Narrative Research

Rauno Huttunen, Hannu L.T. Heikkinen & Leena Syrjälä (eds.)

SoPhi

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Voices of Teachers and Philosophers

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SoPhi

Jyväskylän Yliopisto 2002

SoPhi 67

http://www.jyu.fi/sophi

SoPhi publishes social sciences at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, and it is located at the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy. It provides a forum for innovative studies in social policy, sociology, social work, political science and philosophy. SoPhi publishes 10–15 titles per year, both in Finnish and in English. Manuscripts are selected for publication on the basis of expert opinion.

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Finland

SoPhi is distributed world-wide by Drake International Services, Market House, Market Place, Deddington, Oxford OX15 0SE, UK, tel. (+44) 01869 338240, fax (+44) 01869 338310, e-mail: info@drakeint.co.uk, website: www.drakeint.co.uk

In North America SoPhi is distributed by International Specialized Book Services, 5804 NE Hassalo Street, Portland, OR 97213-3644, USA, tel. 503 287 3039 or 800944 6190 (toll free), fax 503 280 8832, e-mail: info@isbs.com, website: www.isbs.com

ISBN 951-39-0982-4
ISSN 1238-8025

Printed in Kopijyvä Ltd., Jyväskylä 2002

Cover Marko Nääsilä
Layout Olli-Pekka Moisio

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Preface

Narrative, narrative identity and narrative research are nowadays probably the most commonly referred to terms in humanistic, social scientific and educational literature. Some even speak about a narrative turn. Nevertheless, the idea of narrative research and its basic concept are unfamiliar and obscure to many. This obscurity arose out of suspicions surrounding the application of the narrative approach in research. For this reason many students and researchers might well encounter some difficulties when planning and executing their narrative research projects. The editors of this anthology hope that it will help to enlighten the nature of narrative research and increase the understanding of the narrative approach. Another aim of this anthology is to participate in the international discussion concerning the theoretical and philosophical foundation of narrative research.

The first part of the book consists of studies about the fundamental issues of narrative research. The section begins with an introduction to narrative research, its current trends and theoretical foundations. The other articles clarify the relationship between narrative research and history, the relationship between the researcher and the informant in narrative research and the concept of narrative identity.

The second part of the book is solely dedicated to the problem of truth. In this section philosophers discuss, among other things, the possibilities and impossibilities of the correspondence theory of truth in the context of narrative research. And any discussion of truth must also include a discussion of power. The last article in this section deals with Friedrich Nietzsche's and Michel Foucault's history and biography critical remarks on truth and confession.

The articles in the third part of the book are narratives about telling narratives. Teachers and student teachers tell stories about the act and experience of story-telling. The authors reflected on how story-telling has changed their identity and how they start to live their story. The last article in the section introduces the concept of Duography. It is a story about interviening of the stories of a doctoral student and a professor.

The fourth part of the book consists of examples of the use of narrative research in Finland, Norway, Israel and Belgium. The geographical curve of these articles moves from Lapland to the Middle East through Central Europe. The polyphonic narrative data concerns personal growth within the field of teacher education, the micropolitical connections of student teachers, teachers' narratives about school reforms and the role of body in kindergarten teachers' narratives. These articles provide a comprehensive glimpse into the practice of narrative research in teacher research in different countries.

The making of this book would not have been possible without the support of the Finnish Academy project *Teacher in Change*. The aim of this project – led by professor Leena Syrjälä – is to introduce the narrative-biographical approach into the research and discussion of teacherhood. In addition, the project aims at describing the moral-ethical orientation that is implicit in teachers' biographies. It also aims at understanding the consequences of school reforms in teachers' "week-day" and at combining the analysis of biographies with theoretical and philosophical enquiry. The narrative data have been collected by different methods and it includes the biographies of about 100 teachers, mainly hailing from Northern Finland. The storytellers are teachers of different educational levels (kindergartens, schools, universities etc.). Some of the articles in parts three and four are based on these materials.

The editors would like to give special thanks to the translators and language correctors – Lissu Moulton, M.Sc. and Lic.Phil. Sirkka-Liisa Leinonen. They provided invaluable support in guiding the clumsy Finnish writers in English.

Narrative is a mode of verbal representation so seemingly natural to human consciousness that to suggest that it is a problem might well appear pedantic. But it is precisely because the narrative mode of representetion is so natural to human consciousness, so much an aspect of everyday speech in ordianry discourse, that its use in any field of study aspiring to the status of science must be suspected.

Hayden White

I

Narrative research – a polyphony

The articles in this section deal with the basic concepts and theoretical foundation of narrative research. Hannu Heikkinen's article *Whatever is narrative research* is an introduction to this widely used approach. There has been an enormous amount of interest amongst educational and social scientists in narrative and autobiographical research. Some writers have even referred to a paradigm change or a change in knowledge culture. According to Heikkinen, narrativity in research is a multifaceded creature. Narrative research has as many goals as there are researchers in this field. Narrative research is not a method, nor is it a school of thought. Rather, it is a loose frame of reference, the only common character of which is that attention is paid to narratives as a producer and transmitter of reality.

In his article *Narratives in history, fiction and educational research*, David Bridges asks: What is the relationship between the educational research reports and fictions? In research – as in literature - there are many different ways of storying the same events. It is for this reason that the notion of any simple correspondence between the published narrative and the events has already been rendered seriously problematic. Bridges questions whether this elision between educational research and narrative fiction implies that there was no real difference between the two literary forms? What, if anything, distinguishes history (biographical research) from the historical novel? And why or for what purposes might one prefer history? What does history do for us that fiction or the historical novel does not?

In their article *Face to face – The human dimension in the biographical interview*, Raija Erkkilä and Maarit Mäkelä explore one of the most rarely studied aspects of narrative research. That is, the relationship between the researcher and the informant. Erkkilä and Mäkelä claim that while a large number of narrative-biographical research reports and methodological handbooks discuss empirical research, the actual practice of collecting data and, more specifically, the experiences of biographical researchers in doing research are rarely presented and discussed. Erkkilä and Mäkelä ask how researchers should confront their own experiences in interview situations and reflect the meaning they apply to the research process.

One of the most elementary concepts in narrative research is the concept of narrative identity. This concept is actually representative of a field of

philosophical disputes. Arto Laitinen's article *Charles Taylor and Paul Ricoeur on Self-Interpretations and Narrative Identity* sheds light on this matter by presenting an analysis of two famous contemporary philosophers. Laitinen claims that many of the characterisations that Paul Ricoeur uses to describe his hermeneutical theory of narrative identity apply to Charles Taylor's theory as well. There are, however, also differences. Ricoeur takes a detour through the structural analysis of narrativity and stresses the role of emplotment. Taylor, on the other hand, stresses the role of strong evaluations as the central theme of the narratives. Ricoeur thinks narratives are a privileged form of organizing temporally distant events, whereas Taylor connects narrativity more closely with practical reasoning. Yet they both think that both ethical and narrative aspects are necessary in analysis of the creation of one's identity.

Hannu L. T. Heikkinen

WHATEVER IS NARRATIVE RESEARCH?

Caterpillar. The archetype of a machine, full of power and masculinity. The noise of the chain tracks, the smell of oil and exhaust gas. The powerful noise of the robust diesel engine. Feel the power, become somebody, become Caterpillar.

The previous text was not written by a copywriter although it perhaps could have been. Caterpillar brand is an example of how we build vivid mental images around some products. In business and merchandising, the creation of images and brands is becoming increasingly based on the stories which are gathered around the products themselves. The evocative narratives are then subsequently connected and applied to a wide variety of products. In Caterpillar, the imago of a product has been applied from heavy machinery to clothing.

In some cases, the product narratives have become more important than the product itself. The brand of the product is in some cases regarded as more valuable than the productive means. Perhaps some day Caterpillar could forget about the production of earthmovers and continue only with the production of clothing, and Harley Davidson could cease production in its motorbike plants and concentrate only on making pens. Or the "Camel Boot Man" might announce some day on television that he has quit smoking.

The power of narratives has not only been detected by copywriters, but can indeed be regarded more as a general trend in (post)modern knowledge production. It has even been said that we are shifting from an information society into a narrative society, in which images and stories are more the basis for people's consumer decisions than product information (Jensen 1999). Increasingly pre-calculated seductive narratives are being created for companies and products, the task of which is to distinguish themselves

from the rest, create desire; build up corporate identities and product brands.

As we come to realise that reality is increasingly built by means of narratives, it is no surprise that researchers are also becoming interested in them. No wonder there has been an increasing amount of discussion regarding the role of narratives and biographical writing both in the research process and research reporting. The focus has shifted to narratives to the extent to which we could claim that the linguistic turn in the social sciences has become a narrative turn. Lately, it has also been called a narrativist turn (Kreiswirth 2000) or a biographical turn (Chamberlayne, Bornat, & Wengraf 2000). Anyway, however it is called, the growing interest in biographical and narrative approaches has been considered so remarkable that it has been described as "a change in knowledge culture", and even "a paradigm change" (Chamberlayne, Bornat, & Wengraf 2000).

The linguistic turn into texts, discourses and narratives has been connected with a paradigm shift from (naive or scientific) realism toward constructivism (Lincoln & Guba 1994). From the constructivist viewpoint, without any narrative of myself or of the world, neither would exist – there is no "reality" and no "life" which has not been construed by words, texts and narratives. For Jerome Bruner, constructivism is "world making" whereas narratives are "life making" (Bruner 1987, 11–13). This statement of Bruner's presents an interesting clarification of the parallel between constructivism and the narrative turn in the social sciences. On a more general level, the move can also be connected to the cultural shift from modernism to postmodernism, which has blurred previously existing distinctions, including the line between scientific reports and artistic expression. As a consequence, personal autobiographies and narratives have engaged an increasingly captivated audience amongst social scientists. We may ask – as David Bridges does in this book – what are the limits if we licence ourselves as researchers to write "closer and closer in style and form to the novel, the short story, the forms associated with narrative fiction" (see also Eisner & Peshkin 1990, 365; Eisner 1993, Richardson 1994 and 1997).

Expressions like "a paradigm change" and "a change in knowledge culture" refer to a fundamental change in basic beliefs concerning reality and knowledge production. The constitutive attitudes to the nature of knowledge seem to have altered. The main discovery beyond this notion is that our knowledge is a composition of narratives, which is perpetually being constructed in the process of social interaction. These days, human knowledge is no longer regarded as "a grand narrative" which tends to draw together a coherent and universal view on reality, based on the correspondence between the "things-in-the-world" and sentences. Rather, it is a plurality of small narratives, local and personal in nature, which are always under (social and psychological) construction.

In this view on reality and knowledge, the individual and the social are intertwined. As Jerome Bruner has said, narrative is "an organizing principle by which people organize their experience in, knowledge about, and transactions with the social world" (Bruner 1990, 35). Individuals make sense of the world and of themselves through narratives, both by telling them and listening to other peoples' stories.

Narrative is a fundamental means through which people experience their lives, or through which they actually live their lives. It is the narratives in which we situate our experience. Human experience is always narrated, and human knowledge and personal identities are constructed and revised through intersubjectively shared narratives. The narrative is a primary act of mind; "the primary scheme by which human existence is rendered meaningful" (Polkinghorne 1988, 11). The reflexive project of knowing and achieving an identity is to sustain a coherent, yet continuously revised, narrative about ourselves and the world we live in.

Narrativity in research seems to be a multifaceted creature. It appears as though the concept of narrativity has a number of goals and purposes for researchers. In this article, I will present some of the various uses of narrativity that I have encountered. However, I do not presume to be able to exhaustively delineate the amoeba-like nature of narrative research, as such a presumption would actually directly contradict the theoretical points of departure commonly associated with narrativity.

Narrativity is not a method, nor is it a school of thought. Rather, it is a fragmented formation of research related to narratives. It is a loose frame of refererce, characteristic of which is that attention is paid to narratives as a producer and transmitters of reality. The relationship between research and narrativity can be examined from two main perspectives. On the one hand, research uses the term narrative in its material in the broad sense of the word, while on the other hand research can be understood in itself as producing (rational) narratives of the world.

However, for me, the question "Whatever is narrative research" needs some kind of clarification, and I hope my attempt to answer to this question would help some of the readers as well. Perhaps this examination will enable me to achieve what Ludwig Wittgenstein recommended in his Tractatus (see Tractatus, 6.54): I will discard it once I have used it in order to gain a better understanding and will encourage my readers to do the same.

A NARRATIVE OF THE RISE OF NARRATIVITY

Originally, the word narrative comes from the Sanskrit *gna* via the Latin *gnarus*, signifiers associated with the passing on of knowledge by one who knows (Kreiswirth 2000, 304). In Latin, the noun *narratio* means a narration or story and the verb *narrare* to tell or narrate. This etymology has influenced many of the western languages, where these root-words have turned into a number of slightly different variations.

Narrativity has deep roots in philosophy, literature and philology. Recently, the level of interest in narrativity has increased and broadened to encompass a number of fields of study. The discussion of a narrative turn began to become more common rather quickly over the course of the 1990s. On can get quite a good picture of the swift rise of narrativity by examining international quotation indexes (see Lieblich, Tuval – Mashiach & Zilber 1998). They indicate that the appearance of narrativity and its closely related concepts has increased exponentially in research literature from around the mid-1980s.[1]

Although the significance of narration in the information process has always been a point of interest for philosophers and researchers, beginning with Aristotle's Poetica or Cicero's rhetorical studies, the interest in narrativity rose at an explosive rate at the end of the 1900s. The effect on Finnish scientific research practise and the mode of expression has only began to become visible some ten years later, around 1990.

An explicit image of the growth of narrativity in Finland is provided by a list of doctoral dissertations published in Finland, in which the concept of narrativity plays a central role (Hyvärinen 2000). The list begins in 1990 with one title, after which the number of Finnish doctoral dissertations dealing with narrativity has increased steadily throughout the 1990s.[2]

As far as I can see, the concept of narrativity has been used in at least four different ways in academic discourse. Firstly, it can be used to refer to the *process of knowing and the nature of knowledge*. Here narrativity is generally associated with the constructivist view of knowing. Secondly, it can be used in describing *the nature of research material*. Thirdly, we can use narrativity to refer to the *means of analysis* of the research material, and, fourthly, the concept is often associated with the *practical meaning of narrativity*. It is not only a concept used in research, but also an increasingly used practical tool: the writing and telling of life stories is applied in a number of practical ways in professional work. Below, I will examine each of these four dimensions of narrativity more closely.

Narrativity as a constructivistic research approach

Perhaps the most fundamental significance of narrativity is rooted in the nature of (qualitative) research. Quite often, narrativity is associated with theoretical and cultural perspectives, which tend to be referred to as constructivism, and sometimes also as post-modernism (Holma 1999, 322–324: Lieblich et al.1998, 2). The modernist science has aimed at becoming a universal means of examination that is independent of context; timeless and universally applicable. The post-modern concept of knowledge rejects the traditional objectivist concept of reality, according to which reality can be illustrated by means of claims which can be proven true or false. According to the narrative line of thought, a research report is, in the words of Nancy Zeller (1995 b, 75), a product rather than a record.

Constructivism highlights the view according to which people construct their knowledge and identity by means of narratives. Knowledge of the world, like each person's concept of him or herself, is a continuously developing narrative, which is constantly forming and changing form. There is no single dominant reality, but, rather, there are a number of different realities that are being constructed in individual's minds through their social interactions with one another. Research, from this perspective, perhaps has an ability to produce some kind of authentic view of reality, although the belief in the potential attainment of an objective reality is rejected.

The basic claim of constructivism is that a person – the knowing subject – constructs his or her knowledge on the basis of his or her previous knowledge and experiences. Our perspective on things constantly changes form as we gain new experiences and engages in discussions with other people. The constructivist concept of knowledge is representative of knowledge as relative; dependent upon time, place and the position of the observer. From this perspective, knowledge is the thread of the narrative, which constantly gets new material from the ever-changing cultural pool of stories in order to re-join it again. Similarly to the composition of identities and everyday information, narrativity also constantly works two ways in research: narratives are both the point of departure and the end result. A research report traditionally opens by referring to earlier studies and then, based on these studies and the research material, creates a new text from a new perspective. Then the new research report is once again connected to the pool of narratives, a (scientific) discussion in which reality is endlessly surrounded with the help of continuously renewing texts.

The post-modern concept of knowledge vivaciously questions the modern scientific objectivist way of speaking and the illusion of value-free knowledge.

From the post-modern perspective, positivist science has been viewed as a major meta-narrative, which sustains the image of objectivism and systematicism through rhetorical means (see, for example, Zeller 1995 a , 212 and 1995 b , 80–81). In research, this has appeared as an attempt to present pure knowledge without the presence of the knowing subject in the knowledge process. An impression of the researcher is created as an objective and impartial observer. In place of objectivity, post-modern thought brings with it the contextualisation of cognition: the binds of cognition to time, place and the social field. Cognition is always cognition from a given perspective, a given point of view. The modernist notion of a universal knowledge is rejected: cognition is always the knowledge of some knowing subject. This person – the knowing subject – lives within a specific social and physical environment; he or she is someone's child or life partner, and he or she has lived a certain life. Everything that he or she can know originates from these connections of understanding.

According to Hatch and Wisniewski (1995, 118), the central difference between traditional qualitative research and narrative research is the subjectivity of cognition. Where qualitative research is still mainly "scientific," in the empirical sense of the word, narrative research does not aim at objective or generalised knowledge, but, rather, at a local, personal and subjective knowledge. While the modernist order of knowledge considers this exclusively as a weakness of research, narrative research views the same aspect as a strength. It allows people's voices to be heard in a more authentic manner. Knowledge is thus formed as a more multi-voiced and multi-level entity, a group of small narratives, and do not become reduced to one, universal and monological "grand narrative," which often also acts as a tool of power and manipulation.

Narrative research can thus be seen as one manifestation of the suspicion that has been aimed at the modern order of knowledge. It has encouraged oppressed and marginalised groups of people to create their own narratives, by means of which they are able to break free from the dominant stories of the "grand narratives". Post-modern thought has also inspired many researchers to engage in experimental writing: a combination of literature, fictional and scientific discourse. This kind of writing brings for forth the relativity and contextualisation of the post-modern concept of knowledge – the temporal, local and social nature of cognition.

Narratives as research material

Narrativity has also been used in the description of *research material, the character of the material.* In this case, narrativity can be used in order to refer on a general level to the narrative as a kind of text. According to Polkinghorne (1995, 6–7), research material can be produced in three different ways: numerically, in short answer form or in the form of a narrative.

Information that is presented in numerical form is produced, for example, through the Likert scale, by which people assess their own opinions in relation to previously presented claims. Short answers are material in which the responses by the research subjects are comprised, for example, of names, nationality, automobile names or something like hobbies. Narrative material can be, for example, interviews or free form written answers in which the research subjects are given the opportunity to express their concepts of things in their own words. Other examples of this kind of material are journals, autobiographies or other documents that are not necessarily originally produced for the purpose of research.

In this meaning, the narrativity or the material implies a text that resembles a kind of prose – narrative research material is a narrative that is presented either orally or in writing. In the more demanding sense of the word, a prerequisite for narrative material could be the requirement that it possess more narrative characteristics, such as, for example, that a story has a beginning, a middle and an end, as well as a temporally progressive plot. In its simplest form, it is nonetheless any narrative based material, to which the requirement of the production of complete, plot-filled narrative is not necessarily applied.

All three of these types – numerical, short answer and narrative material – can be represented in the same research material, even in the same questionnaire. Nonetheless, their use in the analysis stage presupposes a different means of thought and analysis. It is easy to see that narrative material differs significantly from numerical research material, which is also why the nature of handling it is different. It is important to note, however, that narrative material also differs from short answer material. Short verbal answers can be presented in the form of a list or a catalogue, and they can often be comprehensively categorised in to different classes (Polkinghorne 1995, 6). Narrative material differs in this sense from the two aforementioned types of material: it cannot be unambiguously and un-residually reduced to a number or category, but, rather, its further handling presupposes interpretation.

According to Hatch and Wisniewski, the attention in narrative research is focused particularly on how individuals assign meaning to things through

their stories. The research approach that highlights individuals' authentic narratives distinguishes narrative research from, for example, from those aims of qualitative research in which knowledge is collected through previously planned and outlined means of data collection. These kinds of data collection methods are, for example, thematic interviews, questionnaires, participatory or direct observation. In these research approaches, the assignment of meaning is to a large extent based on the researcher's interpretation and conceptual formation, whereas in narrative research, the location of the "*voice*" of the research subject is emphasised. In narrative research, knowledge is often formed through discussions with the research subject in the form of a dialogue. The intention is for the narrator and researcher to reach a joint, intersubjective understanding, in which the narrator assigns meaning to things in his or her own voice. For this reason, the ideal is that the researcher and the research subject work together for an extended period of time and engage in numerous discussions. (Hatch & Wisniewski 1995, 113–117.)[3]

Narrativity as a means of analysis

We can also refer to a *means of processing material* with narrativity. I have found Donald Polkinghorne's (1995, 6–8) way of dividing narrativity as a way of analysing material into two separate categories to be useful. Polkinghorne distinguishes *the analysis of narratives* from *narrative analysis*. According to him, these two are categorically completely distinct ways of doing narrative research. The *analysis of narratives* places emphasis on the categorisation of the narrative into different classes with the help of, for example, case type, metaphors or categories. In *narrative analysis* the main point of focus is the production of a new narrative on the basis of the narratives of the material. Thus, narrative analysis does not pay attention to the categorisation of material, but, rather, it configures a new narrative on the basis of this material.

This distinction between narrative analysis and the analysis of narratives is fundamentally based on Jerome Bruner's way of distinguishing between two separate means of cognition. Bruner (1986) refers to the form of understanding that is based on the narrative as *narrative cognition*. *Paradigmatic cognition* is presented in a way characteristic of logics and mathematics: typical to it is exact and formal argumentation built by means of an argumentation based on logical propositions, the precise defintion of concepts and the presentation of categorisations. Narrative cognition, on the other hand, is the production of a thematically and logically proceeding

narrative from events. According to Bruner, both means allow us to attain useful and qualified knowledge, which, however, differs in terms of its quality. Bruner strongly defends narrative cognition as one form of rational scientific thought, which has remained in the shadow of paradigmatic discourse.

Polkinghorne's distinction between narrative analysis and the analysis of narratives is based on these two cognitive means presented by Bruner. In the analysis of narratives, paradigmatic cognition is applied when the material is categorised into different categories and types. In narrative analysis, on the other hand, narrative cognition, which according to Polkinghorne (1995,15) is more the creation of a synthesis than categorisation, is applied.[4]

In many research projects, these two views are combined in the practical research work, but more emphasis may be laid on one or the other. For example in this book, the last section "Think global – narrate local" may be said to lay more emphasis on analysis of narratives of teaching in different cultural and educational settings, whereas in the third section "Looking through stories", the focus is perhaps more in composing narratives out of the writers' experiences and memories.

Narrative analysis, in which the focus is on the production of a complete and plot-filled, chronologically proceeding story, has forced narrative research to walk the line between literature and scientific discourse. Examples of the combination of creative and experimental writing appear to be most common in the fields of ethnography and women's studies. Ethnographer Robert Rinehart (1998) refers to his own writing style, which lies somewhere between fictional and academic writing, as *fictional ethnography*. As Laurel Richardson (1994, 523) sarcastically points out, this kind of writing seems to be a luxury open for those academics who have achieved a permanent post in the academic world.

Richardson (1994, 521) has collected a number of examples of experimental writing from fields within the social sciences, which she refers to as *evocative representations*. Richardson lists the following as belonging to this category: narratives written in the first person, fictional texts, dramas, the production of a research text based on communication occurring between a researcher and research subject, aphorism, comedies and satires, as well as visual performances.[5]

The use of fictional elements in research is also related to experimental writing. Actually, we can refer to all research reports as fundamentally fictional, in the etymological sense of the world. The Latin term *fictio* means something made or achieved. From this perspective, all texts, including so-called "scientific" texts, are really ultimately fictional (see Barone 1990, 315). When the researcher combines texts, interprets them and build his

or her own text based on them, it ultimately means that the final research text is a construction made by the researcher, and as such fictional in this sense. Also in this book, in the third section, "Looking through stories", some different writing styles are experimented, including duography (Syrjälä & Meriläinen), pedagogical autobiography (Heikkinen), and a conversation of three people in a written form (Heikkinen, Andem & Vainio).

We can view the inter-mingling of various ways of doing research and writing as a natural result of the shift from the modern scientific ideal to the post-modern, constructivist concept of science. The post-modern state of mind is juxtapositional, multi-dimensional and multi-voiced, as well as ambiguous, incoherent and conflicted, which modernist science has always adamantly avoided. Norman Denzin and Yvonna Licoln borrow – in the non-confined and free way associated with post-modernism – Claude Levi-Strauss' *bricoleur* as the personification of the researcher. (Denzin & Licoln 1994, 2–3; Lincoln & Denzin 1994, 584).

Bricoleur creatively applies various methods and materials without giving any consideration to their original or "real" intended use. The most important aspect of bricoleur is the use of one's own creative thought, followed by the "correct use" of methods and materials. *Bricolage* is a creative and divergent practice in which reason without methods is used, instead of methods without reason. A researcher practising bricoleur creatively applies a number of different research methods and writing styles. Lincoln and Denzin (1994, 584) present Robert M. Pirsig's hero Phaedros as a prime example of bricoleur. They refer to an episode in Pirsig's novel "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance", in which Phaedros fixes the handlebar of his friend's motorcycle with a piece of aluminium he has cut from a beer can under the suspicious gaze of his friend.

Narratives as a practical tool

The fourth understanding of narrativity refers to its use as a professional tool. According to Hatch and Wisniewski (1995,117), practical orientation is typical of many narrative researchers: the research must somehow benefit the research subjects. According to Hatch and Wisniewski, their goal is not merely to portray an image of the world, but also to move it by attempting to improve the lives of those who are the focus of the research.

In some contexts, narratives are used primarily as practical tools, in which case the role of the cognitive formation of the research remains secondary. In this case, the task of the research to form new information and knowledge

is not an end in itself, but, rather the practical uses become more significant. Narrative practice has also been applied in, amongst other fields, psychotherapy, pedagogy, teacher education, health care, geriatric care, social work and rehabilitation, business leadership and marketing.

Many of these practical applications are based on the notion that our identities go through a process of continuous reconstruction by means of the narrative. In identity work, the life story is produced and highlighted as the point of focus by which the fragmented nature of life can be collected into a more complete entity, which in turn leads to an increased sense of control over life. In this book, this narrative configuration of identities is more carefully elaborated in a number of articles, and especially by Arto Laitinen, in the light of Paul Ricoeurs' and Charles Taylor's philosophy. Some practical application of these theoretical ideas are also presented in the third section of the book "Looking through stories", where the self-construction prosess through narrative work is closely focused.

Perhaps the most typical example of the practical significance of the narrative can be found in the sphere of phychotherapy. The use of the narrative as a psychotherapeutic tool is based on the notion that the patient's own self-narrative is detrimental from his or her own perspective, which is why a new and more productive narrative must be created. The therapist works with the patient to create the kind of narrative through which it is possible to overcome whatever life crisis he or she is facing and open new views into the future.

As Polkinghorne (1995,20) notes, it is crucial to distinguish between narratives intended for therapeutic use and narratives that are significant in terms of research. When narratives are examined on the basis of their practical significance, the truth of the narrative is not really of any great interest. The most important thing is that the narrative helps the individual to live a better life. The aim of the research is nonetheless to form some kind of information. As such, the use of narratives as a professional tool significantly diverges from their use as a research tool: the former is interested in the practical consequences of the telling and writing of narratives, while the latter is interested in the formation of knowledge. In terms of the use of narratives as research information, the recognition of this therapeutic function is crucial in order to prevent these two functions from contaminating one another – at least not unintensionally and unknowingly.

In the modernist view on research work, the concepts of validity and reliability are often used as criteria of good research. When referring to validity we usually mean the degree to which the research findings actually correspond to the position of real things in reality. When we refer to reliability, on the other hand, we tend to mean the degree to which possible random factors have influenced the outcome of the research. In the modernist view, we examine the truth of narratives from the perspective of the degree to which the claims in the narratives correspond to the state of things in reality. In other words, the basis of this mode of examination is the correspondence theory.

As narrativity is often associated with constructivist thought, the use of the correspondence theory in the estimation of narrative research is problematic. Constructivist thought is based on the perspective that the truth is basically produced though narratives, in which case the other side of the proverbial correspondence coin is difficult to discern. It is for this reason that the correspondence theory appears to be a problematic truth criteria from the perspective of narrative research (see Heikkinen, Kakkori and Huttunen 2001). In this book, the problem of truth is dealt with in the second section "Truth as narrative", where Pentti Moilanen also gives us interesting viewpoints so as to defend correspondence theory in narrative research.

In this introductory text, I briefly focus my attention on Jerome Bruner's notion of the truth of narratives as "verisimilitude". Bruner's concept of the truth of narrative research is based on his aforementioned distinction between paradigmatic and narrative cognition. The intention of both forms is to convince or persuade the reader. According to Bruner, the persuasion is focused on different aspects: the aim of paradigmatic cognition is to convince its readers of the truth, while the intention of the narrative form is to convince its readers of verisimilitude. The narrative provides the opportunity to understand the world differently than by means of paradigmatic cognition: as a slowly developing dialectic and plotted story, which includes a strong verisimilitude at any given time.

Verisimilitude is not based on arguments or claims, but, rather on the notion that the reader really throws him or herself into the story and actually experiences it as a simulation (Lincoln & Denzin 1994,580). Verisimilitude is the feeling of something that really addresses the reader or listener through something that he or she has experienced personally. Robert Rinehart(1998) considers the central aspect of narrative verisimilitude to be that a given

experience occurs for the reader as a holistic emotional experience through the narrative. Being conceived of a narrative's verisimilitude is a more all-encompassing experience than being conceived of the truth of a given claim. According to Rinehart's interpretation verisimilitude also includes an affective element, whereas the concept of truth has a completely cognitive meaning in this light.

In this sense, verisimilitude extends to encompass the evaluation of fictitious narratives [6]. When a narrative is verisimilitudinal, the question of whether the events have actually happened in some real place to some real individual is not so important. The characters and occurrences can be imagined. What is important is that the story's world be opened up to the listener in a believable manner, so that the listener begins to take on the role of the characters and understand the effects of their actions within the conditions in which they live. Simulation has the potential to open something new to the story's listener or reader to the extent that he or she experiences the world in a completely new way through the experiences of the narrator or character of the story.

Simulation as a criteria of truth does not, however, mean that reality is excluded from narrativity. Quite the contrary: reality is precisely included in a simulation. Conversely, in writing based on claims and correspondence, reality lies in the world outside the text, to which the claim is compared. The reader should, however, be enlightened as to the writers relationship with reality: is his or her aim to interpret and create reality through the narrative as a simulation, or does he or she present claims about the state of things?

In my view, different genres should be combined and lines crossed, also unexpectedly. The combination of different styles and experimental means of presentation are beneficial to science, art and communications. But no matter what the means of storytelling, no attempt to mislead the reader or listener should be made – for doing so results in the loss of authority of the story and loss of believability of the narrator. It is the responsibility of the narrator to enlighten the reader of the intent of the story.

Notes

1 Lieblich, Tuwal–Mashiach and Zilber have not, however, taken into consideration the increase in research literature in general, but even if the growth in total volume is taken into account, the trend seems clear.

2 A number of stories can be told about the reasons and background behind the rise in narratives. According to Matti Hyvärinen (2000), in the backdrop of the narrative turn lie the major philosophical projects of, amongst others, W.T Mitchell, Alasdair MacIntyre, (1981) and Paul Ricouer (1984), which aim at combining the interpretations of the nature and meaning of the narrative in different scientific fields of study. I am tempted here to add some names to this list: Charles Taylor (1989 and 1995), Jean-Francois Lyotard (1986), Jerome Bruner (1986 and 1987) and Anthony Giddens (1991 etc.) The latter of Taylor's works, *Ethics of Authenticity* searches for ethical foundations as the basis of an authentic life. *Lyotard's The Post-Modern Condition. A Report of Knowledge* was an important pamphlet that cast shadows of doubt over the dominant story of the development of modern society toward "a grand cultural narrative." Instead, it proposed "small narratives," the notion of the foundation of knowledge as an ongoing linguistic game. Jerome Bruner defended narrative cognition as a means of scientific thought in his work *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*, which was become a contemporary classic in the field of narrative research. Giddens' *Modernity and Self-identity* is a strong example of a discourse of identity politics in which the creation of a life story is portrayed as a necessary way of producing identity in the late modern cultural situation.

3 The narrative approach comes close to action research in two ways. Central to both is the idea that the researcher and research subject be in a close relationship with one another, sometimes even being the same individual or group. According to Hatch and Wisniewski (1995), the other common characteristic is that both take into consideration the practical consequences of the research from the perspective of the research subjects. They emphasise that narrative research must have practical benefits for the research subjects – a leading thought also shared by the action research movement.

4 In my view, Polkinghorne's concept of "narrative analysis" is contradictory in this sense, as its ultimate goal is not to distinguish or analyse, but instead to synthesise and collect. It would be more logical to refer to narrative synthesis than narrative analysis.

5 Experimental scientific prose can also be considered as one of the specific meanings of the concept of narrativity, as Hyvärinen does (2000). In this outline, however, I still consider it as logically belonging to this third category, and not as its own classification. In other words, my interpretation is that experimental writing that comes close to the style of writing fiction is ultimately a specific form of narrative analysis, in the sense referred to by Polkinghorne.

6 The Latin word *fingere* means, amongst other things, formation, contemplation,

creation and discovery. The noun *fictio*, which is derived from fingere, means something outlined, formed, created. The verb *facere* means doing, happening. The noun *factum*, which is derived from facere, means something done, something achieved. In late Latin this root became the plural *facta*, which began to be used to refer to real things. In everyday speech, we use the term fact when referring to existing realities and the term fiction when referring to products of the imagination. However, the terms fact and fiction were not originally positioned against one another as opposites but, rather, were almost identical in terms of their meaning.

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David Bridges

NARRATIVES IN HISTORY, FICTION AND EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND LITERARY FORM

For some years now qualitative research writing in education has come closer and closer in style and form to the novel, the short story, the forms associated with narrative fiction. Among the features of qualitative research writing which have produced this "contiguity of literary studies with the project of ethnography" (Clough 1999, 444 but see Denzin 1997) are the following:

- the use of the simple narrative form to 'tell a story';
- the focus on the single case as an illumination of a wider phenomenon – including eg. the use of biography and autobiography to personalise a general theme;
- the presentation of 'thick description' of the social context of events, of the physical setting, of the personal as well as professional lives of the characters involved;
- the visible presence in the writing of the author, of the author's history, prejudices and reactions;
- the focus on the phenomenology of events, of the way people experience them and of their affective as well as cognitive response to them.

The more that educational research reports embrace these features the more strongly they resemble fiction even if they retain distinctive and distinguishing claims in terms of their relation to evidence and to what are in some sense, though not unproblematically, real events in a real world.

This relationship between educational research writing and fiction is brought even closer if we also acknowledge, as I think we must, that educational researchers, like writers of fiction, employ both art and artifice in the construction of their research writing:

- It is entirely compatible with their responsibilities as researchers to contrive their case study, their contemporary history, their biographical writing, their storying so as to engage the readers' feelings and imagination as well as their intellects, to draw them into the story, to help them identify with or at least understand their characters and their settings.
- They may reasonably (may they not?) make decisions in the interests of literary fluency, elegance, style or dramatic effect. There are few who have engaged in this genre who have not for example selected a particularly juicy, attention grabbing quotation for inclusion in the title or juxtaposed startlingly contrasting views of the same events for effect.

Beyond this, any research author would have to recognise, that in constructing such narratives we make selections from the data, we take points of view, we tell stories drawn from a pre-existing repertoire – all of which signal that the published narrative tells us as much about the author as it may about anything else and remind us that there are possible as many different ways of 'storying' the same events as there are people prepared to write them (indeed more, because we can all produce different stories of the same events). This is indeed why some working in this genre insist on a full declaration of, as it were, 'where the author is coming from', the better to enable the reader to take this personal history into account. Even with this assistance, however, the notion of any simple correspondence between the published narrative and the events of which it tells has already been rendered seriously problematic. Epistemologically, it becomes difficult to say either what it would mean to describe such a narrative as true or to explain how one would determine whether or not it was true (see on this Bridges 1999).

It is not surprising in this context that some educational researchers have taken this slide from qualitative research reporting in the narrative form to narrative fiction to its logical conclusion — they have licensed themselves:

- to tell their educational stories without the restrictive requirement to restrict themselves to what actually happened, or to that which they can support with evidence of one kind or another;
- to take the exercise of the imagination which is present in any research

reporting a stage further to fill in the gaps in their evidence, perhaps to replace the researched setting by an imagined setting, the observed characters by characters of their imagining;

- to enter areas of peoples' thoughts or private lives which normally lie outside the evidential base;
- to add extra ingredients of drama or interest where perhaps the story might have lacked either
- all in the interests of telling the 'greater truth', the 'greater realism' (Butor 1990 p48) which fiction has traditionally laid claim to express.

One example of this genre of fictionalised educational research narrative was a paper presented by Peter Clough at the 1999 Belfast conference of the British Educational Research Association, which was in the form of a story, a powerful, emotionally charged and convincing story about a male teacher who was provoked into violence against a pupil whom he saw spit at a young woman probationer. This story was based in part (though one was never sure which part) on research, which Clough had done in 'failing' schools, but Clough was quite explicit that this was nevertheless a work of fiction in which he had drawn widely from his own experience and imagination as well as his observation. As his published synopsis declared (BERA 1998 p136) "purports to be constructed from traditionally recognisable data" (he had conducted field research in the school) but which was elaborated, detailed, embellished and constructed out of his professional experience and imagination and in a style which made it clearly redolent of works of imaginative fiction. Consequently, in, for example, its lack of deference to publicly accessible evidence, it appeared, as he put it "to violate many commonly-held principles and procedures of social science research" (BERA 1998,136).

I asked then – and I continue to ponder on the question – whether this slide from perhaps biography and autobiography or contemporary or ethnographic research into fictional writing implied that there was no real difference between these different genres; or whether the elision between educational research and narrative fiction obscures some distinctions which we might ignore at some peril, in which case what are the significant differences between them and what their distinctive contributions to educational understanding? (Please note that I am concerned with distinctiveness and not necessarily with a hierarchy of value).

In one attempt to address these issues (Bridges 2000) I explored four different kinds of approach to identifying what might be significant difference between fiction and what we might recognise as evidentially grounded ethnographic, historical or biographical writing in the field of education

which featured what I insisted on referring to as 'real' correspondence, reported statements, exchanges etc.

- The first approach suggested that the real might be necessary as a basis for assessing the truth or validity of fiction;
- the second argued for the real as enabling readers to enquire into aspects of a topic which the author has ignored or excluded;
- the third looked at falsifiability as a feature of factual or fictional work;
- and the fourth examined what I called 'the magic of the real'.

For these purposes I was then drawing on two academic resources: traditional epistemology and the literature of museology.

The kind of issues which I was addressing in the educational context in terms of the relationship between what for the sake of convenience I will call real and fictional accounts of events (where the real are visibly and explicitly connected to evidential support and the fictional are not) echo very closely much older discussions about the relationship between history (and especially biography) and fiction – and especially about the standing and character of the historical novel vis-a-vis history proper. It occurred to me that this literature might well offer some clues to our more contemporary concern with the relationship between educational fictions and educational research.

Translated into this domain, my question becomes: what, if anything, distinguishes history from fiction or from the historical novel and why or for what purposes might one prefer history to these sources – what does history do for us that fiction or the historical novel does not?

This chapter is thus something of a report on work in progress in answering these questions[1].

History and historical fiction: some resemblance

History and fiction both take many different forms, but let me limit the field by declaring first that I am here concerned with the narrative form in both cases, with those expressions of both history and fiction which are expressed as stories – and this narrative form is of course one of the features which brings them together. Indeed, since the publication of Hayden White's Metahistory (1973) 'narrativism' has become perhaps the dominant perspective in discussion of the nature of historical discourse, so that Callinicos can claim that "the *differentia specifica* of historical writing is now held to be that it is a species of story-telling" (Callinicos 1995, 2).

Let us note, secondly, that these historical and fictional stories both constitute a literature both in the more *generic* sense of a body of writing, such as that examined in the 'literature review' which research students are traditionally required to perform, and in the *honorific* sense of writing of some quality or literary merit. In the nineteenth century and after, for example, the works of Gibbon or Macaulay have been read as works of literature and praised for their literary distinction almost as much as for their historical sweep and scholarliness. More recently Winston Churchill's History of the Second World War won him a Nobel Prize for literature. Nye suggests that

> Because the nineteenth century believed man's mind to be controlled by reason and imagination working in harmonious relation, it believed poets, historians and philosophers could establish relations among themselves with ease and exactness.... History and literature, their nineteenth century practitioners agreed, offered a continuous, integrated, selective narrative of experience that had meaning and relevance to man's condition; both attempted to distil out of experience some understanding of the relation between act and reaction, cause and effect... Both were assured of the importance of their relationship, confident of their common purpose and optimistic of their chances of achieving it. (Nye 1966, 124–126)

It was the introduction of quasi 'scientific' history under the influence of Ranke and which eroded this intimate association of historical with literary writing, which had its roots in the literary character of history as much as in the historical content of the novel.

Thirdly, long before the incursions of postmodernist theory, historians have acknowledged the problems of representation, which are present in historians' reading of their primary sources – be these official documents or private correspondence, archaeological artefacts or features of landscape, paintings, photographs or film, newspapers of indeed contemporary novels. Almost any historian would acknowledge that their scholarly productions involve a selection of material, an interpretation of material, a particular form of re-presentation of material in a changed context, and that elements of subjectivity, of pre-existing theoretical constructs, of ideology, perhaps, shape this process. Perhaps in the form of the novel, these elements have even freer play, but it would be nonsense to deny that they are present in even the most scholarly, most evidentially grounded histories.

Fourthly, to approach the resemblance from the other side, it is clear that some fictions set in historical time can show a level of care for scholarly accuracy and detail comparable with that of the good historian. Thus, in a

review of historical novels (to which I shall refer again below) Collins writes of:

> novels in which a well-researched background is combined with sympathetically drawn characters to allow genuinely historical issues to be examined (Collins 1990, 6).

These are not however only features of the genre of self-consciously 'historical' novels. If history approximated to the novel in the nineteenth century, so also did the novel approximate to history. Confronted with George Elliot's 'Middlemarch', Henry James was forced to ask "If we write novels so, how shall we write history?" (quoted in la Capra 1987, xii).

Fifthly, for these purposes, it is worth observing that both history and historical fiction make claims to be revealing truth about their subject matter in some way, though the notion of truth which is involved in this claim is one which carries some very different meanings. Note, however, that the historian's conveying of meaning is not restricted to the more prosaic or literal claims. As Nye points "the historian, like the poet and novelist, is aware of the metaphoric resources of language, and he draws upon them for both meaning and strength, as the scientist and the social scientist may not" (Nye 1966 p139). Nye may not have encountered the social scientists who frequent the contemporary education research conferences – but his point about historian's use of language is surely one we can recognise.

Sixthly, both literature and history require the active application of creativity and of the imagination. For the historian as well as the novelist, the imagination is employed in the process of selection and of interpretation. Selection involves decisions about which tale to tell, where to begin and to end, what facts to pick out, how to arrange them and what significance to endow them with. Interpretation involves attaching meaning to what might otherwise be presented as 'one damned thing after another', construing pattern, cause and effect, interpreting relationships – and relating all this in terms with which potential readers may engage. In these respects too the creative and imaginary acts of the historian are not a hundred miles away from the parallel acts of the writer of fiction.

All of this echoes very closely the similarities I have observed previously between factually based ethnographic studies of education and narrative fictions of education. The parallels with history and the novel reinforce the contiguity of the two genres. But does closer observation of history and fiction helps us any better to understand the differences? It is to these that I shall now turn.

Once we begin to explore the differences between history and literature, it is easy to come to the view that the historian writes under some disadvantage.

Most obviously the historian may only operate in the past tense. This is an orientation and stylistic limitation which denies the historian the vividness of the present continuous, but, more importantly, it denies the historian access to possible worlds: to what might be; to what should be; to what will be; even to what is – all of which are open territory to the novelist.

Further, the novelists can enter domains of human consciousness and experience beyond the reach of the historian's evidentially tied imagination. As Nye puts it,

> The rules of the historian's game bar him from doing what the poet or novelist, or even the biographer, is allowed to do. The artist is permitted to deal with the internal currents of men's minds, with the emotions and ideas and motives that run between the masks that men assume. It is in removing the mask, in penetrating downward into the well of the individual consciousness that the Faulkners and Conrads and Eliots and Robert Lowells find their true purposes. (Nye 1966, 149)

Thirdly, while the poet and novelist can exploit the reader's 'willing suspension of disbelief', the historian is limited by the conventional requirements of chronology, positionality (social and geographical), plausibility and authenticity. The historian's opportunity for creativity and imagination are thus significantly curtailed.

Finally, even when they might plausibly and without anachronism fill in the gaps between the parts of a story which the evidence will support, they are prevented from doing so by the requirement for an evidential base for their accounts. They may exercise their imagination and creativity in their selection of their evidence (historians tend to talk of their 'historical facts'), in the ordering and in the representation of their evidence – but the connection between the narrative and the evidence has always to be made, and if there is no evidence available, then the prudent historian stays silent on that aspect of history and leaves the field to the writer of fiction. As Kennan has put it:

> It is precisely in resisting the temptation to go further that his quality as a historian, as distinct from a literary person pure and simple, is most basically expressed. The true mark of his trade is that he accepts a set of rules far more rigorous and confining than those, which govern the novelist or the poet. He

> cannot create the pieces of his puzzle; he must attempt to put it together from those he finds lying around. Not only that, but having found a few pieces, he cannot even order them to his heart's desire. They are ordered for him chronologically in advance by that most imperious of all historical masters, the documented date, and before this authority he must bow his head in unquestioning obedience... (Kennan 1959 quoted in Nye p 157–8)

All of this starts to make history look like little more than a poor relative to the relatively wide ranging and liberated possibilities of fiction – unless you start to see the constraints under which the historian chooses to work as contributive to some benefit, some particular quality which is lost in fictional creations written without the same set of constraints.

Before trying to uncover in more detail what these might be, however, I want to return to the history of the relationship between history and the novel and to the particular turning point in the nineteenth century which was marked by the emergence of what aspired at least to introduce a more 'scientific' approach to history and with this at least the temporary divorce of the two genres. Perhaps in this period of separation there are some clues to what more positively distinguishes history from its fictional relations.

'WIE ES EIGENTLICH GEWESEN' – 'SCIENTIFIC' HISTORY AND THE BREAK WITH LITERATURE

The later decades of the nineteenth century saw a widening and self-conscious divorce between history and literature, and the arguments around this provide one source for an understanding of what might be distinctive between history and literature (and by extension between educational research and educational fiction). The key figures in the emerging duality were Hegel, who represented the literary tradition and who held that the writing of history began with a theory which might make order out of the course of events and Ranke, who stood firmly in an empiricist tradition and the belief that history began with the gathering of information about events, which enabled the faithful historian to tell what really happened, how it really happened, 'wie es eigentlich gewesen'.

There was more than one view of the sense in which history might aspire to the condition of science. These included:

(i) the aspiration to a kind of moral neutrality (Ranke was reacting to, among other things, the tendency of some nineteenth century historians to use history as a vehicle for moralising);

(ii) the aspiration to objectivity in the sense of a lack of prejudgement in advance of the evidence;
(iii) a search for laws of human behaviour akin to those which were developing contemporaneously in fields such as biology;
(iv) a rigorous attention to evidence to 'the historical facts'– which even led some to seek to limit themselves to providing the evidence at the expense of wider theorising;
(v) the adoption of a more clinical, less literary style of writing in emulation of the scientific genre.

Nye explains that:

> However they defined 'science' in history, these historians agreed that the 'literary' histories written by the early nineteenth century were unacceptable by the new standards. They did not mean that history might not be written with skill and attention to the use of language. They meant that narrative history, whose interpretations depend on the personal point of view of the historian, and whose meanings were influenced by his philosophical-theological beliefs, was really not history at all, but literature, which was quite a different thing. They did not believe that the historian should attempt to be a conscious artist in the telling of his tale. He should be an observer, a generalizer... a narrator of what happened, and only that. The historian was to be honest and thorough and impartial: he should not write too well..., though he should write as clearly, say, as the writer of a laboratory report or a sociological abstract. (Nye 1966,128)

Not that all contemporaries accepted the view that a scientific concern for the facts was incompatible with attention to literary virtues in the form of presentation. Theodore Roosevelt, no less, observed that good history is simply a presentation of scientific matter in literary form: "The great historian," he argued "... must have the power to take the science of history an turn it into literature." (Roosevelt 1913,16).[2] In allowing, however, the continuing presentation of history in a literary style, Roosevelt subscribed nevertheless to Ranke's aspirations for a genre, which was 'scientific' in its approach to facts, to evidence, to reality.

The project of historical scientificity (however this might be precisely defined) clearly offered the prospect of a much clearer differentiation between history and literature. It also presented a view of the particular merits of history over fiction: history offered facts and a view of how things really were, trimmed of the prosletysing morality or grand metaphysical theories of a previous generation.

