mans, 2002).

2 The Bemba story with its English translation appears in Appendix A.

3 Several terms such as 'performer' and 'narrator' were considered, but the term 'storyteller' is selected to indicate that the content of the story and the telling of it form a unity.

4 *Inshimi* (*inshimi* – plural, *ulushimi* – singular) are stories incorporating a song or songs in their structure. In the Bemba language the term *inshimi* can stand for the stories themselves or for the practice of storytelling. It is used in this article to represent the practice of storytelling.

5 www.almanach.be/search/z/zam_bemba.html, accessed 15 September 2003.

6 The Bemba nation in this context is all the people that originate from Bemba roots and submit to the cultural laws of this ethnicity.

7 'Intuition' or 'implicit learning' in this context refers to a form of long-term memory moulded through regular exposure to music. Incoming stimuli are compared with existing patterns and are instantly recognised as a match or, alternatively, as completely new information (Herbst, 2002).

8 The term 'musical art' refers to the integrated nature between music, dance, drama and the visual arts.

9 Free translation of the iciBemba passage: *Imilumbe ne nshimi filemoneka nga fimo fine, lelo kwena nafilekana panono. Imilumbe tayaba na nyimbo, eyo abaume batemwisha ukuuma pa bakalamba banabo, na pa baice pene nga bamona apo bali pacitwa icintu icibi, atemwa icisuma . . . Na banakashi bene nabo balome milumbe, lelo batemwisha ukushimika Inshimi ishaba ne nyimbo. Bena tabashimika akasuba, kano icungulo-bushiku ilyo bapwe milimo.*

10 Interviews by Joseph Ng'andu with Basilio Mwango Ng'andu during 1997–8.

11 '*Katile akantu*' the leader calls and all present answer '*kaikele nge efyo*'.There are variations to this opening, but the meaning and purpose remain the same. It was, for example, noticed from research data from Mungwi (a district administrative centre about 25 kilometres north-east of Kasama, Zambia) that the second phrase, '*kaikele nge efyo*', is '*kaikele nge fyo twikele*', which is translated as 'it stayed as we are'. The first word of the stories collected from Mungwi is *patile* and not *katile*, but they share more or less the same meaning.

12 The village is the usual setting for *inshimi*. This may be because it is the dominant type of domicile in Zambia, but *inshimi* set in townships and cities are beginning to make an occasional appearance.

13 Scheub (1975) refers to this as the core image in his description of the Xhosa form of storytelling, *ntsomi*.

14 The following variations on the closing formula have been noticed from research data collected from Mungwi, Ng'andu and Kasama (three areas in the northern province of Zambia): '*Kali kashimi kapela*' ('that which was the story, has ended'), '*awe na kashimi kapela*' ('then the story, thus ends'), '*awe na kashimi kacita shani? Kapela*' ('then the story does what? It ends').

15 *Iciwa* (singular) *ifiwa* (plural) – fantastic/fabulous figure(s) that often appear(s) in *inshimi*.

16 The meaning 'hovering bird' does not literally refer to a bird, but is symbolic of a longing feeling for another world which is soaring or hovering above Lukwesa's troubles. *Impungu* is a bird bigger than most eagles and flies very high; *malela* is derived from *ukulela* which means a suspended hovering in space. The combination of the two words describes the longing undercurrent of the song.

17 A fundamental rhythm pattern which is often the result of two or more rhythm patterns that are metrically different being performed at the same time.

18 Observations made during fieldwork and analysis of video footage from the storytelling sessions of the stories 'Chama wesu' and 'Shamupanga'.

19 A Bemba initiation ceremony for girls which is conducted mainly through song and dance.

20 The term 'binary opposites' is used when two opposing forces are compared as a way to understand them.

21 In this model Egan proposes a curriculum that follows the principles and structures of a traditional story.

22 The story as transcribed by Kapambwe Lumbwe from a video recording. The translation into English is literal and was done by Joseph Ng'andu.