Subsequent historiography has been riddled with debates around the claims and aspirations made on behalf of scientific history – and these were well rehearsed before such intellectual debates took their postmodern turn. The criticism has addressed both the naivety of its empiricism (in particular

its failure to appreciate that historical 'facts' are produced by historians as much as they are found by historians) and the limited nature of its interpretative goals. "By and large," wrote E H Carr "the historian will get the kind of facts he wants. History means interpretation." (Carr 1961, 18).

History as narrative (again)

The work of analytic philosophers like Danto and Gallie and then, more radically, Hayden White[3] re-focussed the attention of historical theory upon the nature of historical discourse at a time when structuralism was the most powerful available intellectual resource. The consequence was a reaffirmation of what might have been called 'the contiguity of literary studies with the project of history'. Barthes was among those who challenged the very distinction between 'historical' and 'fictional' discourse, and more especially history in its narrative form:

> Does the narration of past events, which in our culture from the time of the Greeks onwards has generally been subject to the sanction of historical 'science', bound to the underlying standard of the 'real', and justified by the principles of 'rational' exposition – does this form of narration really differ, in some specific trait, in some indubitably distinctive feature, from imaginary narration, as we find it in the epic, the novel, and the drama? (Barthes 1981, 7)

As Barthes clearly intends, once notions of rationality and objectivity desert history, once the notion of reference to some kind of 'reality' is undermined (not to mention any claims to scientificity) then the distinction between historical and fictional narratives becomes extremely difficult to sustain. Just as in the nineteenth century, 'fiction' in the form of the novel and history were allied in their search for objectivity and social realism, so, according to Barthes, were both genres at one in their lack of reference to anything. Barthes again:

> Claims concerning the 'realism'of narrative are therefore to be discounted.... The function of narrative is not to 'represent', it is to constitute a spectacle.... Narrative does not show, does not imitate.... 'What takes place' in a narrative is from the referential (reality) point of view literally nothing; 'what happens' is language alone, the adventure of language. The unceasing celebration of its coming. (Barthes quoted in White 1987, 115)

There is, of course a huge body of literature associated with this line of

argument. For the moment I must limit myself to three observations and a question, which will return us to the starting point of this paper.

(i) The first observation is simply that we have in this discussion of historiography and the fictional narrative form a perspective which would support not only the elision of historical narratives with fictional ones, but by extension the elision of fictional educational writing with other forms which lay claim to some kind of evidential base and reference to events in a 'real' world.

(ii) Secondly, if we accept the Barthian approach, it is not only the claims of history (or social science) to reflect that reality that fall, but also those of narrative fiction – and on a scale, which would certainly subvert the kind of project on which people like Clough have embarked. Fictional narratives become not, as Clough might have hoped, a more effective way in which to represent the reality of lived experience, but simply another spectacle, another celebration of the bewitching power of language.

(iii) Third, the argument which turns all narratives into a celebration of language around nothingness amounts to a hugely reductive project, which while being successful in observing some things which narrative forms might have in common, leaves unanswered the question of what kinds of things might yet distinguish some from others.

It is to this question of what might distinguish historical narrative from fictional narrative to which I want to return in my final section.

The distinction between the historical and fictional narrative

It may well be that the distinction between historical and fictional narratives can only be maintained by restoring some kind of reference for historical works. We have to observe, I think, two ways in which the word history is used: "to an object of study and to an account of this object" (White 1987, 55), to refer to the total of past human experience or some sub set of it (eg the history of the English speaking people) and to refer to what has been written in an attempt to describe and interpret that experience "A History of the English Speaking People") – what I shall refer to for the sake of observing this distinction as historiography. Briefly, it is almost impossible to make sense of historiography without some notion of that history (in the first sense) to which it relates and of course of which it subsequently becomes a part. So one view of the difference between fiction and historiography would be to do with the faithfulness of the account to whatever events and experiences it claims to be an account of.

This however is too simple, not least because historians like the rest of us have no direct access to the past; and so it is impossible in any direct way to observe or check the relationship between historical writing and history. We have instead to rely on various products of that history that are extant – artefacts, buildings, documents of many kinds, images – those things which for short I shall refer to as the evidence of history. Historians take care (variously) to ground their narratives on such evidence, to support their claims by reference to such evidence, to limit their accounts to territory in which such evidence is available and to challenge each other's narratives by reference to (among other things) the evidence available or newly discovered. While fictional narratives may place greater or lesser attention to such evidence, it is in their nature that they are not limited to it, confined by it.

However, such 'evidence' is itself deeply ambiguous – what is it evidence of and how? Without access to the past can we know? What distinguishes history is not just its evidential base, but the disciplined and ethical way in which historians are expected to approach it. This is an observable discipline[4] which typically includes: reference to such general requirements (with respect to evidence) as honesty, impartiality, thoroughness or comprehensiveness, accuracy; basic logical requirements about the way inferences are drawn, requirements of consistency etc; and more distinctive and technical requirements rooted in historical connoisseurship to do with the understanding and interpretation of evidence against its historical setting (eg. understanding what functions a letter from Queen Elizabeth I's ambassador to the Netherlands might have had, for what purposes it might have been written and who might have been expected to have access to it – and hence what kind of reading might be appropriate to its content).[5]

"When the political chips are down," concludes Spitzer, "stories about the past will continue to command our assent when they proceed from shared assumptions as to relevant evidence, legitimate inference, and coherent logic. We cannot validate these standards by appealing to them, but there is no need to validate them if the parties to the conversation share them" (Spitzer 1996, 120–121) As Hunt argues, "the discipline of a discipline, by which I mean the rules of conduct governing argument within a discipline, does have a worthy function. Such rules make a community of arguers possible." (Hunt 1991, 104). She might have added that they also serve to define the boundaries of that community.

The problem for my struggling argument is that much of what I have said here could probably be said in much the same terms about at least some fictional writing – most easily perhaps with respect to the historical novel. In an analysis of different kinds of historical novels Collins (1990) develops a three tiered hierarchy, which I suggest might equally well be applied to

novels set in their contemporary setting. Collins distinguishes:

> (a) Novels which are ostensibly set in the past, but whose overriding purpose is to concentrate on 'the timeless themes of love, sex and violence' (Shreeves). Reference to historical events is minimal, and the period chosen by the author is often ill understood and sometimes ill-defined.
>
> (b) Novels in which the author's research has provided an authentic background of artefacts and events against which the fictional characters themselves are either stereotyped or anachronistic.
>
> (c) Novels in which a well-researched background is combined with sympathetically drawn characters to allow genuinely historical issues to be examined. (Collins 1990, 6)

It is only the latter, which Collins regards as "genuinely historical novels". (Collins 1990, 6) But of course the criteria, which Collins is using to pick out the genuinely historical novel start to look perilously close to those with which one might identify the genuinely historical narrative itself!

Ending

This excursion from the world of educational and, more broadly, social scientific research into the worlds of literature and history leaves me with three observations.

First, it indicates that there is a rich and long established body of writing in both these fields which has direct application to and is capable of informing the debates in the educational research community. Educational research has looked in the past for its intellectual resources in the natural and social sciences; it is, I think, healthy that it should also engage with and draw from the subtle eloquence of the humanities.

Secondly, my excursion reinforces the complexity and contestability of the relationship between, on the one hand, fictional writing and, on the other, narrative forms which lay some claim to evidentially based representations of reality – as well as demonstrating, again, the intimate contiguity of the two.

Finally, however, I am left with the same dissatisfaction with the reductionism which assimilates history to the novel as I am with that reductionism which which assimilates educational research to fictional narratives. This is partly because such reductionism seems to me to limit the fruitful variety of intellectual resources and approaches, which we can bring

to our enquiry. It is also, inescapably, because I find it difficult to accept that the manuscripts that ran through my fingers in the Bodleian Library, or the furrowed landscapes, castles, churches and temples that I clambered over in search of evidence of the past are simply the product of narratives, rather than the products of events and experiences, the pride and the suffering, of our ancestors – just as I find it difficult to accept that these ancestors are simply products of our narratives rather than in some way their source.

Essentially, then, the issue becomes one of ontology (what kinds of things exist?) and of epistemology (how can we know about these things?). The capacity to maintain a distinction between narrative fiction and history or educational research hangs on the *ontological* position, that there exists something beyond the narrative, and the *epistemological* position, that there are disciplined forms of enquiry (represented in eg history and the social sciences) which give us, albeit imperfectly and problematically, some kind of purchase on these things. I do not claim to have argued the philosophical case for either of these positions in this chapter, though I have indicated some of the sources for and ingredients of such argument. For the moment I must content myself with the observation that success in defending these ontological and epistemological principles is a condition of maintaining the view to which I am instinctively drawn. That is, that the cultivation of those disciplined forms of enquiry and the interrogation of experience and events remains a core function of educational research, notwithstanding its proximity with forms of fictional narrative representation which have their own and distinctive capacity to illuminate human experience.

Notes

1 Readers are warned that the literature on the relationship between fiction and history is a long established one, and that a number of the sources quoted here were written before current practice with reference to gendered forms of expression was established in publishing. Some of these sources are a stark reminder of the extent to which, for example, history was represented for many years as an exclusively male preserve.

2 An extract from Roosevelt's own history of 'The winning of the west' gives a flavour of Roosevelt's own literary pretensions: "The night was bitterly cold, for there was a heavy frost, and the ice formed half an inch thick round the edges and in the smooth water. But the sun rose bright and glorious, and Clark, in words, told his stiffened, famished, half-frozen followers that the evening would surely see them at the goal of their hopes. Without waiting for an answer, he plunged into the water, and they followed him with a cheer...." (Roosevelt

1923–6, 380)

3 "Probably the most influential American subverter-from-within of the epestemological self-confidence of the historical profession" (Spitzer 1996, 3).

4 Spitzer adopts an interesting and persuasive approach to the question of veridicality in history by examining a number of case studies of debates around attempts at historical deception – and observes the standards to which all parties to these debates are appealing. He concludes "this is to say not that we can stipulate the universal standards of historical truth but that we can identify the specific standards that are assumed to legitimate a given claim" (Spitzer 1996, 12).

5 The example comes to mind because I recall as a first term history undergraduate in the Bodleian Library at Oxford being handed just such a document to read – and feeling totally flummoxed as to what to make of it at the same time as in some awe that this piece of vellum was the 'real' – no, *real* – object in the correspondence.

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Raija Erkkilä & Maarit Mäkelä

FACE TO FACE

HUMAN DIMENSIONS IN BIOGRAPHICAL INTERVIEWS

The act of actively listening to another person's life story is a complex phenomenon that seems to warrant more attention than it has been given so far. Narrative and biographical research has frequently touched on the question of what it means to a person to tell his or her own story. The possibility to tell and re-tell one's life story seems to help people to perceive their life as more organised, to assign new meanings to experiences and to undergo an emancipatory process. (e.g. Fischer-Rosenthal 2000; McEwan 1997.)

On the other hand, there is not much research on the experiences of researchers listening to their informants' stories. There are a large number of narrative-biographical research reports as well as methodological handbooks discussing empirical research, but the actual practice of collecting data and, more specifically, the experiences of biographical researchers in doing research are rarely presented and discussed. While doing empirical research, we have become convinced that feelings and emotions are inherently present in each interview situation and shape the discourse produced and, hence, the outcome of the interview. We would like to raise the following question: how should researchers confront their own experiences in interview situations and reflect the meaning they apply to the research process?

In our article, we will explore, based on our own experiences, the thoughts and emotions of researchers aroused by interviews. We wanted to engage in self-reflection concerning these experiences, in order to understand them and to recognise the underlying more general methodological issues that biographical researchers find themselves confronted with. Finally, we will link these reflections to the methodological literature on biographical

methods. First, however, we will describe our actual practices as biographical researchers, to give the reader a concrete idea about the contexts in which our experiences emerged.

Research process

The data we are discussing in this article were collected in three separate studies. Two of these studies focused on describing and analysing the professional growth of student teachers. The material was collected while the informants were studying in a teacher education programme. Maarit interviewed nine and Raija seven students. The third set of data consists of biographical interviews of seven teachers working in Finnish Lapland. These interviews were conducted by Raija.

We both chose to conduct a cyclical series of interviews with each student during their teacher education. The repeated interviews in Maarit's study took place during 1996-2000, including altogether five interviews with each student. The first interview concentrated on the student's life before enrollment in teacher education. The next three interviews were stories about each study year. The final interviews were conducted one year after graduation from university. Raija started her cycle of interviewing with a more thematically structured plan. The interviews were conducted during the year 1995–1996, and she carried out all her three interviews with each student by focusing on the student teachers' experiences during their teacher education.

As researchers, we share the experience of having gathered our data through intensive interviews and having chosen to conduct several interviews with our informants during their teacher education. The interesting aspect of this is that we later realised our methods had been notably similar and also that we had confronted clearly similar experiences in our interview situations.

Repeated interview sessions

Numerous methodological textbooks provide detailed accounts of the technicalities of successful interviews, such as how to prepare for an interview, what equipment is needed, what good questions are like, what should be done after the interview, etc. (e.g. Cresswell 1998; Jovchelovitch & Bauer 2000; Kvale 1996). But this was not enough for us as biographical

researchers. While doing our actual practice, we needed a wider analytic perspective to the interview situation, including explicit consideration of the influence and personal contribution of the interviewer.

For instance, in Raija's case, it happened that some of the student teachers started to tell about their previous life more intensively than expected. Although the study was not originally meant to be biographical, it became apparent during the research process that the informants produced stories that were largely biographical (cf. Woods 1996, 79). This was especially true in one case, where the life-story was so intensive that a thematic analysis would have failed to bring out the plot of the informant's story (see Erkkilä 1998). That was one of the critical incidents in Raija's life as a researcher. When, in 2000, we were starting a new study on northern teachers, it the method of biographical interview was a self-evident choice.

Maarit's original aim was to focus only on student teachers' professional growth. But it became evident during the research process that personal life and professional growth are so strongly intertwined as to be inseparable. Thus, reflecting back on these research episodes, we may easily claim that it was these repeated interview sessions that convinced us of the relevance of the biographical viewpoint. Through repeated interviews, the interviewer really becomes interested in her informant's personality and choices. The interviewee similarly begins to feel that the researcher is genuinely interested in his or her life, and in an optimal case, the repeated meetings with the researcher result in a confidential relationship.

Kelchtermans (1993; 1994) describes in detail this cyclical way of doing biographical interviews. He highlights the benefit of analysing the data after every interview. Each analysis provides topics for the next interview, and the interviews thus constitute cumulative sources of data. Also, the "information gaps" and unclear passages of the first interview can be filled in during the later sessions. Each resumption of a topic elaborates the story, and the repetitive instances of narration may shed new light on the interrelations of events, not only for the researcher but also for the narrator. It was these guidelines that oriented our work of doing biographical interviews.

Unexpected situations and feelings faced by the researcher

I am sitting face to face with a complete stranger, discussing with him his work and past life. I suddenly become aware of an absurd feeling: What makes this unknown person tell me about his life? Why did I choose to interview him?

> Why did he consent? But despite this feeling, the situation continues. He goes on to tell me more about himself, and I ask questions and make comments when necessary. (Raija's field note)

An interview may even turn out to be thoroughly frustrating, and the interviewer may end up trying to find a way out of the situation. For some reason, no relationship develops or the initially established relationship fails to develop further. Kelchtermans (1994, 100) noted in his own research that the development of a confidential relationship required a balanced give-and-take relationship. Collecting biographical data should not be "one-way-traffic", but trustfulness is enhanced by mutual reciprocality. Goodson (2000, 20) also talks about giving and taking in biographical interviews. There are two participants in the research, who see the world through different prisms of practice and thought. Such a valuable difference may provide the outsider, i.e. the researcher, with a possibility to back goods in "the trade". The insider offers data and insights; the outsider, in pursuing glimpses of structure in different ways, may also contribute data and insights. That is, according to Goodson, why the terms of trade look favourable.

Occasionally the researcher may be overwhelmed by a feeling that there is nothing to exchange:

> I'm in a new face-to-face situation again. I feel uncomfortable. I feel I'm listening to a story based on a prepared manuscript, and I have nothing much to contribute to it. The questions I make seem to provoke no response. I feel myself completely different from my informant, and I'm afraid he shares this feeling. (Raija's field note)

We believe that many researchers have experiences of both successful and unsuccessful interviews. Especially in an extensive research project, part of the stories always get less attention. What makes the researcher especially interested in certain stories? Time and again, the biographical researcher is faced by the question of both her own motives to do this kind of research and her informant's motives to tell about their life. Our own motives derive from the theoretical and methodological premises of narrative-biographical research. The emerging story is always viewed against the background of the person's life and the surrounding context. The key idea is that experiences about the past and expectations about the future influence the person's perception of the present (Kelchtermans 1993, 199). Another basic assumption is that human beings have a narrative approach to their lives and therefore tell about things that are important to them. (Bruner 1987).

According to our experience, interviews are always situation-specific. Different roles inevitably evolve in a given situation. They are not merely something adopted by the researcher, nor does the interviewee decide about these roles in advance. It is the act of telling and re-organising their life-story that generates a need, to which the researcher is expected to respond through the role assigned to her. It is precisely this intimacy with another person's life that is characteristic of biographical interviews and ties the researcher to the interviewee more closely than any other kind of interview.

> This is my third interview with this student, and I find we are almost acquaintances by now. We start with small talk, just like two people who know each other and happen to meet. As the interview proceeds, I realise my informant has grown more trustful of me. The student I'm interviewing resumes certain points she made during the preceding interviews and provides supplementary information she was not ready to disclose last time. She tells about her emotional turmoil and painful experiences. This also helps me to understand our previous encounters better. (Maarit's field note)

This piece of reflection shows that repeated interviews may allow the informant to resume themes at a more profound level and even bring up sensitive topics (see also Lee 1993). The biographical approach may even have the consequence that the researcher finds the interviewee to expect her to be, apart from being a researcher and a listener, also a friend and even a therapist (Cf. Connelly & Clandinin 1995; Schmidt & Knowles 1995; Josselson 1995). Still, as far as we can see, the therapist's role is not good for the researcher. Researchers have not been educated to work as therapists, nor does research aim to be therapeutic. According to Kvale (1996, 125), too, the researcher should try to keep the interview from turning into a therapeutic session. A good interview, however, may resemble therapy in that the interviewee finds the very act of telling relieving without expecting the interviewer to contribute a solution to their problems. The interviewee finds the interviewer a listener, who is like a reliable friend they can confide in.

While conducting biographical interviews, both of us have also come across another researcher's role, which may be the most common expectation applied to the interviewer. This resembles the "traditional" role of a researcher (see Gudmundsdottir 1996; Jovchelovitch & Bauer 2000). In those situations, we felt that we were expected to ask direct questions, to which the interviewee tried to provide as "good" answers as possible. As far as we can see, interviewees really try to be helpful. They hope for a good outcome of research and try to help the researcher as best they can.

Underlying this, may be the interviewee's idea about the superiority of scientific knowledge and the related assumption of "correct knowledge" as different from everyday knowledge and experiences. The interviewee may also subjectively assume what things the interviewer wants to hear and what she already knows. According to Burgos (1988, 11–12), differences in background and culture between the interviewer and the interviewee may also result in a situation where the interviewee only tries to give the kind of answers they expect the interviewer to want.

In the light of these few examples, we have tried to point out that a narrative-biographical interview is a relatively new and unfamiliar situation to both the interviewee and the interviewer, which always requires some negotiation of roles. Although it may resemble informal conversation, it differs from ordinary conversation in being goal-oriented.

The researcher and her own life-story

The commitment to work on the life experiences and biographies of other people makes the researcher face a number of questions about her own identity, biography and personal experiences.

> While I was listening the interviewee's story, I could not help my thoughts from wandering to my own experiences. I suddenly recognised in myself feelings and things I had not been aware of for a long time. This aroused contradictory emotions in my mind. I was clearly sticking to the rule that an objective researcher must keep a distance to things — which was something I had learnt years ago. Even so, something in me said that these thoughts and feelings, which pertained to my own life, were too important to be ignored. For the time being, however, I forced myself to concentrate on what the interviewee was saying, and only allowed myself to return to the transient emotions I had had during the interview later in the evening.
>
> It was then that I felt the full impact of the realisation: Why did I not have any photographs of my father around? This had suddenly occurred to me while I had been listening to the informant tell something about her own father. I was horrified to discover that 11 years had elapsed since my father's death. All of a sudden, I now realised I had no photographs of him around and I had not even gone to see his grave for years. And still I knew he had been one of the most important people in my life and still was — in my memories.
>
> I could not get rid of this controversy. I finally had to recall my father's face, his way of walking, even his smell. This caused me to reflect more deeply on my relationship with my own father and I soon found myself in a turmoil of emotions.

> Now, at last, I was able to process my anger for his having left me and died without even saying goodbye to me. I went through a period of grief and longing and cried more than I had for a long time. It took me weeks to get over the matter. Finally, one morning, I realised I had come to terms with his death. I had dreamt about my father: he was helping me to renovate my home. In my dream, I asked him: where have you been all these years?" (Maarit's field note)

This experience and some others support our conviction that the researcher can never be a completely neutral outsider. Our own life experiences orient our interpretations, and the life-story to be interpreted orients our life, even if only by evoking minor memories and past incidents. The need to listen to other people's life-stories awakens a desire to consider one's own biography.

But where are researcher biographies? This topic has not been discussed much in the guidebooks for researchers. Yet, there are clear signs to indicate that researcher biographies should also be told, and public discussion concerning this has already begun. There are also some examples of stories told by researchers or supplementing research reports. (e.g. Elbaz-Luwisch 1995).

Traditionally, research reports have been stories of what aspects of a given phenomenon have been studied and how. Why and by whom a certain phenomenon has been studied are questions that have not been answered in the course of research, nor have they even been asked explicitly. Elbaz-Luwisch & Pritzker (2001, 17) consider the norms of the academic world a major problem. These norms underrate the need to expose feelings or even experiences of failure. Therefore we agree with their conviction that acknowledgement of one's own feelings also helps the researcher to understand both herself and the object of her research. Therefore, the researcher should not try to completely separate the emotional and cognitive aspects of her work.

Emotions and reason have generally been considered mutual opposites, and especially traditional science has demanded a strict differentiation of the two. Scientists have developed a huge number of instruments to eliminate the potential impacts of the researcher on the research results. This is an understandable and acceptable objective in natural sciences, but the efforts to apply these principles to human sciences resulted in insurmountable problems. Many researchers have faced the contradictions between the demands of science and their real experiential world. So did Wagner (1999, 325), who provoked her colleagues by asking how research and emotions are related. After all, has not the credibility of science traditionally been based on the requirement that researchers keep their personal emotions separate from their rational commitments?

Brannigan & Merrens (1995) also point out that studies aiming at objectivity lack the human voice. Research reports lack a narrator who would go beyond the phenomenal level of research and describe the context in which the researcher's interest in this specific topic was aroused. Researcher's voice and personal signature (Connelly & Clandinin 1997, 85) are always manifested in the style and form of the research report.

It would also be interesting to find out what motivates a researcher to spend years working on the same topic, seeking answers to research questions. To provide answers to such questions, there should be more subjective and personal stories of research and, more generally, stories of work as a researcher. They would help us understand the world of research from a completely new perspective. One example of this is the reflective description by Roy F. Baumeister (1995), social psychologist, of how he ended up being a researcher. His story arouses a new kind of interest in the interrelations between things and the world of research. Having worked as biographical researchers ourselves, we have felt that an opportunity to read about the conflicts and challenges faced by other researchers makes us reflect on our own researcher stories.

The basic assumption of narrative research is that the story continues to evolve upon being told. We began to analyse our own experiences as researchers, but soon realised that it was not so simple to capture them on paper as we had thought. Writing about oneself was really quite different from reading and analysing the life-stories of other people. But it was interesting to realise that the different stories we have collected and their various details encouraged us to discover in ourselves even things from our distant past that unexpectedly re-actualised.

Why carry on biographical interviews?

According to our experience, narrative-biographical interview is a special kind of interview. It is demanding and time-consuming. It is always situation-specific and unpredictable, and the researcher often ends up in novel and unexpected situations while collecting data. We found this astonishing, as our own education in the 1980s prepared us for a different researcher's role. According to this alleged role, the researcher should remain distant from her informants and maintain a neutral attitude towards them. Our recent experiences of research, however, have proved that we are living, very concretely, at a "narrative turn". This has also caused us, as researchers, to undergo a kind of paradigm change (see Chamberlayne et al. 2000; Polkinghorne 1995, also Heikkinen, in this book).

Although it is often easy to adopt novel ideas at a theoretical level, only practical work shows how well we have been able to internalise these ideas and how functional they are. It may be, after all, that all human interaction is susceptible to surprises that can never be anticipated in textbooks. The researcher is seldom prepared to encounter the variety of roles and emotions that may emerge in the course of an interview. Therefore, it has even been claimed that all factors contributing to the process of narrative research should be critically evaluated. It is not enough to present the content of the story, but we should also ask how we, as researchers, have contributed to the process of research (McEwan 1997).

An interviewer doing research is always present in the interview as her own self. The interviewer's personality always affects the storytelling: what is said and how. The interviewer also personally affects the way in which the narrator mirrors the interviewer's personal characteristics. The interview is like "a two-way mirror" (Elbaz-Luwisch & Pritzker 2001). Who does the narrator feel they are telling their story to? Hence, the researcher does not merely represent her own personality to the teller, but may also represent the larger audience to whom the story is addressed.

We consider the narrative turn especially welcome. It brings everyday life closer to the researcher. Biographical researchers are no longer interested in hero stories, but show increasing appreciation of personal knowledge and studies of everyday knowledge. Many of our storytellers have also voiced their astonishment: What is it in the life of an ordinary person like myself that could be interesting for research? Don't they only write biographies of the great men and women? This major change ultimately allows the researcher to be human and to live, through her emotions, both her own life and the interviewee's life.

Our aim throughout this article has been to underline the researcher's contribution to biographical interviews and to highlight the relationships implicit in them. One issue closely related to this is the question of how the researcher's voice is heard and seen in the research process more generally. The researcher's voice is manifested in different ways. Both while listening to a story and when analysing the material, the researcher may, intuitively and spontaneously, fill in gaps. This may result in two stories: the researcher's story and the interviewee's story (Chase 1996, 54). It is also a known fact that different researchers see different things in the same story. Apart from being guided by her personal view, the researcher is always also guided by theoretical knowledge. The researcher always views things through her own lenses and may even be blind to certain aspects of her own research. We therefore consider the question of "voice" to be a complex issue, which continues to pose challenges that warrant both research and reflection.

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Arto Laitinen

CHARLES TAYLOR AND PAUL RICOEUR ON SELF-INTERPRETATIONS AND NARRATIVE IDENTITY

In this article I discuss Charles Taylor's and Paul Ricoeur's theories of narrative identity and narratives as a central form of self-interpretation.[1] Both Taylor and Ricoeur think that self-identity is a matter of culturally and socially mediated self-definitions, which are practically relevant for one's orientation in life.[2] First, I will go through various characterisations that Ricoeur gives of his theory, and ask wheter they apply to Taylor's theory. Then, I will analyse more closely Charles Taylor's, and Paul Ricoeur's views on narrative identity.

THE VARIOUS MEDIATING ROLES OF NARRATIVE IDENTITY

The most general point that unites Ricoeur and Taylor is that they both have very strong intuitions against one-sided reductions. From Ricoeur's texts we can find as many as eight different characterisations of narrative identity as playing some kind of mediating role:

1) Narrative identity contains both *harmony and dissonance*. Narratives mediate between discordance and concordance and bring about "discordant concordance" or "concordant discordance" to our identities, especially when the discordance in question is *temporal*. (Ricoeur 1984, 4, 21, 31, 42, 43, 49, 60, 69-73, 151, 161, 168, 229)
2) Narratives are both *lived and told*. Narrative configurations mediate between the world of action and the world of the reader. (Ricoeur 1984, ch.2, ch.3;

Ricoeur 1991; Carr 1986; Kaunismaa & Laitinen 1998)

3) Narratives are both innovative and based on established views. Narrativity, in the manner of traditions, includes a dialectic of *innovation and sedimentation*.(Ricoeur 1984, 68, 69, 77, 79, 166, 208, 229).
4) Narratives combine *fact and fiction*. Narrative identity occupies a central position between historical narratives and narratives of literary fiction (Ricoeur 1987, 244-9).[3]
5) Narrative identity mediates between *"what is" and "what ought to be"*. Narration occupies a middle ground between neutral description and ethical prescription. (1992, 114-5, 152-168). Narrative identity is not reducible to neutral description although, on the other hand, ethical identity is also not reducible to narrative identity.[4]
6) Narrative identity mediates between two kinds of permanence in time, between two poles of self-identity (or "*ipse*-identity"). These two poles are, first, "selfhood without support from sameness" ("pure *ipse*"), which Ricoeur illustrates by the phenomenon of "keeping one's word". The second pole is "selfhood as supported by sameness" ("*ipse* as supported by *idem*"), which Ricoeur illustrates with the phenomenon of character. This opens up a space for "an intervention of narrative identity in the conceptual constitution of personal identity in the manner of a specific mediator between the pole of character, where *idem* and *ipse* tend to coincide, and the pole of self-maintenance, where selfhood frees itself from sameness." (Ricoeur 1992, 119, cf. also 1-3, 113-125, 140-151.)
7) Theories of narrative identity are located between an affirmation of a certain and indubitable "I" and a total rejection of an "I". The hermeneutical approach to selfhood occupies a central position between Cartesian cogito-philosophy and the Nietzschean philosophy of "the shattered cogito" (Ricoeur 1992, 1-25). Narrative identity helps to solve the antinomical oscillation these polar opposites create.[5] Narrative identity neither presupposes nor fully rejects a *cogito*.
8) In narrative identity, the person is not merely the one who tells the story, or merely the one about whom the story is told, but she "appears both as a reader and the writer of its own life" (1987, 246). Thus, the individual is both the *interpreter* and the *interpreted*, as well as the *recipient* of the interpretations.

Typically of Ricoeur, all of these characterisations illustrate how narrative identity mediates between two extremes: *harmony and dissonance, lived and told, innovation and sedimentation, fact and fiction, "what is" and "what ought to be", voluntary and involuntary, exalted cogito and "shattered cogito", the author and the reader.*[6] Taylor has a similar taste for avoiding extremes, and his position is in substantial agreement with Ricoeur's on many points.

Nevertheless, Charles Taylor would not agree with all of the mentioned points. The central difference between the two is that Ricoeur favours indirect hermeneutics, whereas Taylor seems to opt for direct hermeneutics.[7] In connection to narrative identity, this means that Ricoeur's analysis contains a detour through a structural analysis of narration as emplotment. Taylor also locates narratives directly on the ethical level, whereas Ricoeur says that narratives mediate between the ethical and descriptive perspectives. Further, Taylor does not draw a distinction between the two poles of self-identity, but instead tends to focus on the side of what Ricoeur calls "character".

Paul Ricoeur analyses narrative identity from the viewpoint of his general analysis of narrativity as an emplotment and imitation of action. The analysis applies both to historical and fictive narratives. Taylor does not pay attention to narrativity in the technical sense. Nevertheless, one can say that from the Aristotelian elements of tragic poetry, Ricoeur stresses the notion of plot, whereas the center of Taylor's analysis is the "thought" or theme of the narrative. He is interested in "the thematic unity of life", or the sense of direction in human lives. This direction or orientation is defined by one's ethical commitments. The spatial metaphors of "direction" and "orientation" refer both to the choices of our fundamental goals and our sense of being closer to or further from achieving them.[8]

Charles Taylor connects narratives to the idea that human beings inevitably orient themselves in life by means of strong evaluations. The movement toward or away from the valuable ends is the topic of our biographies. According to Ricoeur, narratives are a central form of self-interpretation, whereas for Taylor the notion of strong evaluations is the focal point. Taylor thinks there is a variety of forms in which strong evaluations can be expressed, but nevertheless contends that among them, narrativity is an inescapable form of self-interpretation. On the other hand, Ricoeur says that whereas narratives stir the imagination, taking an ethical stand and committing oneself are the final steps in self-determination. Thus, we can say that both Ricoeur and Taylor think that both ethical and narrative aspects are necessary in the process of creating and sustaining one's identity.[9]

Charles Taylor on strong evaluations and narratives

For Charles Taylor, strong evaluations are the central issue in self-interpretations.[10] Strong evaluations refer to qualitative distinctions concerning the "worth" of different desires, feelings, actions or modes of life. Our identities

are partly constituted by what we value. We aspire to, respect, care about and admire certain modes of life more than others (Taylor 1985a, 15-45). Internalising an ideal *directly* contributes to what I am like. I am partially defined by my strong evaluations or orientations. "To know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand" (Taylor 1989, 27).

But strong evaluations are also relevant *indirectly*, by offering the standards by which we evaluate what we are and which guide our "identifications-with". We identity with some of our desires and feelings, namely those we evaluate strongly enough. On the basis of these ideals we can answer the question "when are we ourselves?". For example, different brute desires or addictions (e.g. a drug addiction) may be something that I do not consider as truly mine. Nothing would be lost if I were to lose these brute desires. Yet some other brute desires, like the desire for Peking Duck, might be something that would cause me to feel as though I had lost something important if I were to lose it. What makes the difference is the content of the desire, not the fact that it may be a brute desire rooted in my economy of inclinations. Our "identifications-with" are based on our strong evaluations.[11]

The implicit, the articulated, the re-appropriated

Self-interpretations consist not only of our *explicit* answers to the question "who am I" but also of our *implicit* orientations in life. There are two levels in our identity, the implicit level of reactions, motivations and actions and the explicit level of linguistic articulations. Even before the question "what kind of person am I" enters our consciousness, we are living one answer or another.

Charles Taylor (as well as Paul Ricoeur) stresses that while the explicit level is dependent on the implicit level, the implicit level is also altered by our explicit formulations.

> Our attempts to formulate what we hold important must, like descriptions, strive to be faithful to something. But what they strive to be faithful to is not an independent object ..., but rather a largely inarticulate sense of what is of decisive importance. An articulation of this 'object' tends to make it something different from what it was before. (Taylor 1985a, 38)

Thus, we can distinguish two levels, the implicit and the explicit, and a threefold dialectic between them.[12] First of all, our identity is constructed through our orientations, which may remain totally implicit. A functioning identity can, to a large degree, remain implicit. Thus, the first level can be referred to as the level of *implicit functioning*.

Secondly, we can explicate our implicit sense of who we are, or what is of importance to us. There can be rival explications and rival answers to the question "who am I". One criterion of a successful answer is how true the explications are of our implicit orientations, or how well they avoid distorted pictures of ourselves. But even the best explications can be further weighed and re-evaluated from the viewpoint of moral ideals and imaginative identifications: perhaps the conception we finally identify with is not the one, which is truest to what we have been so far. Our implicit views may have been onesided. It may well be that facts about our past, imaginative identifications and evaluative elements all pull in different directions in our personal reflection.[13]

At this explicit level, there is a plurality of media of expression in which the implicit sense of self can be expressed: not only spoken language, but different arts or even body language will do. Narrative emplotment is one form of articulation, but also descriptive characterisations, such as the statement "I am Finnish", or prescriptive speech acts like "I really ought to stop smoking", can express our sense of ourselves. These need not be interpretations of one's life in its entirety but, rather, of one's ethical ideals, roles, practices, group-memberships *etc.* The crucial factor is that the 'inner' sense of self or of good is expressed in one way or another. Once it has been 'objectified', one can see the 'externalised' expression as one's own, one can identify with it. Here, too, a dialogical process takes place: these expressions are public, and what is public can be given rival definitions by others.[14]

The third phase is the appropriation of the explications, or the internalisation of the expressions. As Taylor points out, there is always an element of creativity in the linguistic articulation, and the appropriated articulation is not necessarily the same as the implicit sense that the process began with. Sometimes the self-definitions we adopt are self-consciously reformative. As time goes by, these once innovative self-definitions turn into routines and habits, they become re-sedimented and metamorphose into elements of the implicit background horizon of orientation. Thus, here we can refer to a dialectic of innovation and sedimentation as well as a dialectic of the implicit and the explicit.

Narratives and the thematic unity of life

In Taylor's theory, narrativity is linked with our strong evaluations and our identity in various ways. First of all, narratives figure among the optional media of expression in which the aformenetioned dialectic of the implicit and explicit takes place. With the help of narratives, our implicit conceptions

of the good can be made explicit to ourselves and also communicated to others. Historically speaking, for example biblical narratives have been very influential in communicating some visions of the good.

Secondly, strong evaluators care about their lives as wholes: "[W]hat is in question is, generally and characteristically, the shape of my life *as a whole*."[15] Indeed, as Heidegger (1964, §46 ff.) points out, it is only as an object of care that one's life can be a whole. Objectively, at any point in our lives, there is always something that we are not yet, and thus we are not yet wholes. And when the wholeness is finally achieved, the person has ceased to exist. This paradox can be avoided by adopting a new perspective to the unity of life as an object of concern. My entire life matters to me, and it is thus in the logical space of "mattering" or concern that we can refer to a unity of a life. My life as an object of my concern has a narrative unity, which Taylor says is a *thematic* unity, not the mere sameness of the human organism (Taylor 1989, 528, fn. 38).

The Heideggerian notion of being-in-time captures an inescapable structure of self-interpretations: we can make sense of events by localising them into larger temporal wholes, in the wider context of our lives. Taylor says that "making sense of one's life as a story is also, like orientation to the good, not an optional extra. ... In order to have a sense of who we are, we have to have a notion of how we have become, and of where we are going." (1989, 47). Humans "make sense of their lives as an unfolding story in a way that gives meaning to their past and direction to their future" (Abbey, 37-8).

One can note critically that one's life is neither the minimal nor maximal locus of meaning: different practices as aspects of life include autonomous internal goods and standards of excellence and they are thus possible centres of narrative gravity, while being smaller units than an entire life. For Taylor, also a sense of belonging to larger wholes or to longer histories than one's own life can provide meaning to one's own life. Thus, caring about oneself *may* but *need not* be identical to caring about one's life as a whole.

Thirdly, according to Taylor, selfhood can naturally be captured in a "moral topography of self."[16] He means that what spatio-temporal metaphors like "moral space", "moral maps", "orientations to good", "direction of a life", "moving toward or away from goods" express, is an inescapable feature of selfhood. Taylor says that our everyday world is not a neutral or value-free reality, but we inevitably experience it in terms of value. Thus we live in a moral space instead of a neutral space. In this space, we orient ourselves, we have goals and aims, which are things we value or conceive as good. Thus, we orient ourselves toward the good.

The orientation alone is not all that matters. Whether or not we move towards these goods, is dependent on the success of our actions. This movement is what we mean when we refer to the direction of our lives. Taylor thinks that people experience that they are leading a life, and this implies control over the movement of one's life.[17] How strong the sense of being in control is varies, as well as the strength of the sense of being in motion. Our life runs in a direction that is either toward or away from the strongly valued goods. This movement within moral space is the theme of our biographies.[18] Thus, narrative identity makes sense of our movements in moral space.

Fourthly, narratives are related not only to our moving away or toward the goods but also to the changes in the "moral maps" that guide our lives, in our conceptions of the good. Narratives can make sense of changes and even revolutions in one's moral outlook. Thus, there is a diachronous heterogeneity to our lives, which narratives have the potential to make sense of.

Indeed, Taylor thinks that this kind of reasoning in transitions is the very basic form of practical reasoning. Practical reason cannot provide absolute proofs of any first premises, but it can comparatively assess two different positions. There are different modes of comparison: in some cases, one can be convinced that position **B** is better than **A** because the transition from **A** to **B** solves some of **A**'s internal problems and can explain why **A** had these problems. Thus, the transition is an epistemic gain. Or, one can know that some transitions are learning processes, we know from our own experience that learning processes lead us to a better position. Taylor refers here to our personal experiences and "biographical transitions".[19]

Fifthly, because there is a plurality of goods, there can also be a synchronous heterogeneity, and one way of unifying different goods is to assign them different places and times in one's life. As Abbey (2000, 38-9) puts it, Taylor's view is that "when people think about how to balance the disparate goods in their lives, they combine a sense of diversity with one of unity. The many goods that claim one's allegiance do so within the context of a single life. When a person's life is viewed as a whole, it becomes easier to see that seemingly different and even incommensurable goods can be combined in practice."

Thus, the diversity of goods can be conceived in diachronic and synchronic ways.[20] For example, let's say that I am a Catholic Marxist who is in love with a Hindu, and that there is tension between these aspects of my identity. Let us assume further that I used to be a Communitarian Atheist in the past. Thus, in addition to the synchronous tensions, there is the diachronous discrepancy between what I was and what I am now. Narrativity

can bring concordance to both synchronous and diachronous discordances, through combining a plurality of goods within a single life and through reasoning in transitions.

To sum up, narrativity has five functions in Charles Taylor's theory. Narratives are (i) an optional medium for articulating some of our implicit self-interpretations and strong evaluations. Narratives alone enable us to (ii) care about our lives as wholes and to (iii) interpret our movements in a moral space. Further, narrative thinking provides a way of providing concordance to (iv) diachronous and (v) synchronous dissonances in our strong evaluations.

Paul Ricoeur on emplotment and narrative identity

Threefold mimesis

Paul Ricoeur's theory of narrative identity refers to those kinds of practical identities whose explication takes the form of emplotted narratives. Ricoeur's structural analysis re-interprets what Aristotle wrote in *Poetics*. According to Aristotle, various arts are forms of imitation (*mimesis*), tragic poetry being the imitation of action. A tragedy – or the art of composing tragedies – consists of six different elements[21], the most important of which is the plot: the organisation of events into a coherent story, into an organised whole with a beginning, middle and an end. The central concept is *muthos*, emplotment. Aristotle identifies emplotment and the mimetic activity: the imitation of an action is nothing more than the emplotment, in which the events are structured into a whole.

Ricoeur accepts Aristotle's central idea, but notes that there are three levels in the imitation of action (*mimesis*$_1$, *mimesis*$_2$ and *mimesis*$_3$), only one of which is emplotment itself: *Mimesis*$_2$ is the level of emplotment, of configuring the events into a story.

Mimesis$_1$ is the reference to the actual world of action, to the "imitated" events that the story is about. This world of action in itself does not contain beginnings and endings in the strong sense that narratives create beginnings and ends, but it is already pre-narratively organised *structurally, symbolically and temporally*.

The world of action is structurally pre-narrative. Any action – in comparison to mere physical occurrences – always implies a network of action-concepts and a practical understanding concerning them (agent, goals, means, circumstance, motives, expectations, responsibility, interaction,

help, hostility, co-operation, conflict; answers to the questions 'what', 'why', 'who', 'how', 'with whom' and 'against whom') (1984, 54–6). We refer to these intentions and understandings in intentional explanations of actions. "So, typical intentional actions are actions about which their agents have a story to tell ..., a story which explains why one acted as one did." (Raz 1999, 24) Yet, while agents always do have a story to tell, not all intentional explanations are full-fledged narratives in the technical sense. There are other cultural symbols in which we can say what we did, or what we intended to do, which nevertheless fall short of being emplotted narratives. From the viewpoint of emplotment, all these non-narrative forms belong to the pre-narrative structure of the world of action.[22]

With the *symbolic* mediation, Ricoeur is referring to the fact that actions always embody signs, rules and norms. These are not private but public meanings, which make actions readable to others. According to Ricoeur, an action is a quasi-text, in which symbols provide the rules of interpreting behaviour. Thus, others need not wait to hear the agent's explanation of what she did, they can see and understand it themselves. The norms governing behaviour are also constraining, telling us which actions are good and bad, approved of or disapproved of. (1984, 57–59)

The third feature of human action is its threefold *temporality*. As a project, action is always oriented toward the future, and as a motivation, it inherently carries the past (1984, 59–64). Thus, on the whole, *mimesis*$_1$ refers to the pre-narrative structural, symbolic and temporal features of the ordinary world of action.

The phase of *mimesis*$_2$ is the explicit configuration of various events in emplotted stories. "In short, emplotment is the operation, that draws a configuration out of a simple succession," emplotment "transforms the events or incidents into a story" (1984, 65). The plot juxtaposes various heterogenous elements (agents, goals, means, interactions, circumstances, unexpected results) as well as temporally distant elements. It does so by means of a unifying theme or thought, by imposing a "sense of an ending" to the story (1984, 66–67). This phase of *mimesis*$_2$ has some liberties in relation to the pre-figured, pre-narrative elements, although there is also an internal connection. The organised events took place in the world of action, but the organisation itself, the plot, is created by the author.

The phase of *mimesis*$_3$ "marks the intersection of the world of the text and the world of the hearer or reader" (1984, 71). Thus, while Ricoeur states that the making of a story is both an organisation of events into a story with a plot (*muthos*) and an "imitation of an action" (*mimesis*), Ricoeur does not equate *muthos* with *mimesis* as Aristotle does. Mimesis contains more than the emplotment, more than the level of *mimesis*$_2$. Mimesis consists also

of a reference to the world of action ($mimesis_1$), and to the event of reading ($mimesis_3$). In one sense, the structure is completed only when the reader reads the text. Reading always takes place in the context of the pre-understandings of the reader, and thus $mimesis_3$ contains a reference to the world of the reader as well.

Emplotted narratives, which obey this logic of threefold mimesis, have a potential to bring about concordance to the temporal discordance by organising the seemingly separate events into a coherent and organised whole. An unexpected event that I suffered at one point in my life can become an expected event when told as a part of a coherent story. This kind of rendering of unity to one's life, with all of its fortunes and misfortunes, is something that only narratives can accomplish. This is why Ricoeur not only applies his notion of narrative to historiography and fiction, but also to identity-narratives. More specifically, the identity-narratives mediate between two kinds of human temporality: temporal persistence with the help of one's character and temporal persistence despite one's character. This is what the next subsection deals with.

The mediation between one's character and voluntary efforts

Ricoeur says that our self-identity, or *ipse*-identity, consists of a spectrum of different constituents, some of which are stable and sedimented into our second nature, and some of which we hold on to voluntarily. Ricoeur illustrates the two extreme poles with the figure of *"character"*, which changes slowly and is not as easily re-definable, and with the figure of *"keeping one's word"*, which is in our voluntary control and not supported by sameness. These are two different modes of persistence in time. (Ricoeur 1992, 118–125)

As cultural beings, we have a second nature that is composed of acquired dispositions and identifications. Two main constituents of our second nature are our habits and our acquired identifications. What we do and learn by doing affects the kinds of habits we have. Habit-formation shows how we actively mold the kind of people we are, without focusing on the question itself. Our habits guide our orientations without any explicit attention, and our habits are formed without giving explicit attention to the question of 'who to be'. We also identify with values and goals, we have what Taylor calls "strong evaluations". These habits and acquired identifications become sedimented into our character, and sustaining them demands no voluntary effort. (Ricoeur 1992, 118–125)

Yet some features belong to me through voluntary effort. Ricoeur illustrates this with the idea of keeping one's word. It may well be that everything

must first be the object of a voluntary effort, prior to its sedimentation into second nature.[23] For Ricoeur, narratives are a form of self-interpretation which mediate between these two poles: narratives are occupied with the entire spectrum of selfhood, with and without support from the sameness of character.

Conclusions

Both Ricoeur and Taylor think that when referring to self-interpretations, the central question is one of the particularities of one's self-identity, and the answers are provided within culturally and socially mediated self-interpretations. This implies that the hermeneutic view of the self and narrative identity is located between an affirmation of a certain and indubitable "I" and a total rejection of that "I". Further, it means that the person in question – together with others – is both the interpreter and the interpreted.

Ricoeur holds that narrative identity mediates between two kinds of permanence in time, one based on voluntary efforts and the other on character. For Taylor's analysis of strong evaluations, the pole of character seems primary. Narrative identity contains both concordance and discordance, both unity and plurality. The plurality in question can be both synchronous and diachronous. While Taylor focuses on the plurality and discordance on the level of strong evaluations, Ricoeur talks about all kinds of discordance in the world of action. The paradigmatic case of unity that narratives bring about is the thematic unity of an entire life, but as was pointed out above, narratives can bring unity also to smaller and larger units. Ricoeur talks explicitly about the temporal concordance that narrative can bring about, but Taylor sees narratives as having a role in practical reasoning and conflict-solving in general.

Narrativity, and self-interpretations in general, include a dialectic of innovation and sedimentation. The implicit layers of one's habitual and characteristic orientations are molded through explicit articulations in narrative and other forms. The tension between implicit and explicit means that narratives are both lived and told, as Ricoeur's analysis of the threefold mimesis and Taylor's corresponding views show.

Because of the central role of strong evaluations in our identity, we can see that identity is not mere description. Identity is not merely a matter of moral stance either, because what we actually are serves as the basis of our identity formation: we identify with some of our characteristics (the desire

for Peking Duck) while not with others (a drug addiction). Nevertheless, there is a factual basis for our identity. The role of ideals and strong evaluations also illustrates how one's identity is constituted through something that I am not yet, something that is merely ideal or projected into the future. In this sense, identity has a fictive element. Another important function of fiction in one's identity is that I can adopt models for my life from fictive sources. The analysis of fiction is more important to Ricoeur than to Taylor.

To sum up, self-interpretations and narrative identity can indeed be characterised as the mediation between all of the different extremes mentioned in the beginning. These were concordance and discordance, 'lived' and 'told', implicit and explicit, innovation and sedimentation, fact and fiction, "what is" and "what ought to be", voluntary and involuntary, exalted cogito and shattered cogito, the author and the reader. While most of these extremes can be mediated by non-narrative interpretations as well, at least temporal discordance and concordance can be brought about only through narratives. In addition, given the central role of temporality in human existence it would not be an exaggeration to claim that narratives are a central medium of self-interpretation. Our life is not just a continuum of separate events, but rather our past and future always structure our present experiences and action. We typically care about our lives as wholes, and it is narratives which make this possible. [24]

Notes

1 "Self-understanding is an interpretation; interpretation of the self, in turn, finds in the narrative, among other signs and symbols, a privileged form of mediation; the latter borrows from history as well as from fiction, making a life story a fictional history or, if one prefers, a historical fiction, interweaving the historiographic style of biographies with the novelistic style of autobiographies." Ricoeur (1992, 114, fn1)

2 Both Taylor and Ricoeur distinquish self-identity from various forms of idem-identity that apply to non-persons as well: sameness as synchronous unity, sameness as diachronous persistence and similiarity. (Ricoeur 1992, ch. 5 & 6.)