23 See n. 15.

24 Medicinal herbs in general; in this case *muti* refers to two herbal sticks (*impimpi*) with power to cause supernatural happenings.

25 'Monkey nuts' in English, referring to a type of local Zambian nut that differs from peanuts.

References

ANTWEILER, C. (2002) 'Local knowledge and local knowing: an anthropological analysis of contested "cultural products" in the context of development', <http://www.nuffic.nl/ik-pages/ikww/index.html>, accessed 4 September 2002.

BETTELHEIM, B. (1975) *The Three Languages in the Uses of Enchantment*. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd.

CANCEL, R. (1981) Inshimi *Structure and Theme: The Tabwa Oral Narrative Tradition*. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilm International.

EGAN, K. (1988) *Teaching as Storytelling: An Alternative Approach to Teaching and Curriculum*. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, Inc.

EGAN, K. & NADANER, D. (Eds) (1988) *Imagination and Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

FROST, M. (1977) '*Inshimi* and *Imilumbe*: structural expectations in Bemba oral imaginative performance'. PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison.

GARDNER, H. (1991a) *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Basic Books Inc.

GARDNER, H. (1991b) *The Unschooled Mind*. New York: Basic Books Inc.

GARDNER, H. (1993) *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*. New York: Basic Books Inc.

HANSEN, D. D. (1982) 'Categories of Xhosa music'. In *Papers Presented at the Second Symposium on Ethnomusicology*. Grahamstown, pp. 34–52.

HERBST, A. (2002) 'Developing music intuition: an approach to music education'. In Caroline Van Niekerk (Ed.), *Selected Conference Proceedings from the Conference held in Lusaka, Zambia, 21–25 August*. PASMAE, pp. 56–72.

HUGHES, Ted (1988) 'Myth and education'. In K. Egan and D. Nadaner (Eds), *Education and Imagination*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1988.

KAEWDANG, R. (2002) 'Indigenous knowledge for a learning society'. <http://www.nuffic.nl/ik-pages/ikww/index.html>, accessed on 4 September 2002.

MANS, M. (2002) 'Using Namibian music/dance traditions as a basis for reforming arts education'. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, <http://ijea.asu.edu/v1n3>, accessed on 31 October 2002.

MUSHINDO, P. M. B. (1976) *Imilumbe ne Nshimi Shintu Bashimika mu Lubemba*. Lusaka: Zambia Publishing Bureau.

NG'ANDU, J. (2000) 'A reassessment of the content and instruction-methods in the Zambian music education programme'. Unpublished MMus thesis, University of Cape Town.

NZEWI, M. (2002) Keynote Address 2: 'Music education in Africa: mediating the imposition of Western music education with the imperatives of the indigenous African practice'. In Caroline Van Niekerk (Ed.), *Selected Conference Proceedings from the Conference held in Lusaka, Zambia, 21–25 August*. PASMAE, pp. 18–37.

NZEWI, M. (1999) 'Strategies for music education in Africa'. *International Journal of Music Education*, Conference Edition, **33**, 72–87.

OKAFOR, R. & NG'ANDU, J. (2003) 'Musical storytelling'. In A. Herbst, M. Nzewi and K. Agawu (Eds), *Musical Arts in Africa: Theory, Practice and Education*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.

SCHEUB, H. (1975) *The Xhosa Ntsomi*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

SCHEUB, H. (2002) *The Poem in the Story*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

SEMALI, L. M. & KINCHELOE, J. (Eds) (1999) *What is Indigenous Knowledge? Voices from the Academy*. New York: Falmer Press.

TRACEY, H. (1986) *Lion on the Path and Other Stories.* Grahamstown: International Library for African Music (ILAM), Rhodes University.

TROSTLE-BRAND, S. L. & DONATO, J. (2000) *Storytelling in Emergent Literacy: Fostering Multiple Intelligences*. San Diego: The Brain Store Inc.