3 "The fragile offshoot issuing from the union of history and fiction is the assignment to an individual or a community of a specific identity that we can call their narrative identity" (Ricoeur 1987, 246). "[T]he historical component of a narrative about oneself draws this narrative toward the side of a chronicle submitted to the same documentary verifications as any other historical narration, while the fictional component draws it towards those imaginative

variations that destabilize narrative identity. In this sense, narrative identity continues to make and unmake itself." (1987, 249)

4 "Narrative identity does not exhaust the question of the self-constancy of a subject, whether this be a particular individual or a community of individuals. ... [T]he practice of narrative lies in a thought experiment by means of which we try to inhabit worlds foreign to us. In this sense, narrative exercises imagination more than the will, even though it remains a category of action. ... [R]eading also includes a moment of impetus. This is when reading becomes a provocation to be and to act differently. However this impetus is transformed into action only through a decision whereby a person says: Here I stand! So narrative identity is not equivalent to true self-constancy except through this decisive moment, which makes ethical responsibility the highest factor in self-constancy. ... It is at this point that the notion of narrative identity encounters its limit and has to link up with the nonnarrative components in the formation of an acting subject." (Ricoeur 1987, 249).

5 "Without the recourse to narration, the problem of personal identity would in fact be condemned to an antinomy with no solution. Either we must posit a subject identical with itself through the diversity of its different states, or, following Hume and Nietzsche, we must hold that this identical subject is nothing more than a substantialist illusion, whose elimination merely brings to light a pure manifold of cognitions, emotions, and volitions." (Ricoeur 1987, 246).

6 One could add even more characterizations of the same kind. For example narrative 'retrograde' necessity of events (and actions) occupies a middle position *between strict necessity and pure contingency*, or between identity and diversity: "the narrative operation has developed an entirely original concept of dynamic identity which reconciles the same categories which Locke took as contraries: identity and diversity."(Ricoeur 1992, 143)

7 According to Ricoeur (1974, 3-24), Heidegger and Gadamer represent direct hermeneutics, but Taylor fits the description well. Another difference between Ricoeur and other hermeneutic thinkers is Ricoeur's strong emphasis on detours through texts instead of a more direct dialogical understanding. For a discussion on this aspect, see Kaunismaa & Laitinen 1998.

8 Taylor 1989, 25-52.

9 *Ibid*; Ricoeur 1987, 249.

10 Ricoeur (1992; 2000), too, adopts Taylor's notion of strong evaluations.

11 Taylor, "What's wrong with negative liberty", in 1985b. Compare to Joseph Raz: "When are we ourselves" in 1999.

12 Compare to Paul Ricoeur's threefold *mimesis*, below. Cf. also Taylor 1989, 203-7 on the relation of practices and ideas.

13 Thus, I think Hartmut Rosa's (1998, 92-95) criterion of internal equilibrium between the implicit and explicit level is on its own an insufficient criterion for the validity of self-interpretations.

14 On "expressivism", see Taylor 1975, 11-29.

15 Taylor 1989, 50.
16 Taylor 1988, 1989, 111-114.
17 Taylor 1997, Abbey 2000, 39
18 The spatial metaphor can also mislead: it is possible that our 'distance from the good' can remain the same throughout our lives. For example, my level of honesty may remain constant despite - or as a result of - my strivings. Thus, it may be there is no *movement* within moral space. See Lane (1992).
19 "Explanation and Practical Reason", in Taylor 1995
20 Abbey 2000, 39, Taylor 1997.
21 The six elements are plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle and song. (Aristotle: Poetics, 1450a10); Ricoeur 1984, 33.
22 See, however, a contrary statement in Ricoeur 1987, 248: "The first mimetic relation refers, in the case of an individual, to the semantics of desire, which only includes those prenarrative features attached to the demand constitutive of human desire."
23 As Liebermann (1998) has pointed out, voluntary *commitments* which are more general than mere promises share some features of the acquired identifications, which can be sedimented into our second nature, and the voluntary persistence typical of promises.
24 I would like to thank Pekka Kaunismaa, Heikki Ikäheimo, Jussi Kotkavirta, Hannu Heikkinen and Rauno Huttunen for various discussion on these topics.

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II

Truth as narrative

The question of truth lies at the heart of narrative research. What is the most meaningful way to speak about truth in the context of autobiographical writing? Is the truth in the sense of the correspondence theory or is it some other kind of truth? And if we speak about truth, we also have to speak of power. We could view the motive for writing autobiography as similar to the Nietzschean *will to power*.

In article entitled *The hermeneutics of truth and selfhood* Rauno Huttunen and Leena Kakkori claim that in the case of art and autobiography the proper concept of truth is not the correspondence theory, which refers to truth as adaequatio between a thing and its representation. With the autobiography a person surely wants to achieve correspondence between her self-presentations and "the true self". This effort is nevertheless a paradox because the truth of person's selfhood cannot be detached from those conceptual expressions that she has about herself. When I tell a story about myself to myself, it has the potential to change me, after which I would have another perspective from which to examine and interpret the events of my life. If this is the case, what then is the truth about ourselves? Or could there even be any truth of a dynamic selfhood, which is always something else when she attempts to conceive it?

In his article *Narrative, truth and correspondence*, Pentti Moilanen attempts to defend the correspondence theory both in the context of narrative research and in qualitative research in general. The fact that in narrative research the subject matter concern people's subjective worlds is not a counter-argument toward correspondence theory, because we can define truth as the correspondence between interpretation and the subjective world. Moilanen claims that in the ontological sense, the concepts of objective and subjective refer to the way of being. Some entities exist in private experience. Their existence presupposes the presence of a person who experiences the subjective fact. In this sense it is possible, at least in principle, to have objective knowledge of subjective facts. When I say that you have a headache, I am making either a correct or an incorrect statement about your experience. In this way the narrative could be seen as more or less corresponding with subjective reality.

In her article *The masters of the truth*, Leena Kakkori applies Friedrich Nietzsche and Michel Foucault to the foundation of narrative research. Kakkori claims that the object of narrative research, is the narrative, and that the truth is what the narrative tells us. The truth of narrative research

is not how the narrative corresponds to reality, because reality is the narrative. And this narrative can be *monumental, antiquarian or critical* in the Nietzschean sense. The great stories of Western history are all monumental narratives. They are narratives that more closely resemble statues than stories. The antiquarian narrative serves the purpose of preserving, of categorizing, classifying and cataloguing. Interpretation and valuation do not belong to the antiquarian narrative, as it attempts to tell everything "just as it is". The critical narrative is the most difficult form of narrative, and because of this it is hard to find a good example of a critical narrative. According to Nietzsche, in critical history the past is "dragged to the bar of judgement". Foucault´s way of writing history is very close to the idea of the critical narrative. Foucault´s books like *Madness and civilization: a history of insanity in the age of reason, The history of sexuality* and *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* are not typical scientific history books. The critical narrative looks at things from a different point of view than a traditional academic research.

Rauno Huttunen & Leena Kakkori

THE HERMENEUTICS OF TRUTH AND SELFHOOD

HEIDEGGER'S, GADAMER'S AND RICOUER'S SIGNIFICANCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH

"Either you are an idiot or you are not"
Idiots, a film by Lars von Trier

In every act of understanding the concern is always self and identity. Selfhood is in question both when I understand something alien and when in some cases I do not understand at all. I might internalize something alien to such extent that it becomes a solid part of my identity. Or it might happen that I do not understand that alien at all and that nothing nothing would change me. In this latter case, this other thing, person or culture does not have any affect on me or on my self-understanding.

Experiences that I accumulate in my contacts with the world and other people shape me allthought not in any causal way. Nevertheless, I cannot fully be aware of everything that has affected or changed me. It is a paradox of selfhood: at the same time I am able and not able to affect who I am and who I am becoming.

Autobiographical writing is a kind of enlightened endeavour throuhg critical reflection to become the master of oneself – the will to power concerning oneself. With autobiography I want to achieve the truth about myself, the truth in the meaning of correspondence theory. I want to achieve correspondence between my self-presentations (self-understandings) and "the true me" (see Moilanen's defence of correspondence theory in this book). This effort is nevetheless a paradox because the truth of my selfhoof

cannot be detached from those conceptual expressions that I have about myself (self-presentations). When I tell a story about myself to me, that affects me which then causes me to become another and gain another perspective from which to examine and interpret the events of my life. If this is the case, what is the truth of myself? Or could there even be any truht of my dynamical selfhood, which is always something else when I attempt to conceive it?

We would not say that endeavour to find one's "true self" is vain. On the contrary, this endeavour is essential to the mode in which Western man (Dasein) exists in the world. This is the bread that we eat or the ground we walk on. Humans cannot exist without a ground, but this ground is basicly an abyss. This abyss again is the moment (pole) of freedom in the selfhood. This means that human being has no other grounds than himself. This freedom lets being be and in this case lets a human be. (Heidegger 1992, 194, see also Verséney 1966,86-87.)

Althought the correspondence theory of truth is our practical maxim when we are writing autobiography, we cannot grasp the dynamical relatiopship between the narrative and selfhood in the light of the correspondence theory of truth. A more interesting aspect of truth opens up via Martin Heidegger's, Hans-Georg Gadamer's and Paul Ricouer's hermeneutics. They help us to construct a kind of hermeneutic concept of truth, which makes again meaningful to speak about the truth in the context of autobiography and self-presentations.

Hans-Georg Gadamer's concept of hermeneutic experience

A good story - for example autobiography - widens our worldview. Gadamer refers to this kind of experience as "hermeneutic" or "dialectic" experience. Hermeneutic experience broadens our horizon and enables us to see something differently than we had in the past. This is why hermeneutic experience is essentially negative in nature – it breaks down typical or restricted ways of seeing things. The negativity of this experience is productive by nature. It is not just that we first had deceptive view and "now we know better" rather, we have constructed a new and wider perspective on other things and other people - but also at same time we lose something or lose sight of something.

Thus experience in this hermeneutic sense is always a negation. It is related to what Hegel has referred to with the term "determinate negation". It is not the simple rejection of earlier view but preservative overcoming (Aufhebung) with new and wider view (Gadamer 1998, 353):

> (...) we use word 'experience' in two different senses: the experience that conform to our expectation and confirm it and the new experiences that occur to us. This latter – 'experience' in the genuine sense – is always negative. If a new experience of an object occurs to us, this means that hitherto we have not seen the thing correctly and know it better. Thus, negativity of experience has a curiously productive meaning. It is not simply that we see through a deception and hence make a correction, but we acquire a comprehensive knowledge. We cannot, therefore, have a new experience of any object at random, but it must be such a nature that we gain better knowledge through it, not only itself, but of what we thought we knew before – i.e., of a universal. The negation by means of which it achieves this is a determinate negation. We call this kind of experience dialectical.

In this hermeneutic sense we cannot have the same experience twice. Experience in the trivial sense means repetitive experinces, experiences that confirm our previous understanding. We of course, need these confirmative experinces, although we do not learn anything new from them. Trivial experiences do not make us more "experienced" in the Gadamerian sense (Erfahrener). According to Gadamer, *experienced persons* are individuals who have experienced genuine experiences, which have widened their horizon. After a series of genuine experiences a person has turn her attention to the nature of the event of this experience and has become more aware of her ability to attain genuine experiences. This person is reflectively aware about her ability to learn new things and widen her meaning perspective. "The experiencer has become aware of his experience; he is 'experienced'. He has acquired a new horizon within something can become an experience for him" (Gadamer 1998, 354). In educational literature such a person is referred to as a "reflective learner".

His introduction to *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel conceives experience in the aformentioned way that is, as the experience of oneself as an experiencing subject. According to Hegel, the true nature of experience is an experience that consciousness has of itself. Hegel claims that this experience of self-consciousness will eventually lead - after series of determinate negations - to absolute self-knowledge or self-certainty, in which nothing in the world would be alien or strange to the self-conscioussness. Thus, according to Hegel, the stream of genuine experiences would stop, because the spirit - which appears as human consciousness - had reached the point at which the spirit had gave up on "the illusion" that something could exist in the world that is alien to the spirit. For Hegel, everything is the same panteistic spirit, but the self-alienated spirit simply unable to find itself in the world until the phase of absolute self-knowledge (Hegel 1977, 56-57):

> The experience of itself which consciousness goes through can (...) comprehend nothing less then the entire system of consciousness, or the entire realm of the truth of Spirit (...) In pressing forward to its true existence, consciousness will arrive at a point it gets rid of its semblance of being burdened with something alien, with what is only for it, and some sort of 'other', at a point where appearance becomes identical with essence, so that its exposition will coincide at just this point with authentic Science of Spirit. And finally, when consciousness itself grasps this its own essence, it will signify the nature of absolute knowledge itself.

For Hegel, the dialectics of experiences comes to an end in absolute self-knowledge and self-understanding. Gadamer wants to apply Hegel's dialectics of experiences without the concept of absolute self-knowledge (see also Heidegger 1988). Gadamer thinks that if a person is experienced, she is not the kind of person that knows everything rather, is a radically undogmatic person. She is a person who is very capable of attaining new genuine experiences. She is quite capable of learning new aspects and broadening her horizon. So for Gadamer, the stream of experiences never fulfils itself in absolute knowledge rather, in openness to new experiences, which is facilitated by experience itself (Gadamer 1998, 355).

Thus, nothing ever appears the same again following a hermeneutic experience. We see ordinary things ("ordinary things" in the former horizon, world view or paradigm) in a different light, and, moreover, we also become able to conceive of totally new entities. Our "world" undergoes a change, and we become changed as people along with it. The situation is even more interesting when the stimulus for this hermeneutic experience is a person's autobiography. What happens when the cause of a hermeneutic experience is the "mimetic picture" of one's life? In order to fully understand the dynamics of that process, we must consider the relationship between the original (life) and representation (autobiography). This problematic is related to the question of truth in artwork.

Heidegger: Truth as uncovering

We claim that in artwork and autobiography, the proper concept of truth is not the truth as correspondence – truth as adequatio between a thing and its representation. We prefer Martin Heidegger's alethetical truth (hermeneutic truth) over the correspondence theory. Heidegger puts forward his concept of alethetical truth by criticising the correspondence theory. Heidegger poses the question of how two totally different phenomena can correspond to each

other, the being (entity) and the assertion about it?

Heidegger claims that the correspondence theory is based on a more fundamental truth, the alethetical truth. This conviction requires the idea of overcoming the subject-object relationship. According to Heidegger a human being (Dasein) is always in-the-world (in-der-Welt-sein). There is no "I" that is separate from the outer world. This also means that a human being is not a single object among other objects in the world, so that the world is the totality of the objects. "Dasein is never 'proximally' an entity which is, so to speak, free from Being-in, but which sometimes has the inclination to take up 'relationship' towards the world." (Heidegger 1992, 84.) He is always with the world, with other beings. In the world Dasein finds himself and other beings. This is what Heidegger refers to as "understanding". Understanding is the basic mode of the human being to be in the world (Heidegger 1992, 182). This understanding is always the understanding of some being. And we can refer this understanding as "alethetical truth". Truth as aletheia is unconcealdness of the being of beings, in other words, it is uncovering of things. The human being, or Dasein, is the truth, because he understands (Heidegger 1992, 263).

> To say that assertion is true signifies that it uncovers the entity as it is in itself. Such an assertion asserts, points out, "lets" the entity "be seen" in its uncoveredness. The Being-true (truth) of assertion must be understood as Being-uncovering. Thus truth has by no means the structure of an agreement between knowing and the object in the sense of a likening of entity (the subject) to another (the Object). (Heidegger 1992, 261)

The location of alethetical truth is not primarily in the assertion, which we usually consider the locus of the truth. In his later philosophy, Heidegger presents the place of the truth as in the work of art and in the poetry. The art is the becoming and happening (Ereignis) of the truth. The truth is not the truth as correspondence but the truth as aletheia, as uncovering. The alethetical truth is the uncovering of the being in its being, and this alethetical truth is by its nature happening and poetry. While poetry is the essence of art, it is also language in its essential form. Poetry is not a form of language, but spoken and written language is a form of poetry. In other words, poetry is the origin of language and art.

If the case is that something new emerges in our world (horizon) as a result of the hermeneutic experience caused by a poem or a story, then artwork surely is not a copy or pure reproduction of the original. Heidegger strongly objects to the conviction that, for example, Hölderlin's hymn "The Rhine" exists in a copy-relationship with the actual Rhine River. Yet

the truth is put in the work, not as a correspondence but as an uncovering – as Aletheia. Alethetical truth is not a relation but, rather, is a way in which a being (Seiende) uncovers itself.

> What is at work in the work? Van Gogh's painting is the disclosure of what the equipment, the pair of peasant shoes, is in truth. This entity emerges into the unconcealedness of its being. The Greeks called the unconcealedness of beings aletheia. We say 'truth' and think little enough in using this word. If there occurs in the work a disclosure of a particular being, disclosing what and how it is, then there is here an occurring, a happening of truth at work. (Heidegger 1971, 36)

The happening of the truth in the work of art is one way of undergoing an experience with language. This kind of undergoing means that we endure it, suffer it, receive it as it strikes us and submit to it. The concept of "undergoing" an experience means that the experience is not of our own making and that it has the power to transform us. When we refer here to the undergoing of an experience with language in the Heideggerian sense, it is not in terms of the gathering or analysis of information (Heidegger, 1982, 59).

Speaking of language is in itself the undergoing of an experience with language. Gadamer's hermeneutic experience is one modification of this undergoing. Language speaks, not you or I. This happens when we cannot find the right words to express what is on our mind, which in turn worries, distresses or encourages us. Heidegger's example is Georg Trakl's poem *Winter Evening*. In this poem, the unspeakable reveals the world, and this uncovering of the world of the winter evening is the alethetical truth. The alethetical truth does not mean, that everything is uncovered. It is impossible to uncover the whole world at once. Something must at same time be covered. Covering and uncovering belong to alethetical truth. To see something is possible only if something else stays in shadow, out of our horizon.

Autobiographical narrative as a hermeneutic picture that is not a copy of the original

Heidegger's pupil Gadamer interprets *Alethetical* truth in the following way: Gadamer considers the experience of artwork as a hermeneutic experience. It is by means of hermeneutic experiences that new things occur in our world, and it happens in a way in which we feel that this artistic representation is more true or authentic than the "original" itself.

Let us take as an example Neill Jordan's historical movie *Michael Collins*. In the movie, Liam Neeson plays the role of Irish political leader Michael Collins so extraordinarily well that we begin to feel as if Liam Neeson is more like Collins than Collins himself; over the course of the movie the character becomes more "himself". The cinematic representation of the real historical person facilitates our recognition of Collins "more as himself". Through the movie, we are able to recognise something as something, which means that truth has happened or the truth has been put into action. The process of recognition, however, does not necessarily mean that we know something again, or that we experience it in a trivial sense. "The joy of recognition is rather the joy of knowing more than is already familiar. In recognition what we know emerges..." (Gadamer 1998, 114)

This is why Gadamer emphasises the unity of the *picture* (Bild) and the *original* (Urbild) in the work of art. For Gadamer, the work of art or a great story is not a *copy* (Abbild) of an original but rather a *picture* of it. In the process of *picture* formation the original becomes born as *ex post facto* (Koski 1995, 73). When we recognise the *picture*, the original somehow becomes increasingly real – it becomes truer (ontological enrichment). Pure copy does not inspire this kind of experience, nor is that the copy's purpose. According to Gadamer (1998, 138):

> The essence of a copy is to have no other task but to resemble the original (...) This means that its nature is to lose its own independent existence and serve entirely to mediate what is copied (...) A picture, by contrast, is not destined to be self-effacing, for it is not a means to and end.

A copy merely points to the original, but a *picture* has an entirely different task. The original comes to life through picture, comes to be more like "itself". Without the picture, the original would not be same as it is with the presence of the *picture*. Without Jean Sibelius' *Finlandia Hymn*, Finland would not be Finland; without Titus Livius' *Ab urbe condita*, Rome would not be Rome, and finally without *The New Testament* - the most powerful narrative in the western world - Jesus would not be Jesus, etc. It is in this way that the truth happens in and through the *picture*. Something new emerges in the world, and something is uncovered – and something else might be covered - as a result of the *picture*.

Let us take an example from Church history to illustrate the power of picture. The question here is the so called Iconoclasts, which cost hundreds of lives of members of The Greek Orthodox Church. In the 800th century, the theological controversy over icons of Christ culminated. In the year 754, Byzantine Emperor Leo categorically banned the portrayal of Jesus.

Only Arabic and Syrian style pictureless decoration and ornaments were allowed in churches. The emperor Leo's councellors thought that the adoration of the icon of Christ would lead to superstition and heresy. The famous Greek Father John Damascene defended the icon of Christ and gave the Greek Orthodox Church the dogma that is still in use (Holmqvist 1928, 338). According to John Damascene, Christ is not the real Christ unless we portray Him. A follower of Jesus needs more than a swallow image of Jesus in her mind. She needs a concrete image – we wuold say a hermeneutic picture – in which Jesus could be born afterwards, as *post ex facto*. Due this hermeneutics of the picture (hermeneutic experience caused by the icon), the image of Jesus is experienced as more true than the original historical Jesus. Via the icon, the believer recognise something as something. That is, via the icon, the believer recognise Jesus (pre-understanding) as Jesus Christ (hermeneutic picture). Without the different kinds of hermeneutic pictures of Christ (New Testaments, icons, hymns, famous confessions of faith, movies, religious stories etc.) there would be no Christ. Christ can only exist in a living picture of Christ. For John Damascene, the icon of Jesus was itself a defender of the divine presence; just as God is presence in the Holy Communion, Christ is presence in the picture. Without the picture, Christ cannot be.

Autobiography and identity posess this same kind of hermeneutic logic as the picture and original. Autobiography is not a mere copy - it has another task, the task of the *picture*. As Jeromy Bruner notes, there is no "life itself" without interpretation. There is no life without a picture of life:

> There is no such thing psychologically as "life itself". At very least, it is a selective achievement of memory recall; beyond that, recounting one's life is an interpretive feat. Philosophically speaking, it is hard to imagine being a naive realist about "life itself". (Bruner 1987, 13.)

Interpretation is the process of recognising something as something. In autobiography, we recognise ourselves as ourselves. In this process of recognising, we simultaneously create and preserve (determinate negation) ourselves. Telling or writing an autobiography brings about a hermeneutic experience in which I see myself in an entirely different light. This could in turn alter my action and force me to retell or rewrite my autobiography. This is the point at which Ricoeur's hermeneutic concept of mimesis comes into the picture.

Ricoeur's Threefold concept of mimesis and the hermeneutics of the picture

Ricouer claims that narrative is a condition of human temporal existence (Dasein). Humans articulate time through narratives. Ricouer attemps to grasp the mediation between time and narrative with his threefold concept of $mimesis_1$, $mimesis_2$ and $mimesis_3$ (for more profound presentation of threefold mimesis, see Arto Laitinen's article in this book). Ricouer writes (Ricoeur 1984, 45): "In constructing the relationship between the three mimetic modes I constitute the mediation between time and narrative".

Ricoeur borrows his concept of mimesis (imitation) from Aristotle. For Aristotle, poetic is essentially imitation (mimesis), but not in the meaning of the plain copy, which is the Platonic use of the concept. "If we continue to translate mimesis by 'imitation', we have to understand something completely contrary to a copy of some preexisting reality and speak instead of a creative imitation" (Ricoeur 1984, 45). According to Ricouer's application of Aristotle, mimesis refers to creative imitation by means of the plot of lived temporal experience (Ricoeur 1984, 31). For Ricouer, mimesis is not just the production of a narrative text. Mimesis also refers to the threefold process of which the creation of narrative ($mimesis_2$, plotting the events) is merely one element, thought the most important one.

These three phases of mimesis are *pre-understanding, plotting* and *application*. Ricouer names these phases as $mimesis_1$, $mimesis_2$ and $mimesis_3$. Ricouer calls the preliminary understanding of action *pre-understanding*, and refers to it with the concept of $mimesis_1$. In the process of writing autobiography, $mimesis_1$ represents the phase in which the author lives his or her life and forms a pre-understanding of it. When we live our lives, we have some kind of practical and on-going understanding of it. To use Heideggerian terminology at this stage we have our life "present-at-hand" (Zuhanden); as something which is not properly thematized, not yet transformed into a picture.

A necessary condition of the narrating process is the fact that human action in general is always already articulated by signs, rules, and norms. Our pre-understanding in $mimesis_1$ is already linguistic, which is a necessary condition to the plotting in next phase. Ricouer does not say that our life already exists in narrative form, but rather, that our life is always already *symbolically* mediated. We could say that our life "in-itself" is an almost completed narrative, only the plot is missing. Ricouer speaks about a pre-narrative structure of temporal existence. In this context Ricouer uses term symbol to refer to something that is halfway between a simple notion and a

double-meaning expression following the model of the metaphor (Ricouer 1984, 57). Thus our fragmented pre-understanding of our life is symbolically mediated and is something between a set of simple notions and a set of complex symbols. Each of us has elements (memories and self-presentations in the form of notions and symbols) of one's autobiography "ready-at-hand" – all that is needed is a plot.

In the next phase, the narrative is organised into a text; pre-understanding is transformed into a poetic totality. Ricouer calls this active process of textualisation mimesis$_2$. Mimesis$_2$ constitutes the pivot in the narrative process. In this phase, singular events are organised into *the plot* (muthos). This emplotment is based on the pre-understanding of mimesis$_1$. According to Aristotle, "the imitation of action is the Plot" (Aristotle 1958; Poetics, 50a1). The production of the *plot* is the most creative moment in the threefold process of mimesis. In the composition of the plot, the essential thing is that the narrator is the maker of a plot (Ricouer 1984, 41):

> One feature of mimesis, then, is that it is directed more at the coherence of the muthos (the plot) than at its particular story. Its making is immediately a universalizing "making". The whole problem of narrative *Verstehen* (understanding) is contained here in principle. To make up a plot is already to make the intelligible sprung from the accidental, the universal from the singular, the necessary or the probable from episodic.

According to Ricouer the plot is the mediation between the individual events and the narrated story as a whole. The plot makes a meaningful narrative out of the diversity of events and incidents of life. Plot transforms events into story. There is no story prior to the productive imagination of the author or the writer of an autobiography. Emplotment and storytelling are possible because our pre-understanding is symbolically mediated, although an author must still invent a plot, a common thread that holds events together. Ricouer claims that a story must be more than an enumeration of events in serial order. Plot organises events into a whole in a way that allows us to pose the question: what is the "thought" of this story? (Ricouer 1984, 65).

On many occasions, Ricouer emphases that mimetic activity is not copying. This is especially true in the phase of mimesis$_2$. A plot, theme or thought is not and it cannot be a copy from original. In the process of emplotment, the original is created *post ex facto*. In this process something happens to the author's pre-understanding, something to which the author cannot reverse back. In the case of autobiography life "in-itself" (Hegel) becomes life "for-itself" in a way in which there is no going back. We refers to what

happens here as the ontological enrichment of life. Something new comes into the world when the writer of an autobiography transforms her fragmented memories and life happenings into a meaningful whole with a concluding plot. With the reflective act of emplotment, the author's life "in-itself" becomes life "for-itself"; life becomes the story of an author's life narrated by the experiencing ego to itself. In this way the ego transforms her fragmented self-presentations into kind of artwork, which becomes a pontential stimulus of hermeneutic experience for the author itself.

In the phase of mimesis$_2$, events and happenings of an author's life become transformed into a structure or into picture in Gadamerian sense. These events were before only properties of author, but after this this transformation into written text they become common property, something more permanent than author herself. According to Gadamer "the transformation into a structure means that what existed previously no longer exist. But also what exists, what represents itself in play of art, is lasting and true" (Gadamer 1998, 100).

But the narrative process does not stop here. The story is told and adopted, and thus becomes part of the identity of the writer. The author begins to *apply* this new understanding to her own life. There is, of course, no "simple" application of a story or self-understanding, because the story becomes altered over the course of the process of its application. The process of application is always interpretation and reconstruction (Gadamer). This application is also "the closure and disclosure of being", where the horizon of the "applicator" simultaneously widens and close itself (Heidegger). When I apply my new self-undertanding, something new emerges but also something else also remains concealed. Ricouer explicitely says that this stage corresponds to what Gadamer calls "application" (Ricouer 1984, 70). This Gadamerian *application* is mimesis$_3$, and it is also the starting point of a new *pre-understanding* of life.

If we want to create an analogy between threefold model of mimesis and Hegel's threefold model of the appearance (phenomenology) of spirit, it would proceed as follows: Mimesis$_1$ corresponds to the stage of the subjective spirit, in which the spirit is "in-itself" (an sich selbst). Mimesis$_2$ corresponds to the stage of objective spirit, in which the spirit is "for-itself". And finally, mimesis$_3$ corresponds to the stage of absolute spirit, in which the spirit is "in-itself-and-for-itself" (see Hegel's Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften, § 385). We hold this analogy with addition that the stage of "spirit in-itself-and-for-itself" is not stage of absolute self-certainty but a new beginning - a new phase for the spirit to be "in-itself". The development of spirit and selfhood is a never ending process in which the spiral circulation always includes the possibility to go in new direction.

With this threefold model of mimesis Ricouer actually presents his own version of the Heideggerian "happening of truth in poetry". In Ricouer's hermeneutic plays the role of poetry. Something new emerges (the truth as a happening and an uncovering; the ontological enrichment of being) when the author tells the story of her own life, and this "something new" begins to affect the author's life by its application of author itself. The written autobiography works as a Gadamerian picture (Bild), by which the author gets the sense of becoming more herself. The autobiography is not a copy of life (Abbild). It does not re-present anything, but rather discloses and reveals the truth of being, the truth of the dynamic of oneself. Selfhood is always dynamic, and the very process of composing an autobiography alters it. In the process of $mimesis_1$-$mimesis_2$-$mimesis_3$, oneself becomes another; not another person altogether but something different than what she had been. The autobiography and selfhood are involved in a recursive relationship, which is why the process of autobiography is never-ending. The hermeneutics of telling and re-telling the narrative identity can be presented in the following way:

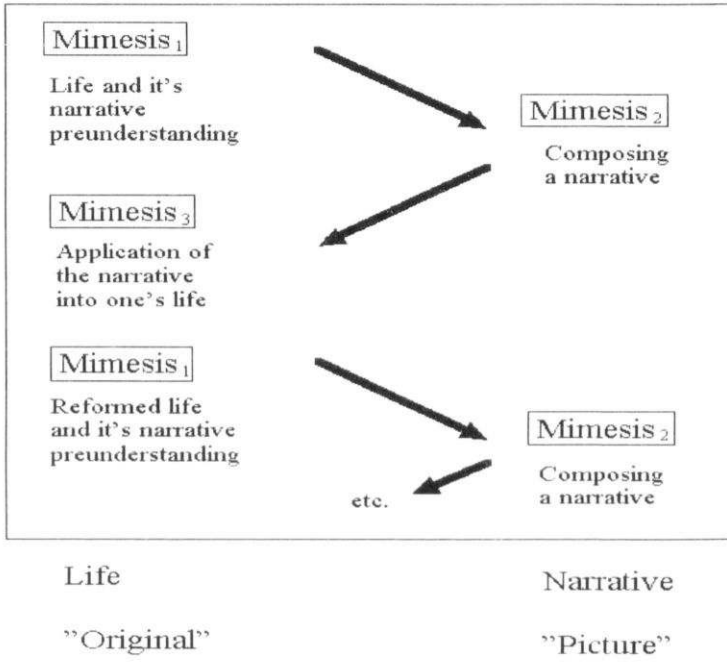

Figure 3. The ontological enrichment of life and story (Heikkinen, Kakkori & Huttunen 2001)

In mimesis$_1$, the life and its pre-understanding serve as the "original" (Urbild). In mimesis$_1$, fragmented stories about oneself are in the form of "inner speech". In mimesis$_2$, you are in the phase of dictating and conducting your autobiography. The writing of an autobiography is an indication of the need to "plot" these fragmented self-representations into a coherent "outer speech". The plot determines which memories we include and which memories we emphasise. As a result of the autobiography, some aspects come to light while others remains concealed. The plot also determines how we consider the change in ourselves; which parts of us have changed and which have not. In this way, we create and renew our narrative identity. In mimesis$_3$, I apply the written story to my life again. For example, in a religious confession, I confirm to myself and other people that my story is true and authentic. Through my words and deeds I begin to actualise this picture of me, after which this picture starts to live its own life. As Jerome Bruner (1987, 13) has put it: "Narrative imitates life, life imitates narrative". This imitation is productive in both ways. The autobiographical narrative is never a simple copy of life and life never imitates autobiography in any straightforward way. One might think that after you have made your political or religious confession (mimesis$_2$) life would be the simple application (mimesis$_3$) of this new self-understanding (a new mimesis$_1$) – but there is nothing simple in life.

The absence of power in the hermeneutics of truth and selfhood

We have presented a very positive and humanistic view of the development and interviewened of narrative and selfhood. Nevertheless, this is only one side of picture, the side of freedom. According to David Carr, the selective nature of the process of mimesis$_2$ is a sign of the presence of power (Carr 1986). We do not tell our biography in a vacuum but in certain tradition and discourse, wherefrom we get the concepts and models of thoughts. Tradition and discourse particularly determinize the way we plot our life happenings in the phase of mimesis$_2$. Of course, tradition and the power structures of discourse are active in the preunderstanding (mimesis$_1$) and in the application (mimesis$_3$).

Also we have examined the hermeneutic experience and the formation of narrative in the light of "the realm of freedom", in which we presume that our relation to tradition and our former self-understanding (preconception) is purely dialogical and the process is always open to new

perpectives. But there is ascpetc of "the realm of necessity" which provides a different picture of the mimetic process. According to this point of view, humans are not free and they do not have capacity to reflectively modify their identities and selfhood. According to Michel Foucault, the concept of self is only "an ideological particle", an enlightened illusion of freedom and self-control (see Leena Kakkori's article in this book). So what is the truth of selfhood? What is the relationship between freedom and determination in the hermenutics of selfhood? Perhaps there is no proper synthesis and there is real antinomy, as Immanuel Kant thought (Kant 1971, 104). There is freedom and there is non. The human is simultaneusly a member of both the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity.

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Pentti Moilanen

NARRATIVE, TRUTH AND CORRESPONDENCE

A Defence

Narrative research is suitable for teacher research because stories fit the complexity of teachers' work and the indeterminacy and richness of teachers' experiences. Stories can capture the many nuances and intrinsic multiplicity of meanings that constitute the world of teaching. (Carter 1993, 6.)

The analysis of narratives is usually a hermeneutic appraisal. Narratives are textual and hermeneutics is a theory of interpretation. In spite of this the hermeneutic conception of truth does not fit all views of interpretation or all views of narrative research. In this article I try to show that even in hermeneutic analysis of narratives one often presupposes the correspondence theory of truth. I present here two examples of hermeneutic interpretation to support my thesis. The first one stem from analytic hermeneutics and deals with the interpretation of the reasons for action. The second derives from phenomenological hermeneutics and deals with the interpretation of human experiences.

The correspondence theory of truth is often considered unsuitable for qualitative research. One idea behind the denial of the correspondence theory of truth is the conception that one cannot test the correspondence of interpretations and social reality because social reality consists of changing interpretations. According to this conception there is no ultimate social reality with which the interpretations made by a researcher could be compared. From the constructionist viewpoint people are all the time constructing their psychic and social realities shaped by historically contingent conventions of discourse (Gergen 1985, 272). According to Carter (1993, 10) in narrative research thinking about the grounding of generalizations in empirical facts is seriously threatened.

I think that relying on the correspondence theory of truth is still possible. One aim of social research is to reconstruct the interpretations made by the

members of the societies investigated. Here one can, in principle at least, compare the primary interpretations under investigation with the interpretations made of these primary interpretations.

Strauss & Corbin (1990, 252) see three kinds of judgments about the validity, reliability and credibility of data. Judgments are made about the data, research process and empirical grounding of the research findings. In research practice there seems to be an emphasis on the validity of the research process (Atkinson, Health and Chenail 1991, 162). It is supposed that the research process should be made as transparent as possible to allow the evaluative analysis of each step.

Here I take another course of analysis and concentrate on the third form of validity analysis. The starting point of my argument is that one tries to find some independent support for an interpretation hypothesis. This support is based on a comparison of the interpretation with certain facts. The crucial question is if there is a reality the interpretations could be compared with. I try to show that in some cases of narrative research the answer is affirmative.

Truth and interpretations

Validity in qualitative research

Truth is the most important notion of science. One of the aims of science is to build up a truthful conception of reality. The requirement of truthfulness is a demanding one because there is no direct way to evaluate the truthfulness of scientific theories. In evaluating theories one is relying on other theories (See Longino 1979, 39-40). This notion leads us to question the usefulness of the notion of truth in science. Should we have some easier ways of evaluating the quality of scientific theories? Maybe it is enough that theories are useful in the explanation of phenomena or in the prediction of courses of events or in managing with phenomena in our daily lives.

The problem of truth has become a complex question in qualitative research. The methods of gathering and interpreting data are not simple procedures that could be used in exactly the same way by every researcher. Some researchers are more sensitive than others in interviewing people or more insightful in construing interpretations. The process of interpretation is therefore a subjective process. (See Carter 1993, 9).

Especially in action research and in narrative research, too, the subject of research is changing due to the research process. It may be argued that in

research where the methods of data collecting cause reflection in the people studied, the research cannot objectively describe social reality. Different research procedures change people in different ways and therefore there is no objective way to compare the results of various investigations.

A third problem concerns the ontology of social reality. This problem is tied to the subjective nature of social reality. Social reality consists for a large part of interpretations (Lenk 1991, 291). Many social facts are based on interpretations that are not alike in different societies. For example democracy, equality or freedom have no universal meaning. In these cases the researcher makes subjective interpretations of subjective interpretations. Is there any place for the notion of truth?

In qualitative research the traditional notions of validity and reliability are seldom used. Instead one uses notions like credibility, transferability, dependability and corfirmability (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 300). These notions better suit the subjective nature of the research process. The most interesting concept of these is for me the notion of credibility. It seems to presuppose the notion of truth. The other concepts are coherent with the subjective side of interpretations but the notion of credibility is different. It demands that one should make interpretations that correspond to reality, even if this reality is a subjective one.

Subjectivity and objectivity of interpretations

The reality investigated is in many cases subjective and the process on interpretation is subjective, too. This does not, however, mean that the reality and the process of interpretation are alike because the term subjective has different meanings. Searle (1995, 8) writes that we have to distinguish an epistemological and an ontological use of this term. In the epistemological sense 'subjective' and 'objective' refer to the evaluation of knowledge or opinions. In this sense musical taste is subjective because there are no objective criteria for music. One prefers rock music and someone else jazz. It is up to one's own musical taste what kind of music is good. Objective facts do not depend on people's opinions or feelings. Helsinki is the capital of Finland and this is an objective fact.

In the ontological sense objective and subjective refer to the way of being. Some entities exist in private experience. Pains are subjective in this sense. Their existence presupposes some person to experience the pain.

In this sense it is possible, at least in principle, to have objective knowledge of subjective facts. When I say that you have a headache, I may make a correct or incorrect statement about your experience. Even if I cannot objectively say that jazz is better than rock music, I still can say that you prefere jazz.

Even if the social world consisted only of subjective interpretations, it is no mistake to state that we can, in principle at least, make objective interpretations of social reality. Even if these interpretations are not the whole truth, they can accurately describe the subjective social world from some point of view. In this sense we can have various true interpretations of the social world that consists only of subjective interpretations.

I think that two specifications must be made here. First, the social world does not consist only of subjective interpretations. Secondly, even if objective interpretations of social reality are in principle possible, it does not have to be so in practice.

Lincoln and Guba (1985, 295-296) state: "When naive realism is replaced by the assumption of multiple constructed realities, there is no ultimate benchmark to which one can turn for justification... In order to demonstrate "truth value, " the naturalist must show that he or she has *represented those multiple constructions adequately*, that is, that the *reconstructions* ... that have been arrived at via the inquiry are *credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities*." To my mind this idea is consistent with the correspondence theory of truth and fits in with the two meanings of subjectivity.

Coherence and correspondence in hermeneutics

The correspondence theory of truth is usually not considered to fit in with hermeneutics (See Wachterhauser 1994, 24). There are at least three reasons for this. Hermeneutics has construed the interpretation process as a dialogue based on a hermeneutic circle. Interpretation has not been seen as a hypothetic-deductive procedure including testing of a hypothesis, but as a gradual correction of pre understandings. Secondly, one of the aims of hermeneutic understanding is mutual understanding that leads to edification. Here, truth means truth to a person, not universal truth. Third, the coherence theory of truth fits in with the actual methods of hermeneutic interpretations. In interpreting literary works, one aims at building a coherent interpretation of the work. In searching for hidden meanings or presuppositions one cannot compare the interpretation hypothesis with a certain fact of the text because the hidden meanings and presuppositions are not to be seen on the pages. The existence of hidden meanings and presuppositions is non-visible.

When one wants to understand the action of some people, one has to try to see the world through their eyes. Even this is not enough because their action is situated in some culture and in interpreting individuals one must make interpretations of the cultural ethos of their society. In interpreting

text or other social facts one is trying to construe an interpretation that makes the subject of interpretation a meaningful totality. Interpreting social facts is woven into the interpretation of culture. The interpreter is not concentrating on separate facts but on the entire culture. The idea of coherence theory of truth suits this endeavour.

Verification of interpretations

There are many kinds of qualitative research and even of interpretive research. For instance Miles and Huberman (1994, 7) list more than twenty types of qualitative research. Therefore it is not possible to deal with the truth of qualitative research in its totality but with the problems of truth in some certain kind of qualitative research.

In this article I deal with two kinds of interpretation: the interpretation of the reasons for action and of lived experiences. In both cases the interpretation is based on narratives. The people investigated are telling stories about their actions or lived experiences and the interviewer has to make interpretations based on these stories.

It may be that the researcher observers and interviews a teacher and tries to find out what it is like to be a teacher. This question is an ontological one because it asks about the way of being of teachers. In this kind of research one possibility is to base the research on phenomenology and base the analysis on the experiences of teachers. Narratives are needed to reveal these experiences.

Another possibility is to ask what ideas of teaching guide the action of teachers. In this case the researcher is interested in the reasons for action. According to Bruner (1985, 100) narrative is concerned with the explication of human intentions in the context of action. Therefore narrative suits the analysis of the reasons for action.

Interpreting the reasons for action

In interpreting the action of some people the researcher may try to find the reasons for their action. These reasons are needed to make the previously odd action seem meaningful. If the interpreter knows what the agent aimed at with his action and why he considered that aim valuable, the interpreter can understand the action of the agent. In short, one is making interpretations of people's intentions and beliefs in order to understand their action. (Carlgren & Lindblad 1991, 5009; Nespor 1987, 323; Noel 1993, 142.)

Action has a twofold narrative structure. Action gets its meaning partly from the intentions and interpretations of the agent. Also the interpretation or identification of action is tied to a narrative understanding of action. As von Wright (1971, 115) puts it: "– the behavior's intentionality is its place in a story about the agent."

Understanding and explanation of action are tied together. Reasons contribute causally to action and therefore the intentional explanation of action can be seen as one type of causal explanation. On the other hand knowledge of the reasons for action makes it possible to understand the action, e.g. to see its point and to re-identify it.

The agent's conceptions of the reasons for his action may sometimes be misguided. Therefore to see the agents point of view may help to understand the action from his position but it does not necessarily give a valid explanation of the action. In these cases the interpretation is one sided and it needs correction. Still, in some sense, these kind of invalid explanations give some understanding of the action studied. One can see what the agent consideres his action to be like.

Giving a correct intentional explanation of action does not guarantee its understanding. The interpreter may lack acquaintance of the culture the person studied is living in and therefore the interpreter is unable to see the cultural point of the reasons for action (see Martin 1976, 162–165).

A correct understanding of an action is linked to a causal role of the reasons. As Bhaskar (1979, 115) writes:

> It is only if X does A because of R that we are justified in citing R as the reason for A_t. And there would seem to be no way of explicating the 'because' save in terms of causality. For unless the reason was, in context, a necessary condition for the physical movement that actually occurred ... then ... the particular reason explanation given must appear as totally arbitrary. Like a good fairy-tale it may soothe and satisfy the listener, but it cannot explain. If and whenever they explain, then, reasons must be interpreted as causes, on pain of ceasing to explain at all. (Bhaskar 1979, 115.)

According to agent causalism the reasons as mental states do not per se cause the action but the agent is this cause. The reasons causally contribute to action because they have a part in the control of action (see Vollmer 1995, 184). This control is partly conscious and partly unconscious.

It is possible that the same action can be explained in different ways. We humans are individuals capable of conscious control of our action, holders of social myths, reproducers of social processes and animals with various animal instincts. An explanation of action may refer to any of these

phenomena. Therefore the reasons explanation is only one possible kind of explanations. In some cases these other kind of explanations are explanations for having certain reasons for action and therefore they complement to reasons explanations. Sometimes they are rival explanations that aim at making reasons explanations unnecessary. Even if we are convinced of the correctness of the reasons explanation it is always possible that there are other or better explanations to be sought after. That is why the correctness or validity of a reasons explanation is relative to this special perspective or language game. Therefore it is presupposed in my argumentation that reasons explanation is a valid type of explanation even if it is only one possible way to explain the action investigated.

The reasons for action do not constitute a uniform case. There are different kinds of action and different kinds of reasons for action. Besides deliberated action with conscious reasons there is routine action. In the cases of routine action, the action may have been deliberated first but gradually become routine. Another possibility is that the action has never been deliberated. In any case the reasons for action are tied into the control of action by the agent. The agent (consciously or unconsciously) aims at something and alters (consciously or unconsciously) his action according to the changing situation to attain the goal. The control of action presupposes what Searle (1992,175–179) calls the "background" of action. This background includes, e.g. habits that are automatically realized in action. For example, when walking into a restaurant, we do not have to wonder how to stay upright while walking. It succeeds automatically.

In this way the reasons for action are tied to a conscious and unconscious control of action and background capacities. This holds also for nonphysical action. Even if there are many kinds of action and many kinds of reasons for action the agent always controls his action somehow.

As Phillips (1997, 101–106) states, there is a difference between narratives as causal accounts of action and narratives as justification for action. Here it is easy to see what the real reasons for action are. They are the intentions and beliefs involved in the guidance of action. Narratives of action catch these real reasons if they cite beliefs and intentions that have this causal role in action.

Here the correspondence theory of truth is well founded because the truth of interpretation can be defined as the correspondence of an interpretation and the real reasons for action.

Interpreting the lived experiences

The aim of phenomenology is to investigate lived experience. This presupposes that one must transform lived experience into a textual expression. Because lived experience seems to have a linguistic structure one can speak of human experience as a kind of text. Because of this textuality of experience principles of phenomenology and hermeneutics are useful in the study of lived experience. Hermeneutics is needed to complete phenomenology because hermeneutics is the interpretive study of expressions and objectifications of lived experience. The aim is to determine the meaning embodied in these expressions and objectifications. (Van Manen 1990, 38–39).

Lived experience is our immediate, pre-reflective consciousness of life. We are involved immediately and naturally in our daily activities. We are conscious of ourselves, our action, and our environment but in a non-reflective manner. This consciousness is implicit, non-thematic and non-reflective and consists in the simple presence of what we are doing. This means that we are not conscious of our consciousness. Lived experience can never be grasped in its immediate manifestation but only reflectively as past presence. (Van Manen 1990, 36–38).

Phenomenological research has a twofold character. It is a preoccupation with both the concrete as well as the essential nature of a lived experience. Therefore phenomenology asks what is the nature of phenomena as meaningfully experienced and what is the nature of a specific kind of experience. The aim is to find common features of our lived experience.

Even if lived experience is inherently temporal or even proto-narrational, the structure of self-conscious expressions of this experience is not necessarily the same as the structure of lived experience. There are many ways in which narrative conceptualization and retelling can transform and distort lived experience. This does not mean that individuals' accounts of their experiences must necessarily distort those experiences. (Sass 1998, 432).

According to Atkinson (1997, 327) it is a mistake to suppose that the personal private aspects of experience can be rendered visible through dialogue. Narratives are no less conventional than any other form of data. Experiences are constituted through conventional acts of narrating. For this reason we are deceiving ourselves if we believe that narratives of experience bring us into direct encounter with the original experience (Churchill 2000, 54).

The data for phenomenological analysis should be descriptions and not explanations of experiences. Often this does not happen but the data are a mixture of descriptions and explanations. Sartre calls this second mode of

reflection *impure reflection*. These acts of reflection are motivated by a fundamental passion to escape the responsibility of freedom. We seek to ground our ambigious and superfluous acts by means of reflective acts that posit plausible explanations for our conduct. (Churchill 2000, 49).

Purifying reflection discloses the way that experience is lived originally. According to Churchill (2000, 51) one never engages directly in purifying reflection without having to move through impure reflection. It is the task of researchers to see the illusory and self-deceiving nature of these reflections.

Stories consist of events, characters, and settings arranged in temporal sequence that imply causality and significance (Carter 1993, 6). Therefore stories must be purified from causal explanations to make the purifying reflection possible. Van Manen (1990, 63) considers protocol writing as one means to obtain data for phenomenological analysis. In this writing one must avoid as much as possible causal explanations, generalizations, and abstract interpretations. The author should describe the experience, as it was, describe specific events as how they were felt. These are features that do not make up a good story in themselves.

Churchill (2000, 54) thinks somewhat different about the use of narrative in phenomenological research. He goes on to argue that reflective consciousness is not separate from the consciousness reflected on. Therefore the deceptions in the subject's account are indicative of the very nature of the particular experience. If the subject is trying to escape from her responsibility and find excuses for her action, the interpreter has to analyse what this tells about the experience reflected on.

Here it seems evident that the correspondence theory of truth succeeds in defining what the truth of an interpretation means. There is a reality of lived experience that interpretations can be compared with.

Truth of interpretations

Theories of truth cannot be verified. Therefore, these theories cannot prove anything about narrative research. In spite of this they are needed to support narrative research. They are like stories that give meaning to the efforts of researchers (See Koski 1996, 13). These stories can tell why it is not necessary to reach for absolute verification, or why there is disagreement among researchers. Another reason for their importance is that they make it possible to ask different kinds of questions about the results of narrative research. Not all theories of truth make it meaningful to ask, e.g., whether there is a valid consensus in a research community.

It is impossible to prove that the correspondence theory of truth is true. This theory is a philosophical theory and therefore the question of its truth is not meaningful. The more fruitful question is what meaning this theory has for research activities. I think that a transcendental argument is sound: the correspondence theory of truth is presupposed in the many activities of researchers who use narrative methodology. (See Bhaskar 1979, 7.)

Now one can see why the idea of the correspondence of theories and reality is still accurate. One aim of science, even of hermeneutics or phenomenology, is to make correct statements or interpretations of reality. This aim makes the correspondence theory of truth useful.

The correspondence theory of truth is important in narrative research because it makes it possible to ask which of the competing coherent interpretations is true or whether the agreement of the validity of interpretations is a sound one. It also makes it possible to wonder whether a useful interpretation is a true one. (See Lincoln & Denzin 1994, 580.)

The importance of the correspondence theory of truth is tied to the aim of interpretation. If we want to find out the real reasons for action (e.g. the reasons that causally contribute to action) or the real lived experiences, we are supposing the correspondence theory of truth. The correspondence theory of truth does not necessarily state anything about a possibility of the actual comparison of interpretations and reality. In this sense it is possible to state the importance of the correspondence theory of truth for the understanding of the concept of truth or of truthful interpretation. Despite this one may be forced to depend for example on the coherence theory of truth in the actual evaluation of interpretations.

The coherence, correspondence and consensus theories of truth do not necessarily conflict with each other. The correspondence theory states what the truth on interpretation means, and the coherence theory of truth states how the truthfulness of interpretations can be evaluated. The consensus theory of truth stresses the importance of the research community in the actual verification of interpretations.

When we ask what the real reasons for action are, we must assume the correspondence theory of truth. Nevertheless, this question is not the only possible one. If we ask how far the agent's reasons for his action are rational, we are forced into a dialogue that concerns our own ideals and presuppositions, too. This dialogue presupposes the coherence theory of truth because we have to maintain a coherent world-view to be able to defend our own position.

If the aim of research is to make reflection and emancipation possible in the community studied, we are trying to help people to find a better way of living. Here an instrumental theory of truth is supposed. Those interpretations

that make a deepened self-understanding or democracy in community possible are useful for the development of the community. If our aim is just to listen to the stories people are telling about their action and to understand these stories, we are engaged in a dialogue trying to build up a coherent understanding.

My arguments conflict with those of some other authors who write about hermeneutics and narrative. Doyle (1997, 96) and McEvan (1995, 178–180) write about a gadamerian view of educational research that does not aim at objective explanation of teaching but at edification. If we want to understand the practices of teaching we have to be able to speak the language of practice. The practitioners can give account of their actions by relating them to some goals and their interpretations. The meanings implicit in the actions of individual teachers are embedded in the common meanings of the group. The aim of educational research is to go beyond the self-understandings of teachers, to challenge them and to change them. This is not possible from an outsider-position. The researcher has to get access to the stories of teachers involved in practice.

> In telling stories about teaching we are doing more than simply recording how practices arise, we are also potentially altering them. By finding a new language to talk about the practices of teaching – a new language that can, moreover, become a part of the practice itself – we are adding to the history of the practice and participating, for better or worse, in its evolution. Research on teaching, then, in so far as it tells stories about teaching, is inevitably oriented toward changing how teachers think and act because it contributes to changes in the languages that constitute teachers' practices. (McEvan 1995, 181)

The idea of changing teachers' understanding of their work is not new. Traditionally the aim of educational research has been to find the laws covering learning and teaching. Knowledge of these laws helps teachers to develop their understandings and to change their practice. What McEwan suggests is that as researchers we should be interested in the teachers' narratives that give meaning to their practices and to engage into a narrative dialogue with them. In this dialogue researchers can deepen their understanding of teaching and without it is not possible to understand teaching and to change teachers' understanding of their work.

This is clearly different from what I have been suggesting. My arguments concern the research that is interested in knowing what the real reasons for action or real experiences of people are.

Elsewhere in this book, Huttunen and Kakkori write that autobiography is not a copy of something but a process creating and changing ourselves.

That is why a hermeneutical concept of truth suits narrative research. This, too, is different to my arguments.

It seems that a third person view is presupposed in my argumentation. We are interested in the narratives of others and try to find out what these narratives reveal of their action and lived experiences. Huttunen and Kakkori have a first person view. We are interested in our own lives and selfhood.

Another presupposition of mine is that we are seeking something behind the narratives – the real reasons for action or the real lived experiences. It seems that Huttunen and Kakkori presuppose a different view of reality. Narrative itself is the reality to investigate.

It seems that there are different questions of narrative and truth in our articles. What I want to suggest is that in narrative research there are questions that make the correspondence theory of truth important. This does not mean that every kind of narrative research presupposes this theory.

In the two cases I have been writing about it is quite easy to show that the idea of the correspondence theory of truth is sound. Still there are cases of narrative research that are more complicated. For instance, in the investigation of teachers' opinions on the importance of schooling we are dealing with a theme that is too obvious for serious thought, I think. The whole profession of teaching presupposes both a social and individual importance of schooling. For this reasons teachers do not usually think about it. When forced to meet this question teachers begin to construe thoughts that have never been in their mind. In different moments they tell different stories that are equally true for them.

In this case the idea of the correspondence theory of truth may be saved if we are satisfied with a minimal momentary correspondence. In this moment teachers' beliefs are what they are but in the next moment they may be quite different. Here we should remember what Huttunen and Kakkori write about autobiography as a process in which we are both creating and changing ourselves. Indeed there are subjective realities that are ongoing processes and are being created through personal narratives. Still, I believe, a third person view makes the correspondence theory of truth necessary. If we want to tell a true story of the narratives of others, we have to ask if our stories match their narratives.

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Leena Kakkori

MASTERS OF THE TRUTH

NIETZSCHE´S AND FOUCAULT´S CONCEPT OF THE TRUTH IN LIGHT OF NARRATIVE

That's me in the corner, that's me in the spotlight loosing my religion
Trying to keep up with you and I don't know if I can do it
Oh no I've said too much. I haven't said enough...

Every whisper of very waking hour I'm choosing my confessions
Trying to keep an eye on you. Like a hurtlost and blinded fool
Oh no I' said too much...

R.E.M.

Narrative research is currently being done in a wider range of fields than ever. Researchers have begun to realise the benefits of narrative research, but at the same time the problems of research have become increasingly apparent. One problem is the question of the truth in the research. In the following article I will expose this problem, first in the light of Friedrich Nietzsche´s philosophy and then with the help of Michel Foucault´s concept of confession.

For Nietzsche, the will to power means willing to everything that enhances, maintains, and preserves life. The extremity of the willing is the willing of will, which aims at the preservation of life. In this all-comprehensive circle of willing even God dies, and only super-human are able to stand it. The term "super-human" does not mean super-hero, but a human being after God´s death. God no longer rules law and morality, nor is God the ground of the law and the foundation of morality. The human being must take his place and make his own rules and morals. History is one thing that preserves and enhances life, not scientific history, but, rather, a history that more closely resembles stories and narratives of life.

Nietzsche´s themes of the will to power and God´s death are close to Foucault´s genealogy of history. He has referred himself as "Nietzschean". For Foucault, the subject is the creation of power and power relations. The confession is one of the constructions of this power that forms the human subject. Foucault says that the human being is a confessing animal. The human being betters himself by confessing and telling stories and narratives about himself, or, in other words, creates his own autobiography. The first and best-known member of this tradition is Aurelius Augustinus, Saint Augustine. He wrote his confession to God and his fellow man during the years 397-400. When we confess, the confession must be right and true, as this is the central aspect of the nature of the confession. A confession is not a confession if it is not true. One of Foucault´s main arguments is that the power relation defines both what is right and true as well as what a true confession is. There is no essence of the human being, which can be found by analysing and researching the human being and her confessions. Confessions construct the human being. The stories told in confessions are the truth. The truth is no longer timeless and stable, the absolute truth, but is historical and dynamic, and can be even less significant: "There are very many indifferent truths" (Nietzsche 1980, 33).

Nietzsche and History as Narrative

Nietzsche´s remarks about history are very valuable, when we consider them in the light of narrative research. If we replace Nietzsche's word "history" with narrative or autobiography, find we very sharp and productive critique, which narrative research needs. In Nietzsche's thinking, the drive to attain the truth is merely an expresion of the will to power. The writing of history, and especially the writing of autobiography, are no exceptions.

Forgetting as the beginning of remembering

Friedrich Nietzsche begins his book *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History* (1874) with a description of a feeling that has tortured him often. He hates history and believes that we are all suffering from a consumptive historical fever. In spite of his hatred of history, Nietzsche does admit that it is certainly a necessary part of human life. We require it for life and action, not for the smug avoidance of life and action. For Nietzsche, the avoidance of turning away from life represents the negative aspects of history as fever and disease. (Nietzsche 1980, 7–8.) Nietzsche´s goal in his essay is to show the way to a liberating use of history (Ruin 1994,115).

Animals live happily because they have no memory – in other words, they live un-historically, similarly to children (Nietzsche 1980, 8–9)[1] But for children the happiness is brief, because as soon as they learn the past tense, their happiness ends.

> And yet the child's play must be disturbed: only too soon will it be called out of its forgetfulness. Then it comes to understand the phrase "it was", that password with which struggle, suffering and boredom approach man to remind him what his existence basically is B a never to be completed imperfect tense. (Nietzsche 1980, 9.)

Children learn to forget and remember. The remembering and forgetting belong together, although in a different order than we usually tend to think. Forgetting is just as necessary for human as sleeping. If we were to remember everything and did not posses the power of forgetting at all, we would freeze.

Nietzsche's view is that we must find the borderline at which the past must be forgotten if it is not to become the gravedigger of the present. This is not an easy task to carry out: "Only from the standpoint of the highest strength of the present may you interpret the past" (Nietzsche 1980, 37). The narrative as a research object can be considered in this light. When somebody tells about her past, she is engaging in the act of remembering. The researcher, of course, wants true narratives, although she does not want narrative that includes everything that has happened. The researcher might ask someone, for example, How did you become a teacher? One possibility is that the interviewee will begin by telling of her birth and continue to provide a minute by minute account of the events in her life leading up to the point at which she begins telling the story and begins to tell how she begun to tell her story. These kinds of people hardly dare in the end to lift a finger, as endless repetition completely covers the present and makes it impossible to live this moment unhistorically.

> With the smallest as with the greatest happiness, however, there is always one thing which makes it happiness: being able to forget or, to express it in more learned fashion, the capacity to live *unhistorically* while it endures. (Nietzsche 1980, 9.)

As the endless repetition covers the present, it also covers the truth, and so we must forget something. The truth of the narrative does not mean that everything that has happened has been told. The truth is what we remember, what is uncovered.

According to Nietzsche, the unhistorical and the historical are equally necessary for men. Nietzsche describes two kinds of men: historical men and superhistorical men. Both types of men would say "no" to the question of whether they would like to live the last ten years over again, although for different reasons. "The historical men believe that ever more light is shed on the meaning of existence in the course of its process" (Nietzsche 1980, 13). They constantly look backwards for the sole purpose of understanding the present. They really do not care about the past, because the present is always better than the past. We might refer to these men as the "Hegelian few".

For G.W.F. Hegel, history is the process of the spirit, and its goal is the attainment of absolute spirit and the absolute knowledge. The spirit is the concept of all human needs and ideas, cultures and sciences. The Hegelian concept of history is continuously developing and processing. Our present is a product of the past and it is better than previous times. This can be seen, for example, in Hegel's theory of the phenomenology of spirit. The spirit develops in different stages to the absolute, and the tree highest stages are art, religion and philosophy. And this development is historical in nature. At ancient art perfectly illustrates the spirit in the form of concrete matter. But when the spirit develops and surpasses itself, art can no longer externalise the spirit. It shimmers (scheinen) through the work of art, trough the matter. "Spirit transcends art in order to gain a higher representation of itself" (Hegel 1977, 426). Religion is the next step in this development. The highest form of religion, Christianity, is still unable to fulfil the development of the spirit in a single image of a crucified Jesus. Philosophy is the last stage in the development of the spirit, in which all material aspects have been dialectically surpassed (Aufhebung). Nietzsche make's fun of Hegel and writes: "so, that for Hegel the apex and terminus of world history coincide in his own Berlin Existence. He should even have said that all things after him are properly to be only a musical coda of the world-historical rondo; more properly yet, to be redundant" (Nietzsche 1980, 47). For Nietzsche, history and the writing of history is one mode of the will to power.

Superhistorical men would also answer "no", although this time for different reasons. He does not see healing or salvation in the process, and he sees world as complete and achieving its end at every single moment. Superhistorical men might say: "What could ten new years teach that the past ten were incapable of teaching!"(Nietzsche 1980, 13.) They consider the past and the present as tantamount, one and the same. The present does not bring anything new to the understanding of the past and the past

does not help us to understand the present. When superhistorical men consider history, they will slowly feel aversion and become bored because they find nothing new.

The three types of history/narrative

A history conceived of as pure science is viewed by Nietzsche as impossibility, because it would be a kind of final reckoning for humanity. History is useful (Nietzsche's words are something like "healthy" and "fruitful") only if it is ruled by some higher power, and this higher power is the purpose of life (Nietzsche 1980, 23). History will never be able to and should never be able to become pure science, like, for example, mathematics. History is indispensable to the human in three different ways, all of which correspond with Nietzsche's three aspects of history: 1. History belongs to the realm of human deeds, which corresponds to a monumental history. This glorifies the heroes and feats of the past. 2. History belongs to the realm of the human efforts to preserve and admire, which corresponds to an antiquarian history. This piously preserves every possible aspects of the past. 3. History belongs to the realm of human suffering and liberation, which corresponds to critical history. This aspect passes critical judgment on the past in order to carve out new possibilities for the future. (Nietzsche 1980, 14, see also Ruin 1994, 115.)

My thesis is that it is useful and fruitful to consider the autobiographical narrative in light of these two Nietzschean historical men and the three aforementioned aspects of history. These two historical men do not want to re-live their lives. They are what they are. This kind of starting point is necessary in narrative research. Superhistorical men tell history and proclaim afterwards: "I am what I was already in the beginning of the story". Nothing new happens under the sky. In the view of historical men, they have learnt a lot during their lives and do not want give it all away by going back in time.

Every human, whether he is historical, superhistorical or something else, needs history and uses a certain knowledge of the past, sometimes as a monumental history, sometimes as an antiquarian history, and sometimes as a critical history. History belongs to the living human, to his goals and needs, and according to Nietzsche, without history he is merely learned (Nietzsche 1980, 14–15). In autobiographical research it is impossible to ask the question: "Is the narrative true?" There is a preconception that men tell true stories about their lives. It would be too insulting to ask: "Is your story true?" This is so, because behind this question could lie another question: "Has your life really been so incredible?" This question would

obviously be extremely insulting to someone who has just confessed her most painful or dearest experience. In my view, every serious narrative researcher questions the honesty of the narratives at some point during the research process (as life tends to be more complex and amazing than we can even imagine). And what happens if the stories are not true? There is no unambiguous answer to this question, but it is not catastrophe. In narrative research it is much more important to consider the kind of truth in a narrative, and the answer is that the truth is historical and is bound in time and space.

In narrative and biographical research, the object of the research is the narrative, and the truth is what the narrative tells us. The truth of narrative research is not how the narrative corresponds to reality, because reality is the narrative. And this narrative can be *monumental, antiquarian or critical* in nature. The great stories of Western history are the monumental narratives. For example, The French Revolution or the life of Julius Cesar are monumental narratives. They are narratives, that more closely resemble statues than stories. They have their own specific time and place in our history and in our minds.

The antiquarian narrative serves the purpose of preserving, categorizing, classifying and cataloguing. Interpretation and valuation do not belong to the antiquarian narrative, as it attempts to tell everything "just as it is". In the antiquarian narrative everything is arranged as in a library, following an order of something that is quite indifferent to content. In libraries, books can be arranged according to the first letter of the author's name. A good example of an antiquarian narrative is the Encyclopaedia Britannica. It is not only a single narrative, but it is also thousand of narratives, which are placed one after the other only according to the first letter of the name of the thing in question. The Encyclopaedia Britannica tells us about things, men and happenings in this order, because it aims at impartiality and objectivity. If something is valuable enough to be proven and included in this great dictionary, it does not require any other means of categorization and will be played according to the first letter of its name or title. It can be said that in the antiquarian narrative the order of the occurrences and things are more important than their content.

The critical narrative is the most unstable form of narrative and because of this it is difficult to find a good example of a critical narrative. The monumental narrative is stable and says how the things were. The antiquarian narrative is like a catalogue from which where you can pick up whatever you want. The critical narrative has a destructive element. As Nietzsche says:

> He must have the strength, and use it from time to time, to shatter and dissolve something to enable him to live: this he achieves by dragging it [the past] to the bar of judgement, interrogating it meticulously and finally condemning it? (Nietzsche 1980, 21.)

Foucault´s way of writing history is very closely related to the critical narrative or history, as will become clear below. The critical narrative looks at things from a different point of view and from a new perspective. It does not tell how the things should have been or how they should be in future. No evidence of a traditional moral statement can be found in either Nietzsche's of Foucault's philosophy. Nietzsche is, in his own words, "beyond good and evil" and Foucault describes things and happenings that we condemn morally, not him.

Too much history is too bad likewise too much narrative

There is an inherent danger in history. In five ways, the age of the surfeit of history seems to Nietzsche to be hostile and dangerous to life. These ways are: 1. It (the surfeit of history) produces a contradiction between inner and outer, and in this way the personality is weakened. 2. It makes up fantasies that it possesses the rarest virtue, justice (hindsight). 3. It keeps both the individual and totality from developing to maturity. 4. The belief in the old age of humanity is embedded – the belief that we are merely epigones. 5. The age of the surfeit of history has a mood of irony about itself, and what is even more dangerous is that it becomes cynical. All of these factors cripple and destroy forces of life, and the outcome is modern man, who suffers from a weakened personality. (Nietzsche 1980, 28, see also Nietzsche 1968, 40–44.)

This is a rather pessimistic illustration of modern man. The world has been divided into the inner realm and the outer realm, my narrative against the whole world. Modern man believes that he can only understand what has been happened after the fact, which is why he is not his own master. He thinks that he is what he is because of the past, not because of the present. This hindsight makes him cynical, and perhaps modern man might think to himself: Now I know, why I did not know earlier, am I stupid?

There is an antidote to this surfeit of history, or, in our case, the surfeit of a narrative or autobiography. History is not the only great story of the development of humankind. The narrative in autobiographical research is not the only comprehensive story of someone's life from birth to the present. For Nietzsche, the value of history is:

> ... to describe with insight a known, perhaps common theme, a everyday melody, to elevate it, raise to a comprehensive symbol and so let a whole world of depth of meaning, power and beauty be guessed in it. (Nietzsche 1980, 36.)

This definition is a good definition of an autobiographical narrative. Objectivity is necessary in order to locate this daily melody. This objectivity does not refer to the definition by which we are used to understanding it when discussing science. It is not the impartial relationship between scientist and research subject. Objectivity is the fire of emotion, the character, the loving immersion in the empirical data, and the artistic and creative ability. Nietzsche wants history to transform itself into a work of art. It would then be possible to say "vivo, ergo cogito" (I live, thus I think) instead of "cogito, ergo sum (I think, thus I am)". (Nietzsche 1980, 61) Art is a maintaining and stimulating factor of life. In Nietzsche's view, without art the human cannot endure the endless will to power. If history can become transformed into art, can it also arouse new kinds of life supporting forces. Historiography as art does not fill the requirements of scientific determination. In fact, to model historical research after scientific rules is possible for a fairly long period, but in the end it is impossible and even fatal.

Art has no method. Art does not have same demands and determination of truth as science. We can even say that it possesses a different kind of truth than science, in which the correspondence truth has ruled since Descartes. Art and religion are antidotes to history as science.

Foucault and confessing animal

Michael Foucault is very actual among the researchers, who make narrative research. He has developed own style of writing history, just like Nietzsche. The style is against the traditional history writing and he makes no normative claims.[2] He does not say how the things should be, instead he wants to uncover the nature of man and the nature of the social systems. And I argue, that Foucault's writings belong par excellence to the Nietzschean critical history.

Start over and tell the truth

According to Michael Foucault, reality is produced through the mechanisms of power. Foucault writes: "Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power." (Foucault 1986, 131.)

Foucault's writings belong to the realm of critical history. Foucault's books like *Madness and Civilization: a history of insanity in the age of reason*, *The History of Sexuality* and *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison* are not typical scientific history books. Foucault focuses his attention on the question of how power relations shape individuals. He does not question why men do what they do, and he considers individual identities to be formed through power relations. Individuals cannot be determined and understood without taking into consideration the power relations that shape them. Similarly to his teacher, Louis Althusser, Foucault claims that an individual is an imaginary particle of the ideological representation of society.

> The individual is no doubt the fictitious atom of an "ideological" representation of society; but he is also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power that I have called discipline (...) In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained from him belong to this production." (Foucault 1992, 194; See also Foucault 1980, 60.)

Confession and truth

An area in which the production of truth (and its rituals) works quite explicitly is that of sexuality. An immense apparatus for the production of truth regarding sexuality has been created. "... the truth of sex became something fundamental, useful, or dangerous, precious of formidable: in short, that sex was constituted as a problem of truth" (Foucault 1980, 56). According to Foucault, there have been two great procedures for the production of the truth of sex in world history. On the one hand, there are certain societies (China, Japan, India, Rome, the Arabo-Moslem societies) which have developed various forms of the so-called "ars erotica" erotic art. It is a form of esoteric knowledge that aims at satisfaction evaluated in terms of its intensity, its specific qualities, its duration and its reverberations throughout the body and soul. Only masters and their students have access to this kind of knowledge. If a person successfully learns this masterful art, he or she must possess "an absolute mastery of the body, a singular bliss, obliviousness to time and limits, the elixir of life, the exile of death and its threats" (Foucault 1980, 58).

Foucault claims that our modern civilisation possesses no *ars erotica*, but that we instead practise *scientia sexualis*. Over the centuries we have developed procedures for telling the truth of sex. The development of this procedure has formed a kind of knowledge-power, which is opposite to

the system in which the master reveals the secrets of the ars erotica to novices. Scientia sexualis is a means of controlling sexuality, person´s sexual identities. What Foucault has in mind here is the Western idea of confession:

> The truthful confession was inscribed at the heart of the procedures of individualization by power (...) The confession became one of the West's most highly valued techniques for producing truth. We have since become a singular confessing society. The confession has spread its effects far and wide. It plays a part in justice, medicine, education, family relation, and love relations, in the most ordinary affairs of everyday life, and in the most solemn rites; one confesses one's crimes, one's sins, one's thoughts and desires, one's illnesses and troubles; one goes about telling, with the greatest precision, whatever is most difficult to tell. One confesses in public and in private, to one's parents, one's educators, one's doctor, to those one loves; one admits to oneself, in pleasure and in pain, things it would be impossible to tell to anyone else, the things people write books about. (Foucault 1980, 59.)

I confess in order to find out the truth about myself (in this case the truth of my sexuality) and in order to modify my personality in the manner required by the hegemonic discourse (by hegemonic discourse of sex). Finding out the truth about myself is actually the precise moment of the production of the truth of myself. Without hegemonic discourse (paradigmatic discourse, ideology, world view etc.), I could not produce the truth about myself and my sexual orientation. Mechanisms of power are with me from the beginning, from the moment that I discover or produce my selfhood.

The confessing animal and freedom

One of the most well-known and appreciated confession was made by St. Augustine, written in 397–400 in the form of an autobiography (St. Augustine 1970). It can be said that St. Augustine actually began the development of the Nietzschean modern man. There is an inherent problem in Augustine's book. He has a compulsive need to confess, but to whom is he confessing? First he writes that he is confessing to God. But later on in the text he realises that ever though he is confessing to God, it is not a genuine confession. God is almighty, the lord of time, and knows everything that has happened and will happen; he is the supreme being. How can St. Augustine confess anything that the God does not already know about his life? St. Augustine continues his confession and explains, that he continues to confess in order to praise God, but that at the same time he is confessing

to himself, his countrymen and his friends. He has the need to do this. Foucault encapsulated this need by saying that "Western man has become a confessing animal." (Foucault 1980, 59.)

The need to practice confession is anchored so deeply in us that we cannot view it as being caused by power and power relations. On the contrary, we feel that the truth as confession is an attempt to attain freedom from the depth of our soul. We think that truth and freedom belong together and that power reduces us to silence. These traditional themes in philosophy have to be overturned, because the truth is not by nature free, but its production is imbued with relations of power. (Foucault 1980, 59–60)

Foucault presents an example of this:

> And think of that obscure partisan (...) Who had come to rejoin the Serbian resistance deep in the mountains [in the II world war]; his superiors asked him to write his life story; and when he brought them a few miserable pages, scribbled in the night, they did not look at them but only said to him, 'Start over, and tell the truth'. Should those much-discussed language taboos make us forget this millennial yoke of confession?" (Foucault 1980, 60.)

We rationalise this absurd example by reasoning that with the help of confession it is possible to decipher between a spy and a true partisan. However, the question here is one of power and the making of a partisan through his life story as a (ideological) subject. We can only imagine the anxiety of the partisan candidate in a situation such as this, which would have been completely foreign to him. Nowadays we are able to recognise the power aspect of confession and we are able to play the games of confession. I have a personal experience related to this kind of confession-game:

I was at the entrance examination to the Academy of Kindergarten Teaching and one part of the examination was an interview with a psychologist. All of the candidates were informed beforehand that the interview would include two candidates and one psychologist, and that the topic of discussion would be the question: "Why do I want to be a kindergarten teacher?" Based on the information I had received prior to the interview, I was quite surprised when we were seated around the table and the psychologist said to us: "Tell me about the crises of your life." The other candidate talked about her parents' divorce, about a boyfriend who had a drinking problem and about experiencing feelings of loneliness following the death of her cat, and so on. When it was my turn I said that it was enough of a crisis for me to be trying to gain a spot at the Academy. This was not enough for the psychologist. He asked: "Haven't you had any other crises?" Then I invented

something about being jealous of my brother, who was about to get married, because I did not even have a boyfriend. After this the psychologist asked: "But haven't you had any major crises?" I answered: "What on earth do you mean by crises? Aren't there enough crises in normal everyday life?" Afterward I was accepted into The Academy with my fabricated story. I feel, that if I had told "honest" confession from my heart, I would not have been accepted. Will the healthy and well balanced person tell the most significant things of her life to the totally strange person? What the psychologist want? What happened in that examination? Was it the honest discussion or pure Foucaultian play of power and who was in charge?

Is my story true? Did everything happen just how I said it did? If I were now to ask the psychologist and my fellow candidate what happened during the interview, their stories would certainly differ from mine. There would be three different stories, all of which could be true. What, then, is the truth? If we think that truth is the exact representation of a situation and that we have the potential to achieve it, then, according to Nietzsche, we are suffering from an "historical fever". And the answer would be: NO, it is not a true story. But if we think that my story uncovers something about essence of modern man as a confessing animal, then we can say that the truth does occur in my story. My story is true. But did it happen...? Really?

Conclusion

The question of the truth is topical in narrative research. Nietzsche and Foucault do not provide us with a simple answer to the problem. They do, however, provide us with the tools with which we can approach the problem of truth. In narrative research it is necessary to realize how we regard the past of our own histories. Are we Nietzschean historical or superhistorical men if we say "no" to the past, or can we adopt an unhistorical attitude and learn something from the past? And what are the inherent dangers of the surfeit of narrative (research)? Narrative research and confessions from our past are not the only solution to the problems of the present. And they do not always tell the true story, because they can make us forget the most important maxim: *memento vivere* – remember, that you must live.

Notes

1 We must not take this Nietzsche´s statement too rigorously, because our history of philosophy has the long tradition to understand animals and children this way. For example Immanuel Kant has a term maturity (Mündigkeit), for those men who are under moral law. It is some kind of romantic few of children and animals, according to witch they are innocent and live in the natural state.

2 In the interviews of Foucault can be found very sharp moral statements, but from his book he only describe how the things are.

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III

Looking through stories

The articles in this section show how life stories can be used to promote growth into teacherhood and humanity. Hannu Heikkinen's paper *Telling stories in teacher education* could be decribed a pedagogical autobiography or an autoethnographic report of action research, where the writer reflects on his experiences of the development and use of the narrative approach. While working with students, Heikkinen wrote, at their request, his own autobiography to share his experiences with the group he was tutoring. In his paper, he discusses the relationship between narrative work and therapy and describes his development of the narrative approach towards portfolio work in co-operation with different groups.

The next article *Looking at yourself in a broken mirror* is another piece of experimental writing; a trialogue. Here the reader is able to share the discussion of two students and their teacher educator about the power of the stories. The starting-point of the story is the beginning of teacher education, which has some points of contact with the writer's personal experiences. Based on these experiences, the writer has produced two different stories: one of a loser and the other of a survivor, which are commented on by the other participants in the discussion. At the end, the narrative process of constructing identity is considered with reference to Bruner and Ricoeur.

In the last article of section 3, *Meaning of autobiographical writing as a way of constructing teacher/researcher identity*, teacher and researcher Heli Meriläinen tells about the construction of her own autobiography by means of producing and a pictorial portfolio. The paper is a duograph, in which Heli, having started her doctoral studies, communicates with her supervisor Leena about the significance of writing for her work. Both have been writing a diary, and in their student – supervisor relationship, they also began to share in writing events of their everyday life and experiences of their research work. Writing is not simply a process of describing things, but something takes place at the same time. Writing alone requires a strong commitment, and sharing one's story may help. No voice is ever produced in a vacuum, but in relation to others and the environment. The duograph focuses on the intersections of stories, the different voices of a mother, a woman and a researcher as well as their conflicts.

Hannu L. T. Heikkinen

TELLING STORIES IN TEACHER EDUCATION

A NARRATIVE-BIOGRAPHICAL VIEW OF PORTFOLIO WORK

"Perhaps I have learnt some teaching skills and obtained a lot of useful information about teaching and learning. But what we have not paid much attention to is the question why. What is school? What is it for?" – My final teaching practice report in teacher education, spring 1985.

PEDAGOGICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY – A METHOD?

In this article, I will explain how I became involved in using autobiographical writing as a method of teacher education. This story of telling and writing stories is a story in itself - this is my narrative of how I became a narrative teacher educator. You could probably call it a kind of pedagogical autobiography.

A pedagogical autobiography? A method? Why not? This may be the way methods are invented: some people construe texts in their own ways, more or less systematically, more or less rationally, based on either the paradigmatic way of knowing, which refers to logical argumentation, or on the narrative way of producing knowledge, which refers to the process of composing emplotted stories out of events and memories (Bruner 1986; see also my first article in this book).

The pedagogical autobiography – as I call this – is a natural method for any teacher to report about their professional development. Possibly, this is what teachers have always done, more or less systematically, more or less rationally.

These stories could also be regarded as reports of action research. As a number of writers have pointed out, action research reports do not need to

follow the format and rhetoric of academic writing. Action researchers are recommended to include more personal and narrative writing styles and forms of innovation in their reporting. Clarke, Dudley, Edwards, Rowland, Ryan & Winter (1993) suggest that mixing together different ways of innovation is typical of action researchers. New ideas are generated through many kinds of experiences and practices, e.g. through conversations with people, listening to the radio or watching the TV, reading books or *even* (!) research reports.

According to Kemmis (1995, 5), action research is *open-minded about what counts as data or evidence* . Lately, writing autobiographies has been recommended as an elegant and purposeful method in reporting action research: "I would argue that a more powerful way of thinking about action research is to construe the activity as really a piece of teacher autobiography. And if this be true, then action researchers should be including more personal context, larger chunks of autobiography, in their research statements" (Smith 1994, 301). In general, reporting through narratives seems to become a mutual interest. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994, 2) , it "involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials - case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional and visual texts - that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives".

My doctoral dissertation, which I defended in January 2001 (Heikkinen 2001), was also a combination of different kinds of texts, including internationally published academic articles, memory work, short stories, and fictional dialogues. My approach has probably been quite close to that launched by Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bocher (2000) under the banner of autoethnography. But the personal narrative writing style is not the only method I have used in my work. Rather I combine many kinds of writing styles and methods, and this particular paper is not an exception.

Another key feature in my work is that I often ask my students to join me as co-writers. Kemmis and McTaggart have defined action research characteristicly collaborative and participatory in nature (Kemmis & McTaggart 1988, 22-25; also Kemmis1995, 5.)Writing together with my students is often the way I do my action research, and this particular paper is not an exception in that sense, either. The voice in my texts is not only mine – although I must admit that mine is probably the most audible – but there is a polyphony of voices. Perhaps my voice is being echoed in the student's voices and the other way round. I have often wondered where it all starts from.

My interest in the autobiographical approach arose from my own experiences of teacher education in the early 80's. In my teacher education,

as it seemed to me, the ends had been replaced by the means. The questions *why* and *what for* had been replaced by the question *how*. The main focus was on effective teaching behaviour. For me, that kind of teacher education was an epitome of the consequences of instrumental reason: *the spread of formal means/ends rationality* (McCarthy 1984, xix). I suffered from this kind of "rationality without reason". I thought we should have been more interested in the philosophical questions of being and becoming teachers and persons, such as the social conditions around us, who we really were, where we belonged to and what we worked for – what values or what kind of rationality did we serve in our teaching work?

However, we engaged in serious discussion in small peer groups in our leisure time. Those discussions with my friends were of vital importance for my development as a teacher. I still appreciate them as the most significant learning experiences during my teacher education. They gave me a vision for the future, a soul for my profession. But, paradoxically, all that took place outside the official curriculum.

How did I become myself?

As I started my work as a supervisor of teaching practice, I had the idea of sharing autobiographies as part of the dialogue between the student teacher and the supervisor. This idea was originally quite instinctive, but an impetus was given by the national Finnish radio channel *Radiomafia*. In the series *"How did I become myself" (Miten minusta tuli minä?)*, the broadcaster interviewed a great number of artists, athletes, etc. They went deep below the surface by sketching famous people as human beings rather than celebrities, portraying their childhood and youth. I thought that telling one's own story would be useful for everybody, including student teachers.

Thus, I made student teachers write short autobiographies titled *"How did I become myself"*. I guided the students with a list of questions, but I gave them a free hand to decide how and how much to write. The narratives served as a starting point for reflection and dialogue between the student teachers and myself as their supervisor. The experiences were promising. The narratives helped us to pay more attention to thinking instead of focusing on teaching behaviour in the classroom. Thus, it led us into profound reflections about achieving an identity as a teacher.

– Why don't you write your autobiography yourself, she asked.
We had been discussing about her visions of becoming a teacher for an hour on the basis of her autobiography. She had been reflecting on her life from

many perspectives, and I had mainly listened.
- Well, I have, a kind of autobiography, I responded.
- Why don't you share it with us? she asked. - You speak about education as dialogue, but I think this work with autobiographies has been rather one-sided thus far. We share our lives with you, but you don't.
- I think I do, I replied. - I mean these discussions. But you think I should share my written autobiography with you..?
- Yes, I think so, she said. – Why not? That would be more like real dialogue.

I decided to follow this student teacher's idea. I wrote a 8-sheet short autobiography titled in the same way as my students' essays: *"How did I become myself"*. And that worked. For me, writing my own autobiography was an important journey into myself. This experience made me even more convinced that it is useful for any teacher to reflect on him- or herself through writing an autobiography. And for any teacher educator, as well.

I started to share autobiographical texts reciprocally with the students I was supervising in teaching practice. But the power of autobiographical writing also surprised me in an unexpected way. The writing of one's life story seemed to launch psychic processes in the students, which were rather difficult to me to handle. Especially the following text made me reconsider what I was doing:

> Written down, everything seems to become irrevocably true. (...) My need to understand or discover my background is tremendous, so as not to continue the chain of disasters. It may be that the war some decades ago brought about the alcoholism of my grandparents, which possibly caused traumas to my parents, who, possibly for that reason, drifted into an unhappy marriage, which possibly caused stress on us, their children, which possibly... Seems bad. I'm rapidly becoming embittered and cynical. I'm ready for anything that could save me from acquiring that kind of attitude. That's why I am happy to write this.

This autobiography was written in a way that really made me wonder whether I was going too far. In her text, the student wrote very profoundly of her childhood, dealing with the problematic relationships between her parents and their children, who were tormented by continuous mental violence, which had led to her sister's drug abuse, etc.

Reading the autobiography and talking with the student immediately after having read the text was a moving and memorable as well as unexpected experience. The process with this particular student was rather hard to carry through, but the outcome was ultimately satisfactory. I felt I had succeeded in helping her to reach a kind of balance with her life history.

Some feeling of continuity, some coherence in her life. Afterwards, I thought this was one of my most important experiences of success.

According to most of my students, this kind of reflection on personal and professional growth was very useful, but on the other hand, all this introspection caused me serious problems concerning my role as a teacher educator. Our confidential discussions easily turned into some kind of therapy sessions, and I felt I was definitely not a therapist. As I described this experience in a research seminar, one of the supervisors was very sceptical about my approach. She suggested I should be more cautious about that kind of "therapy" because I had no expertise in it:

> - You are not a psychotherapist and therefore you should not start any mental processes like that. And teacher education is actually not therapy. You should distinguish the two from each other.

I felt somewhat confused about this advice. Later, as I discussed with Adra Cole and Gary Knowles of my dilemma of becoming a quasi-therapist instead of a teacher educator, they answered simply that therapeutic aspects are always present in reflective teacher education. Therefore, we cannot accurately discriminate between the perspective of professional and personal growth and that of therapy. Throughout the course of human history, people have been telling their life stories, which has helped them to understand themselves and their world. Psychology as a practice, on the contrary, only evolved two hundred years ago. Why should we leave the right to use autobiographies to psychologists only?

Anyway, at that time, I was not able to think like that. Following the advice of my supervisor, I became more cautious, in order to avoid becoming a quasi-psychotherapist. I thought perhaps the best way for autobiographical reflection would be to arrange group meetings rather than confidential discussions between myself and the student teacher. That would be the next step: turning the autobiographical approach into group meetings.

The power of the group

An important contribution to my thinking was made by Stephen Kemmis (1995), who suggested memory work as a method of action research. This methodology seemed to fit well with my view of teacher education, and it offered me a model for dealing with autobiographical memories through group work. Thus, I started recruiting volunteers for a memory group. The group was offered as an optional one-credit course to the students under

the themes of memory work and reflection. In March 1996, a group of six voluntary 3rd-year students enrolled.

In the group sessions, every "case" was allocated two hours. The sessions were planned to last for about four hours, and two autobiographies were discussed in each session. After some general and informal discussion at the beginning, the first case of the day delivered his or her written autobiography for the others to read. Everybody read silently and simultaneously while having a cup of tea. Then, the case him/herself had the floor - a possibility to comment upon either the writing process or the autobiography itself or whatever. Then we had some general discussion, often drifting from one topic to another, with people frequently reflecting on their own experiences compared to those that had just been dealt with through the narrative.

The experiences I had with the voluntary group of memory workers led to yet another application. The next step of my autobiographical work was to apply this approach to the "home groups", which were launched in the Teacher Education Department of Jyväskylä University in 1996. "Home group" refers to the idea of safe and confidential relationships prevailing in a permanent group of about 16 students. The groups are formed at the very beginning of teacher education, and the educational subjects are taught by a mentor, called home group teacher, who is responsible for teaching most of the contents of educational studies for the first study year.

At the beginning of my home group teaching, I continued to share my own autobiography with my students. But this time, I noticed that the sharing of my autobiography also produced mixed feelings. Some of the students found it somehow annoying. Therefore, I became more cautious with my personal contribution. I came to the conclusion that reciprocal sharing of life stories by the students and the supervisor perhaps worked in the context of supervising teaching practice and in the voluntary group of memory workers, but not this time, as the home group sessions were not based on voluntariness and personal interests. As the home groups were a compulsory part of teacher education, the situation was different. I concluded that I should step aside with my own life stories and give more room to the students' autobiographical work. Thus, I did not share my written autobiography with the students any more.

Simultaneously, I reduced the emphasis on writing complete autobiographies and generated alternative ways of presenting life stories, such as writing letters, telling memories to each other and drawing pictures of some significant life experiences or school memories. In this way, I started to shift from a modernist perspective of writing coherent and consistent life stories towards a more postmodern perspective, allowing more alternatives

and multi-layered ways of telling and writing of one's life. In this book, the following article, written together with my students Christiana Andem and Paula Vainio, is an example of this kind of writing assignment.

The first narratives in the home groups were quite short and they were presented only orally. In the very first session in the autumn, the members of the group were asked to introduce themselves by telling about and showing some object or memory from their childhood. The memory could be a toy, a picture, etc., which had been especially important to them. Everyone had something to present, and we thus developed an autobiographical touch at the very beginning. I showed a memory of mine as well - it was my father's leather jacket, which I still wear as I ride my motor bike. In this way, we cautiously started our autobiographical process.

Gradually, we went on with the narratives. We wrote reflective letters to the other group members about the motives for becoming a teacher. In the letters, we also focused upon the events, experiences and people who had significantly affected our attitudes towards the idea of becoming a teacher. Then we wrote reflective letters to each other about our experiences during the first weeks at the university. During the academic year, we returned to these initial experiences as we read books on education, in order to connect the experiences with the educational theories presented in the books. Moreover, each of us wrote a short autobiography to be shared with the group members. The experiences were as positive as in the previous memory work group - the autobiographical writings and discussions seemed to serve the purpose of professional growth and achieving a teacher identity. As one of the students wrote:

> I had never before understood how you can learn things through discussing with people. These dilemmas about being a teacher and an educator, they are so complex that you have to think about a multitude of aspects at the same time. Dealing with the complexities of teachercraft, group discussions with your peers and your tutor open up spheres you might never have discovered alone.

By the end of the academic year, we produced a more complete life-story. The students were asked to outline autobiographies with the help of the mind map that had been used before (appendix 1). In this way, I experimented with a more visual version of an autobiography. The original mind map with the questions was copied in the centre of an A3 sheet, and the students extended the figure by answering the questions with key words or short sentences. The mind maps were dealt with orally, as the students presented them to each other.

The autobiographical work gradually turned into a form of portfolio. The basic idea of collecting several autobiographical assignments into a portfolio was based on the observation that some assignments or methods seemed to suit some people but not everyone. Some people became greatly inspired by the autobiographical exercises, whereas some others did not like the work very much. Therefore, I gave the students even more freedom to compose their own autobiographical portfolio in their own manner.

I collected the different autobiographical exercises into a list, which formed the frame of the portfolio (appendix 2). In the list, the assignments were divided into compulsory and optional assignments. Some of these assignments were done together in the group meetings, while some were done as optional homework. Besides these, a number of people designed their own assignments, and this resulted in a great variety of very personal portfolios. A portfolio is, at its best, a personal product; as personal as your fingerprint.

We often called this folder *"Myself as a teacher"* portfolio, though some people named it more personally. The students used expressions such as "My Way", "That's my life", "My journey to teacherhood", etc. The results have been very personal from cover to cover - really like fingerprints. Showing some examples here would be nice, but it is rather expensive to print any coloured pictures of the works here. Thus, we have published some samples in the net at the URL address www.avoin.jyu.fi/pedagogi.

And that's how life goes on; one thing leads to another. My time as a doctoral student in the Department of Teacher Education came to an end, and I was asked to coordinate a new project of planning basic studies of teacher education in the Open University of Jyväskylä University. The autobiographical portfolio became part of the basic studies of education in the Open University. Besides, I have given lectures and run workshops about narrativity and biographical work in teacher education in several universities and congresses. Perhaps my story of telling stories in teacher education has affected some teacher educators, who have developed and elaborated the methods even further.

A PORTFOLIO AS A NARRATIVE IDENTITY

As I read the literature on portfolios in teacher education, it seemed to me that a number of different purposes and goals have been applied to portfolios. In the following figure, I have illustrated some of the approaches. A portfolio can be used either as a collection of merits or, on the other hand, as a tool for learning and self-assessment. Further, the focus may be on achieving a personal and professional identity.

Table 1. Three approaches to portfolios.

	Portfolio as a collection of merits	**Portfolio as self-assessment and tool of learning**	**Portfolio as identity work**
For whom?	an employer	myself my teacher	myself, my 'significant others'
Why?	to give a good impression of myself	to evaluate my learning	to construe my identity
Basic questions	What kind of employee am I? (how qualified) What have I achieved in my work? Where am I at my best?	How have I learnt? How could I learn better? What kind of learner am I?	Who am I? Where do I come from? Why do I want to become a teacher? What alternatives do I have?

The above classification is naturally simplified - reality is always complex and can never be comprehensively categorized. Yet, the table illustrates different views of portfolio work. It is useful to discriminate these functions from each other, because the purpose of the portfolio determines the actual outcome. Naturally, you can pick up some parts of your previously made portfolio for some other purposes. For example, when you apply for a job, you can assemble a new portfolio as a collection of merits, even though your initial purpose had been to produce your portfolio as an identity work. Most often, the features in the middle column are emphasised in teacher education (e.g. Barton & Collins 1993; Loughran & Corrigan 1994; Wade & Yarbrough 1996). In my work, the emphasis is on the right, while the purpose of collecting and presenting merits is hardly emphasised at all.

Students as action researchers

Through the years, I have more or less systematically aspired to evaluate and further develop my autobiographical methods through action research. I have collected student feedback and other home group teachers' experiences, revised the methods, left out something unsatisfactory and experimented with something new. I have also reported my action research by publishing a number of articles (e.g. Heikkinen 1998) and presenting congress papers, a number of them co-authored by my students (e.g. Heikkinen et al. 2000 and 2001).

Gradually, I have trained student themselves to be action researchers. I thought students could find the voices of their fellow students in their own research work more authentically than myself. A number of students wrote their seminar papers on the narrative work they had been doing themselves. Here, the results of two of the seminar projects are studied in more detail. The survey by Hanna-Maria Hinkkanen and Anna-Leena Säde was carried out in the autumn 1999, two months after the first-year students had begun their studies. The data were collected with a questionnaire presented to a group of nine students. At the time of the study, the group had just finished their portfolios and the experiences were fresh in their minds. The study by Aleksi Munter, Antti Pyrhönen and Tero Vaahto was also made in the autumn 1999. It concentrated on examining the experiences of second-year students in the teacher education programme. These students had finished their portfolios about a year before the data were collected. Thus, they already had some distance to this identity work process.

Making the narrative portfolio was generally considered an impressive experience by the students. But some problems were also reported. One of the biggest problematic issues at the beginning of the process was the lack of motivation due to some earlier experiences of portfolio work. In the beginning, therefore, some students just completed the portfolio as another writing assignment. Some students believed that involvement in portfolio work was not going to offer them anything new.

> Starting the process was very difficult. I have already done two portfolios before this. So my first reaction was something like: oh no, not again. (I mainly thought A FASHION FAD!)

Some of the students felt confused and frustrated, whereas some were rather excited about this kind of work. The biggest question was how much of yourself to share with people you hardly knew. However, as the process went on, according to the conclusions made by Hanna-Maria Hinkkanen and Anna-Leena Säde, even the doubtful students started to see the portfolio work in a more positive light. Trust in the group began to grow when the members discussed their personal life stories with each other.

Another problem was to capture the idea of the autobiographical portfolio. Some of the students found it hard to begin the task when they had no clear image of what they were supposed to do.

> At first, it was difficult to understand the basic meaning and purpose of the portfolio. I didn't seem to comprehend what it really should represent. At some stage I understood that it could be (especially its form and structure) almost

anything. During the collection of the 'research material' I myself started to realise what it really was that I was doing.

Another relevant issue was the problem of what to include in the portfolio and what to leave out. Some students reported finding it difficult to be completely honest and sincere, i.e. to reveal something about their innermost feelings, at the beginning, when the group members were still almost strangers to each other:

I didn't include my most difficult experiences in the portfolio because it would have been too personal.

The students were not encouraged to reveal too personal things in the group. However, they noticed that even though they felt uncomfortable to bring all their feelings out in the open, they still processed those feelings and issues in their own minds.

On the other hand, I dived into some kind of a crisis concerning mostly my future. Whether to continue a long relationship... The personal portfolio aroused several ideas, which do not appear in the portfolio at all.

Working on the portfolio gave the students a perfect chance to think about their life, past, present and future, and even to question some of the choices they had made during their lives. Some of them had never had an opportunity to do this kind of identity work before.

The process of making it gave me time to stop and think of why I have become what I am now. I had to go deep into my inner thoughts and feelings. I don't know, but I think it gave me strength to keep on going towards the goals that I have set for my life.

The student's motivation to work varied, especially in some groups. Some people spent a lot of time on the assignment, whereas some others completed theirs with a rather low profile. Therefore, the outcomes varied. A lot of the work was regarded as voluntary and personal exercises without supervisory control. It was underlined that the work was done mainly for the student's own professional growth, and there was little mentor feedback. For some students, this kind of autonomy was confusing; it was difficult for them at first to figure out what was expected. It was also problematic to know whether one was supposed to do the assignments just for oneself or if they were shared with the group.

Some students also felt the conversations in the group uncomfortable at times. Although the process of examining one's inner feelings was considered to be very important by some students, the continuous self-reflection caused feelings of frustration in some students along the way.

> The continuous reflecting made me feel awkward. It seemed as if nothing was the way I had thought it was, but behind it all was something unconscious. Maybe things were just those difficult issues you did not wish to admit to even yourself. So if you hadn't been forced, you wouldn't have even thought about it.

For most of the students, according to the conclusions of the two student seminar papers, the autobiographical portfolio was the most worthwhile assignment and the greatest accomplishment of the first study year. The students felt that such autobiographical work has major relevance in teacher education. Some felt that it was the process of compiling the portfolio that made them aware that they were studying to be teachers. The narrative practices were considered a starting point for developing qualities useful for a teacher. The most essential thought reflected in the answers was that, in order to become a good teacher, a realistic and positive self-concept is needed.

> I think that when you're going to become a teacher, one of the most (if not the most) important things is to be happy and proud of yourself. You must know yourself - your strengths, weaknesses, etc.- and accept yourself as you are.

According to my experience as a narrative teacher educator, I have succeeded with this kind of narrative work somewhat differently in different groups. As a conclusion, the ethos of the group seems to be of notable importance. I agree with Adra Cole and Gary Knowles (1995, 29), who emphasise the need to create open, safe and respectful learning environments within small peer groups. All this requires time. As Helen Freidus (1998, 15) has concluded in her narrative portfolio practice, *it is imperative that time and resources be allocated to the building of trust*. The teacher in charge of the home group has to devote time to the students, help them to get to know each other and proceed slowly from more general texts and exercises to increasingly personal reflection.

On the whole, each student must be given the opportunity to decide what they want to do and at what pace. Everyone has the right to decide what to share and what not. Autobiographical narrative work is a powerful instrument in teacher education. As with any heavy tools, we must handle it with care.

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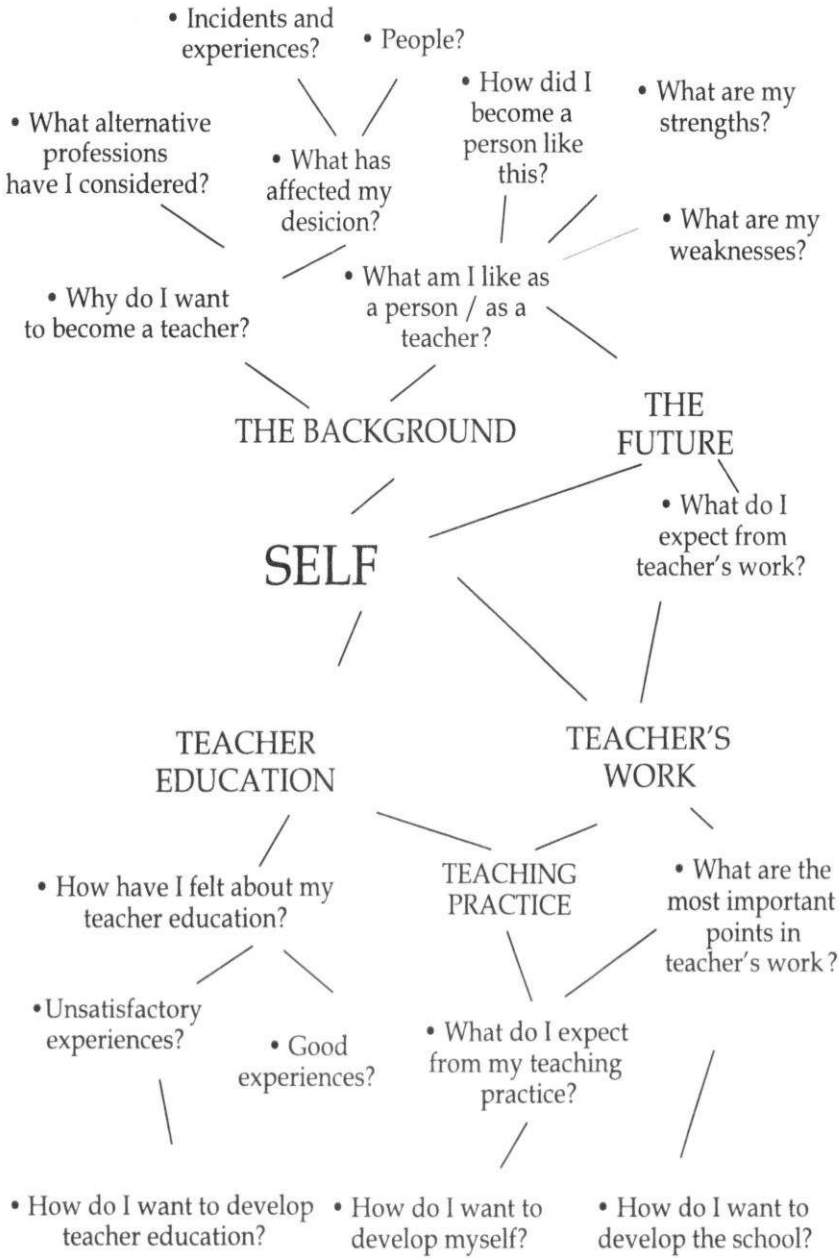
APPENDIX 1. A MIND MAP COVERING THE DIFFERENT VIEWS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVES IN TEACHER EDUCATION.



1. COMPULSORY

A. SWOT analysis at the beginning and at the end of the studies

At the beginning of the teacher education programme, the students make a SWOTanalysis according to own preconceptions. Another SWOTanalysis is made at the end of the studies. The objective for everybody is to outline their development by making the SWOT twice. It is possible that, after some teaching practice and learning assignments, you may see you strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in a different light. As an appendix to these two SWOT analyses, write a reflective essay approximately 3 to 6 pages long, where you consider the reasons that have contributed to your changes. In this essay, use quotations of your learning diary.

B. My best accomplishments and most significant learning experiences

One way to use the portfolio is self-evaluative collection. In this case, its goal is to develop self-evaluation, *reflectiveness* and *self-navigation*, to go deeper into learning and to diversify the evaluation of learning. Apart from evaluating the learning results, the whole learning process should be considered.

- My best accomplishments

One of the elements of portfolio work is to present one's best achievements. This viewpoint is emphasised when the portfolio is made as a tool of meritation. Also, in a professional portfolio, at least two of one's most successful accomplishments are presented. Argue your selections: why did you choose these particular pieces of work?

- Documentation of the most significant learning experience

In addition to individual assignments in a learning portfolio, the whole learning process should be considered. Decide which learning experiences have been the most important during these studies. The chosen work does not have to be written or visual. You can also use other material produced during the studies, e.g. book abstracts or lecture notes, mind maps, drawings, etc. An important learning experience can be the reading of a book or the

writing of an essay, but it can also be some experience from your teacher training or perhaps a discussion. You may also use your learning diary as source material. If you have written about an important learning experience in your learning diary, you may review it more closely in your portfolio. The document on successful experience can also be a copy of pupils' work. In this case, remember the secrecy obligation: you are not entitled to share with others something that may violate someone's privacy. Therefore, one must observe strict caution and discretion.

2. Alternative

Choose a minimum of two of the assignments introduced below. Also see www.avoin.jyu.fi/pedagogi for the work of others and apply the information you find when working on your own assignments.

A map of character traits based on my name

This assignment is done during the home group sessions. It is a kind of word game, which also leads the students to very profound questions about themselves: Who are we? What are we like? After drawing maps with words starting with the letters of their name, they reflect on the character traits by discussing them in the group.

A picture of me

A photograph, a drawing, a collage, etc. A story about what the picture is about can be attached.

A map of my life trail

An autobiographical visual map of your life and of some critical decisions you have made along the way.

Myself as a child / a teenager

A drawing, a text or some other piece of document (or a photocopy of one) from your childhood. Write a story of 2 - 4 pages in which you describe the making of the document, and its significance to your personal growth and the development of your identity.

Study biography

Write a biographical essay of 4 - 10 pages, in which you take a look at the significant learning experiences you have had and yourself as a learner. Write about the kind of relationship you have had to school and to your teachers. Think about the reasons for certain feelings you have had at different times during school. What kind of experiences do you have of your teachers? Which qualities made a teacher "good" or "bad"? Why? What kind of a teacher do you want to become? When writing about your teachers, do not use their real names. It is also unnecessary to mention the name of your school. A general description of the school is enough. Also, take a look at the learning that has taken place outside school. Where, besides school, have you learnt something significant concerning your own life?

An autobiographical narrative

Write a short autobiographical narrative about "How did I become myself?". Think about the following questions:

What kind of a person am I?
How did I become this way?
What are my strengths?
What things are important to me?
You can title your autobiography as you wish. However, follow these instructions in your writing:

– do not use real names for people or places
– do not use your own name in the story, either
– choose what to write and what to leave out, which things you want to reveal to others and which to keep only to yourself. It is not necessary to write everything down, as some things can be read between the lines
– you can also write the text in the 3rd person, as in the memory work method

An interview

Discuss with a person that is close to you (e.g. your mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, a childhood friend, etc.) Find out what things have been characteristic of you ever since your childhood. In what ways have you changed? Include a document about the conversation in your portfolio.

What is important to me?

You can also introduce some things that are important to you in your portfolio. You can present, for example, music, literature, how you take care of your motorcycle or how you view the world. Add some documents or samples that tell something significant about this topic. Write a reflective essay of 2 - 4 pages, in which you explain the meaning of this topic to yourself - how it started, how its meaning has changed at different times, and in what ways you see it becoming reality in your life in the future.

Hannu L. T. Heikkinen, Christiana Andem and Paula Vainio

LOOKING AT YOURSELF IN A BROKEN MIRROR.

A STORY OF TWO STORIES BY THREE STORY-TELLERS.

In this article, which has been written in the form of a trialogue, two student teachers and their tutor discuss narrative practices in teacher education. The student teachers were asked to write two fictional, mutually contradictory stories, loosely based on their life at the very beginning of their teacher education. The first story was to be a pessimistic story of loss and despair, and the second one, based on the same series of events, was to be a positive one: a story of survival and joy of life. This text tells about Paula´s experiences of telling and writing those two stories. Paula´s statements are here commented on by her close friend and classmate, Christiana, and their mentor, Hannu. To conclude, the narrative process of achieving an identity is illustrated through Jerome Bruner´s interpretation of the Russian formalists´ concept of fabula and the model of ontological enrichment, based on the hermeneutical philosophy of Paul Ricoeur.

Hannu:

The more I read and think about narrative configuration of identities, the more problematic it has become simply to tell who I am. I sometimes have the feeling I am a fly on the wall, looking at myself from the outside every time I tell somebody who I am, thinking at some meta-level about my life stories being construed in different situations.

Anyway, whenever I have my turn to introduce myself, I usually start simply by saying that my name is Hannu Heikkinen. Sometimes I find it

important to tell people that I have been working as a teacher for more than ten years of my life and then I gradually turned into a teacher educator and a researcher. In certain settings I prefer to tell people I am working as an Academy of Finland researcher in the University of Jyväskylä and a planning coordinator of teacher education in the Open University.

Paula:

My name is Paula Vainio. The reason why I have joined in this story is that I'm too short to be a professional volleyball player and too ambitious to be a hairdresser. So, I am studying at the University of Jyväskylä to become an international primary school teacher in the JULIET programme of Jyväskylä University Language and International Education for Teachers.1 But this is just a part of me. Lately, I have begun to suspect that this process of trying to find out who I am and where I belong will beeverlasting.

Christiana:

My name is Christiana Andem. Who am I? Ex-elf, ex-sprinter and ex-reindeer, but right now I am a second-year student of teacher education at the University of Jyväskylä and I am also studying in the JULIET programme. These two sentences tell a bit about me but they do not really reveal any "real" Christiana. I have noticed that I am still on my way to finding who I am, but through stories I will be able to find more about myself.

Hannu:

Earlier in this book I have told my story about becoming a narrative teacher educator in more detail, and, despite the fact t that his story, for myself, is a kind of sequel to the previous one, I'm not saying here that this is my story. Rather, my story is here intertwined with Paula's and Christiana's stories, and in this way, this is a new story. A polyphony perhaps, where our own voices are being echoed by each other's voices.

The form of this writing is something like a dialogue. But because there are three people speaking rather than two, we would like to call this a trialogue. But regardless of what this kind of experimental writing is called, the purpose of this presentetion is to tell about the telling of different kinds of stories in teacher education.

Before we start telling our story of two stories by three story-tellers, we tell something of our background and how we have got together. I personally

started as a mentor of the group which Paula and Christiana belonged to in September 2000 in the Jyväskylä University Teacher Education Department. For me, it was my fourth start as a mentor of what is called home group in teacher education. But for them, it was their very first start as student teachers.

I had already experimented with different autobiographical exercises in teacher education for about seven years. At the time, I was just about to finish my doctoral dissertation on developing the autobiographical and narrative approach in teacher education through action research. As a part of the action research process, I organised a number of workshops and presentations and published articles alone and with my students (Heikkinen & al. 2000).

During the autumn term 2000, I started with a new group of 12 students, including Paula and Christiana. We started by composing a teacher portfolio from a narrative-autobiographical viewpoint, as illustrated more closely in the previous article. This group did an excellent piece of work, and these portfolios would be worth another story. But here, in this particular story, the focus is on one of the narratives: telling two mutually contradictory stories about a single series of events.

I had experimented with telling two contradictory stories with my students earlier, but as a teacher's life usually goes, you are not always happy with the way you carried out your teaching. I felt the exercise we did earlier was partly ruined by the student teachers' crowded programme. Anyway, this kind of practice seemed to be promising. This time, I thought, I would be wiser and give more time and space for the assignment.

Christiana:

The assignment was given to us in our group session at the beginning of our second semester. We were supposed to tell a story about the initial stage of our teacher education. At first, we were to tell two different versions of the same story with a fictitious character who had entered teacher education, just as we had done a few months earlier. The first story was to be about disappointment and loss, whereas the second story was to be a story of survival and growth. The first phase of the assignment was to tell the stories in pairs. After having told these stories, we wrote them down.

So as to illustrate what we really did, Paula takes the floor with her first story, the one that was intentionally written as a story of a loser.

Paula:

Every morning I wake up just to find that everything is the same as yesterday. I hate it all. I hate my life at home, in this relationship that forces me against the wall, in this relationship that makes my breathing difficult, occasionally even impossible. Every day I pack my bag as if it were the last time I am leaving and I keep hoping that things would be different at school, even though I know they won't. Those smiling people are filled with energy. As if they were happy. I keep smiling until my cheeks ache. That is the reason I fall silent and withdraw as quickly as possible.

It is easy to sink into this melancholy. To hide behind this fear of mine and to live through today and the day after, hoping that tomorrow will somehow differ from the yesterdays . I am doomed to be stuck in this life, doomed to be a backbone to someone else who is not able to stand by himself. And myself, collapsing under my burden. My duty has been predetermined. I am the saviour. I am the one who is breathing when the other is too tired. I am strong and the others can see it. That is why I am allowed to be alone.

Every time I have believed every single word and every time I have been deceived and every time I have been more and more afraid that something will happen and bring everything to an end or change the direction.

Is it impossible to hear
the shout that was never shouted?
Is it impossible to see
the invisible?
Is it impossible to save
the saviour?
Does the light have
a kingdom?
Can the insignificant be
invalidated and can I be
saved?
Will anyone hear even if I don't
shout?

Christiana:

This was the black version of Paula's story. As I listened to that, I could feel what the character had felt. I could see myself being lost in the crowd "*To*

hide behind this fear of mine and to live through today and the day after, hoping that tomorrow will somehow differ from the yesterdays." Memories of the past are part of who I am, but life goes on. Paula was sharing her experiences through the stories. What if she had chosen differently, what if she had followed the other path; would her life really have been a story of a loser? She wants to see herself as a survivor; she has grown and found who she wants to be. The loser, instead, had become stuck to the same place and had not moved on. Everything happened against her will, she had lost her freedom. *"I have learned to believe that nothing changes. I am doomed to be stuck in this life. I have noticed there is always someone stronger than me. I'm alone and surrounded by darkness"* All of us have the freedom to choose, and making decisions is part of our everyday life.The loser had just lost her grip on and belief in freedom. She had lost her identity as a person by accepting her situation in life, by letting someone else have control over her wishes, hopes and love.

But there is another story with more hope; a story of a winner.

Paula:

Actually, all this started last spring when I looked in the mirror. It was then that I saw my blind spot staring back at me, and my reflection in the mirror was frightening. I had cried my eyes out. I was shrunk, I was pale, cynical. I had drifted to the point where I thought I was everything I was supposed to be. I had left everything I had believed in. I did not want to be either perfect or whole anymore. All that had been replaced by a deep yearning to be someone else´s backbone and at the same time I had drooped. Suddenly I realised that sacrifice does not help in the long run, that I am not able to change anyone. I could not achieve anything in a game where I could not win. And I made my decision. I closed my ears to the threats and the begging. That is how I was released. And I have not looked back in longing.

Now that I am looking back, I see a miracle: How did I manage without falling completely apart, although I was already in shambles? I had reached the point where cynicism had prevailed over everything else. I had lost my naivety, and my love, or what I imagined to be love, had turned into hatred and pity. I was living, without realising it myself, in a small bottle. I had little room to breathe. All the time I was in distress, but I was not aware of the existence of the bottle because I could see through it. I do not reminisce about the times and deeds I have left behind with dread and bitterness. I would not be me without that weeping, the cried-out tears and the fear. And the narrowness of the bottle.

Christiana:

The winner sees light at the end of the tunnel. The life she had is now behind her. She believes that she was guided by something subconscious, which, in the end, is best for her. Through Paula's winner's story, I felt the happiness of the character, as she had been released from the bottle. Now she has grown as a person; she has had positive experiences since she started teacher education.

She has also found an answer to one of my questions *"Teacherhood is not something that we either have or not. It is something in us which we can process and develop in ourselves."* She had found one of the main points: we are in teacher education to grow as persons and as teachers.

In the process of finding who you are, you must know who you were in the past, as the past is part of you. As the winner says: *" Sometimes you have to make choices, you have to step closer to the edge even though you might be scared...even if you do not know whether you can fly."* The paths we follow change according to the choices we make, but without the freedom of choosing what we want in life, we cannot live our lives authentically.

Paula:

One of the most important benefits of writing these two contradictory stories, from my point of view, is that they increased my consciousness of the choices I have made. Every written word is dedicated to the question "what if?". I am aware that it is not possible to try to find one unambiguous "truth". The "truth" is always a more or less an individual construction of interpretations concerning one's environment. My stories are written as I see things right now. If I were to re-write them a couple of years from now, they would certainly be quite different. The notes I have made during the writing process are full of hesitation and questions: Have I told too much? What are the risks? Would I even be able to write the winner's story if I was not so sure that I am actually living in it?

At the beginning, when we were given the assignment, I started to tell a story with a plot. But as soon as I had started writing, I realised I would not be able to give my best to the assignment if I wrote an "ordinary story". And where would I end up with my stories? Very far from the starting point, I think. The stories are a flow of words, some of them carefully calculated but most of them drawn directly from the subconscious. Thus, the plotted story, the modern narrative of progress and development, gradually turned into a more postmodern form; not a coherent story but rather a collage of poems and free association.

Christiana:

Despite the fact that these stories are fictional, they tell something real about our experiences and feelings. The feelings and thoughts of the character are ours, they are real. Through our stories, we step back in time and see the world and ourselves in a different light. Through writing we express ourselves and release the emotions we have inside us. It is easier to write about a fictional character and tell our experiences through him/her. The stories we write are a way to step back and look at ourselves from a different angle. That is what reflection is about, to see things with new eyes, like an outsider.

Our teacher education has the purpose of helping us grow as persons and as teachers. Through writing autobiographical stories, we go back in time, and in one way or another, the stories included the same experiences that we had during our first months in teacher education. The stories helped us verbalise and tell the reality and the truth of our lives. Certain events got meanings, and we see them differently now.

In her story, Paula dealt with her past. Both of the characters shared some features of herself; feelings she had felt, questions she had made. Although the assignment was not supposed to be about ourselves, each of us still told the story of our lives at the beginning of teacher education.

It is like looking at yourself in a broken mirror. You step out of yourself and you see your life from an outsider's perspective, yet still being the main character. Although each story is different and like its writer, we can see ourselves in it. The same feelings and questions are in our minds. I felt I was reading about myself when I read Paula's stories. I did not see myself directly, but in between the lines I remembered how I had felt a few months ago.

Hannu:

This reminds me of what Jerome Bruner has written about *fabula*, *sjuzet* and *forma*, based on the Russian formalists. Especially the relationship between *fabula* and *sjuzet* seems to offer interesting views on autobiographical writing.

Fabula could be described as a composition based on the everlasting themes of human life, which are adapted to innumerable individual life stories. *Sjuzet*, then, is the actual life story, any local and personal story, any of those people tell every day. To cite Bruner:

> The timeless fabula is the mythic, the transcendent plight that a story is about: human jealousy, authority and obedience, thwarted ambition, and those other plights that lay claim to human universality. The sjuzet then incorporates or realises the timeless fabula not only in the form of plot but also in an unwinding net of language. Frank Kermode says that the joining of fabula and sjuzet in story is like the blending of timeless mystery and current scandal. The ancient dilemmas of envy, loyalty, jealousy are woven into the acts of Iago, Othello, Desdemona, and Everyman with a fierce particularity and localness that, in Joyce´s words, yield an "epiphany of the ordinary". (Bruner 1987, 16.)

From this viewpoint, the reason why something in Paula´s story touches us is that it reminds us of something that is familiar to us through our own life experiences. For us all, some of the basic experiences are rather similar - or if not similar, based on similar tensions or contrasts. We share the basic concerns of being human: birth and death, love and sexuality at least. But still, out of these basic elements of human life, something more complex emerges: human growth and the efforts for a better life; competition and struggle; power and emancipation; envy and bitterness. The increasing consciousness of the limits of your life time. Loyalty and care for the people you live with; your "significant others". And so forth. All that *lays claim to human universality*, as Bruner said. *Fabula* involves "the timeless"; the eternal tensions that dominate human life, no matter what historical epoch the story is about, and where in the world the individuals happen to be living their lives.

Christiana:

I must say I was inspired by *fabula*; this idea that human life has the same elements that, regardless of where you live, are timeless. In Paula´s story I find especially one element that can be generalised; aspiration to freedom and growth as a person. Both of the characters were searching for freedom; freedom of choice, freedom to become the ones who they really are; trying to find their authentic selves (Taylor 1989). There are reasons why they are where they are, but they still have the freedom to make their decisions. There is no need to hide the reality, but you should not cling to the past. Your life goes on. I could see myself behind the stories, that was my advice to myself, but Paula had told it to me through her stories. Not directly, but through those simple questions and sentences.

But it is also interesting that, although both of the stories touch me and tell me something very essential about my life, neither of them can grasp the essence completely. I think no story can ever do that. Your words and stories are always imperfect and incomplete.

Hannu:

This process of what we call *ontological enrichment through narratives* has already been elaborated earlier in this book, first by Arto Laitinen and then by Rauno Huttunen and Leena Kakkori (see also Heikkinen, Kakkori & Huttunen 2001). Here, we can make a more concrete application of this model.

The autobiography and the self are involved in a recursive relationship, which is why the process of autobiography is never-ending. Telling or writing an autobiography brings about a hermeneutic experience in which you see yourself in an entirely different light. This could, in turn, alter your action and force you to retell or rewrite your autobiography.

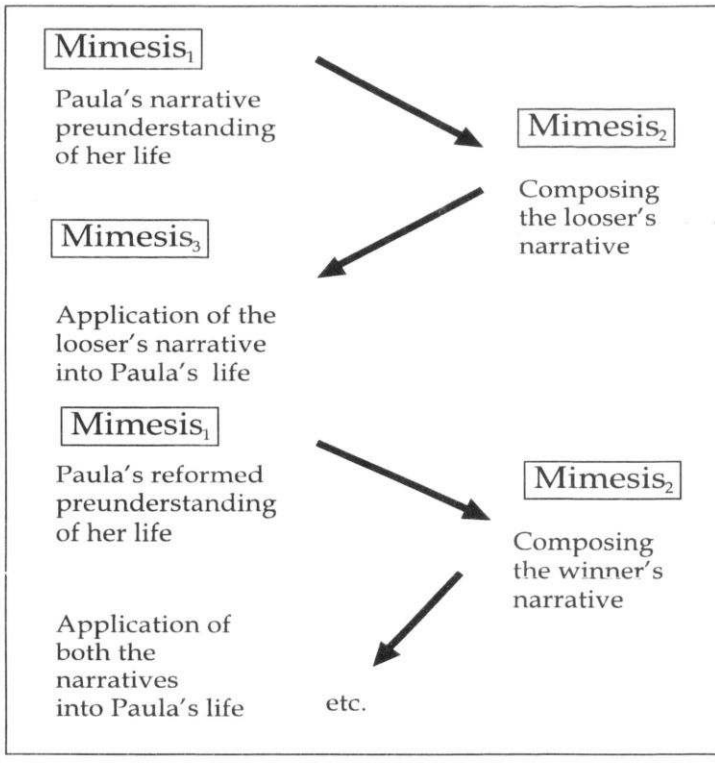
In this process of telling or writing our life stories, we both create and change ourselves. As I see myself in an entirely different light when I tell my life story, I somehow alter my actions and retell or rewrite my life story. And here we return to Paul Ricoeur's elaboration of Aristotle's mimesis.

According to Ricoeur's interpretation, mimesis refers to creative imitation by means of the plot of a lived temporal experience (Ricoeur 1984, 31). For Ricoeur, mimesis is not just the production of a narrative text. As Laitinen, Huttunen and Kakkori have illustrated, mimesis refers to a threefold process, of which telling a narrative is one phase.

The three steps of narrative identity construction are *pre-understanding* (mimesis$_1$), *plotting* (mimesis$_2$) and *application* (mimesis$_3$). The concept of mimesis1 refers to some kind of pre-narrative thinking or "inner speech", where you textualise certain events into words and sentences and stories just in your own head, though you may never tell them aloud to anybody. I often notice, as I go jogging or I drive my car, etc., that I somehow think in the form of story. I go through some events mentally and give some kind of form to them. These stories are not always complete with a plot, but may be merely some scattered fragments. In the process of composing an autobiography, mimesis1 forms the pre-understanding of your life. This is how I understand the concept of mimesis1. For you, Paula, there was something inside yourself even before you started to tell your first story.

Paula:

Yes, naturally there was. I often notice, as I start to tell somebody of something that has happened to myself, that there really is a half-made narrative inside me, which then turns into audible speech or readable text. As I tell something about my life, I somehow collect and organise these small inner stories into a more complete whole.



Picture 1. Paula's two stories as narrative identity configuration (see Gadamer 1998, 199; Ricoueur 1984, 52-87; Widdershoven 1993, 3-5; see also Rauno Huttunen's and Leena Kakkori's article in this book.)

Hannu:

That is what Ricoeur calls the mimesis$_2$ phase; turning your pre-narrative experiences and memories into a plotted story. Here, you turn your inner textual world into an audible or readable form. In this phase - in this active process of textualisation – your fragmented inner speech is organised into a more coherent and plotted narrative. The pre-narrative pre-understanding is transformed into a poetic totality, as we could put it, quoting Aristotle (1958) and Ricoeur (1984). Mimesis$_2$ is in the very heart of the narrative

process. Producing the *plot* out of your incoherent pre-narrative fragments is also the most creative moment in this threefold mimesis process.

But for myself, the most inspiring finding in Ricoeur's model was the $mimesis_3$ phase: how much it means to you what kind of stories you tell about youself. As your story is written down or told aloud, it becomes part of your identity. In your process of composing narratives, something new emerges as you tell the story of your life, and this something "new" begins to construe you in a new way. You begin to *apply* this new understanding to your own life.

In the $mimesis_3$ phase, you always compare your expressions to your inner feelings and memories. You may detect some very important omissions or even lies in what you told or wrote, and perhaps you have to change your story about some point of your life. You realise that what you tell of your life is something like hopes and desires, or attempts to hide something, or unauthentic. Anyway, this *application* is $mimesis_3$, the starting point of a new *pre-understanding* of life; a new $mimesis_1$. Through your words and deeds you begin to actualise this picture of you, which you have more or less intentionally created. As Jerome Bruner (1987, 13) has put it: "Narrative imitates life, life imitates narrative". This is how your identity and your life stories are being construed in a reciprocal way.

This is what we call ontological enrichment through narratives. What you, ontologically speaking, really are is nothing more or less than your life story, which is being construed along with your experiences and memories.

Christiana:

Is our life a story itself? A story we live in, an act in which we play the leading roles?

Hannu:

I do not think there can be any "real" me; something which really exists independently of the story I tell about myself. As if I could find myself by removing some extra masks or surface layers. Like peeling an onion, layer after layer, and finally finding the "true me". I do not believe in that. Rather, I think, there is a construction called myself, which is being socially and psychologically built up by composing narratives, both the inner and pre-narrative forms of narrative and ones that you tell aloud.

Christiana:

But, then again, you can always tell different stories. For example, which one of Paula's stories would be more true? What do you consider to be your truth?

Paula:

Truths are as many as the points of view; the stories. The first story could be mine as well as the second one. The loser's story is the other truth of mine; the winner's story is brighter and more comforting but equally true as the other one. Both of them helped me to reach a new level of understanding of my past and the choices I have made. As I wrote:

> She, the one who had squandered her illusions on her way to the unknown, had finally arrived at a place where she knew that she was only a visitor. A tourist, pursuing her authentic life.

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Heli Meriläinen & Leena Syrjälä

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING AS A SELF-CONSTRUCTION

Towards a duography

We consider narrative research consists of self-study and reflection for which writing is a crucial means of inquiry. We both started diary writing as adults, for the first time after girlhood, to note down thoughts and action in order to construct and have a better hold of our work. Our stories have also begun to live and be constructed through reading. The process of doing narrative research tempted us to write ourselves and question our writing concerning its meaning, form and functions in a research process. We believe that, while doing narrative research, both the researcher and the story-teller are involved in a process of constructing their identity. Our vulnerabilities, conflicts, choices and values are put into conversation with ourselves as well as with our readers (Ellis & Bochner 2000, 748). Understanding someone else' stories presumes reflection and often also the task of writing one's own life story. More attention in qualitative research has been afforded to data collection and analysis strategies than to the process by which texts are produced and understood (Coffey 2001, 4).

Our aim is to highlight the meaning of writing in a research process, which deals with peoples lives. Not the means of putting together a research report of other's lives in a written form, but including the life and experiences of researcher's in the centre of the research processes, as self-construction. First we outline some theoretical framework of writing as a process and tell our own experiences in writing. Secondly we concentrate on how our stories met and started a new relation between Heli, as a doctoral student and Leena as a mentoring professor and move on to ethical and moral implications of writing: The idea of preserving our written material and even including it as a part of our research meant that there would be more people sharing

it than we two. We will give an example of duography, in which the intersections of our stories make a new conversation, a new story.

The inquiry process

The setting of this inquiry is very interesting. What is specific between us is that Heli, as a doctoral student, is working at long distance from the University of Oulu. This means that the main part of mentoring takes place through e-mail in a written form. Another connection between us is that Heli's master's theses was a narrative autobiographical self-study and Leena had a log term project (Teachers in Change) going on with a narrative approach to teachers life, in which Heli joined in 2000 as a doctoral student after a period of working as a class teacher. In that way, we had already two different stories 'waiting' to meet each other.

The project of producing a dissertation is a personal process that transects ones' whole life, where the instructor is committed to remain aside and to support a noveice researcher. For us, writing personal letters begun as a natural part of Heli's dissertation process. Little by little we began also to share diary extracts and to comment on each other's texts. We have both used reflective methods and material (diaries, interviews, portfolios, videotapes, observing, photograph analyses, art, e-mail conversations, manuscripts) to explore our own practical theory. The analysis of the research material is preliminary examination of few examples, with a focus on the meaning of writing. Our writing and its analysis will continue along with Heli's dissertation process.

In our project, many teachers have sent their life stories with extracts of diaries, poems, glimpses of daily life with its joys and sorrows (see Estola, Erkkilä & Syrjälä 2001; Estola & Syrjälä 2001). For these teachers, writing has been a way to leave traces of themselves and to make themselves visible. Sometimes, the process has been one of reconstructing selves out of shattered pieces and splinters. Along the process the meaning of writing as an experience have got more and more attention. We have discussed many times about how important it is to give an opportunity for teachers to have their voices heard in order to value and respect teachers work more but also to evaluate and rebuild it with past and future in mind, through teachers' own experiences. Now the same viewpoints can be turned to researchers. This has been too little explored area in the field of qualitative research (see. Elbaz- Luwisch & Brizker, 2001).

Writing to converse with myself and my work

Words serve the major vehicle of thought and are our best tools for sorting out and organizing our worlds. Words help us to gain some purchase on the constructive processes of our thinking (Diamond 1993, 513). Hence, writing, in its widest definition, can be seen as a means of thinking. Writing is a means of articulating connections and organizing representations of thought. For both of us, the decision to start writing was a conscious choice based on the motive of understanding our work better. As Hoover (1994, 84) claims: after having written something we understand it better (see also Huttunen & Kakkori in this book). The permanence of the written word allows the writer to rethink and revise ideas over an extended period. Written recollection and analysis can allow for continuous review and re-evaluation with the sharpened focus or explicitness of ideas through deliberation and word choice and the active nature and connectedness of writing allowing for integration of ideas (Hoover, 1994, 84).The above-mentioned viewpoints are put into practice in Leena's fragment:

> Leena, 2 May, 2001, e-mail to Heli: For me, the beginning of writing was a dazzling experience on the road towards self-discovery. I was approaching my fiftieth birthday and experiencing various crises. The final stimulus was the need to plan this research project and the realization that one cannot understand other people's stories without writing something about one's own life.

For Leena, writing was part of her job as a professor of education, but her personal diary writing started with a new impetus (for the first time after youth) in 1997:

> Leena, 4 May, 2001, e-mail to Heli: I have written quite a lot over the past few years. The desire to reflect on my own work arose in 1997, when my thoughts began to be filled with teacher stories and the idea of recruiting a group to collect them. I thought it would be important to write down the ideas and incidents that occurred during the project. At first I did this quite systematically, but soon the events and crises in my own life became too overwhelming to leave me any space for writing about my work. At the same time, I began to add to my research papers and lectures glimpses of my own life to illustrate how my interests and research topics were part of the totality of my life.

Writing is considered one of the most effective methods for collecting autobiographical data. Diary writing as a means of combining thoughts, feelings and action. Writing is not only for reaching something, but turns

out to be valuable in itself. Instead of describing things something happens right now. Writing can be seen as an anchor on which to rely while taking a journey into one's life.

In Heli's case, diary writing began as a way to vent her frustration with teacher education (1992 – 1996). She felt that the aims of teacher education and the means used to reach those aims were incompatible, and she began to write about it:

> Heli's diary, 17 June 1994: I have often pondered about the process of growing to be a teacher, and when I read Towards Teacherhood (goals of teacher education), I realized that our education does not promote professional growth, if we take that to mean an ability to be critically reflective. I am now ready myself to go out on the soggy marsh that Schön talks about and to use a stick to probe for solid ground. Right now, I feel that diary writing would be a useful way to learn reflection. And even in theory, it is a method supportive of reflection! I will give it a try and see how it works...

Writing was therapeutic and allowed her to 'breathe freely' and canalize her anger out ofher mind. At the same time she became interested in reflective thinking, and these two things have given here strength during teacher education.

Writing on a continuous bases demands a lot of self-discipline and it always takes time. In other words, writing as a conscious effort always requires commitment, and that is something not so easily reached:

> Heli's diary, 27 June, 1995: Almost a year has passed since I wrote in this diary. I often find myself thinking it would be important to write, but then I'm also frustrated by the feeling that there would be so many things to write about and so little time for it! Perfectionism – you cannot reduce to words a life that is being lived all the time. Any written text is merely a stop on the way, a window to a life as it is or was.

Counselling and support from a researcher or a colleague could open new ways of seeing one's own life and make its processing more conscious. That would also give a new stimulus to write and a motivation to continue. What came up in Hoovers (1994, 91) study of reflective writing by student teachers was that assignments without a predetermined focus frequently led to an outpouring of complaints and survival concerns, particularly about co-operating teachers, curricular demands, and the transition from the university setting into the reality of the public schools. Hoover (1994, 93) reminds us that assignment of writing tasks as part of a practicum does not

necessarily lead toward reflection beyond the level of personal concerns. We must continue to search for ways to tap effectively into the learning power of writing.

Because writing is usually voluntary, it is hard to engage in it. It is always a question of time as Leena & Heli have noticed. Writing as a process requires a long, intensive period of effort, until connections and the 'help', satisfaction and empowerment inherent in it can be found. As Francis (1995, 233) says about preservice teachers, they 'rambled' in their writing until they discovered the connections and real issues. It really takes time to find one's own way of expressing and making interpretations:

> Heli's research report, 1996: Writing without any goal was not motivating. I felt frustrated and had a bad conscience about writing too little or too seldom. A further step towards a more reflective attitude was my decision to read literature about reflection. My efforts to study theoretical critical reflection and to keep on writing my diary began to have an impact on the quality of my writing, but I still needed something to boost my motivation and to provide new perspectives and depth to my writing. It was time either to give up or to go on. I had an 'authority' problem. While writing, I tended to only describe things and did not find paths into the basic premises of my thinking.

Writing alone in the beginning is something to get started with Writing about different stages of life and describing things like family relations, school and working experience, hobbies, etc. give good material to look back and reflect. But to go on further in order to find new connections, one needs new challenges and stimuli. Shared writing can be an opening experience for new ways of thinking. Dialogic journal writing is a written conversation between two persons on a regular basis. It consists of reading and responding to each other's texts. It helps to generate personal questions, to explore hunches and hypotheses and to perceive the multiplicity of views inherent in human experience (Hoover, 1994, 92). For researchers, dialogic journal writing is also a way to reduce isolation.

In Heli's case, there was no counselling and no other writer with whom she could co-operate. The only feedback she got was at the academic level about her teaching practice periods and seminar work for her Master of Education degree. The story, a narrative self-inquiry, which was later published, was a kind of report of her own path through teacher education, a story of self-directed learning through writing and reflection. (Meriläinen 1996.)

> Heli's Research report, 1996: The process of searching one's own thoughts is endless. Everything is related to everything, and it seems difficult to pick out the essential issues. When I first decided to start this experiment, after having read much about reflective thinking, I felt almost embarrassed to tell people about my project. So many of my friends seemed to consider it a version of the Bold and the Beautiful. How on earth could you do scientific research about yourself! But my aim is renewal and enhancement of self-knowledge. I have a hunch that I will succeed, because I intuitively feel that already. At least I have been able to gain more self-knowledge, and I'm sure I will one day thank my 'critical friend' for that (I mean my diary).

Writing is seen as a useful means for conscious professional development. One crucial part of professional development is to confront one's own practical theory: to make one's own thinking and reasoning visible, in order to develop a voice and to feel empowered. Diary writing allows one to experiment with different viewpoints without the burden of responsibility always implicit in ordinary oral conversation. This helps one to revise conventional conceptions and to change one's life course through reflective withdrawal and comeback. Diary could be seen as a passive partner of conversation, who is never wrong or embarrasses you.

Writing helps us to distinguish between our different voices. It makes aspects of one's self become more audible and possible. A personal voice in academic writing has been considered suspicious, unreliable, illegitimate, and even trivial. Because narrative forms of writing may interrupt the public academic discourse, to explore positioning and reflexivity, they have often been dismissed. Each aspect of the self constructs, apprehends and writes a very different interpretation of reality. Since each voice provides a further opportunity to structure and restructure experience, the more modes of thinking, feeling, and experiencing that we can master, the richer and more varied we will be (Diamond 1993, 511-512; see also Coffey 2001 and Ellis & Bochner 2000).

After qualification, processing with teacher portfolio became a means of self-evaluation in Heli's class teachers' work. For Heli writing while being a teacher ment an opportunity to find different voices. She was thinking about postgraduate studies in education, but she just loved to teach. The stress and lack of time for writing changed her way of interpreting herself as a teacher. Little by little, she started to process her teacher portfolio, in which art education and her voice as an art teacher became more visible for her than before. Reflections on the ways of learning art and the use of art in primary school teaching became the 'big questions' of her teaching. Photographs about art projects accomplished with children were included,

and her own way of thinking through doing art started to become more and more important for her. Before enrolling in teacher education she had been studied art. She found new connections between teaching and making art during her first year as a teacher, and the reflective hold of being a teacher continued, even though she did less writing and turned into photography and visual work.

> Heli's diary, August 1997: I was really intrigued by my discovery that one can learn through art and by producing art just as well as by reading and writing. Art seemed a useful method especially with the first-graders, who have big differences in their reading and writing skills. A picture is neutral, as everybody can draw and look at pictures. The first-grades no longer felt so anxious about learning to read and wirte, and still everybody learnt those skills!

> Heli's teacher portfolio, 2000: Teaching is full of different encounters.My first 'own' pupils still seem very dear and important to me. It was with them that I made my first effort to learn to let my pupils go and to prepare for another group of pupils, wondering how much of myself I would be able to give to the new class? (...) I thought it important to share with them the journey to the source of mental and physical experiences. I mean realistic situations, where I would hear the children comment on things and see them act. (...) Starting a teaching career is very much like starting the 'first grade'. One has to accept the fact that one is not a skilful and experienced teacher, even with all the knowledge and skills acquired during teacher education, but only a novice. The process of getting oriented to work and developing in it has been going on for a while, but only now do I realize that I am, quite concretely, alone responsible for my class. This is a dramatic realization, and I will only be able to evaluate my performance after some time. (...) I could never have guessed how much I would learn while teaching my first class. The fact that the conditions were what they were was actually only fruitful for my growth, although it was really hard going at times. When I now think back about my experiences three years ago, I can see that I came very close to the Reggian principles (a movement of art education) only by listening to the children.

Any self or text is 'not as a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of an Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash' (Barthes 1977, 146). New writings needs to be appreciated on their own terms rather than from the traditional viewpoint that writers who 'experiment textually' are somehow 'abdicating their responsibilities as qualitative researchers' (Denzin 1997, 5). Teacher researchers who experiment with arts-based, literary forms may create the conditions for locating new

epiphanies within texts and people's lives. Their texts and selves are manifestations of consciousness and artifacts to be analyzed and responded to (Diamond & Mullen 1999, 22).

The connection between art education and narrative research is obvious. In both of them, the core of action is to process with self. Art, as well as writing, is a mode of expression. Finding a voice should not be connected exclusively to written forms of expression. For example, teachers do their work with their bodies, feelings, and voices (in a biological sense). The mode of expression could be music, movements, pictures, poems and other artistic forms as well. The question of when we are ready to include these aspects into our research protocoll is a matter of time and revolution in our academic attitudes. Coffey's (2001, 21) notions of alternative representational forms encourage to free oneself from traditional academic writing: Different representational forms (like collaborative writing, autobiographical texts, poetry, scripts and performance texts) can better capture the polyvocality and rhythms of social life, and can aid more reflexive and self-conscious approaches to writing.

Shared writing experience – awakening new voices and chances

Similarly, teachers' and researchers' work involves many intertwined voices. One of the most profound aims of writing is to find one's own voice, to feel empowered and renewed. On the other hand, this may lead to need for change. Elbaz-Luwisch, Moen & Gudmundsdottir (in this book) point out that the production of narratives should lead to honesty in admitting failures and criticizing one's own subjectivity. The very act of narrating a non-unitary self permits greater self-knowledge that is not merely emancipatory but may also lead to improvements in practice.

Even though writing about one's life may help the voice to be found and heard, Elbaz- Luwisch, Moen & Gudmundsdottir (in this book) claim that a voice may never exist in isolation. Voice never exists in a vacuum, it is never neutral. In addition to there being a voice that speaks the utterance, it is also important that there is somebody the utterance is addressed to. Meaning and understanding are not elements that can be transferred from one person to another. Quite to the contrary they are created when voices engage in dialogues with each other Elbaz-Luwisch, Moen & Gudmundsdottir (in this book; also Ellis & Bochner 2000 733-768.).

Diamond (1993) talks about the same thing when he says that thinking

about one's self, teaching and research are not given but are constructed by each of us in community. By becoming more present to each other through writing, each voice can redefine, call to, and awaken the others to reply. Through writing, we turn these 'senseless' unknowns into meaningful subjects for further discussion and thought (Diamond 1993, 517). This means that, without collaboration it is almost impossible to find one's real, authentic voice. Even Diamond (1993, 513), a very experienced writer, wonders in his article weather he has any voice in his academic writing which remains his own. We would claim, that finding a voice is not just attainment of result, but the very process of searching is valuable in itself. We are engaged in a social act, representing a version of reality through various kinds of texts, and writing and representing as integral elements of the research process (Coffey 2001, 10-13).

> Leena, 2 May 2001, e-mail to Heli: But let us continue our discussion. It seems that the primary role of writing in my life at all times has been to search and construct myself, which is a lonely job. Writing to someone else and dialogue based on that writing clearly opens up new perspectives and helps me to view things from a distance and in a larger context.

> Heli, 3 May, 2001, e-mail to Leena: I feel that this way of writing has a special depth, and I am really happy about it! Our stories meet in this dialogue between narrators, which will, in turn, shape our respective stories and open up new perspectives and paths.

For both of us, shared writing was new and refreshing experience after having written alone for a long time, and we felt deeply inspired by it. We never questioned the trust between us, nor even talked about it really. Everything felt so natural and just went on. Our stories started to make a kind of chain where the links consisted of points of intersection between our stories, where themes popped out. We decided to look back on our written material and find some themes that had seemed especially important to us over time. We pooled the fragments and 'answered' to each other with fragments of our stories. We worked quite intuitively. When thinking back to it now, another way to find common themes could have been to read the whole material that each of us had. Could it have been equally exiting as our way of doing it, when we could still keep our secrets, and would it have led to knowing too much about each other? These are some questions to consider in this process.

One turning-point in this process occurred when the concept of duography was introduced in a book review in a Finnish educational journal

(Kasvatus 2/2001). A closer look at the references (Diamonds work) showed that this was the concept to frame our writing process: duography promotes reflexive studies of the self and a trusted other. Duography is a collaborative form of inquiry in which two individuals reflect on their lived experiences through responding to one another's stories. As a co-author, each then acts as a knowing participant in the other's development (Diamond & Mullen 1999, 318). Diamond & Mullen (1999, 317) define duography as a retrospective written account that two people provide of a selection of events and ideas taken from their research lives. Similarly to an autobiography, a duography involves telling one's own stories. Like a biography, a duography also involves trying to understand and articulate the stories of another. Unlike an autobiography or a biography, a duography features turn-taking in writing and response to produce a duologue (Diamond & Mullen 1999, 318).

We realized that duography was something we were actually already doing: Our stories were conversing and intersecting on certain common themes. We decided to continue finding more common themes in our autobiographies and to continue shared writing about doing a research. This is also a mentorship relationship that acts both ways and an interesting experiment of supervising a doctoral student in a novel way. Our writing became more conscious and started to include conversation about this inquiry process. We have begun to wonder if this also signifies a change in our relationship: writing has turned to be part of research and not so 'fun' and spontaneous any more. Are we writing because we know we could produce a good piece of narrative research with this experiment? That is a question of honesty and deception (Coffey 2001, 16).We may also be writing about our friends, family, enemies, colleagues etc. How do we balance our responsibilities to them, our emotional commitments and the authoring of the research text (Coffey 2001, 16)? Are we able to 'remain' as open as we have been up till now or is our relation stressed with the facts that one of us is in the position of experienced professional while another is un-experienced, beginning researcher? Reflection on our relation is certainly needed and talking, writing and analysing it will be one of the topics along the process.

Lomax (2000, 51) conceptualizes a relation based on differential authority or collegiality as an educative one. She thinks that an educative relation is a direct relation without ritual and includes the idea that there will be learning and improvement (change) that involves both the self and other independently and resiprocally. As the relation progresses, each person becomes more consciously aware of themselves and how others see them. There are two components in it: The intra-subjective dialectic and inter-

subjective dialectic. Intra-subjective dialectic is the process through which ones own understanding is transformed as one engages in the struggle to represent what one means. The inter-subjective dialectic is an engagement with imagined or actual responses of others, where the act of representing is intended as an invitation to others to engage.

The question whether the story that progresses along the process of dissertation is true or at least authentic has many answers: The fact that stories are always written in a certain context and situation, we would add in certain viewpoints, thoughts and purpose in mind, they are always interpreted and recollections. The stories we have already written about our lives are also constructions of time and culture with many voices in them. We are creating our stories, as the common one too, they are not there waiting to be found (Huttunen & Kakkori in this book). The only truth is that we can never capture experience. The goal of this kind of work would rather be representation and to evoke in readers a feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable, and possible. Reading about it can give vicarious experiences. (See Ellis & Bochner 2000, 750-751.)

The following is a short example of the dialogue between fragments of our stories:

Voices of a woman, a mother, a researcher - Conflicts between work and family

Heli, 20 Dec. 1995, diary: It is an awfully big decision to choose between a career and a family. Traditionally, the woman has been the "spirit" of the home, who gives birth to lovely children fathered by her husband and takes care of the home and the housekeeping. I have noticed that ambition in a woman is often considered merely a desire for 'free life' outside the family, meaning extramarital relationships. I want to become a mother and to see how motherhood and family help me grow as a human being.

Leena 2 May, 2001, e-mail to Heli: Your text made me recall myself at the age of thirty. During that particularly year, very many things happened in my life: I got married, gained my doctorate and had my first baby, all within a year! And my personal stage of growth was quite different from the stage you are in now. When, after the public debate, my supervisor and opponent encouraged me to continue research, I thought: You can say what you want, but I will stay at home and concentrate on my family! You know things did not go that way, as my life simply took a different course.

Heli, 3 May, 2001, e-mail to Leena: Motherhood has made me almost euphoric about all the beautiful things in life! Although I stay up nights and feel tired, each day contains such moments of great joy that they help me go on. Maybe, after five years, I will consider myself crazy to have been doing research and staying up nights with a baby! Today, however, I wish I could see this time as equally rewarding later as I do now, though I sometimes do feel bothered by the role expectations applied to motherhood by outsiders. Some of the people I know seem to disapprove of my choices and consider me a 'hard mother' because I value my own goals so highly. This is somehow the culmination of all prejudices felt against researchers: a researcher as a mother must be the worst of all. I'm sure I will have to work to find a balance between these things in the future, too

Leena, 4 May, 2001, e-mail to Heli: Heli, you are starting a career as a researcher and have just become a mother for the first time, You are pondering about the conflicts between being a mother and being a researcher. Maybe I have been too naïve myself, or else I have just felt that this is the road I should choose, that I have been given this choice, which is different from the choices of many others, and that it somehow chose me and I should only be grateful. And I have certainly often appreciated the flexibility of this job. Actually, in that respect, professorship is a very good job for a mother! And it is not really different from any other job. Only there is this burden of myths. Looking back, however, I feel that if I had been able to say 'no' at some point, I might have avoided some of the problems I'm struggling with now. My children have grown used to this job and way of life, but I still wonder what it may mean to them later in life.

Heli 4 Sept. 2001, e-mail to Leena: I have been thinking about what kind of a researcher I consider myself and what I think of this situation. And I have also been wrestling with the very idea of whether I will have the courage to go on as a researcher and whether I will have enough strength for it. The mental resources I derived from my master's thesis have been very helpful in my work. Efforts to construct and analyze one's identity make one feel vulnerable and depleted. Maybe I have been afraid of not being able to make it after all.

Leena, e-mail to Heli, 17 Sept. 2001: You are pondering about yourself as a researcher and wondering if you dare to start a research career and if you will have enough strength for it. You went through a major process of growth while doing your self-study and writing your master's thesis, and more or less alone. Then I did not hear from you until the graduate school began. And even then, you hesitated about enrolling. I remember I was myself afraid you might not, after all. And even so, I have often felt doubtful about encouraging someone to

become a researcher. What if teaching or some other job would be better for this particular person? In the case of some doctoral students halfway through their projects, I have been fairly certain that it would have been better for them to do something else, but then the situation has suddenly cleared and the person has completed his or her dissertation without any dramatic complications

Heli 4 Sept. 2001, e-mail to Leena: I understand what identity work and openness to one's self means. That has made me less of a perfectionist and more merciful towards myself. I am now better able to recognize my limits and resources and admit that I do not have to accomplish everything. It was in one of the graduate school meetings, where we were told that one can give up even this project, that I probably first realized that I am the one to make the choices, and that this is only a project to produce a doctoral dissertation, but also work to make myself grow and discover new opportunities and meanings, which will result in a dissertation as an inevitable outcome. One part of me said: OK, if it gets to be too hard, you can always quit. After that, it has been easier to breathe. What I feel to be difficult about my current situation is that I always seem to be somewhere else and never where I should be or where things are happening. I would love to work closer to the university now. It is peaceful to work at home, but I sometimes feel I will go crazy looking at these same four walls for days on end. I have no fellow workers, and I am a sociable person. But there are good points, too. I have more time for my family than I would if I were teaching. For once, I have time to think about matters, and this distance from the university may also be good: there are so many stimuli there that I might easily be drawn into some secondary projects, such as teaching.

Leena, e-mail to Heli, 17 Sept. 2001: It seemed comforting to read your text. You are aware of your own choices. Maybe narrative research will signify an inevitable, though sometimes painful, process of growth for you. In most cases, though not always, this process ultimately turns out well. You have continued despite hardships. I guess that's what I have done, too. Even when one feels oneself wounded, one can go on and find new paths and perspectives to oneself and one's work. For you, writing a dissertation is like any other work with its good and bad points. That's how it should be. That's how I think about work myself: I know someone else would do things differently, but as I am here, all I can do is to do research and teach the way can, aware and conscious of my strengths and limits. I certainly often feel inadequate in this job, as if I were on an alien planet in the academic world. But this research group has given me so much. I feel that each of us has a right to be what we are and to do the kind of research that we consider important and that has given us so much.

In education science, the narrative approach is now appreciated widely. Writing about one's life is narration, and there may be many smaller stories and voices intertwined within the main story. On the other hand, writing as action is essential way to produce material for narrative inquiry. The stories to be analysed in research must be told first. Stories may change over time, new stories constantly emerge to enrich the old ones. We are dealing with different re-constructions and recollections of life. According to Coffey (2001, 20), writing involves a practical accomplishment of literary conventions, but also serves as a mechanism through which we express, construct and represent others an ourselves. This situates ethical representation within broader understandings of the relationships between researcher and researched, and develops the idea of the reflexive practitioner of author.

The researcher is challenged to face material that may touch him or her in very meaningful way. The storywriter may also change remarkably through autobiographical approach to his or her own life. Writing as a process of data transcription, editing, authoring and representing is a crucial point in the narrative research process (Coffey 2001). It always challenges the researcher to reflect his or her own identity and feelings through someone else's story. In our opinion, the power of writing should be discussed seriously now that the narrative approach is gaining ground in education science. Writing an autobiography or making notes reflectively is crucial for documenting and evaluating one's work and decision making during a research process.

Writing for academic publication is usually like 'knitting according to the intentions of others' (Pessoa 1991, 7). Only more personal ways of writing or narrating can provide the language of adventure, self-exploration, and growth (Diamond 1993, 512). To reach that level of thought and expression, we would claim that researchers must also write about themselves. Reading other peoples' stories, some of them very touching, is not just reading, but trying to understand and reflect the life of someone else. This means that, in order to understand someone else, one has to understand and reflect oneself first, or to stand by while reading someone's story. These thoughts and experiences inevitably direct the researcher's own way of expression. It is therefore important also to write about this in the research report (see Coffey 2001, 1-32; Ellis & Bochner 2000, 733-768).

Narrative provides autobiographical opportunities for each of us to gain a distinctive presence within a series of registers that we can use to explore

the bipolarity of our first and third person voices, i.e. our private and public, fictitious and factual selves. Presence is established when thoughts and feelings are called forth by and in community rather than in isolation. The development of the self and its different levels of consciousness takes place both intra- and inter-personally. Self is perhaps a relation rather than a thing (Diamond 1993, 512; Laitinen in this book.).

Writing acquires different forms and functions over time and develops through personal processes. Everyone has his or her own style of writing, and the meaning of the text is inherent in the language used. As researchers we can ask easily, have you written for yourself or with a thought of having it read by someone? The attitude to writing affects the resulting remarkably. Diamond (1993,517) states, when thought about self becomes our central text, the self who later reads the writing is different from the author self who originally wrote it. Gaining perspective on self by becoming aware of the possibilities that are available within, without, and over time brigs us closer to developing authentic voice. Narrative self-inquiry enables us to speak for ourselves and to feel heard.

> Leena, 3 Sept. 2001, e-mail to Heli: How many voices can we hear calling us in our work today? There are voices of teachers and researchers from the past, voices from our personal history and yet others from our contemporary life situation. But underlying all these voices, there are the voices of children who need to be hugged and held, not only by us but by the people who have the love, wisdom and strength to work as educators in the future. It seems to me that the most crucial voice calling both educational researchers and teachers is the same: that voice calls us to work for a better world for children and adolescents. Each of us can personally accomplish so little, but every encounter involves a new possibility.

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IV

Think global – narrate local

In this section you can read the voices of teachers who hail from the Arctic Circle to the Middle-East. The articles included in this section also provide an extremely clear outlook illustration of narrative research in action. In their article *Whose reform?*, Eila Estola and Leena Syrjälä study Finnish school reforms and changes as moral voices in teachers' stories. The demands of official school reforms are often confusing and contradictory to teachers because the language of practice regarding changes in the classroom often differ from the language of administrative practice. Estola and Syrjälä make the assumption that there is a distinction between the administrative language of justice and teachers' language of care. Language of justice aims at action that is compatible with certain collective rules, while the language of care concerns relatedness and responsiveness. Estola and Syrjälä asked teachers to describe schools reforms and changes in the classroom and the way in which they translated the moral language of administration into their own language as teachers.

In their article *The multivoicedness of classroom*, Sigrun Gudmundstottir, Torill Moen and Freema Elbaz-Luwicsh discuss the contribution of Bakhtin's ideas to educational narrative research. The writers consider Bakhtin's ideas to be extremely useful when interpreting teachers' stories about classroom practice. They claim that the voice of narrator never exists in isolation from the voices of other actors? Individuals always exists in relation to others and are involved an endless dialogue with others. Bakhtin's focus is on voices which engage each other, and which together create meaning. The writers provide two examples of how Bakhtin's work has illuminated their own understanding about teachers' voices. The first example concerns an interaction between a Norwegian teacher and a pupil, and the second involves the life stories of two Israeli teachers.

Geert Kelchtermas and Katrijn Ballet have studied the stories of Belgian teachers just beginning their work. In their article *Learning how to play the game* they present a single case from the perspective of micropolicy. At the start of their career, most primary teachers in Belgium – similarly to those in Finland and Israel – are given full responsibility for a group of pupils. At the same time they also have to find and negotiate their place as a member of the school organization. The school as an organization lives and is guided by certain traditions and habits – most of which are unwritten de facto

practices. The new teacher is confronted with a micro-political reality in his/her job situation. Writers define micro-political reality as the strategies and tactics used by individuals and groups in an organisation in order to promote their interests. As such, the micro-political perspective deals with an essential dimension in organisations: micro-political processes simply occur in any organisation, in processes of collaboration as well as in resistance. Narrative research is used to reveal this micro-political reality.

In her article *Where is the child?*, Eila Estola examines the corporeal reality of teachers' work. Estola's article has its basis in phenomenological body-philosophy. Estola claims that the body is a significant part of teachers' identities and work. Estola's narrative data consists of teachers' diaries and examples drawn from their daily work. Estola focuses her analysis on the question of how and what teachers reveal about the body in their narratives. Estola attempts to question the present way of seeing mind and body as separate and the body as subordinated to the mind. Local narrative, global body.

Eila Estola & Leena Syrjälä

WHOSE REFORM?

TEACHERS' VOICES FROM SILENCE

In the 1970s, the Department of Education in Helsinki was housed in an old two-floor building close to the Market Square and the Cathedral. I always felt confined there and was not really inspired by my minor subject studies. It was spring, and many things were going on at the university. We were all becoming increasingly aware of the radical student policies. The canteen was a much more interesting place than the cramped old library. While I was studying for my final exam in educational science, I heard that the comprehensive school committee were writing their report upstairs, and that professor Koskenniemi usually asked a few questions about this statewide school reform in his oral examination. I therefore had to find out personally about this major upheaval of school life in the 1970s. Afterwards, I have often wondered how far from the reality of school life students of educational science were at that time and suspected that the committee working upstairs never got closer to real life than the students downstairs - and we knew nothing. For me, the school reform remained a mystery, and I have spent a lifetime trying to shed light on that mystery, fully aware that there are no correct solutions.

This is how Leena, the older of us, recalls her experiences of the major school reform as a young student. While analyzing teacher biographies for the past few years, we have often come across people who have labelled us as outmoded opponents of change. Such comments have been provoked especially by our stories of teachers who tell about their vocation, love of children and joy of work. Our opponents claim we have only received stories from elderly school mistresses nostalgic for the good old times. Although we have also described the conflicts and battles of teachers in the turmoil of school reform, we have been criticized for romanticizing the careers of some exceptional teachers, which actually involve no change but rather stagnation and standstill.

We therefore posed ourselves this question: are we still as far from the real world of school life and the real changes as we were as young students? Do we understand sufficiently well what the efforts to change school really mean and how teachers perceive school reforms? Gudmundsdottir has described school reforms as messages from politicians to teachers and into classrooms. The reception of messages has been described (Cuban 1993) as a hurricane that makes the surface of the sea churn with waves, but leaves the deeper layers calm.

While analyzing the biographical story of one teacher, Helena (Estola & Syrjälä 2000), we realized that although the justifications for change may be external to school and also echo the cultural traditions and the political situation, real change can only take place when teachers integrate the idea of change into their own intentions. Helena did not spontaneously tell about school reforms, until we asked her about them. Nevertheless, Helena had been developing her work more than most others, but she talked about the changes she had accomplished in her own personal style and through actions taking place in her classroom.

We hence considered it interesting to find out what, if anything, teachers say about changes and school reforms. The idea of school reform as a message encouraged us to analyze change as a moral voice, which speaks in a different language in each context. Our assumption was based on the findings that have made a distinction between the administrative language of justice and teachers' language of care (Noddings 1992; Thayer-Bacon 1998). The former has also been called the language of the father and the latter the language of the mother. The language of administration is the language of justice, which aims at action compatible with certain collective principles or rules, while the basic principles of the language of care are relatedness and responsiveness. We therefore asked how teachers (most of whom are women) describe school reforms and changes in the classrooms and how they 'translate' the moral language of administration into their own language of teachers.

We decided to focus on the comprehensive school reform[1] which was the biggest reform of educational policy ever implemented in Finland. The reform basically aimed to enhance educational equality in a welfare state by providing all children equal opportunities for social progress regardless of where they lived and what social status they had. Prior to that, Finland had had a parallel school system, which included elementary school for 8 years and an optional junior secondary school, for which volunteers applied and wrote an entrance examination. Finnish children start school at the age of 7, and there is no compulsory pre-school or kindergarten[2].

This profound reform of the structure of elementary school took place in the 1970s, when the 9-year comprehensive school system was implemented.

The state was to take care of all citizens and to provide welfare for all. The comprehensive school reform aimed to solve the problems of basic education in a manner almost opposite to those applied elsewhere in Europe, with the exception of easternmost Europe. The development of comprehensive school over the following decades can be divided into three stages.

Volanen and Mäkinen (1997) and Volanen (2000) have discovered three stages in the comprehensive school reform. The first stage was the transitional comprehensive school with a streaming system from 1972 to about 1985. This was followed by the mature comprehensive school, where streaming was replaced by special instruction, up till the early 1990s. The third stage of comprehensive school, however, has been more teacher-oriented, and the contribution of teachers to change has been regarded as increasingly important. A further typical feature has been the severe cuts on financial resources justified by the economic recession.

The first stage of the comprehensive school reform was a clearly politico-administrative reform, which was implemented by issuing administrative directives. The reform was planned and implemented through extensive committee work, and the Finnish parliament finally passed a law and a statute on comprehensive school. The reform was accomplished as a technical procedure, in-service education was provided and new materials were made available to teachers.

Reading Stories

We read teachers' autobiographies with an eye on how teachers talk about school reforms and changes. Our approach is narrative and hence inherently concerned with change (Clandinin & Connelly 2000). Geertz (1995, 1-2) claimed that nothing can ever be described as a static thing because everything keeps changing –' there seems to be no place to stand so as to locate just what has altered and how'. The stories were produced by teachers for a research project in different ways and in response to different instructions (see Teachers in Change). Part of the material came from interviews, while another part consisted of written autobiographies. Some of the stories were produced in response to a general instruction to tell about their lives. Some material came from a biographical writing competition, for which the participants were encouraged to write especially about the changes in their work consequent to changes in society and school.

Having read more than a hundred stories, we were astonished at how little these teachers talked about the comprehensive school reform or any other school reform. Instead, they described in detail changes at the

classroom level instigated by factors other than administrative reforms. We especially noticed that the teachers commented on these changes emotionally and argumentatively, sometimes with a sense of discordance and disappointment, sometimes with fervour and enthusiasm, as if the rhythm of the narrative had reflected the variable rhythm of everyday teaching (cf. Connelly et al. 1997).

The autobiographies were retrospective, and we should bear in mind that they were events are always interpreted in the contemporary light, and the 'purpose of and audience for the retellings may color what is told' (Mitchell & Weber 1999, 12). We had, however, stories told for different purposes and addressed to different organizations, and we can hence consider the outcome of the analysis sufficiently diverse. We also had stories told by male and female teachers of different grades and of different ages, living in different parts of Finland (though a large majority were women). We picked up those in which the teachers at least briefly described the comprehensive school reform. As a result we had 18 stories, 2 by men and 16 by women. We have four teachers as 'key' stories whom we call by (pseudonymous) names. The solution has its pitfalls, it might make the anonymous stories seem less important. This was not our aim, neither was bothering readers by too many names. The key stories were selected in order to present different views and ways they describe the school reforms and to emphasize that school reforms as well as all the changes at the classroom level are part of the teacher's personal, biographical story (Gudmundsdottir & Flem 2000).

'Voice' is a concept that has been used to refer to very many things (Elbaz 1991; Freeman 1994). For us, 'voice' is a metaphor applicable to teachers, who act in contexts where they hear and participate in different discourses. Also Wertsch (1991, 51-52) has been inspiring for as he writes: 'Meaning can come into existence only when two voices come into contact: when the voice of the listener responds to the voice of the speaker'. Teachers are implementing the comprehensive school reform through the discourses in which they participate or through the voices they use. We, as researchers, wish to continue this chain: having listened to the voices of teachers, we aim to generate meanings for these teacher stories through our own academic discourse by reflecting on what the stories mean to us, rather than what the stories meant to the teachers (Moje 2000).

We approached our material based on Freeman's (1994) argumentation that researchers should analyze language as a socially constructed discourse. The substance of teacher stories is shaped by the way in which they are told. Freeman suggests that, apart from assuming teachers' knowledge to be evident in the language they use (representative use of language), we should

pay more attention to how data are presented in language. 'The presentational view assumes that language is both the vehicle and the substance of participants' meanings. (...) Thus in this presentational approach, the teacher's words are taken for what they are as well for what they say. To work with language data one must look at not only *what* is said but also *how* it is said.' (Freeman 1994, 83). According to Freeman, we need three approaches to understand how teachers construct their knowledge through language. Firstly, we should analyze linguistic expressions, for 'language depends on a speech community to create and sustain meanings' (p. 85). If, therefore, the language of administration is different, teachers have to translate it into their own language. How is that done? Secondly, we should consider the 'voice', and thirdly, we should find out where the voice comes from. 'If voice is a fabric of language, one needs to examine the references and sources for the various threads out of which it is woven.'(p. 87.)

The metaphor of voice also inherently implies that not all voices are equally loud. Teacher research has frequently shown that teachers' voices may not be audible (Elbaz 1991). We were especially intrigued by this idea of silence and inaudible voice. Could researchers be sensitive enough to hear even the nearly inaudible voices? We wanted to try.

The paper of Rogers et al. (1999) helped us to read the stories in a way that brought us closer to topics that are difficult to talk about or hard to identify. The authors highlight the need to analyze language and discourse. They point out that language is used to express such things as the process of remembering, uncertainty, the process of imagining, identifying, and selecting. We also paid attention to metaphors, which may explicate something that is otherwise unsayable. Lakoff & Johnson (1999) have described metaphors as language with a material background, which is why they reflect well the human experiences. Metaphors are 'dense descriptions', which effectively reflect the narrator's experiences in symbolic language or by juxtaposing two different phenomena. Teachers described themselves as runners with *'muscles full of lactic acid'* or as a choir who ' *sang to the conductor's cue'*, while one teacher said she *'felt completely bogged down by the formal teaching methods'*.

The analysis has proceeded from the whole to the parts and back to a whole. We started by reading the stories from the viewpoint of the transitions in the school reform, concentrating on the introduction of comprehensive school, the period of establishment and the reversal in the developmental trends. We also identified the themes discussed by the teachers in their narratives. After that, we applied the ideas of Freeman and Rogers et al. to our analysis of the teachers' stories about the school reform. Since we consider life a narrative that is being told (Bruner 1987), we also read the

stories produced by individual teachers as narratives of multi-voiced discourse. The parts acquire their meaning through the whole (cf. Clandinin & Connelly 2000). We used two contexts as reference and background for individual episodes or descriptions: the official narrative of the comprehensive school reform and the individual narrator's own story. In this way, we ensured that both types of discourse were covered in the analysis.

We will first concentrate on how the teachers 'answer' on the public, administrative rhetoric of the comprehensive school reform. After that, we will illustrate by a few examples the teachers' 'own' way of talking about changes in the classroom.

'Everybody Can Learn Everything' – Constrained by the Public Rhetoric

Many teachers' stories about the comprehensive school reform commented on the public discourse. The reform was approached from three perspectives. Firstly, there was discourse about the goals and objectives of comprehensive school. Secondly, there were stories about the belief that in-service education could serve as a tool for implementing the reform. Thirdly, there were descriptions about the changes in the substance and methods of instruction brought about by the reform, which were expected to establish the reform in the classrooms.

According to the teachers, however, the reform was not so simple. Teachers live in the world of a different practice. The administrative practice and its moral language could not be directly translated into the language of practical instruction, where different moral rules prevail (cf. Silfverberg 1996). Teachers' stories were woven into a discourse that tries to explain the public discourse and to make it understandable to themselves.

The structural reform promoted by the administrative discourse was partly a terminological reform. One upper secondary school teacher described this as follows: '*The new school was described in a new terminology: "discipline" was replaced by "optimal working conditions" and "class schedule" by "work plan". Even "school", a word with such an honourable tradition, was replaced by junior and senior "level".*' Teachers considered the new terminology a means of the public rhetoric to alter the traditional premises of teaching. For the writer, the word 'school' had a clearly more profound meaning that the more technical and performance-oriented 'level'. Teachers were concerned about what they were and what they were expected to be, and possibly also that school life, in the long run, would really be

transformed into a technical performance. This is often the key issue in discussions of stability and change. The new terms were probably the most concrete indication of the tendency described by Hargreaves (1997) that teachers have been expected to change themselves and their work, as if change were a mere technical solution.

One teacher described the official propaganda in favor of comprehensive school, which, *'in retrospect, was very naïve'*: the principles of comprehensive school were publicly advocated by the director general of the National Board for Education and other officials. The education was given to large crowds and was hardly useful at all. All discussion remained at a general level and never addressed the problems that occupied teachers. No-one cared about the real situation of teachers and pupils, nor did the teachers' union help.

Teachers' ways of telling of the school reform can be considered comments on the voices of administration and media. We identified five ways of telling about the school reform. Although the categories were sometimes mixed with each other, we make an effort to perform them one by one. The discourses were: the silence, the irony, the submission, the active resistance and the opportunities.

The silence

At first, we recognized the silence. Rogers et al. (1999) argue that the discourse of silence is the most elusive language of the unsayable. The mere absence of some information does not necessarily indicate silence. This comment is especially relevant to our research, where so many teachers said nothing about the school reform in their stories. What does this mean? What kind of response to the administrative discourse of reform is non-response? Silence is also an interesting moral question, as it is related to the general ability to hear voices in society. It is also very clearly a matter related to power (Lather 1991, Wertsch 1990). Could we even postulate that the voices of teachers are voices of women, which are intentionally not heard or understood. Ås (2000) has analyzed the ways of oppression women, and one of her arguments is the practice of making women invisible. The voice of someone who is invisible is certainly not very loud.

The most striking silence was the failure of many teachers to say anything at all about the comprehensive school reform. By silence, speakers can make their interlocutor, in this case the public discourse, poignantly aware of their refusal to listen to the interlocutor's voice. In our case it had serious consequences on the amount of the stories we could analyze further. In some stories, the complete silence was punctuated by a single brief remark: 'the comprehensive school reform came', but such a comment is like silence

in that the speaker never went on to comment further, but moved on to another topic.

Even those teachers who told about the transitional phase of the reform only seldom told anything about the mature years of comprehensive school reforms. In those few comments they described it as a good time for teachers: the groups of pupils were small, the financial resources were good and there were enough materials and tools. The silence about this period probably indicates that teachers concentrated on their work in serious silence. Although interpreting the specific meaning of silence is difficult, we want to argue that it is an efficient way of expression and earns to be reflected on.

The irony

An ironic tone probably indicates that the narrator finds the public rhetoric unrealistic. The public discourse used at the early stages of comprehensive school is considered exaggerating and promotional by several informants. Maija, a former civic school teacher wrote: *'The leading idea of comprehensive school was that everybody can learn everything. Only teachers understand how utopian that idea is. All of a sudden, every pupil was to be linguistically and mathematically talented and to reach a high level knowledge in all subjects. Special instruction was like a magic wand that was whisked to clear the learner's path of rocks and tree stumps. No-one was to stand out from the crowd or to be better than the others. That was democracy.'*

According to Maija, the language used to advertise comprehensive school was unrealistic. The pupils were to be talented 'all of a sudden' and 'were to' reach a high level in all subjects. Maija's ironic comments and metaphors she used is a response to the finger-pointing public discourse. Special instruction, the magic wand, would eliminate the differences between individual pupils and help to establish democracy. Maija's story presents the reform as a process whereby politicians tried to persuade teachers to see problems where they themselves wanted to see them (Rust 1993, 18). Maija's story also shows that the public rhetoric of marketing campaigns was used to persuade teachers to view the problems of learning and teaching from the political perspective. We can also infer that no-one asked the teachers about their view of the problems and their solutions.

One topic of public discourse was the changes in curricula and teaching methods. The teachers told about the changes in subjects, such as the introduction of the first foreign language on grade 3 and the availability of technical work and textile work to both girls and boys. The descriptions mostly lack involvement, and the narrators seem to have an outsider's

perspective to the topic, although the system of subjects, for example, certainly had direct consequences for their daily work. 'New math', however, inspired a few scathing comments: *'And we went to the extremes with some nonsensical experiments. For example, the pupils were not taught the multiplication table systematically, but pieces on paper were pinned up on the walls and the children were expected to pick them up just like that. And all mathematical instruction went wide off the mark. The new math and the set theory and things were so alien to real life that the kids got completely lost. And we, too, had a hard time with the math.'*

The teller, Laura, a primary school teacher discusses the failure of the experimental education advocated in the public discourse. The message of her story is that the teachers tried to follow the instructions, although, based on their experiential knowledge, they doubted the success of such 'nonsensical' projects. The teachers also had a 'hard time' with the experiment. Another teacher recalls the same thing, pointing out that the new math was 'buried in silence'. New mathematics was actually also dropped from the official curriculum.

The submission

A submissive tone may reflect the ways of women to respond to authoritarian and patriarchal administration, trying to survive in difficult and challenging situations. *'Teachers made a huge effort in this contradictory situation, trying to live up to the demands of both contemporary and future society and the challenges posed to them. Moreover, the majority of teachers were, and still are, women'*, wrote Maija pointing out the gender and power issues inside the school reform.

We argued earlier that in-service education was expected to provide a solution to the problems of the transitional stage. In the next Maija's quote the voice of submission has simultaneously an ironic sound. *'We learnt new things, acquired education, went out for the weekends to listen to people wiser than ourselves, who were often unprepared and underestimated their audience. We did whatever we were ordered and never complained, and no-one ever wondered if we had enough resources for all that.'* The efforts of teachers are here described as earnest, but the quote also implies that administrators looked down on teachers, underestimating them and denying the real problem, i.e. the possible burnout of teachers.

The rhythm of stories sometimes seem to reflect the fast pace at which the public discourse envisioned the change to take place. One male primary school teacher gave this breathless account and told (again with a bit ironic

sound) about their hectic efforts to 'translate' the public rhetoric into the language of classroom practice: *'There were multiple-choice tests, there was the spiral method, there was the question of fixed-grade or alternative instruction, and always something new on the way, and the teachers were like race runners with their muscles full of lactic acid, painfully struggling on.'*

Our informants were sometimes uncertain about a given state of affairs: *' I guess I was, by my natural disposition, ahead of my time'*, said one teacher, and another said: *'our task was probably to test the new school for all its shortcomings'*. These expressions imply uncertainty as well as the possibility and even probability of holding a different view. Evasions were sometimes identifiable in expressed emotion or opinion. One teacher wrote as follows: *'I do not really understand why we should have a reform for the sake of reform'*. The words 'not really' signal uncertainty. The sentence implies that the writer suspects the problem is her failure to understand, which also is a typical women way of thinking according to Ås.

Teachers had to respond to the public discourse defending themselves, often as outsiders rather than subjects. No-one ever asked teachers how they were coping, but they were left alone to wrestle with their feelings of inadequacy amidst the reforms (see Nias 1993). Maija put it: *'In the middle of all this, they forgot all about teachers, who, after all, were the ones to carry out this reform. There was naturally also matter-of-fact information, but it was mostly drowned in the hype. The teachers did a huge effort in this contradictory situation, trying to respond to the demands of both present and future society and all the challenges posed to them'*.

The active resistance

Some informants responded to the public rhetoric by active resistance' reflecting the speaker's detachment: *'you can say what you want, but we will act like this'*. Such comments were often included in the stories about how comprehensive school was advertised as a school without homework, where pupils would learn everything without any effort or work. As far as this matter was concerned, teachers acted in their classrooms based on their own knowledge and moral, knowing perfectly well that children actually learn different things in a slightly different ways. The discourse of resistance also included teachers' serious argumentations in which they comment reform trying to make their own perspectives visible.

In the next fragment Maija engaged in a dialogue with the image of teachers propagated by the media. *'It was precisely at that time that the public media also attacked the school and the teachers. The students' asso-*

ciation started spreading the 'student's red book', which was very provocative about the despotism of teachers. It was easy enough to find a pop singer who had been neglected by a teacher and given a bad mark in music, though he was such a star now. Listening to him, you probably agreed with the teacher. The television also recruited people to produce documents or sketches of teachers as military monsters waving a pointer, shabbily dressed and with their hair done up in a bun, who sent pupils flying into the corner or under the desk. In reality, however, the teacher is like an actor on stage, facing an ever critical audience and therefore fashionable and well-coiffured.'

The comprehensive school reform was presented as discourse about teachers as monsters and tyrants unable to understand children. Maija's comment is serious, well argued and based on personal experience. Teachers have to carefully consider their appearance and behavior. This has also been pointed out by Mitchell & Weber (1999).

Maija then went on: *'Newspapers published reports about the new comprehensive school: no-one will have to repeat a grade, no-one will be failed in exams, and therefore no-one will need to study. That lulled the pupils into a false notion of laziness and negligence'*. This theme was brought up by many teachers. *'Comprehensive school is a happy school'*, they proclaimed. *'Everybody can learn everything at comprehensive school, though there is no homework.'* Teachers told about their feelings of guilt under the public scrutiny of the administrators and the media. Pupils would certainly learn if teachers could teach them well enough. Ingrid Carlgren (1997) has described this phenomenon in the course of the Swedish school reform. According to her, teachers have been subjugated in the reforms, and their experiences have not been taken seriously. The reformers have insisted on discussion about what professional knowledge *should* be rather than what it is. *'Teachers are expected to do and know something other they do and know'*. (Carlgren 1997, 48 original italics).

There is concern that can be heard in teachers' stories during the decades: teachers argue against the policy which seems to narrow teachers' role. The male teacher wrote: *'If I am correct in my interpretation that teaching is becoming more important than education, it may happen that the whole infrastructure of teachers' work turns upside down. As far as I can see, that would seriously undermine the position of teachers, and the prospect is certainly not a pleasant one. We have a good school system and we have been investing a lot of effort in gradually developing it within the current framework, though we have sometimes felt very inadequate.'*

The quote also presents the comprehensive school system in a good light. We will now concentrate on this topic.

The opportunities

When telling about the reform there was also discourse of opportunities, and without that the comprehensive school reform might appear in an unnecessarily gloomy light. Underneath the advertising or accusing rhetoric, teachers also discovered positive aspects, opportunities for change, a new kind of freedom and a new kind of openness and exchange of professional ideas in further education. In the stories the opportunities, difficulties and challenges were told in the same, mixed story and the same teachers used different discourses.

The overall goal of educational policy, i.e. equality in education, was unanimously advocated as an important moral principle: *'The comprehensive school reform was a necessary prerequisite for equality. In the old times, many of the talented children in remote regions had no opportunities for education. Comprehensive school placed all children on the same starting line'*. This was a comment by Maija who had herself acquired teacher education in the midst of major hardships during the post-war period of poverty. Without exception, all teachers advocated the goal of equality. This also reflects the contemporary political ideal of a welfare state. Teachers presented the goal of the reform as 'necessary' or, as above, something that warrants 'absolute' commitment, because 'all children were to be given equal opportunities for education regardless of their parents' place of residence, economic status or education'. The manner of writing reflects the teachers' serious attitude towards this public discourse. no deprecatory comments, no irony, no disapproval.

Despite all their comments on the lack of realism in the public rhetoric, some teachers admitted that the reform ultimately gave them more freedom and encouraged them even to take up topics that had not been discussed before. *'The comprehensive school reform resulted in a liberation, and that made it possible to adopt a different role. We had the new math experiment and these teacher meetings and educational sessions, and I found them positive'*, wrote Inkeri.

One teacher considered the mature years: *'The system of streaming was replaced by the idealistic view that "everybody can learn everything". I disagreed then, and I disagree even more now. In other ways, however, the situation at school was ideal. The group size became smaller. When you have sixteen pupils in a group, you get to know each one of them personally'*. Even this teacher starts by pointing out the lack of realism of the public rhetoric, but then goes on contentedly to comment on the things that made teaching easier. This description highlights the importance of

the close teacher – pupil relations, which became possible in the smaller groups (Thayer-Bacon 1998). Teachers were now better able to respond to the needs of individual pupils. It is possible to read between the lines that there was less stress and more time to concentrate on teaching (cf. Olson et al. 1999).

At the same time when the material resources became better some stories comment on the new substance of the comprehensive school as a victory of commercialism. Laura, a female primary school teacher told: *'Along with the comprehensive school reform, textbooks were naturally also reformed, and that was partly a good thing. ...But, but... very soon it began to seem that textbooks are a good marketing niche for the publishers. I must admit that many the teacher's guides were really good, but was it necessary to publish new ones so often?'* Did the comprehensive school reform also benefit people aiming to profit financially from the school system?

I Could Have an Opinion of My Own About Teaching – The Discourse of the Commitment

When opening the door to the classroom we hear different stories about what is changing and how different it seems from the discourse of the school reform. This discourse we call 'the commitment'. The importance of the personal motivation and the connections to the teacher's identity become obvious. Teachers told about their efforts to develop curricula, teaching methods, and co-operation with the parents.

In this paragraph we will have a look more to what and how teachers told about the 'voice' that motivates and make them involved teachers with the developmental work. In general, the voices were heard from several directions. What is common to all narratives of change, however, that this voice is stimulating, encouraging and calling (cf. Hargreaves 1997). The quote in the title was a comment by Kirsti, a secondary school teacher who was able to attend in-service education in the late 1980s, which was *'notably different from the coercive training at the beginning of comprehensive school'*.

While attending the course, Kirsti was encouraged to think what she personally wanted from teaching, what she expected the pupils to want, and how she could make these two sets of expectations mutually compatible in foreign language instruction. She was presented a *'revolutionary array of new matters to be thought about and applied in class...I really began to think about things and, for the first time, it occurred to me that I could have some opinions about teaching. Up till then I had been like a good girl,*

listening to the instructions and advice from higher up and feeling guilty for not being able to accomplish everything. I had believed that outsiders really know better than the teachers what we should teach and how'.

Kirsti gives a true and serious account of the impact of in-service education on her. Without irony or understatement, she tells about a feeling of empowerment and a new kind of confidence in her own resources. Prior to that, she had considered herself subject to the administration and forced to 'listen like a good girl', because there was no other way. She had lacked faith in her own competence. This lack of courage should be viewed against the background of the public discourse and the moral voice of administration. Teachers were viewed as implementers rather than developers of the reform.

Temporally, the quotation refers to the mature stage of comprehensive school, when many teachers took off time to pursue further studies. In-service education had finally established a better interface with teaching. Teacher – pupil interaction was considered important, and outsiders were sponsoring development projects. Gordon's book about the wise teacher and educational courses based on these guidelines were described by many teachers as having opened their eyes to the importance of teacher – pupil interaction.

Personal change was sometimes also triggered by the media. Laura told about the time before comprehensive school: *"Back in the 1960s, I once read in the newspaper about a study which had indicated that 80 % of 4-year-olds have creative talent. At the age of 8 only 40 % are creatively talented, and at the age of 20 only 3 % are still creative...This news really hit home. I decided: that will not happen in my class. I began to read about creativity. I enrolled on a course. I nurtured creativity at all times, during every lesson, in all things I did. Based on this, I began to alter my own attitude and my way of working with the children. I felt I was growing and renewing mentally, and my work seemed meaningful and rewarding. I worked much harder than previously, but that was not important. I tried to give the children personal experiences and considered it important that everybody should have feelings of success. I built a home for active hands. One day, I hauled the teacher's desk down from the podium. I remember that the school inspector wondered about that. Some time later I had the podium removed altogether and brought in a large carpet, a 'magic carpet'. We gathered on that carpet to read stories. The parents even consented to have their children bring small cushion to school. I am sure the children learnt better. And what was most important: school was fun.*

Laura is telling a story of change, describing her commitment and

willingness to even face other people's astonishment to promote her cause (cf. Lauriala 1997). Having identified the problem, she began to study and make changes. It was a major change to take the teacher's desk down from the podium. Only later did she dare to remove the podium altogether. Laura's story is multi-voiced, including the astonished comments by the inspector and probably also the parents, who 'consented...'

When teachers told stories of change in the classroom, it was evident that this change never coincided with the official school reforms. Many teachers had accomplished changes in their classrooms that are only later introduced by the official discourse as topics for public discussion. The motivation may date back to their own teacher education as it was in Laura's case. *'At one point, there was this public discussion about integrated education. I was confused and desperately tried to see what was new in this issue. Then I realized: they were the same principles of Aukusti Salo that I had learnt at seminar and had been applying ever since. It was a blessed thing they were discussed more widely now and were gaining wider acceptance'.*

This teacher comments on public discussion and points out that the 'new' topic was actually old and familiar to her. While reading the narratives, we came across several similar comments. Gudmundsdottir and Flem (2000) have also noticed the same phenomenon in Norwegian classrooms. Teachers implement changes long before they are 'publicly' advocated. This also put school reforms in a new light and offers a challenge: How could school reforms establish a dialogue where teachers' voices would be really heard or can they ever?

Discussing Discussions of Reforms and Changes

This inquiry addressed reform as a moral voice to which teachers have to respond. Thus, when we analyze school reforms as moral voices and messages into classrooms, we should ask what kind of messages they are. We used as an example the biggest reform of educational policy ever accomplished in Finland and teachers' comments concerning it. We described the modes of telling and demonstrated the diversity and mutual differences in the teacher narratives. We became convinced that the comprehensive school reform was a one-way message to the teachers and the voices of teachers were not heard. The reform used advertising rhetoric supported by media in which teachers were seen as technicians or even as non-professionals who did not understand or knew anything about the

education. This 'forced' teachers to apply different reacting and defensive discourses.

Despite the efforts to change the administrative culture, it seems that the situation has not changed. According to many teachers, the current stage of development of business orientation and the related administrative discourse are taking the school system into a wrong direction and again teachers' voices are silenced. One teacher asks: '*What will happen to the average teacher in an average school?*' The narrator is worried that only the best and most successful individuals are appreciated or even accepted in society. The teacher's argumentation echoes with Volanen (2000) when he points out argues that when there has been a change towards decentralization in the administrative culture and an idea of a service-providing school with alternative options available to pupils, yet the direction of development has been reversed. This is because many supporting systems such as the special instruction, has been decreased or cut off. This has enhanced the role of the parents and hence the direct impacts of differences in social status on education and educational choices.

In the western countries, justice is often equated with the maximization of financial profit, and decisions are made accordingly. For teachers, therefore, reform has mostly meant larger classes, less money for special education, fewer subsidies, etc. The everyday work of teachers, however, is based on a justice where the children's needs are the primary criterion (Thayer-Bacon 1998). Teachers evaluate changes in terms of the effects they have on the interpersonal relations in the classroom, especially between the teachers and children. Often changes are part of teachers' silent practical knowledge, and teachers sometimes underrate them (Walsh et al. 1991). In order to make reforms real changes, it is not enough to pay attention to teachers' knowledge, values and background, but also their hopes, intentions, and wishes for the future must be taken into account including the fact that changes include some improvised elements (Clandinin & Connelly 1998, 155-156). Reforms should, therefore, be approached as moral issues, always in relation to teacher's personal and professional values.

The way of presenting changes in the classroom is the discourse of commitment and differs from the ways of presenting the official school reform. It is the language which present changes connected with the relationships and emotions. The changes in the classrooms were sometimes related to reforms, but they were always filtered through the teacher's own identity and moral horizon (Taylor 1989). These stories were not directly related to the public rhetoric, although occasional references were made to such matters as the 'inspector's astonishment' or the 'parents' consent', the

latter of which seems to imply that the teacher was not even sure of the parents' attitude to change.

Teachers' moral is its own distinctive 'whole', its own language of practice, which does not follow the rules and moral schools (cf.Hansen1998; Johnson 1989). The main emphasis in the school reforms is to produce a dialogue between the languages of administration and teachers. Teachers may also be embarrassed by the fact that reforms seldom address the problems they encounter in their daily work. At the present, there are both national and international signs indicating that teachers' voices are even less audible than before in the discussion of reforms. This may ultimately turn out to be a problem. Although more and more people realize that the keys to change are held by the teachers themselves, it may happen that administration and everyday teaching continue to diverge. The ongoing process of globalization and the furious pursuit of economic profit will probably result in increasingly business-based school administration. Who has the strength to go on speaking for ever if nobody listens? Who is taking teachers seriously? This is also a challenge to us as researchers.

Notes

1 From 2001 onwards, municipalities will be obliged to provide pre-school education for all children aged 6. The children, however, have no obligation to attend.

2 The teachers adopted some cultural ways of presenting their own voices about the school reform which then discussed with the voices of public rhetoric.

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THE MULTIVOICEDNESS OF CLASSROOMS

BAKHTIN AND NARRATIVES OF TEACHING

Classrooms are places where many voices meet. In seeking to understand the complexity of classrooms, and the multifaceted nature of teachers' knowledge of their work, the themes of voice and dialogue have much to offer. Bakhtin's currently popular work on dialogue (1981; Holquist 1990) is difficult, but this should not discourage us from exploring the usefulness of his ideas for understanding practitioner knowledge. In discussing the methodology of the human sciences, he says:

> The exact sciences constitute a monologic form of knowledge: the intellect contemplates a thing and expounds upon it... Any object of knowledge (including man) can be perceived and cognized as a thing. But a subject as such cannot be perceived and studied as a thing, for as a subject it cannot, while remaining a subject, become voiceless, and, consequently, cognition of it can only be dialogic. (1986 , 161)

In this chapter we will consider the contribution of Bakhtin's ideas to our understanding of classroom practice and narratives of teaching. We will begin by discussing some of the concepts and ideas drawn from Bakhtin's work that we find useful in looking at classrooms and listening to teachers. We will then provide two examples of how Bakhtin's work has illuminated our understanding, first of an interaction between a Norwegian teacher and a pupil, and second of the life stories of two Israeli teachers.

Voice and dialogue in Bakhtin

Bakhtin's (1981) conception of knowledge as dialogical, and his notion of voice are revolutionary in social science research. Voice implies that in order to appreciate the individual intra-psychological processes, it is necessary to understand the semiotic signals employed to mediate these activities. The use of the term itself serves as a reminder that even intra-psychological processes are considered communicative by nature. When we speak, we also assume that our voice is addressing somebody – that we are speaking with somebody. Furthermore, in order to understand mental or intra-psychological functions, a form of genetic or developmental analysis is required. In spite of Vygotsky's focus on this issue, he was criticised for not including the social and historical dimension in his studies of the development of individual consciousness or intra-psychological functions (Wertsch 1991). Bakhtin's notions of dialogue, utterance and addressee are important analytical tools to understand voice.

Bakhtin conceives of dialogue from a very wide perspective. To him, almost all human activity is dialogic in its nature. Humans have internal dialogues with themselves, and conduct dialogues with the world around them. Closely associated with dialogue is the concept of utterance. Bakhtin associates utterance with the dialogue between the individual and the social context. The concept of utterance has to be understood broadly. An utterance may be spoken or written. It may also be thought, as Bakhtin assumes that a thought is dialogic in nature. What Vygotsky calls internal speech, is for Bakhtin an internal dialogue. An utterance requires a person to talk to, an addressee. This may be a person in any situation, it may be a group, a superior, an employee, an enemy, a stranger, a member of the family etc. The addressee may also be oneself on the intramental plane. Finally, the utterance requires a voice. An utterance may only exist if produced by a voice.

In keeping with the strong emphasis on dialogue, a voice may never exist in isolation. Voice never exists in a vacuum, it is never neutral. In addition to the voice that speaks the utterance, it is also important that the utterance should be directed at somebody. An individual always exists in relation to others. Living involves an endless dialogue with others. In this way Bakhtin's focus is on voices which engage each other, and which together create meaning and understanding. Meaning and understanding are not elements that can be transferred from one person to another, quite to the contrary they are created when voices engage in dialogues with each other. Thus an utterance is always a link in a chain of other utterances (Bakhtin 1986, 84; 99). The voice producing the utterance relates to, or reflects the person or persons the utterance is directed at. When a mother speaks to her two-year old, she uses

a different voice than when speaking to her colleagues at school. When a teacher speaks to her second-grade students, she has a different voice than when she speaks to her principal. Therefore she reflects the voice of the addressee in addition to having her own voice. Thus an utterance always includes at least two voices.

A typical Bakhtinian question is: Who is doing the talking? It is clear that an utterance reflects not only the voice of the person talking, it also reflects the voice of the person the utterance is directed at, the voice of the addressee. Furthermore, the voice also reflects other voices gained from previous life experience, from our history and our culture. Hence, the voice producing an utterance comprises the voices of many others, the intentions of others, their expectations and attitudes. In addition to the voices of all the others, the person producing the utterance also retains his/her voice. In this way the words we speak do not only belong to ourselves, but also to others. We only temporarily inhabit the words.

Another important aspect of Bakhtin's work relates to his notions of polyphony, chronotope and carnival. Coulter (1999) drew on these ideas to develop and critique a dialogic research project around the policy of grade retention. He demonstrates the importance of providing a hearing for many voices (polyphony), "juxtaposed and not blended", in order to achieve "no final, complete truth, but unfinalizable, partial truths generated from the interaction among characters."(1999, 7) The notion of chronotope speaks to the importance of time, place and experience: dialogue will be possible only if the voices added reflect authentic individual experience. Finally, 'carnival' speaks to the importance of giving a hearing to alternate voices, to the non-hegemonic, to the unconventional or repressed which reflect not just official views but the truths of ordinary people.

Voice and dialogue in school practice

Almost all researchers and scholars who study school practice refer to voice as the informant's voice. Some, such as Hargreaves (1996), treat voice almost as if it is fully formed, laying around in "contexts", waiting to be turned on by a tape recorder. The notion of "voice" that we are offering holds, that voice is intimately interconnected with culture, meaning and mediated activity as is suggested by the empirical work of Acker (1997), Alton-Lee (1993, 1997) Clandinin (1988), Clandinin and Connelly (1990), Elbaz (1983), Feuerverger (1997), Fox (1996), Grant (1995), Hoel (1994, 1997), Hollingsworth (1992), Kyratzis and Green (1997) and Richert (1992). Voice

is neither turned on nor created; rather, voices are claimed in the process of collaborative narrative inquiry. Furthermore, there is no singular voice as any claimed voice is a heteroglossia of culturally situated voices that ventriloquate through the singular voice that is claimed by an individual. Heteroglossia refers to the stratification of language not only into linguistic dialects, but also into 'socio-ideological'-languages such as those belonging to social groups, professions, or generations (Bahktin 1981, 271–2).

In a profession rich in traditions stretching as far back in history as school practice does, there are many voices to be claimed and developed into one's own through a process of collaboration or interaction with an Other, or artifacts of practice – the artifacts being a portfolio, developing practical arguments and the various forms of research texts that involve the use of the language of practice. The process of claiming voice is basically an interaction between an individual's beliefs and experiences (intra-mental plane) and external voices of practice as manifested in the Other and the artifacts of practice (inter-mental plane). The individual's meaning comes into contact with external voices of practice and through structured interaction between these two, the teacher's meaning changes as in Fox' (1996), Grant's (1995) and Richert's (1992) work on portfolio, where the concept of the portfolio becomes a site where a heteroglossia of voices are sounded and the individuals who are compiling their own portfolio cannot escape hearing these voices and are compelled to claim several of them as their own. The implication is that the individual teacher's meaning and understanding is always multi-voiced.

With this multivoicedness comes the invisible baggage of our culture's ideologies and ethical issues relating to unequal power relationships. When we as narrative researchers put our ideas into circulation among our colleagues through our narratives, we may at times be doing the narrative project and school practice more harm than good. Narratives, as McEwan (1997) observes, are not always emancipatory, they can also be coercive. Sometimes we, through our narratives of practice, may end up reproducing the gendered, hierarchical and patriarchal structure of our culture. Our concern with voice should also be extended to a re-definition of subjectivity, from a unitary subjectivity in which individuals are assumed to be unique, fixed, individual and coherent, to a non-unitary subjectivity where language, ethical issues, relationships, social interactions, pivotal experiences and development are central (Bloom 1996). In practice it leads to honesty in admitting failures and criticizing one's own subjectivity. The very act of narrating a non-unitary self permits greater self-knowledge that is not just emancipatory but can also lead to improvements in practice.

Our culture promotes unitary subjectivity, especially through the meaning making tools it provides us with, the narratives. Unitary subjectivity is a myth, claims Bloom, promoted by the masculine domination in our culture. As a result, women's subjectivity is "continually fragmenting from daily experiences from living with the pervasive hierarchical, patriarchal structuring of sexual differences through which women learn to internalise negative and conflicting ideas about what it means to live as a woman" (Bloom 1996, 178). The challenge for us researchers, is to improve at interpreting non-unitary subjectivities in the self representations we are faced with in our work with our informants and to be on the alert as to how non-unitary subjectivity is produced and re-produced in our own narratives of practice. Our challenge is to turn the non-unitary self representations of our informants into something that resembles emancipatory narratives of practice (McEwan 1997). A self narrative becomes emancipatory when it gives up "the myth of a unified subjectivity" and allows for "the subjectivity and the validation of conflict as a source through which women become strong and learn to speak their own experiences" (Bloom 1996, 192).

The thrust of a non-unitary self representation is strong in the stories of school practice that our informants tell us and the stories we tell of their practice. It works mainly through the narrative structures furnished by culture and appropriated by our informants in their presentation of self and their practice and us, in our narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin 2000; Munro 1998). The narrative scripts to be appropriated are many: "the conquering hero"; we know them from many novels and from Hollywood B-movies, "the happy ever after"; we know them from, among others, many commercials - 'eat/buy this and you will be happy,' the stoic, never changing characters that pass through the silver screen seemingly unaffected by any event and without a normal existential crisis. Bloom calls these "master narratives of male success." When we (informants and researchers) appropriate these narrative scripts, we are probably unconsciously responding to generic expectations of literary narratives and thereby further silencing an already silenced group, in addition to reproducing the gendered, hierarchical and patriarchal structure of our culture. One wants to hear the story of an uncomplicated and good teacher, of a teacher who is able to gain control over all the children in his class and the teacher who gets all the children in her class to deliver book reports with everybody living happily ever after.

The stories by Elbaz (1983), Vasquez-Levy (1992) and Morgan (1992), however, break away from the narrative script provided by culture in various ways: Elbaz's informant is frustrated; Vasquez-Levy is faced with the complex issue of what constitutes change and progress in practice; Morgan finds many challenges in getting all the children to deliver book reports and at the end of

her narrative, she has not yet achieved that part of her project. She has, however, gained a valuable understanding of the dilemmas in the children's life situations. These are not the "conquering-hero" or "happy-ever-after" narratives or the stoic, never changing characters. Instead, we see in these narratives complex challenges and dilemmas that require compromises and where there are no easy solutions on the horizon (Berlak & Berlak 1987). They describe nonunitary subjectivities: the teacher's growth, both professional and personal. We see people with feelings, and they are made of flesh and blood. Moreover, their honesty gives us insight into their reflections over their small victories as well as their defeats — their narratives bring us up close to their thoughts and practice (Carter 1993, 1995, Zellermayer 1997).

Teacher-student interaction through a Bakhtinian lens

The interaction presented here is taken from the start of a teaching campaign on a special topic - good manners. The campaign is based on the curriculum and the school activity plan pertaining to the learning of responsibility. This is not a new topic area – it has been worked on by the school previously. The interaction is brief, only one minute and thirty seconds long, yet it is not unique for this particular classroom. All the children are sitting in a semi-circle in front of the blackboard, facing the teacher, Wigdis; they have been sitting in the class circle for approximately ten minutes when the sequence described below occurs. Wigdis's questions have encouraged the children to offer suggestions for class rules. These suggestions have been discussed, to be written on the board if everybody agrees. Wigdis has already written "Don't point fingers" and "Don't say bad words". As she is writing "No calling names" on the board with her back turned to the children, the dialogue between Tom and her commences.

(1) Tom: "It's bad to call those who come from other countries niggers" (Addresses himself to Wigdis, looking at her.)

(2) Wigdis: (Seated in her chair. She is holding the chalk eraser, is turned toward Tom, looks at him with interest, queries:) " So is there anybody who does this?"

(3) Tom: (Seated with his feet on the chair, tucked inside his sweater. He looks at her and says,) "I used to before, but now I've quit."

(4) Wigdis: (Still turned toward Tom. She leans forward and says in a surprised and questioning tone,) "Have you stopped? As easy as that (snaps her fingers) and then it's over?"

(5) Tom: (Smiles a little and answers,) "No."

(6) Wigdis: (Leans her head to one side and asks in an interested way,) "What made you stop?"

(7) Tom: "... (unclear) ... thinking more about what we did."

(8) Wigdis: Couldn't you, yes, we think perhaps many people need help to quit." (Turning her chair while saying this, looks at everybody in the circle, points to the children. Then she looks at Tom again, nods to him and says,) "And all you did was think about what you did, and then ..."

(9) Tom: (Garbled, noise in the teaching area. Says that he called a girl this.)

(10) Wigdis: (Looks at Tom intently and asks,) "What did you call her?"

(11) Tom: "I called her a nigger."

(12) Wigdis: (Leans forward toward Tom and asks,) "Then you were also unhappy about this?"

(13) Tom: (Nods confirmation to Wigdis)

(14) Wigdis: (Looks intensely at Tom, asks anxiously,) "Yes, did you tell her afterwards, then? Did you tell her you were sorry?"

(15) Tom: (Laughs and says,) "No, we didn't dare."

(16) Wigdis: (Inclines her head towards him. She looks serious and asks,) "Do you think it would've been good for her to hear that you really didn't mean it?"

(17) Tom: (Unclear ... says something about what she had done to his sister.)

(18) Wigdis: "But no matter what she'd done, should you have called her a nigger?"
(19) Tom: "No (pause), that's why we don't call her nigger anymore."

(20) Wigdis: (Appears surprised, says,) "You don't?. How clever you are." (Tone

of voice makes it a statement). "You started thinking about what you did. Was it that simple? Just to think it over and then you really disagree when you hear it and then you stop?"

(21) Tom: "Yes."

According to Bakhtin any utterance is a link in a chain of utterances. This makes the one utterance dependent on the previous utterance. Nevertheless, to make the interpretation easier to follow we will first examine the dialogue from the boy's perspective, followed by the teacher's perspective.

From the boy's perspective: Tom's first utterance occurs in a context, it is a link in a chain of other utterances. It fits well in the preceding utterances which have led to the teacher putting "no calling names" on the board. By means of his first utterance, "It's bad to call those who come from other countries niggers" (1), Tom is mediating intra-psychological processes. Different terms may be used about what the utterance mediates: it concerns knowledge, realisation, an insight or an accepted attitude in our culture. As the dialogue continues, it emerges that Tom did not always have this knowledge, perception, insight, and attitude. Thus the dialogue also conveys a story of internalisation. Tom has previously called a girl a nigger, now he does not do that anymore (3). What has happened, why does he not do it? Tom himself has no insight into this issue, but he nonetheless knows enough to state that it was not as easy as just snapping his fingers (4, 5). Instead, he refers to his own reflection; he started considering what he had said (7). Through considering it, he resolved not to say nigger any more. Language has become an instrument for thought, reflection and planning.

Tom often has problems in social situations at school, in his spare time and at home. When he tells why he called the girl a nigger (17), it is possible to speculate whether that habit has been internalised. If the teacher had explored this further, it would have become more apparent. The teacher's response (18) to Tom's utterance does not open for him to continue in his reflections here, and we do not learn whether the insight has been internalised. Nevertheless, it may be assumed that it is a step in the direction of internalised attitude.

Vygotsky asserts that all development occurs on two planes, first in inter-psychological processes, in social negotiation with others, thereafter on the child's intra-psychological plane, in the child's consciousness. Tom has encountered the attitude that it is very bad to say racist things when interacting with others, whether at home, at school, with friends, when watching television and so on. In this way the echo of a number of voices is heard in Tom's utterances. In addition to the fact that his utterance reflects the voice of the

teacher, Tom's first utterance occurs while she is writing "no calling names" on the board, so two other voices also emerge clearly. These are the voices of the girl who was called a "nigger" (11) and the voice of Tom's sister (17). Tom here shows that he is decentralising. He views the situation from the perspective of the insulted girl, who must be unhappy when she hears such talk, and he sees the situation from the perspective of his sister, who is sad because the girl has done something to her.

Besides mediating his knowledge and attitudes, Tom's utterances also mediate confidence. Tom feels safe and confident in the situation he is in. He dares to admit something about himself to the teacher and the entire class. It is not just any admission he makes, he talks about something he has done and which he knows is not socially acceptable. In many contexts this may be a huge chance to take, there is the risk of being shunned, denounced and rejected. This does not happen in this context. Perhaps after five months at school Tom has gained the experience that he is in an environment that listens to him? This question leads to an examination of the role of the teacher in the interaction.

From Wigdis' perspective. Developing from the class discussion Wigdis and her students have agreed that she will put "no calling names" on the board. This signals the conclusion of the discussion which has occurred. This is when Tom delivers his utterance leading to the dialogue which has been described. Continuing, Wigdis could have opted for expressing agreement with Tom's utterance that 'It's bad to call those who come from other countries "niggers"' (1), thus putting a stop to any further dialogue. She does not do this. Wigdis often comes into situations where she talks to individual children. She therefore believes it is important to listen to children when there is something they want to say. In addition to agreeing with Tom's utterance, she also queries, "So is there anybody who does this?" (2). Thus she opens for the inter-psychological process which follows. Questions of this type (2) propel the conversation onwards. She also asks, "What made you stop?" (6). Wigdis is focused on Tom, she is listening and intensely concentrated on him. Through her question she gets Tom to say more, thus entering into his intra-psychological processes. Wigdis is very concerned with letting children speak. There are a number of reasons for this, not the least being that she thinks it is important that they learn to use the language for communication purposes.

Moreover, she causes Tom to consider his own emotions. She asks, "Then you were also unhappy about this?" (12). This might be considered a leading question. If she instead had asked Tom what he felt or thought, she might have got him to put words to his own emotions. The question may, however, be taken as an indication that the teacher puts herself in the boy's place,

that she understands and confirms his emotions, that she, in other words, is felt to be supportive in the situation. At any rate Tom nods confirmation to the question of whether he was sad (13).

Wigdis also attempts to make him place himself in the situation of others, to adopt the perspective of others through the question, "Do you think it would've been good for her to hear that you didn't really mean it?" (16). This question could also have been phrased differently to make Tom put into words what the girl had felt. For example, she could have asked Tom what he believed the girl would have felt or experienced if he had told her he was sorry for what he said to her. Nonetheless, Wigdis's utterance causes Tom to use language for further reflection. He does not, however, reflect about the girl's emotions, he wishes to explain to the teacher why he called the girl a "nigger" (17). Wigdis emphasises having the children use language to state what they think and believe. This is not something that simply develops on its own, it must be trained.

Both verbally and non-verbally Wigdis shows support and acceptance in this situation. The exception is when Wigdis responds to Tom's attempt to explain why he called the girl what he did (17). Here she replies, "But no matter what she had done, should you have called her a nigger?" (18). Another type of response might have made Tom reflect further. Responses of an evaluating or judging nature are not as good for facilitating further interaction. Nevertheless, Wigdis also tells Tom that he is clever (20), she offers him positive feedback because of his development here. Wigdis feels it is important to give her students positive feedback.

Wigdis's strong supportive attitude is shown by the fact that she looks at Tom, leans in his direction, changes her intonation and facial expressions depending on Tom's utterances. She is receptive to what Tom says, her responses incorporate Tom's voice. In addition to reflecting the voice of our culture, the voice of the curriculum, the voice of the school activity plan, Wigdis's voice also reflects the voice of the girl who was called "nigger" (16, 18). By entering the inter-psychological process that is described here, the teacher gets to know the boy better. The boy mediates what he is thinking and feeling, and thus the teacher learns about his knowledge and attitudes. She enables him to use language as a tool, not only for communication, but also as a tool for reflection and awareness of one's own thoughts, actions and emotions. In turn this may cause Tom to stop, reflect and plan his own actions the next time he encounters situations where he feels provoked.

Two Israeli teachers who participated in life-story interviews enable us to illustrate the idea of multivoicedness as it comes to expression in these teachers' accounts of their work. Both teachers were invited to participate in the research because of their involvement in various kinds of innovative work in their schools (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2000). Dalia is a high-school science teacher, in her early 40's; she is religiously observant, and teaches in a school for girls within the Orthodox Jewish school sector. Yael is an elementary school teacher in her 30's; she teaches in a kibbutz school, where she is involved in setting up a program for gender equality.

In listening to the stories told by Dalia and Yael, it became apparent that both of the stories are non-linear, and were not told chronologically: Both of them went back and forth in the interviews, sometimes sketching the main lines of the story, sometimes filling in details. Yael started from her early life, describing the different phases quickly, and then went back to reminisce and elaborate on many important events from childhood in the middle of telling about her current work. Dalia began her story by talking about the meaning of career, and then she also returned to fill in different details in somewhat random order. The form in which they tell their stories seems to demonstrate that both Dalia and Yael are always and necessarily 'in the middle of things'. The stories are complex, circling around, and essentially both stories are dialogical, as Dalia and Yael are always engaged in working things out, in their own minds and in conversation with others.

These dialogical processes take place in different contexts and settings. We will look at the multivoicedness of these teachers' dialogues with pupils and colleagues, in the context of work on curriculum and subject matter, in the dialogue between home and family, and in their own reflections, which might be considered 'conversations with themselves'. Finally, we will consider the nature of the different social and cultural voices that are ventriloquated through their stories.

Dialogues with pupils and colleagues. Yael tells how she heard about a project on gender equality run by the Ministry of Education and the Women's Lobby:

> I said O.K., we will join that... I went ahead to a meeting, and when I had to introduce myself, I told them who I was and said "I'm going to force you to do this project in our school." That's how I introduced myself, the height of nerve ('hutzpah'), I think, and they were in shock, but the fact is, things started rolling.

Yael's confident engagement in dialogue with colleagues, parents, and others in her community is reflected in many places. Regarding a decision not to involve parents more in the project, for fear of rocking the boat, Yael comments: "I think our community is ready for this, and even if two or three parents complained, there would have been a debate and that is legitimate, it's meaningful."

Dalia tells how she was dissatisfied with the educational approach of the first school where she taught, and after a while

> I asked the principal to be a homeroom teacher ("mechanechet" - educator), and I was given one of the classes, don't ask what I did with them... I organized weekends ... I had no cooperation from anyone, no support, no help, just a lot of interference... I put a lot of energy into it, but I felt that it had no chance of having an impact in the long run, because I was slowly becoming burnt out. I felt that 90% of my energy was going to deal with all the hurdles that were being put in my way. Just to organize a bus for a trip was a nightmare!

Then Dalia was offered a position at a religious girls' school and given a mandate to set up the physics department. She met with the local inspector, who told her the school had an impressive educational program, but

> He told me "you have no chance of setting up a physics trend there, the principal is dreaming - this is a religious school for girls, and girls have no interest in this subject." And you know what? That is just the sort of thing that I take as a challenge. He said that, and I said to myself, I'll show him!

Dalia also describes lengthy discussions both at home, and in school about value conflicts that arise particularly around religious and social issues; she may be drawing implicitly on a religious tradition of debate and discussion that is grounded in Talmudic study and argumentation. For Yael the background tradition may be that of the socialist kibbutz movement with its patterns of discussion whereby difficulties are examined and problems solved. Whatever the origins of these styles of debate, it seems that both women are deeply engaged in discussion and argument with colleagues. They see debate and conflict as valuable and legitimate, and they don't want everyone to simply do as they say. In fact, working against an opposing point of view may be energizing for them.

Curricular dialogues. Enacting a curriculum that is relevant to their pupils is something that is completely self-evident for both teachers, and for both of them it comes about through dialogue with pupils. Dalia says "often I had discussions with the students during physics classes, about all

kinds of topics, about things that were happening in the country, about motivation to serve in the army... the students are so thirsty." And Yael comments, "anything that gets the children's attention, I easily go in that direction - if a child comes with something from the news, something about values, that belongs to everyday living, or if there's a problem in class, it attracts me much more than teaching another unit in arithmetic."

Dalia believes that her school must provide a religious and educational alternative to the secular lifestyle many of the students are exposed to outside of school hours. Recently, she was instrumental in organizing a party for Purim (a holiday celebrated by dressing in costumes and much merrymaking) which included Karaoke music and performing by the girls; the event was criticized by those with more conservative views of religion, and Dalia was one of those who argued for the necessity of such activities in order to meet students halfway. She engaged in serious soul-searching because it was not her intention to compromise her religious principles.

Yael's work in the Gender Equality program provides many examples of dialogues around curricular issues, which illustrate how different voices come to expression and mediate a variety of changes in the school's programs.

For example, the idea of 'Mothers' Day' always bothered me, and I wouldn't do it in my class, I had 'Family Day' and I remember that people were very angry with me because I was the only one who refused to invite the mothers... today no one would even think of celebrating only 'Mothers' day', there's been a turn-around.

Among the many changes taking place in the school, Yael mentions discussions during Bible lessons:

> This year they taught the Creation differently than every other year, about the creation of woman. They taught about two stories of creation... parents called me and asked to hear the story, so they would be able to help the kids.

as well as in literature, where the roles of men and women and many other topics started to come up:

A teacher taught a poem about a boy who sits backwards on his chair, and she asked why it's about a boy...and it turned out the girls also sit that way...there was a discussion...these are things that would never have come up before.

Dialogue between home and family. Both teachers see their lives as 'all of a piece', with work and private life interrelated all the time. Dalia tells of the major change that resulted from her daughter's studying in her school. Her daughter became very involved in the spiritual aspects of the school's

message, and Dalia had many ongoing conversations with her daughter and with a former student; as a result the whole family began to focus more on spiritual and religious matters. The increased religious observance in her personal life is in interesting contrast to her bold championing of the Karaoke celebration for Purim, which raised objections from religious conservatives among the school staff. And it may be because she is known to be strict about religion in her personal life that her more radical ideas about educational practice are taken seriously.

Yael also constantly interweaves stories of her family with her account of her career. Not having children of her own, Yael often looks at the school through the experience of her niece and nephew who are outsiders attending a kibbutz school. She is also very aware of and sensitive to the difficulty and even threat posed by the equality program to teachers, touching what goes on in their homes and families:

> For some people it's threatening...maybe it threatens what goes on in the home...it's threatening to see that I am making mistakes, it's scary...all of a sudden you work on yourself, you check things...how am I raising my children with respect to this? It's very personal...the fact that the women (teachers) know one another, afterwards they go home and live together on the kibbutz and sometimes one chairs a committee that deals with the other one's child or husband...so they're very sensitive to that.

Conversations with oneself. Both teachers engage in reflection about their own work, and the best use of their energies. Dalia thinks about withdrawing from the responsibility of being a homeroom teacher, because it is the most difficult job at times, and yet she feels that this is where the authentic educational work can be done.

> Do you understand the dualism I feel? All my other responsibilities are more administrative, organizational... these things depend only on you, on your ability to carry things out, your ideas, so if you are good, you succeed. And with the pupils, it's dependent on the other, and there are many girls I haven't been able to get close to...with some of them, I feel that my messages, and the things I say, don't speak to them at all. I speak a different language. I have a very hard time with this. And it's painful, because I think the truth of this work ultimately is not in knowing how to organize parties, it's in the pupil.

At the time of the interview, Yael was thinking about how to continue the project into its second year, during which the focus would be on bringing about further changes in classrooms. She saw her role as one of supporting

and pushing, being someone to whom the other teachers could come with questions and concerns. She was also aware that she "will not be a teacher forever...it seems to me too difficult, and one's patience wears thin after a while, you have to be so patient." In fact as someone who is very involved in many spheres of social and political activity, she has "very attractive offers, the options are more appealing than teaching, I admit;" a year or so after the interviews Yael began working as a teacher-advisor for the Gender Equality program.

Different social and cultural voices. Both teachers are intelligent and thoughtful women who give expression to high ideals and think seriously about education: they speak as reformers with a vision of what their schools could become. And yet, they also occasionally express more negative views of the system and even of kids, views which one encounters in every school. For example, when Dalia described her early experience of teaching physics in vocational classes, she expressed some of the common stereotypes about low-achieving students - they are not motivated, and no one really wants to teach them:

> They gave me one good class - 9th grade...in that class I was very successful, so they let me continue with them, and gradually, over the years I came to teach only the good classes. No one wants to teach the other classes, by the way...it's very difficult, basically the children's main purpose is to leave school with a certificate that they spent 12 years in school...they have no motivation, the subject doesn't interest them, they will go to work in a garage, or do other (unskilled) jobs.

This comment does not reflect Dalia's usual position, but she is able to give voice to this aspect of reality from the point of view of the new teacher saddled with a full load of difficult classes. Similarly, in Yael's portrayal of her first year, she also tells about the pupils from the point of view and in the voice of a harassed teacher for whom the children represent only problems. While the latter voices, voices usually associated with teacher resistance and complaint, are present, they appear only occasionally and don't take over. Perhaps their awareness of these voices gives Dalia and Yael more credibility with their colleagues - they can speak the same language, and despite their high ideals they are not 'holier than thou'.

Awareness of different cultural voices is also expressed clearly by Dalia, who was very influenced by a recent discussion with the graduating class, in which the girls pointed out that the school reflects a European, Ashkenazi tradition, which is alienating for the girls from Sephardic backgrounds. She sees this as a serious weakness of the school. She is also aware that for

some of her pupils, she 'speaks a different language' than they do, and her message (particularly concerning religion) does not register with them. Dalia expresses a diversity of voices on the subject of religion too: in her personal life she is searching for the right way, and has become more observant over time, but in the school context she usually searches for relevance, for ways of adapting behaviour to situation within the letter and spirit of religious law. Thus she has conflicts with colleagues whose first concern seems to be that the religious laws should not only be upheld but also seen to be upheld. Dalia often argues against this position but acknowledges that both kinds of concern are important.

Yael also expresses different voices on the issue of gender. She tells about her own development from the position where she thought that "one should choose on the basis of ability and not male/female", to the understanding that if women were not supported in their political and other aspirations they would not be represented.

> I noticed the women were not there, in politics. I had a friend who ran for a position with the Youth Wing of the party, and it really bothered me when people asked her, How can you do it when you have a baby daughter? Running against her was a man who also had a baby, and no one even raised the question. That was astounding to me.

Following this realization Yael became active in the Women's Lobby and slowly became more involved in working for equality of opportunity for women. "I saw that on the Kibbutz women don't get work places that they should get, or positions, and women who want to be on Boards of Directors are sent to a special course, that men aren't required to take." As her understanding grew Yael came to see equality as a broader issue:

> It's more correct to talk about equality of opportunity... in the State of Israel, in the whole world, everyone should have an equal chance to develop and get to wherever they want... you can't say, I want equality between the sexes but not between races, or between Ashkenazim and Sephardim, or Arabs and Jews.

Yael hints that she is critical of some recent changes in the kibbutz movement, yet she can also be nostalgic and use the relatively uncritical language of the 'old days' when the kibbutz member to be admired was a strong, friendly and helpful male who would always organize whatever people needed.

It is apparent that both Yael and Dalia are deeply involved in a philosophy or world view - Orthodox Judaism for Dalia, socialist and kibbutz ideology for Yael - which grounds and organizes all their thinking. Both of them,

partly as a result of their philosophies and partly through personal preference and temperament, work incredibly hard and like to be involved, not watching from the sidelines. Both are willing to go out on a limb, and to do things with which others may not agree. They do so because they believe in their own ideas and want to influence others. The fact that each of them has a very clear and compelling set of beliefs to guide her educational work also makes them stand out in comparison to the majority of teachers who find themselves torn between the conflicting alternatives that characterize postmodern times. Even in the kibbutz and the religious school systems, few teachers are as single-minded and clear in their views as are Dalia and Yael.

A conception that may help to make sense of this is Bakhtin's distinction between authoritative discourses and internally persuasive discourses, which Bloom sees as "an enabling heuristic for making sense of successes and failures at 'breaking out' of 'old behaviors'." (Bloom 1998, 25) Authoritative discourse "demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally...its authority was already acknowledged in the past." (Bakhtin, 1981, 342) Internally persuasive discourse, however, "is denied all privilege, backed up by no authority at all, and is frequently not even acknowledged in society" (342) and it "is of decisive significance in the evolution of an individual consciousness" as the individual engages in a process of "distinguishing between one's own and another's discourse, between one's own and another's thought". Internally persuasive discourse is tightly interwoven with "one's own word", even though, in the dialogical understanding of language this discourse is always half ours and half someone else's. (345)

This distinction provides an interesting insight into the stories of both Dalia and Yael, each of whom lives and works within the confines of an authoritative discourse, yet it is a discourse which is also highly internally persuasive for them. Thus they share in the power and confidence that comes from accepting the dictates of an authoritative discourse (Orthodox Judaism for Dalia, socialist kibbutz ideology for Yael). However, each of them engages in debate with received knowledge, and they sometimes have the personal insight and energy that seems to come from challenging the authoritative discourse. This unusual situation is itself subject to historical and practical contingencies. In Yael's case the kibbutz movement is formally committed to equality, but support is lukewarm: the kibbutz is currently much more preoccupied with economic issues as the rhetoric of individuality and the global market challenges traditional kibbutz arrangements. Yael is aware that in the future she could find herself in quite different circumstances, even leaving the kibbutz. For Dalia too, things could change if her school were to be more influenced by other discourses within religious Judaism, whether a

more strict formalistic approach or a more mystical and fundamentalist trend; and she is keenly aware that her ability to speak to some of the students is limited by her language.

Ethical issues

Concerns about ethical issues in interpretative research craftsmanship have been constant companions of researchers for a long time, as long as there have been people who call themselves interpretative researchers or ethnographers (Gudmundsdottir in press). The pioneers in ethnography often worked with isolated illiterate non-western cultures. The texts researchers wrote about their fieldwork had no influence whatsoever on the informants' subsequent careers or their lives. Moreover, the researchers were strangers who always departed as soon as their fieldwork was concluded. The ethical issues inherent in this kind of situation were simple. Disguising the tribe and assigning pseudonyms to key informants were the rule. If there were any unsolved ethical dilemmas at the end of the fieldwork they were solved by default when the researcher left. Other possible ethical dilemmas were controlled rather than solved through journal writing. Like the ethnographers of the past, we who conduct narrative research on school practice knock on the doors of the people we want to study and obtain their permission to be a part of their lives for a limited period of time. But that is where the similarity ends. Our informants can read our studies and they may not like what they read. They have a career they care about, their time is precious and there are invisible unequal power relationships in all research involving high-status academics and lower-status teachers, male and female (Carter 1993). In Bakhtin's terms, we too are always engaged in a dialogue with our research informants or participants.

In those cases where researchers are fluent in the language of practice, the dialogue may have unique qualities. It is in these contexts that teachers (as informants) tend to be more personal than they otherwise would have been. Thus narrative research on school practice comes to be essentially a moral enterprise rather than a technical one where researchers and informants see themselves as moral agents in search of a better practice (Elbaz 1997). This calls for a re-definition of the ethical and moral dimension of research on practice. It has been suggested that moral reasoning is dialogical; a dialogue between justice and care, with each notion representing distinct discourse practices (Day and Trappan 1996). The "justice" voice speaks the language of fairness and equality. Ventriloquating through this

voice are many of the great moral philosophers since ancient times. Then, there is another voice, the voice speaking the language of "caring". Its vocabulary captures interpersonal relationships, feelings, attitudes and flexibility (Noddings 1991; Trappan 1991; 1992). Thus, solutions to practical ethical dilemmas are never absolute and cast in stone. Instead solutions can be claimed through a structured dialogical process between the two distinct voices.

Our use of a Bakhtinian perspective may indirectly provide an additional safeguard on the ethical quality of our work. Although we listen carefully and report as faithfully as possible the words of particular individuals, our interest in multivoicedness means that we pay attention to many different voices and to the varied social, cultural and historical contexts from which those voices are uttered. We do not seek to reduce the individual to a single 'authentic' voice, nor to any particular combination of voices. Nor do we claim to know the ultimate 'origin' of any particular voice. Thus the individual teacher or pupil, with her unique, changing and complex storied identity, always stands a little way outside of our storied accounts and retains her integrity.

Conclusion

We, as narrative researchers on school practice, do not intend nor want to be mere messengers, writing down the words and actions of someone else. Our accounts above of Wigdis and Tom, of Dalia and Yael, are the results of multiple overlapping dialogues – between the teacher and her students, among colleagues, between teacher and parents, among the pupils themselves, among teachers and researchers, and with the philosophical and research literature. In the dialogue between Wigdis and Tom we saw the possibility of a conversation that examines ways of speaking and their moral implications, that probes stereotypes and encourages children to put themselves in the place of the other, without judgment or moralizing. In the life stories of Dalia and Yael we saw the possibility of teachers listening to their own multiple voices, becoming aware of different social, historical and cultural influences on their speaking and their work. These are their stories, but they are also the result of a dialogue between the two authors, foregrounding our own understanding of the characters, and bringing forward voices that we believe are important to listen to. The Bakhtinian perspective enabled us to hear these voices and provided us with tools for probing them to see how they work in dialogue.

We may not be able to dismantle our culture's patriarchy, but in the telling of messy, multivoiced stories such as these, we have an opportunity to rid interpretative research of its narrative coercion. We can only say that our informants have claimed a voice of their own through which the language of practice ventriloquates, a voice that does not reproduce the gendered, hierarchical and patriarchal structure of our culture, when we, as researchers, have accepted nonunitary subjectivity as a strength rather than as a weakness and as an alternative discourse in all branches of interpretative research. Otherwise teachers (male and female) will never have the opportunity to see themselves "outside of masculinist ideologies" and will never gain strength from exploring their own nonunitary subjectivities (Bloom 1996, page 193). In this respect, it seems to us that if the stories of Wigdis and Tom, Dalia and Yael are useful to our understanding of classroom practice and teaching, it is because they are not closed or final, but genuine, messy stories embedded in experience, which can help to turn upside down some received ideas about schooling and teaching practice.

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Geert Kelchtermans and Katrijn Ballet

LEARNING HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MICROPOLITICAL LITERACY

Research on beginning teachers' socialization has clearly shown that this phase in their career is of particular importance to their professional development. Basically teachers only "become teachers" once they effectively start to perform their job duties (e.g. Veenman, 1984; Jordell, 1987; Huberman, 1989; Freshour & Hollman, 1990; Bullough, Knowles & Crow, 1992; Kagan, 1992; Schempp, Sparkes & Templin, 1993; Kelchtermans, 1993; Kuzmic, 1994; Tickle, 1994; Borich, 1995; Gold, 1996; Vonk, 1994). That moment, however, they don't only have to deal with classroom responsibilities and didactical issues, but they also become (temporary) members of the school as an organization. This again constitutes a complex set of challenges and learning tasks beginning teachers are facing when they start their career and thus the development of their identity as teachers (see also Kelchtermans & Ballet, in press): learning to handle the norms and values that prevail in the organization, to deal with a principal or with the colleagues in the staff, as well as with the parents of their pupils... Basically this learning is about power relations and interests or –as we will argue- about developing a "micropolitical literacy", an essential part of beginning teachers' professional development. Using the micro-political perspective (Ball, 1987; 1994; Blase, 1991 & 1997; Hoyle, 1982), we will illustrate this by presenting the result of an interpretative reading and re-telling of one primary teacher's story about his first years in teaching and how he learned to play the game.

The study

The case of Rob is one of the 14 cases on beginning Flemish primary school teachers (see also Kelchtermans & Ballet, in press). Using a variant of the procedure for "autobiographical self thematisation" as developed by Kelchtermans (1994; 1999), we collected data by stimulating our respondents to reflect back on their career (auto-biographical) and narratively share their experiences and the meaning they got for them (thematisation). For this study we adapted the procedure by starting with a *questionnaire* in which the respondents were asked to give a chronological overview of their formal career positions (contracts). Apart from the formal career, the questionnaire contained also open questions, on the perception of their actual job situation; on the evaluation of their teacher training experience, and a question aiming at identifying possible critical persons who had been particularly supportive during the start of their careers. The results from the questionnaires provided the interviewers with a kind of "robot photo" of the respondent, on the basis of which the researcher was better able to prepare the *narrative-biographical interview* that constituted the next step in the data-collection.

The narrative-biographical interview was semi-structured in form and basically consisted in a systematic exploration of the questionnaire data, both the formal career and the answers to the open questions. The semi-structured form allowed for the collection of rich narrative data, in which the specific individual experiences of every respondent were reflected, while the structuring of the data collection provided sufficient commonalities in the approach to make a comparative analysis of the data possible. In eliciting the teachers' story we focused on the socialization process, conceived of as the meaningful interaction between the beginning teacher and the organizational context of the school where s/he was working.

All interviews were *tape-recorded, transcribed and interpretatively coded.* After transcription and coding, a systematic summarizing report was written, presenting for every respondent all relevant data in a structured form (all reports had the same structure of paragraphs). This report was called the Professional Biographical and Micro-political Profile (brief: the Profile). For the purpose of this article we confine ourselves to presenting the Profile of a teacher we called Rob, who had worked for three years in primary schools as we interviewed him (autumn 1998) (See Figure 1).

ROB
* Born in 1970 * 1990-1991: studies German Philology at the university, but gives it up after the first year * 1991-1994: studies at a Higher Institute for Teacher Educationj to become a primary school teacher * 1995: marries to a primary school teacher
Overview of the different contracts and posts (1) 24.11.94-23.12.94: Fulltime teacher in Grade 4 in M (2) 09.01.95-31.08.95: Educator in a boarding school for secondary education (pupils of 16-18 years) (3) 01.09.95-30.06.96: Fulltime teacher in Grade 3 in SPRN (School Board = CC) (4) 09.09.96-01.10.96: Fulltime teacher in a combination class of Grade 5 an 6 in O (5) 08.10.96-24.10.96: 50% teacher first Grade in N (6) 04.11.96-20.12.96: Teacher (75%) Grade 4 in SPS (CC) (7) 20.01.97-30.06.98: Fulltime teacher first Grade in SPO (CC) (8) 01.09.97-30.06.98: Fulltime teacher first Grade in SPO (CC)

Figure 1: Rob's formal career

Actions and thoughts of organization members are to an important degree determined by interests (Hoyle, 1982). Taking up this central idea from the micro-political perspective, we linked it to the concept of "working conditions" (Kelchtermans, 1996). All teachers and principals hold beliefs about what entails good teaching and what conditions are necessary or desirable to perform their professional tasks properly. These desirable or necessary working conditions operate as *professional interests* to the people involved.[1] Through micro-political actions teachers will strive to establish the desired working conditions, to safeguard them when they are threatened or to restore them if they have been removed. *Micro-political action* we thus understand as *those actions that aim at establishing, safeguarding or restoring the desired working conditions*. This definition guided our interpretative reading of the narrative-biographical data collected from Rob (career story). We now present the results of this interpretative analysis, thus chronologically re-telling Rob's story highlighting his micro-political elements learning.

Teacher education

Looking back at his training as a teacher, Rob is quite satisfied. He enjoyed both the curriculum and the training methods. He also was a highly engaged reporter for the institute's internal newspaper, although that often got him into discussions and conflict with some of the teacher trainers, who didn't always agree with the newspaper's content.

One further incident needs to be recalled here. Rob experienced some difficulties during one of his teaching practice assignments in School SPRN. During a lesson in which his supervisor from teacher education was present to observe and assess, Rob fell flat on his face: *"That weren't good lessons. I fully admit. (...) At a given moment, I collapsed and started crying like a little child. So I had to go to the principal."* This principal, however, didn't comfort him, but even worse, he was very mad with Rob. *"He lashed out at me instead of comforting me. He said 'Don't think you'll make it in education with this attitude and this poor level of stress coping.' That moment, I thought a lot about breaking up with my studies. I couldn't handle it anymore and decided 'If education is like that, I really thank for it'. It was an coincidence of a lot of circumstances, because that moment I had a lot of discussions with the teacher educators"* (concerning some of his pieces in the school newspaper). It was only thanks to his mother's support and encouragement that Rob continued and successfully finished his studies.

Start as a teacher

Getting a job was the first concern to Rob after receiving his teacher certificate. However, in the autumn of 1994 jobs in primary schools seemed to be scarce and Rob couldn't start. To tide over the period without any work perspectives, Rob participated –voluntarily and unpaid - in school camps of different schools. This way he got the opportunity to get more relevant experience and to contact possible work contexts. *"To get contacts with schools and show 'Look, I am available'. I did it because I heard that I wouldn't have any work in September and October."* Rob, thus, had already understood that he would have to conquer his position on the labour market by purposefully using political strategies. Making himself visible was the marketing strategy behind his commitment.

This engagement did indeed pay off and Rob was called to replace a teacher of Grade 4 who went on sick leave. Thanks to the school camp, Rob already knew the pupils. The principal also knew Rob's qualities, but moreover he only wanted male teachers in his school (only boys school). Other female candidates for the job, even with more teaching experience, didn't get a chance. Rob felt a bit guilty about it, but at the same time, he became aware of his gender-based strategic advantage: male teachers had become a 'scarce good' in primary schools and seemed to be very much 'wanted'.

Rob was only supposed to take care of Grade 4 and no further commitment at school level was demanded. His colleagues treated him as a beginning teacher and didn't want to charge him with the full burden of school tasks. *"I strongly experienced my job as 'taking care of the class group for 2 weeks.' (...) And my colleague-teacher made it clear to me: 'You don't have to worry about the other things'.* Rob was very pleased with this situation, because this way he could focus all energy on his work in the classroom, a task he still didn't feel completely confident about yet. *"It was very comfortable to me. Because that moment I was extremely obsessed about giving good lessons. And so I was very pleased that I didn't have to worry about the public relations towards parents or taking care of any bills.* Focusing on his classroom work, Rob was firstly concerned with developing some kind of professional identity and self esteem. His colleague-teacher of Grade 4 helped him a lot in his teaching task, passing on lesson plans and teaching materials as well as supporting him in dealing with the pupils. *"That saved me a lot of time. (...). And basically, I had the attitude of 'God, it only lasts for a week or two.'"* Although Rob was mainly preoccupied with his own immediate duties in the classroom, his lack of commitment at the school level was also motivated by strategic reflections. There wouldn't be any gain for him from any commitment to others. *"It was a school I didn't feel at ease with the colleagues and furthermore, when starting I had been told that it would last no longer than two weeks. So I decided not to get involved in the team."* Additionally, Rob was new in the job and he really felt like it. *"I noticed the others thinking 'that is a new one.' But it didn't bother me."*

Nevertheless, Rob established a good relationship with the principal, thanks to the strategic coaching by his colleague-teacher: *"The colleague-teacher had warned me 'Take care, he is a hypocrite. You have to greet him every morning and evening. This is finds extremely important to him.'"*

During this interim job, Rob became more self-assured as he noticed he was actually capable to successfully manage and teach a class group. He

had been extremely afraid of breaking down during a lesson, as he had experienced during his teaching practice. *"During teacher training there is always a backup. (...) But after graduation, you are out there all by yourself. And when you are alone in your class and you hit the roof, you have to manage it all by yourself. At that moment, that was my greatest concern: 'What to do in case such a situation occurs?' But I could easily manage, because I didn't have to worry about other things."*

Due to this reduced set of job duties, Rob felt more like a student teacher than like a real teacher. He therefore also stayed away from the staff room and had lunch in his own classroom. He simply felt uneasy about being around with the colleagues and chose to avoid contact (strategy of withdrawal). *"In fact, I didn't dare to enter the staff room, because I feared 'where will they be talking about?' Picture the fact that I do not understand the things they are talking about. That's why I tried to keep me apart from the others."* Standing aloof from his colleagues was to Rob an explicit means to cope with the short term of the interim. *"When you accept that kind of short interim jobs, you effectively have the attitude of 'Okay, I will give excellent lessons, (...) but I don't care about the rest.' (...) That would be a waste of energy. Because by the time you get integrated, you already have to leave."*

This interim job ended at the beginning of the Christmas holidays, but Rob had already a new job offer in another school. Although he was not very enthusiastic about the previous job, he was satisfied to leave the school leaving a good impression about himself, since he realized that this was strategically important for possible future job offers. *"Each time one accepts to work in a school, one hopes to get better chances for the future. Each time, one thinks 'I hope I can stay there.' But afterwards, I was relieved not to work in that school (...). because of the principal being a hypocrite."*

(2) 09.01.95-31.08.95: A joyful temporary solution

In November, Rob applied for a task as educator in a boarding school for 16-18 years old boys. He had contacted the inspectorate and they had assured him that there wouldn't be any serious job offers in schools for the rest of that school year. In this contact with the inspectorate Rob also carefully checked whether accepting the job as an educator would negatively affect his future job opportunities in primary schools. *"But the Inspector said: 'you'd better take any job you can get. Because the chance that the ones who graduated this year will find a job, is almost zero. An interim job for some two weeks, like you already did, or maybe a month and that will be all.'"* So Rob accepted this job. However, he immediately made it clear (to

the staff of the institution and to himself) that it was only a temporary occupation, while waiting for opportunities in primary schools. *"It was a way to earn money and to outweigh the problem of being unemployed. (...) So, during that period, I went on looking for 'Is there something available in primary schools?'"* Rob was very clear, both to himself and to the school about his position, his plans and commitments.

Rob developed an excellent relationship with the youngsters of the institute and this made his self- confidence grow enormously: being able to handle 18 year olds was understood as a sign that dealing with primary school children could not be much of a problem anymore. *"It gave me a noticeable self- confidence. (...) I had been afraid that they wouldn't accept me. But I quickly found out that I was capable of handling the boys. (...) I had the feeling 'Now I can handle every class group. No problem.' You know, self-confidence remains the most important thing to work on during the first years of teaching. One has to convince oneself 'Yes, you can handle things'. When one is teaching, one has to keep thinking 'I'm doing okay, I can manage'. In the end, you are the only one who can convince yourself".* So developing self-confidence as a teacher/educator remained the central issue in Rob's personal professional agenda.

(3) 01.09.95-30.06-95: The first 'real' job

At the end of each school year, Rob used to visit several schools, applying for a job. During his teacher training he had been explicitly advised to do so. Apart from that he also kept in touch with the regional inspector. His third job, Rob got thanks to a friend, who was the daughter of a principal. The school was one of the numerous schools governed by the Catholic Congregation. Although Rob was pleased with the opportunity, he realised that the coin had two sides. In case of failure, the principal would tell his daughter about it and that would be embarrassing. Moreover, this was the school where he had experienced his difficult teaching practice and he vividly remembered the lashing out of the principal. The principal was now explicitly looking for a teacher who could effectively manage a class, since the former teacher had suffered a nervous breakdown because of the difficult group of pupils. Rob thus feared that the principal would also remember him and judge him incapable. *"The first confrontation with the principal I thought he will remember me as the student teacher who had sat crying right there in his office. So, I was a little afraid. (...) But he welcomed me very enthusiastically. (...). And he took me apart and said 'I believe in you and you'll make it here.' And I felt his support."*

Because of all this, the new contract was a real challenge to Rob. However, he was extremely motivated to start it since he would have a full year's job in a class of his own for the first time. *"For the first time I felt like a real teacher. (...) And I really felt like someone important to society. I felt I belong here. (...) I really wanted to start working. Like 'this is my classroom.' I really loved it".*

At the school year's start, the principal offered Rob the educational "mission statement" of the Catholic Congregation and the way the school worked with it. Rob also had a personal mentor, a colleague who was supposed to provide him with any information he needed about the school or classroom matters. His mentor, however, made it clear from the start that he would only provide technical support and would not go into emotional or social supportive mentoring. Rob, however, didn't mind, he felt self-assured. The new contract had boosted his self-esteem. His professional identity as a teacher had grown solid.

The school was located in a poor neighbourhood, with a lot of pupils from ethnic minorities. The teachers thus had to cope with a series of specific problems that they had not been prepared for in teacher education or in-service training. The circumstances forced them to close ranks and work together, but this made them a great team. *"That team, I have the best memories about it. It was a special school, because it mainly concerned deprived children. A totally different challenge than the ones I had encountered in my former contracts and during my student teaching."*

Rob enjoyed being part of that school team. There was an open atmosphere and everybody was communicating honestly and straightforwardly. Positive as well as negative comments were exchanged in a constructive atmosphere. Although he found this a bit strange and unusual in the beginning, Rob quickly learned to appreciate this culture. *"You knew what you were up to, what others thought about you and what you meant to them. You knew 'If I do something wrong, I will get a good scolding.' In the beginning I got diverse telling offs, and it did scare me off from time to time, but little by little I got to appreciate it because I realized that if they said I had done well, they really meant it, and I indeed had done well.'"* This collegial climate was in accord with his own ideas about how colleagues should be treating each other.

Rob found himself also confronted with parents. Because of the hard conditions most of the parents had to deal with, he tried to be understanding and open towards their problems, questions and needs. He tried to cope with them in a diplomatic way. In spite of their severe social and economical problems, these parents considered the school and the education as very important to their children and they were deeply appreciative and grateful

for Rob's work as a teacher. *"Those people said in the heart of their hearts 'thank you for educating my child.' Nowadays, you don't hear it often, because it seems evident to everybody. (...) Those people, however, had the politeness and the respect for recognizing the teacher as it used to be in the past. (...) It was really 'you have to obey your teacher.' For them, the teacher is someone who really wants to explain something and one has to be thankful for it. (...) It implied a special connectedness."*

His professional experiences made Rob's self-esteem grew enormously. He felt he was taken seriously and was being treated as a full teacher. *"The experiences as an educator in the boarding school had given me a lot of self-confidence and I felt that I could cope with any group of children. The colleagues warned me that I would have to cope with a difficult class group. But as I told them I had worked with 16 year old boys already, they confirmed: 'if you know how to handle those boys, you won't have any problems with the kids of Grade 5 and 6.'"*

Looking back on this experience, Rob has warm feelings about this period. The contact with the pupils, colleagues and parents were very satisfying and rewarding. *"It was the first time I really had my own class. I had fully settled down in this school and my classroom. I had plans to develop several teaching materials during the summer holiday. I started to love those children and the way of living there. I really felt I was making a difference, my work made sense, what I did was educating the children. Not just teaching them maths and languages. I changed my opinions about 'marginal people' and felt that these people are the ones one gets most respect and appreciation from."* So Rob's identity as a full teacher was being established and reassured. His self-esteem had grown and he experienced deep satisfaction in his job.

The end of this contract was a hard time to Rob. The principal had promised him that he would get a new contract for the next year, but on the first day of the summer holidays Rob was told that there would be no vacant jobs in that school. It was hard, because Rob loved to work there. Moreover, he was very disappointed because he hadn't applied for any other job. *"It came like a bolt from the blue. (...) I didn't write any letter of application because I was convinced I had a job. I had often asked explicitly: 'Do I have to apply in other schools?' 'No, because you can stay here', they had told me.'"* He received a lot of personal letters from colleagues telling him they felt sorry about his having to leave. From this experience Rob concluded that in the future he'd better not get attached to people so easily, *"Because it hurts too much to bid farewell. Especially to beginning teachers. One has to fly from one job into another. It hurts when you arrive somewhere, where you feel fine and secure, and say, 'If I could stay here for the rest of my life, it would be like paradise.'"*

After this disappointing experience from having been trustful and passively waiting, Rob took over the initiative again. He contacted Inspector as well as the School Board of the Catholic Congregation (CC) and told them about his experiences and his disappointment. *"I really felt they had played a dirty trick on me. So I told the board: 'well, you promised me a job, now please give me one.' During the holidays I contacted them several times, making it clear that I still didn't have a job. I had already married at that time, so I really couldn't afford to be unemployed."*

Compared to the past, Rob's self esteem as a teacher was much more positive. Although he had worked in difficult situations, he had always got positive evaluations and had built a reputation of being able to handle difficult classes.

(4) 09.09.96-01.10.96: Collegiality? What's that?

However, September first passed once again and Rob was still without a job. He felt angry, frustrated: *"This extra vacation is welcome, but it shouldn't last for too long.'"* Then, on September 9th, Rob could start working in school O, in a combination class (Grade 5 and 6). Although this was a new and difficult task (dealing with a combination class), Rob didn't bother too much because it was only a two weeks contract: one week on school camp and then a project week to work through the experiences from the camp with the pupils. Rob got prepared himself for the job, but then he was told that the contract would be extended. Rob was not pleased with that news. *"I sincerely hoped I wouldn't have to stay there too long. Couldn't image that I would have to do that class for a whole year. (...) I barely got prepared for those two weeks and I didn't have a real idea about teaching a combination class. How do I have to do it? How do you cope with it? I didn't know."*

Rob went to see the teacher he was replacing in order to get all his teaching materials. It made him feel like a student teacher again.

In this school, the collegial atmosphere and relations were quite different from those in the previous school. The teachers were not interested in each other and just lived their own lives. Teachers stayed in their classroom almost all the time and there weren't any informal meetings. The school didn't even have a staff room. *"Those colleagues, hum, they just weren't colleagues. (...) It was an entire group of burnt out – how can I put it politely- old people. (...) I had learnt by then I had to be social when working in a team.' During the break I was in the refectory and asked the other teachers 'where do we eat together?' 'Oh, we take a break in our own classroom. You can eat together with the children if you want.' Everybody in his own room, so I really couldn't see any 'team' (...) I didn't feel connected to these people at all."*

Rob felt very lonely during this interim job. By that time, he had a clearly developed idea about what good school teams should look like, but he felt completely incapable to put it into practice in this school. *"It was very depressing. I guess I would have quitted teaching if I had to continue working there. My only satisfaction came from working with the pupils. I was there only for those 15 kids."* The experience, however, made him realize how important it was to him to be able to work as a team member. *"It really matters, especially in order to get feedback. In schools people have to motivate and stimulate each other. It also is important in order to cope with the loneliness. Any normal person I think is interested in the things the colleagues do outside their work lives."* These negative experiences were further intensified by his colleagues' indifference and apathy as Rob published a booklet with poetry for children. They simply didn't care.

In heavy contrast to this was the warm relationship Rob had to the principal. They were about the same age and got along together quite well. *"We had been together on the school camp. (...) We had a lot of similarities in our lives. (...) We understood each other, also in matters outside school. (...) He could be some friend of mine. (...) We had the same kind of humour and we laughed with the same situations."* This compensated the lack of collegiality from his fellow teachers. Rob decided to stay away from the staff meetings –since he hoped he would only have to stay there for a short time and it wouldn't be of much use to participate. The principal understood this and agreed to it.

This principal promised Rob to do anything he could to keep him on his staff. Yet, Rob had ambiguous feelings about this. Having a job was a good thing and he liked the principal, but the poor relation to his colleagues overwhelmed his enthusiasm. The principal also promoted Rob's qualities to principals in other schools and that was strategically very important to Rob's future job chances.

Rob was truly happy to end this contract: he didn't like the combination of Grade 5 and 6, he had bad contacts with his colleagues but the principal would keep a positive memory of him. *"I left my good name. Good marketing once more."*

(5) 08.10.96-24.10.96: The lost son

The principal of this school in N. (the village he lived in) contacted Rob for an interim job in the first grade. Rob had only applied in this school at the end of August and the principal had been really sorry that he hadn't done so earlier: *"She said: 'I am so sorry you come only now. Because, if you had come in June, I could have employed you for a full year'."*

The school used to be a girls-only school, but since it had started mixed education the principal definitely wanted some male teachers on her team. So –again- being male put Rob in a priveleged position. Furthermore, this was the village Rob actually lived in, so he made a perfect candidate. At that time, Rob had already been promised a next job in another school, replacing a teacher who went on maternity leave. So, he set of in this new job, but without much enthusiasm. The job didn't have any perspectives, nor special challenges. Rob felt that he was only supposed to replace the absent teacher for two weeks and that was it. So he took a distanced attitude: he would do what he had to do, but no more, looking forward to his next job. *"The only thing I was interested in was that interim job for the maternity leave.' My attitude was like 'I will handle this very professionally. I do my job, but I will not get involved in anything more then that and I won't let myself getting attached to the children.' Avoiding painful goodbyes at the end."*

Rob had to teach the First Grade and that was something he didn't like very much either. *"I didn't like it, because the First Grade it has its own typical problems. Moreover, I had never taught in a First Grade. (...) I felt there wasn't much I could do with these young children. (...) I had to adapt to their lower level, because those children aren't able to do much. (...) They couldn't even drink milk on their own."* He had little affinity with a First Grade and decided not to teach in that grade anymore. *"Over there, I learnt, I don't want to teach in a First Grade for the rest of my life. I disliked it so much and I felt one needs particular capacities as a teacher that I simply don't have. "*

Rob had good, but superficial contacts with his colleagues. The principal, however, was very pleased with him and thought he was the ideal male member for her team. *"They were friendly. (...) It was certainly an improvement compared to my previous job. (...) The principal was delighted that she had a male teacher on her team. (...) She said: 'I am so happy you're here. I always wanted a male teacher. And if I wanted one, it had to be someone like you.'"*

Since Rob now was teaching in the village he lived in, he developed closer contacts to the parents. He also became more visible in the local community. Parents were curious about him. *"Not just the parents of my pupils, but also those from other classes. The came to have a look at me: 'Aha, that's the new teacher.' A big event in N, because I originally came from the city and hardly anybody had noticed that I had moved into that village. They didn't know I lived here. I noticed they were talking about me, not negatively. When I went to the bakery, before nobody had greeted me, but now it was 'Hello, sir'. (...) I liked that, being recognized and*

being able to say hallo to other people." This was a new, meaningful experience to Rob and 'positive' new working condition: having a publicly recognized professional identity and 'position' in the local community.

It became clear to Rob that he was building a reputation as a teacher. He had already done some 'hard' jobs and the other teachers were aware of this. *"I didn't have the feeling of being 'the student teacher', as I did in the beginning. But I was accepted as 'the substitute teacher'. Because I had built some kind of a reputation that was spread among the principals and they communicate it to their school teams."* So Rob had become aware about the marketing potential of his reputation and how it could be used in order to advance his career. He started to see the advantage of having done several interim jobs in very different conditions, since it really made him look like an experienced teacher on this CV. This awareness maked him act more assertively and proactively in looking for jobs, and made him less depending on luck or initiatives from others (principals; school boards).

(6) 04.11.96 – 20.12.96: The disillusion

Rob was contacted for a job of a month and a half in another school of the Catholic Congregation. This school consisted of a main building (SPS), and a second building (SPO). Rob knew the school, since he had done part of his teaching practice there. *"I had gone on school camp with them. Very good principal, very good school team, even so good I made up for myself 'If I had the chance to pick a school by my self, I would like to work over there.' (...) That principal told me at the beginning of the year, that I would get any job in his school if one became available. He already promised me that interim job for the maternity leave. And he told me 'if I have something sooner, I will call you.'"*

So, Rob was extremely happy to work in that school, where he had done a successful student teaching, and found himself happily teaching Grade 4, the grade he had always preferred.

The teacher he was replacing quickly socialized Rob into the local school culture. *"He told me the hottest gossips, like 'this teacher so, and that teacher that'"*. Thanks to his teaching practice, as a student teacher. Rob already knew the other teachers and didn't have to be introduced to them.

As already mentioned, Rob considered this school as the ideal one. He was very pleased to work there. However, his enthusiasm vanished the moment he was told that one of the teachers was frequently stealing. He was advised to lock his door at all times, never let any valuable thing in his classroom. This knowledge radically changed Rob's feelings about the school: disappointment replaced his eagerness to work there. *"It made me feel*

uncomfortable. It broke my confidence, because I had figured out for myself: 'If I want to be in a school, it will be this one.' And then one hears something like this. (...) Such a thing can change your whole vision". Apart from this situation, Rob also quickly found out that the professional relationships among the colleagues were confined to functional and professional exchanges. Rob's conclusion in general was that he had to be very careful with idealising a school on the basis of limited information or experience. Because *"it is only by being part of it that one really finds out what things are like".*

In this school Rob started even more to feel like a full teacher. He was given more tasks and responsibilities, also beyond his classroom teaching: *"just in the way colleagues treat you or the self evidence with which you are given your turn for doing surveillance in the playground'. (...) Basically, it shows in the responsibilities you are given. If you are simply threated like someone who has to take his turn, you're a full teacher. If not, then you know there's something wrong, either with you, or with them."*

Rob wanted this interim job to end, because he knew he could start for the rest of the year in a full time contract. He used the period of being unemployed (one month) to prepare for his job. He contacted his Inspector to let him know that he wasn't interested in another interim contract during the month. So Rob proactively made sure that nothing could threaten the long interim that he was promised. *"The end of this contract felt very safe and good. Because I knew 'now there is a real interim job ahead. It is over with al that messy short-term work; I will start on January 20th and end as the school year ends in June."*

(7) 20.01.97- 30.06.97: The long expected interim job

As already mentioned, this interim job had been promised to Rob at the beginning of the school year. Rob was eager to start this interim job, because he had learned that the maternity leaves were the most interesting contracts. His rule of thumb was: *"If you're a beginning teacher and you spot a pregnant teacher, you've got to step up to her and find out when she is supposed to give birth. Those are the best interim contracts, pregnant women on maternity leave"* .

For this job Rob returned to the same school and found him welcomed by all the colleagues. They were happy to learn that he would be the one to replace the pregnant teacher, because "*we are already familiar with you and we know who you are and what kind of teacher you are.'"*

The only less motivating element in this contract was that it was in the First Grade. Yet, this time Rob had been able to prepare himself and there

was also his wife who was teaching the First Grade in another school. Both things, enough preparation time (Christmas Holiday) and the perspective of being able to exchange and work together with his wife made him less anxious about this. Furthermore, he had been carefully 'briefed' by the teacher he was replacing and he managed to develop an intensive collaboration with the fellow-teacher in the other First Grade. Rob counted on the colleague for help because he wasn't familiar with the First Grade and he wanted to succeed. *"We joined forces intensively. Because we hit it off immediately. (...). And my attitude from the beginning was 'Ok, I have to handle this and I have to handle this successfully. So I will do it as good as possible.' But, since I didn't have any experience, I needed someone with a lot of experience. And the experienced one appeared to be the other teacher. So, he explained certain abilities and things one has to do to make a good First Grade teacher."* This colleague-teacher not only coached him, but also motivated Rob to teach in the First Grade. Rob even started to like that grade. *"He motivated me to teach in the first grade. So, my attitude has completely changed and I think 'Yes, I wouldn't mind teaching the First Grade for the rest of my life. (...) Now I look at it in an entirely different way. For example, I frequently enter toy stores searching for materials to use in the classroom. (...) The two of us work very closely together. (...) It demands consultations, sitting together, planning time...but it works very well."* This clearly shows how Rob on the one hand takes up the new challenge with a positive attitude, but at the same time he proactively looks for supporting working conditions, in particular in the form of social and professional support. He wants to do a good job, to experience success and to make himself seen as a competent teacher (visibility). An unexpected, positive spin-off of the whole experience is his change in attitude towards teaching young children, primarily because of his experiences of success.

In general the quality of the relations in the team were very positive and mutually respectful. Rob was thriving and when the school board invited him to a meeting for beginning teachers (although he hadn't been teaching there for a full year), Rob felt flattered and considered this as a good sign for the future. *"And it gave me the impression of 'OK, here we are. We're launched for the rest of our life.' Because I already had heard that School Board CC had a lot of influence and that if they really wanted someone, they would do everything to keep him."* So the future looked bright.

Contrary to the other interim jobs, Rob now actively participated in the staff meetings. He felt as a member of the team and dared to speak up. He thought of himself as having enough experience and having acquired enough educational jargon to participate in the discussions. *"I didn't feel like an outsider. It used to be like that before. Now, I was really in-side and part*

of it. I knew everyone in the team and so I was less anxious of making mistakes or loosing face. After all, I had been in teaching for some time by then and felt more at ease with the educational jargon." Participating in the staff meeting thus reflects Rob's self assurance and the solidity of his identity as a teacher. At the same time this participation is an expansion of the area in which he felt confident to demonstrate and practicize his identity and professional competence: no longer only in the privacy of the classroom, but also on the more public forum of the staff meetings.

At the end of the year, Rob was promised –unofficially- that he could start for the next year in another school of School Board CC. The School Board thus asked Rob not to apply for other jobs. Rob, however, still remembering his troubles after a former promise of that school board (see interim 3), contacted the principal to express his worries. The latter, however, reassured him that everything would be all right. He even continued to talk about his classroom, bus duties, school camps, ... In other words, the future looked safe. But time past during the summer and still Rob wasn't given any contract to sign. So he contacted school N where he had been working already, since he felt it would be safer to bet on two horses then running the risk of ending up with nothing. There the principal reacted with surprise: *"So you are available indeed? I had inquired about you with the School Board CC and they had reassured me that you would start in a new contract with them."*

However, thanks to some members of the teachers' union, Rob was informed about the things that had been going on. They told him everything and explained to him the school board tried to avoid the compulsary appointment of another teacher who had more experience. *"In the beginning, when one is in the running, one is glad to have the opportunity to work. But the further one gets, the more one hears and notices, also concerning unions. (...) Thanks to the union I found out that the school boards was playing a game. My colleague in the First Grade was the union representative in our school. He called me and said 'congratulations. You can join me in the First Grade.' And I didn't know a thing. The unions knew it before I did. And in that respect, I think unions are important. Because the more you're in, the more you learn to know the games they play. Because a whole system of games was going on. (...) The school board wanted to keep me, but because of the legally imposed priority system they couldn't be sure and still might have to take someone else. (...) The chance was 90 % that I had to go to SPO, because they have fewer teachers, so I could loose my job. (...) So they waited until the 31st of August –because the priority system had to be finished on the 31st- and in the meantime they said 'there isn't any class available.' After the 31st, they can tell me 'everything is save, the priority commission passed and your place is free.'"*

So, in the end Rob did get the promised job and had learned more about the way school policies were made or more particularly how school boards played with the legal restrictions and regulations to keep a maximum autonomy in their human resources management. He learned about these structural issues and about the role of the unions in this. *"I now understand how and why they do it. They felt they had already trained me, invested in me and they wanted to keep me. Beyond that, CC wanted as many young male teachers as possible. All schools do nowadays. (...) But they kept it silent for me. But actually, I don't complain, because they offer me a job instead. It isn't totally correct the way they do, but I don't complain because I have a job. A job in the school I wanted to teach, so...."*

(8) 01.09.97- 30.06.98: Full member of the experienced teachers

After all the difficulties during the summer holidays, Rob could start again in SPO, where the colleagues were happy to have him back. A major change, however, with the former year was the fact that SPO had become an autonomous school, with a principal of its own: a new principal, new rules and habits. Rob was well aware that he had learnt a lot the year before. Now, he could rely on his own experiences and was less dependent on help from others.

The relation between Rob and his colleague-teacher was very good, warm and inspiring. They were a good team together. *"It goes very good. We already were called 'the tandem of the First Grade'. (...) My colleague-teacher doesn't have a family, so he only lives for his work. (...) I told him 'you're the 'master' of the First Grade and I am your second man.' (...) And if one handles it this way, you are really working together."* In other words, Rob's micropolitical understanding came to include the following insight: acknowledging a colleague's experience and competence not only contributes to his and one's own job satisfaction and effective collaboration, but in the end also to one's own publicly acknowledged professionality.

Rob had learned that being open to new things and to coaching is very important. In this way, one can learn the most. *"Gradually, I learned that one can grow into a particular grade. Despite the fact one makes up for oneself 'I don't want to do it', it appeared to be worth it. It works, if one opens up oneself and if one asks for coaching."*

Rob was now completely integrated in the school team. He had the same responsibilities as all other teachers. *"Yes, I participate completely in the team. I am a part of the experienced ones. There are teachers who entered after me and who are completely new. And now, I am not a new one anymore."* Beside the good contacts during school time, the team also

worked on activities for the teachers outside the school building, like going out together, going on day trips with all the colleagues, ...

Micropolitical analysis

Rob's story shows a beginning teacher's "learning" to find his way in the professional reality: finding and keeping a job; developing his "market value"; finding job satisfaction; learning to balance his own initiative and reliance on others; understanding the niches for assertive action as well as the larger games that are played structurally "above the heads". Dealing with the micropolitical realities in the job constitutes a crucial dimension of beginning teachers' professional development. We called this the development of "micropolitical literacy": teachers have to learn to "read" the micropolitical reality and to "write" themselves into it. Less metaphorically, we can say that this micropolitical literacy encompasses at least three important aspects: a knowledge aspect, an operational aspect and an experiential aspect.

Firstly, there is the *knowledge aspect*, which concerns the knowledge necessary to acknowledge ("see"), interpret and understand ("read") the micro-political character of a particular situation. In other words, the 'micro-politically literate' teacher is capable of politically "reading" situations, because s/he owns the necessary "grammatical" and "lexical" knowledge on processes of power and struggles of interests. This knowledge thus is part of the teacher's subjective educational theory. It varies from rudimental and superficial to refined and complex understandings.

For instance, from the beginning Rob was fully aware of his gender-based advantages on the labour market: male teachers were scarce, and thus more 'wanted'. Rob also realized the importance of 'marketing' his reputation: e.g. by leaving a good impression at the end of an interim or a principal's promoting of Rob's qualities to principals of other schools. In this respect, he also saw the advantage of having done several interim jobs in very different –often difficult- schools. Another theory about job opportunities is his alertness for 'spot' pregnant teachers: he learned that the maternity leaves were the most interesting contracts. Throughout his career, Rob realized that he had learned more about the way school policies were made and about the games that are played by school boards and principals to get teachers working for them.

The *instrumental or operational* aspect encompasses the repertoire of micro-political strategies and tactics a teacher is able to effectively apply

(how broad is the repertoire?; how high the degree of mastery?) in order to establish, safeguard or restore desirable working conditions. It is important to stress that the micro-political meaning of actions is always connected to the particularities of the local context: strategies that work at home or in the sports club, might not work in the school; or strategies that had proved to work in School 1 might be ineffective in School 2. Developing micro-political literacy is always context-bound. The operational aspect thus refers to the political efficacy of the teacher: to what extent and under what conditions is the teacher capable of effectively influencing the situation, either proactively or reactively.

In Rob's story we saw him using the following strategies. In Rob's career the development of self-confidence as a teacher was a central issue. To realize this he only focused all energy on the class activities during his first job. He didn't have any contact with the fellow teachers; moreover he avoided contact because he felt uneasy about being around with the colleagues. Rob developed another strategy while doing a lot of interims: standing aloof from his colleagues was an explicit means to cope with short-term interims: it wouldn't have been of any use to try and integrate in a school team for such a short time span and, furthermore, it hurts too much to bid farewell after integration.

Rob actively maintained his contacts with 'significant' persons. For example, Rob contacted the Inspector when he got a job offer for a task as educator in a boarding school for 16–18 year old boys. He had to be assured not to miss any serious job offer in primary schools, by taking up the one in the secondary school.

Rob always paid a lot of attention to 'micropolitical relevant information'. For instance, during his first job, Rob got strategic coaching by his colleague-teacher: he warned him to be careful in his interactions with the principal and to play the game that was demanded. During another contract, Rob could count on the information he got from his colleague, a union representative, who knew about the policies of school boards and principals.

The *experiential aspect*, finally, refers to the degree of (dis)satisfaction the teacher feels about his/her micro-political literacy. The confrontation with the micro-political reality and the inherent need to effectively act in it, provokes particular experiences. The experience of the micro-political reality quite often triggers intense emotions: discomfort and uncertainty, powerlessness and sometimes anger (*I can see how things are played out here, but I feel powerless to do something about it*), frustration and vulnerability (*I find myself forced to do and implement things opposite to my own opinions and beliefs...*) (Kelchtermans, 1996). Of course those feelings can also be positive: joy, experiencing success and satisfaction, e.g.

if one has been able to successfully tackle a difficult situation or gets the rest of the team to accept one's proposal to solve a problem.

Most of the time, Rob felt positive about his micro-political knowledge and activities. All the strategies he used were justified by his search for work or his need to protect himself for disillusions. The fact that he had better chances to get a job as a male teacher made him feel a bit guilty, yet he learned to accept it as something he couldn't change.

Conclusions

The micro-political analysis of beginning teachers' career stories showed that learning to become "micropolitically literate" constitutes an important dimension of beginning teachers' professional development. The narrative-biographical approach allows for an in-depth understanding of this learning processes, since the teacher's career story presents his (learning) experiences in a retrospective account in which events are always situated as embedded in a meaningful context. The particular form and content of one's micropolitical literacy reflects these particular contextualised experiences and as such is in principle an idiosyncratic result. However, independent of the particular case, we argued that the micropolitical literacy structurally entails three aspects. The knowledge aspect, the operational and the emotional aspect are structural characteristics of micropolitical literacy that can be identified in any career story. As such they constitute conceptual tools that can be used disentangle the complex micropolitical learning process and develop an analytical and differentiated understanding of this proces that deeply affects beginning teachers' professional lives.

Notes

1 Elsewhere we showed that five different categories of professional interests could be distinguished in the data: self interests, material interests, social-professional interests, cultural-ideological interests and organizational interests (see Kelchtermans & Ballet, in press).

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Eila Estola

THE BODY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

TEACHERS' STORIES

A GLANCE AT THE BODY

> The routines, strict schedules and activity periods during my first few years as an early childhood teacher were far from my ideal of early childhood education. Where was the child in day care? Were the children fully controlled by the adults, never making noise, never playing games, completely organized in the middle of jigsaw puzzles! My own girls romped around at home, but they were not even allowed to build play huts in day care... (Kirsti)

In this quote, Kirsti describes her job and asks a serious question: Where is the child in day care? She also implies that adults use their authority over the children in day care and compares the home and the day care centre. This is not merely a matter of principle but, quite concretely, a question of how small children, as living and moving creatures, can find their place in day care centres, which operate in accordance with rules and routines generated by adults. I will also ask a question: Where are the children and adults in day care and how do they relate to each other? I will seek answers to this question from stories written by early childhood teachers, who describe the bodily aspects of education, which constitute an important part of the interaction between children and educators, though it has been frequently ignored or undervalued. What is the role of the body in the everyday routines of day care, what kind of situations is it related to, and how do early childhood teachers tell about it?

A year and half ago, I would myself not have read this extract as a description of the bodily aspects of education. To reach this interpretation, I had to travel a long way. The turning-point on my journey was marked by

the stories told by a comprehensive school teacher, Helena. Although I had previously read and analyzed her stories (e.g. Estola & Syrjälä 1999; Estola & Syrjälä 2000), I suddenly seemed to have in front of me a text full of references to embodiment. Her class was no longer an abstract 'class', but alive in a new way in my imagination: quiet or noisy, attentive or absent. Helena also told about the bodily quality of her own emotions: how she was almost reduced to nothing under the cross-pressures, or how good she felt when the children hugged her after a holiday. Having since read other teachers' stories, I have realized that teacherhood, education and teaching often pivot on the body. But there are also stories with very few references to bodily qualities.

Although there is a lot of research on embodiment in various disciplines (Jokinen 1997), the topic has been rarely touched in educational science. Now it seems, however, that even educational researchers are becoming increasingly interested in the body. Silvennoinen (1995) quoted his memories of school to support the claim that pupils protest against the school routines through physical action. Some papers have pointed out that the love of learning and teaching either thrives or dies through the concrete interaction between the child and the teacher. Pryer (2001) tells of how she, at the age of 4, fell in love with ballet (2001, 76): "My desire for her body was a desire to enter the world of ballet, to become a part of that world". Leggo (1996, 234), in turn, recalls his own school years like this: "I remember almost no pleasure in school....Students sat in rows of hard seats with the teacher staring, staring, staring – a prison like experience".

Weber & Mitchell (1995) have approached teaching as an embodied activity. They analyzed the public image of teachers in the popular culture: how are teachers expected to look and behave? In another book (Mitchell & Weber 1999), they try to find ways to reinvent teaching by listening to teachers' stories. They point out, among other things, that (ibid., 124), 'when a teacher enters a classroom for the first time, it is not necessarily her or his ideas that first attract students' attention. It is the body and how it is adorned and clothed – how it looks, sounds, moves and smells. Whether or not we realize it, the image we project precedes us, introduces us, and inserts us into the communication we have with students. This applies to most teaching situations, from kindergarten to university.' They also argue (ibid., 127) that learning environments have upheld clothing customs aimed at hiding or covering up the body in order to focus on mind.

I feel now inspired to study the references to the body in various texts, which has been the method in some other Finnish researches as well. The project titled 'Embodied differences and hierarchies' analyzed interviews, biographies, diaries, newspaper articles, memories and videotapes (Joki-

nen 1997). Nykyri (1998) studied the postures of angry women by asking the informants to tell about anger either in writing or orally. Utriainen (1999) described women taking care or dying people as the posture of being present. I will also myself use the phenomenological metaphor of posture to describe the fact that the mind and the body act together, and that the body is not merely an object in space and time, but rather a conscious and thinking organism with a memory. (Laine and Kuhmonen 1995, 178). This means that our body is able to learn many things, of which some are manifested as bodily postures. Our bodies sometimes take a posture that quite concretely and, what is even more important, symbolically recaptures the mental experiences of a given matter or incident.

Early childhood is an important time for learning bodily postures. They are learnt specifically in practical activity, and according to Merleau-Ponty (1964), they gradually develop into a habitual body[1], which functions even without the person's conscious interference. Early childhood teachers can contribute to the habitual body postures that children develop. As far as I can see, bodily posture reflect the individual's holistic posture toward moral issues and social life. Do children learn to appreciate other people and respect themselves and do they learn to enjoy learning new things? These issues require co-operation between two indispensable components: the mind and the body.

Early childhood significantly shapes the child's way to see his or her relations to other people: the way in which the child sees the Other. As Merleau-Ponty (1964, 114) argues: 'I seize the other's psyche only indirectly, mediated by its bodily appearances. I see you in flesh and bone: you are there'. Recently, the fact that children learn the most important things through concrete contacts has probably been considered so self-evident that it has hardly been spared a thought, at least in the Finnish public discussion of early childhood education. It therefore seems to me that the phenomenology of the body has something to offer to our interpretation of education as activity that does not differentiate between the body and the mind, but approaches them as an integrated entity (Johnson 1987).

The purpose of this article is to describe the embodied character of education in early day care centers. I analyzed a corpus of 17 stories told by eight early childhood teachers in order to find references to body. The stories were produced during a further education course, which aimed to support early childhood teachers' professional growth and their efforts to develop their own work and working community. All participants had a certain amount of working experience, some for a few years, some for decades. There was also one male teacher. Story-telling was voluntary, and not all informants had time to do all the assignments. The writers were also told that their stories could possibly be used for research purposes. The corpus included a few stories with exceptionally frequent references to the body.

In the first assignment, the informants were instructed to describe some problematic situations and the reasons why they solved them the way they did. After that, I sent each informant a personal letter where I commented on the first response and gave the topic of the second assignment. The second assignment was to write about the people who had most clearly contributed to their own teacherhood and the relation between their ideal and real teacher qualities. The third assignment was given after a lecture and a discussion about the second assignment. The third assignment was simply to write about the thoughts provoked by the discussion.

It is certainly not strange that the stories contained references to the body, although the topics were not explicitly about embodiment. Narratives describe experiences and they are hence always bodily descriptions, as the describing subjects are bodily persons who acquire their experiences through their body (Merleau-Ponty 1964). Narratives do not, however, photographically replicate events but rather provide the narrators' interpretations of their experiences. While telling about their experiences, the story-tellers inevitably conform to the cultural narratives among which they live. The language and the words with their cultural connotations limit the scope of what can be talked about and how (Wertsch 1990). Both the present story-tellers and I have lived our lives in a western culture, which shapes our experiences of the body. Chinese or African early childhood teachers would doubtless have produced different stories.

The bodily references are obvious in some stories, but concealed in others. In order to disclose even hidden references, I have used the examples of Lakoff and Johnson (1999) and Johnson (1989) about metaphors that explicate the embodied quality of thinking. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) approach a variety of English phrases as metaphors, which verbalize abstract phenomena

in concrete and often very physical terms. They talk about primary metaphors (ibid., 49-54). For example, the metaphor 'They greeted me warmly.' (ibid., 50) refers to the temperature: feeling warm while being affected. 'Tomorrow is a big day' (ibid., 50) refers to the importance of the day. According to Lakoff and Johnson, the primary experience is that, since their childhood, children find that big things, e.g. parents, are important and can exert major forces on children and dominate their visual experience.

Early childhood teachers adopt a variety of bodily postures, habitual bodies, in their work, but may not be conscious of this. Bodily postures are part of the practical knowledge Johnson (1987) refers to while talking about the embodied nature of teaching. Such knowledge is incorporated in metaphors. One of my informants said that she was so busy she did not have time to *stop* to think. This short sentence is a telling expression: thinking is not something separate from the body, but the body must have a special posture for thinking, namely a posture of immobility. The comment voices the pervasive impact of western philosophy on our way of thinking: thinking is related to immobility, as exemplified by a philosopher gazing into the distance, rather than a playing and running child.

While reading the texts, I have aimed to listen responsively (Brown & Gilligan1992, 21–31) to gain insight into the informants' experiential world. I chose one story as an 'evocative anecdote', which is considered by Weber (1993) an excellent way to describe teachers' way of thinking. This anecdote followed the comment quoted at the beginning of this paper. Kirsti gives a lively and sensitive account of the bodily quality of everyday life in a day care centre.

It's best to shut up and do what you're told

There were some things that I dared to change while working as a substitute, although I feared I might be stepping on someone's toes. But I remember most clearly these afternoon naps and especially one gutsy little girls who refused to do what she was told. The regular early childhood teacher had a grasp on this girl and could make her fall asleep, but if someone else was in charge, there was always a power battle after the story time, and everybody ended up feeling bad. I often wondered why it was so necessary to force this child to sleep, as she had already had a rest anyway. Who benefits from such situations and actions? I suggested a change a few times, but when nothing happened, I resigned and thought: well, I'm just a substitute and won't be here long. I had better shut up and do what I was told. But why should we cling to routines and do things the same way every day.

In my present job I have realized how much more rewarding early childhood education can be, both for the children and for the educators, when we break down routines and experiment with new ways of action. When you get personally involved, you enjoy things as much as the children do, and your work is more deeply satisfying, sometimes demanding and strenuous, but ultimately rewarding. (Kirsti)

To be seen and heard

The need to be seen and heard has sometimes been considered the first experience of a baby. Postmodern research has introduced the concept of hearing and the metaphor of 'voice' to supplement the quality of being seen. 'Voice' specifically implies the right of every human being to be heard and to experience life from his or her own perspective, ' to one's authentic concerns' (Elbaz 1991, 10). Special attention has been given to the possibility of subjugated groups to make themselves heard. The metaphors of seeing and hearing relate personal experiences to their bodily background, but they both also imply an ability to take other people seriously. The need to be seen and heard can be considered one of the basic issues of education, which requires the body and the mind to be approached as an inextricably intertwined network.

Kirsti wanted herself to be heard, i.e. taken seriously both as a professional and as a person. The metaphors she uses reflect her posture at work: submission, silence, humility. 'Stepping on someone's toes' implies that some people in the day care centre have more power than the others, and the act of stepping on the toes of those in power would have unpleasant consequences. Kirsti deemed it best to keep quiet and to find consolation in the fact that she would not stay there long. She says she thought it best to do what she was told and shut up. You can almost see Kirsti work, baffled and stealing a glance at the others now and then, to see if she is doing things the right way or if anybody saw her do something differently from the established routines.

All those who have been working with children know that the working postures of early childhood teachers are, very concretely, bodily postures. The body is the prime vehicle of presentness and each instance of communication (Melucci 1996). The early childhood teacher cannot escape the fact that she is in contact with the children precisely through her own bodily presence, who in turn are in contact with their teacher and the other children through their bodies. Attitudes, emotions, thinking, and

values are reflected in bodily postures (Laine & Kuhmonen 1995, 180). Kirsti's story also tells about the posture of another teacher, who had a grasp.... In the context of Kirsti's story, this teacher's posture reflects self-confidence, even authoritarianism, as is suggested by her routine of 'forcing' the children to have a nap and, more generally, clinging to the routines. I can see a determined teacher and a little child's head peeping out of the blankets.

Kirsti's ways of telling reflect the multiple voices of education, which means that bodily postures are often simultaneously both desirable and undesirable. A bodily posture is always also a moral statement. As a young teacher, Kirsti adopted a posture that helped her work in accordance with the day care centre's traditions, avoid offending her colleagues and possibly also attain the goal of being considered an easy worker. At the same time, however, she felt she was doing violence to her own principles and views of good education and was working contrary to the goals she had set for herself. She had to sacrifice her own principles to be accepted.

Towards the end of the anecdote the story changes and we learn that Kirsti later found a job where routines had no intrinsic value, but could be changed. She was able to get involved and enjoy things together with the children. The story has a happy turn, as Kirsti can adopt a new attitude toward work. We can see a brave and cheerful teacher and happy children. Kirsti's description reminds us of Leggo (1996) and Pryer (2001), who pointed out that the central aspect of teaching is the teacher's love and passion for his or her work. This enthusiasm radiates from a person, and Kirsti describes it as something enjoyable.

The metaphor of getting involved was also expressed in a number of slightly different ways by the other informants. Someone said that early childhood teachers are not working at a conveyor belt, while someone else admitted that you must show the children your own feelings. What these descriptions have in common is that the professional involvement appears very concrete. You cannot claim to be doing things - the things you do are actually reflected in your bodily postures (Weber 1993; Mitchell & Weber 1995).

Kirsti is specifically worried about the ability of children to make themselves heard. A child cannot make him- or herself heard unless the teacher has time to stop and listen to what the child has to say. This is not merely a matter of speech but, more generally, of the language of practice permissible in a given certain cultural setting and the predisposition of educators to interpret situations. As Wertsch (1990) pointed out, there is no single correct way to interpret situations, which are always multi-voiced. Although one teacher had enough authority to keep the rebellious child in

bed at nap time, Kirsti could not help wondering whose will should actually have been complied with. Kirsti feels like defending the little girl and is worried about her voice not being heard. The little girls uses her body to try to make herself heard, and the teachers respond in the same way. Since adults have more power, they can easily refuse to listen and, once again, show the child that big people have more power (Siren-Tiusanen 1996).

Seeing and hearing seem to be closely related aspects of the act of taking someone seriously. Children try to make themselves heard through action that must first be seen in order that it could be heard. One of the stories described a situation where the parents complained that everybody was keeping a critical eye on their child. This metaphor implies that that child is always seen in bad light. It also indicates that the parents were worried that their child might not be heard in the day care centre. Such experiences may linger in the child's memory for a long time because of the shame they evoke. And this shame is not felt by the child alone but by the whole family. (cf. Kosonen 1997).

Model

> It is very important to be a model for children. As an educator, I should show them my emotions, show what I feel good and bad about.... I can teach children to recognize both their own and other people's emotions. (Emmi)

In this quotation, Emmi introduces four themes that are very concrete activities in the practice of education. First, she refers to being a model. Second, being a model consists of doing and showing, i.e. bodily activity. Third, she comments on the moral task of education and its relation to emotions. She points out that teachers should encourage children to express and recognize their emotions and thereby to develop an ability to be in caring relationship with the others. In her short text, Emmi concisely outlines the role of relation-based moral in teaching: what it means to try to see another person as an Other and even to teach small children to see this. According to her, the goals of education are part of the everyday practice of education and hence manifested as concrete, bodily interactions.

The task of being a model is a concrete link in a long temporal chain, which means that one's actions may have culturally transmitted consequences that reach far into the future. Children learn through non-verbal behavior cultural customs and values of what is right or wrong, frightening or pleasing, and later on, other adults and peers introduce more variable alternatives to

act (Taylor 1989). The informants described the significance of their early childhood experiences, especially their own parents, for the development of their own identities. Many also mentioned the significance of their first colleague(s) for their teacher identity. Some examples were good, some warning. In both cases, however, the things that teachers concretely did in their work and their bodily postures of being a teacher were transmitted through an example.

Later on in life, it is possible to adopt as models even people that one has never met. Films, cartoons and books propagate various teacher images (Tirri 1999; Weber & Mitchell 1995). The teacher John Keating in the film *Dead Poets' Society* is a good example of teacherhood as bodily activity. His charisma is reflected in his ability to act, move and captivate the class. I have seen the film several times with students, and it always gives rise to animated discussion. Many students admire such teachers, but many also point our that a charismatic teacher may have a long 'shadow' and that a confident view of one's professionalism may also prevent one from recognizing the child as an 'Other'.

In the chain of being examples, early childhood teachers are models for children, as Emmi pointed out in her description above. Early childhood teachers' postures reflect their moral, and these posture are imitated as models by children. This ethical code is an 'embodied moral', which is crucially based on interaction, dialogue and responsiveness, i.e. emotions and an ability to empathetically see things from the other's viewpoint and care (Gilligan 1982; Noddings 1992; Thayer-Bacon 1998). Although closeness as a relation is not identical to physical distance, it is not completely unrelated to it in education. It is difficult to imagine that, in the context of early childhood education, an adult and a child could develop a close interpersonal relationship without some degree of physical proximity. The contemporary western culture, which is notably sexualized, has begun to attach special importance to physical contact, which has also been sexualized. In some countries, this has led to a strange situation where completely normal physical contact is considered unnatural in, for instance, early childhood education (Duncan 1998). Still, each teacher and parent knows the significance of touching for children. Touching provides the baby its first contact with the outside world, and it has also been though that touching may be the last sensory route remaining before death.

From the educator's viewpoint, the posture of proximity means availability to the child whenever the child needs an adult. This is described by Kirsti as follows:

...some children let you come close, while some others always maintain a certain distance, and there is nothing wrong with that. But if the child feels me to be a safe adult and, despite the distance, accepts me and feels good in day care, I know I have been acting right. (Kirsti)

Embodied routines, rhythm and time

At the beginning of our narrative, Kirsti wondered:

> The routines, strict schedules and activity sessions were far from my ideal of early childhood education... Where was the child in day care? Were the children fully controlled by the adults, never making noise, never playing games, completely organized in the middle of jigsaw puzzles!

Frustrated, she asks: where was the child? She then goes on to describe the strict routines and schedules that are used to make the children invisible and inaudible. They do not actually even exist as the kind of bodily and active creatures that Kirsti saw her own children to be.

The subjective experience of routines provoked anxiety in Kirsti. Johnson (1989) underlines the bodily character of routines. They are so self-evident that hardly anybody even sees them as knowledge that helps us to orient to place and time. We could say that the education and identity development of a small child are also based on the acquisition of routines. Routines serve as a shared grammar and give the child an experience of independence and initiative, while they simultaneously consolidate his or her ability to co-operate with others.

Routines have many functions. They may serve as ways to maintain order or social defences, by which the educators control their environment and the children, but also themselves. Situations that cause anxiety and uncertainty can be controlled by rules and repetitive actions. Kirsti also seems to refer to such routines: things are done in the way they have always been done. Routines also have a positive protective and constructive function; without them, education would be chaotic and unpredictable. Routines impose a temporal rhythm on children's life, making them feel able to control place and time.

Routines also have a moral message and mostly pertain to interpersonal relations. They include routines of management, such as the rule of not disturbing others. Kirsti's description of the child who found it hard to fall asleep at nap time implied a violation of this rule. Kirsti wondered if it had not been possible to apply the rules more flexibly to meet the needs of an individual child.

Routines further help to organize time and introduce a rhythm into life. Studies have shown that the rhythm and cyclicity of events are the key factors that teachers use to organize their work (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986). The human physiological functions are cyclic and rhythmic: respiration, heart beat, digestion, and the rhythm of being awake and asleep. An infant gradually internalizes the cyclicity of its physiological existence. For example, the infant's diurnal rhythm is not 'only' a physiological rhythm, but something that is regulated in a number of cultural variable ways. The diurnal rhythm of children is also partly governed by the day care schedule and the parental needs. Diurnal rhythm plays a major role in the child's overall well-being. It is not only an important foundation for intellectual performance, but also contributes holistically to well-being. Whoever has experienced a shift of diurnal rhythm is aware of this. (Siren-Tiusanen 1996).

The phenomenon of cyclicity is so primeval that, according to Johnson (1989), we feel it in our bones and always live by some kind of rhythm. Johnson specifically underlines that cycles are felt rhythmically through the body. These experiences are rarely reflected on consciously, but they emerge in narratives. According to Johnson, rhythm and routines also introduce a narrative structure into bodily experience. Functions have a beginning, a course (plot), and an end.

In early childhood education, routines and rhythms intertwine with time. Teachers have to adjust the rhythms of individual children to the rhythm of the other children and adults. A given child's place and ability to make his/her voice heard is concretely manifested in how well his/her individual rhythm is recognized. The basic question is: what kind of time governs the child's rhythm. Early childhood teachers write about the shortage of time, which is part of the everyday life in large groups. Teachers do not have time to pay attention to individual children. "Sometimes there is not enough time for anything: last Friday, I was alone with the whole group until noon... but the children were actively engaged in their play and probably knew nothing of the adults' worries." Another early childhood teacher regrets the shortage of time from a professional viewpoint: "you often make them (= wrong solutions) when you're in a hurry and don't have time to stop and think".

Teachers' reports of the shortage of time should be taken seriously, because it is their way to express through speech their concern about things that are central to teaching and education (Olson et. al. 1999). Teachers know that children need their attention and time. There should be time for concretely being together, and the routines and rhythms should be sufficiently flexible to allow enough time.

Power

According to Leavitt (1994), the use of power is embodied in many ways. Power is present in all interactions, and all things I have said above about embodiment and bodily postures also involve power relations. Power is not merely a negative phenomenon. Burkitt (1999) considers power as a source of both control and productivity, and the teachers' stories also highlighted both types of power and the problems related to them. 'Where was the child?'- This question crystallizes the problem. Do children actually even have a place in day care? Can they make themselves heard and understood?

Power is embodied in interaction between adults, between adults and children, and between children. Interaction, in turn, is affected by control over space, which is the main way of adults to restrict children's activities and choices. Availability space is a way of adults to wield power. A physical environment full of rules and restrictions gives children experiences of closure and limited freedom, while a permissive environment implies wide scope and new opportunities. Adults' actions may result in good experiences for children even in a possibly cramped space. Schedule is an even more important tool of power. A strict schedule really forces people march to time, and children's time is naturally largely regulated by adults. (Leavitt 1994.)

Early childhood teachers reflect on their child-adult relationships and the power implicit in them. According to Kirsti's anecdote, the power struggle over nap time left everybody feeling bad. This episode can also be approached from the viewpoint of bodily posture. It is easy to perceive in a power struggle both tones of voice and movements that can be threatening, shielding, frightening or withdrawing. A bad mood is also manifested concretely in our body: we tend to assume a 'sad posture' that reflects sorrow and apathy. Kirsti's ideal power relation was a balanced and open relationship between adults and children, which allows both parties to act and express themselves freely.

Another early childhood teacher describes interaction with a balance of power as follows: 'I must be there for the children, able to listen and to recognize each as an individual. I must come down from the pedestal and enter a more equal adult-child relationship, yet without forgetting that I am the adult whenever the need arises.' The ability to listen to the child, equality, and commitment to the adult role are mental constructs of this early childhood teacher, but they are manifested in practice and reflect her posture in her interaction with children. In her story, good interaction is based on credibility and personal honesty. Credibility and authenticity

have also been underlined as aspects of the current human identity by Taylor. Oser and Patry (1995, 37), in turn, point out that teachers, while solving problems, should also make sure that their solution are in agreement with themselves, that they feel of being honest. The possibility of adults to control and limit is enhanced by the difference in size between adults and children combined with the adults' authority. In the education of small children, the physical difference in size results in a power discrepancy that easily subjugates the child. Children are able, since birth, to recognize the things important for them, such as the big size of adults. (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1999).

Although children are often considered powerless, van Manen (1990) points out that they actually use their helplessness as power over adults. According to him, the helplessness of a little child appeals the care-giving adult. A small and helpless infant hence has more power than an adult. The early childhood teachers often expressed their desire to take children seriously and to listen to them, which can be considered a consequence of the desire to help evoked in the adult by a tiny and vulnerable child. But things do not always turn out so well, and the stories also reveal the other side of the coin, i.e. the inability of adults to listen to what children would have to say. For example, adults may apply routines quite ruthlessly as a way to control children and to wield power over them.

Children also use power in many ways (Silvennoinen 1995; Estola & Syrjälä 2000). They may, for example, choose between a passive and an active way to resist adults. "The girl never even budged when the mother asked her to come home", one of the early childhood teachers wrote. Many of the informants also pointed out that it is difficult to intervene in the conflicts between children unless one has seen the preceding course of events. Conflicts frequently arise in highly concrete situations of power use: children quarrel over toys, or a child hits another. It is in such situations that children learn which bodily postures would be useful in conflicts. Should one assume a threatening or conciliatory posture, be submissive or defensive? Adults can provide an important model for problem solving. Social interaction, if anything, is embodied action. We perceive the others through their bodies.

Place of the embodied child

I began to read the stories to find answers to three questions: what are the bodily aspects of everyday life in day care centres like, what situations are

they manifested in, and what is said about them in stories? The stories turned out to be a good source of information about the bodily aspects of early childhood teachers' practical knowledge. There were roughly two kinds of references to the body. Firstly, there were many metaphorical references to bodily aspects, and secondly, there were also many explicit accounts of the concrete and physical nature of education.

The stories were about general educational situations, such as games, meals, outdoor activities, and nap times. None of the episodes were explicit descriptions of teaching. This may have been partly due to the way the informants were instructed to write. Ultimately, therefore, our informants' views of the mutual relations between the body, learning, and teaching were derived from very few indirect references. One of them wrote like this: "I would like to consider myself a person whom the children can freely approach and tell about their joys and sorrows, who is nice to be with every day, and who will occasionally help them to learn new things." In this informant's story, good education consists of close interaction and is notably emotional. But the quotation also seems to reflect the distinction between the mind and the body. The body is more clearly related to emotions than to the learning of new things.

Early childhood education has traditionally underlined children's inherent activity and ability to learn by doing as well as their need to learn emotions and values. The phrase about developing the head, hands and heart has been part of the culturally inheritance of practical knowledge. Analyzing teachers' stories pointed out that this tradition is still living in teachers' stories. Holding arms, hugging and physical contact are an essential aspects of teachers' work (Golden 2001; cf. also Irigaryi 1993).

When I combined the informants' comments on the body and the everyday situations these stories relate to, I was able to identify four central categories of embodied practice in all education. These were: 'to be seen and heard', 'power', 'being a model', and 'embodied routines, rhythms and time'. Bodily posture in education is hence a markedly holistic, moral, emotional, and cognitive way to work that also reflects all these categories. In their stories, early childhood teachers aimed at a posture of being present. This was shown by the goal of being able to hear, see, and take seriously both the child and oneself and to serve as a model. The stories also showed that these goals cannot be attained unless the everyday routines, rhythms, and time in day care allow practices whereby one can make oneself heard or be a model.

The bodily awareness that develops in day care is shaped by cultural and societal factors. Finnish children spend long days of up to 10 hours in day care, and many of them are in day care from the age of under one year until

they start school at age 7, because many Finnish parents work full time. Efforts have been made to improve the lives of children by, for example, passing a law on the child's subjective right to day care, which means that all children under school age are entitled to publicly funded day care. This has guaranteed a certain degree of continuity in day care. Due to the long days in care, however, children do nearly all of their daily activities in day care centres. It is certainly not unimportant what we believe and think about child development. The manner of arranging the child's daily rhythm definitely shows the child the adults' attitude towards his or her individual needs (Siren-Tiusanen 1996).

What do early childhood teachers think about the child and education? The question is especially topical now that the pre-school reform is under way and every child is supposed to go to the pre-school. I wonder how early childhood teachers will go about teaching in pre-school? There are obvious threats, though, admittedly, they are neither new nor exclusive to early childhood education. Several decades ago, Schwab (1978) already hypothesized about the inevitable connection between instruction on the one hand and activity and emotions on the other. He postulated that the myths about pupils unwilling to learn date back to the unwillingness to arrange instruction that would have been sufficiently intriguing to children. Teachers have forgotten that they should first establish a close contact with the pupils, and that they can only expect intellectual achievement after that. But since emotions and activity have been considered as something separate from intellect, teachers have not even been concerned about those aspects, and pupils' emotions and inclinations have been considered as external to the curriculum (Schwab 1978, 108). Will the same thing happen in early childhood education?

The posture of presence cannot be adopted without actually being present. The concern about the shortage of time, large groups, and high staff turnover is a real concern for the imminent collapse of the foundation of good education. There can be no education without bodily presence.

Notes

1 Merleau-Ponty use the concept 'habitual body' to describe the practical orientation of the body to the world. When, for example, we learn to bike or get used to wearing a certain kind of clothes, these objects become part of our living and functional embodiment and thus bind us to the world, the objects of this world and other people.

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WHO ARE WE?

The writers of this book were asked to answer to the question "Who am I" by writing an autobiographical anecdote about themselves. It was not easy to get the authors of a narrative-autobiographical book to write any autobiographies so as to introduce themselves. Perhaps these people are too aware of how we compose our identities through our small everyday life stories.

But these mini-autobiographies were worth asking and asking again. Here are what we got; some evocative, impressive and powerful life stories which make the authors alive in a vivid way.

CHRISTIANA ANDEM
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Who am I?

The day I was born, I began a story of my own. A story in which I am the main character. The day I was named, my character got the first answer to the question of who I am. Different times and situations change what I tell about myself, and the process of finding who I really am will be everlasting. Every time I tell a story or answer the question of who I am, I reveal something of myself. To begin, my name is Christiana Andem and right now I am studying at the University of Jyväskylä to become an international elementary school teacher.

I could also tell you that I am a big sister and a daughter. My family has always been important for me, and they are the ones who give me love and support wherever I am. I could tell you about a girl who has lived part of her life abroad and has a multi-cultural background. There is also a story of an ambiguous sprinter, a girl who reached her stars without being the 'best'. There are many stories that reveal something of me, but they do not tell the whole truth of who I really am.

Stories and truths change over time and depend on what I find important to tell about myself. The paths I follow change me and who I am. But as it is said, finding who you are is a process that never really ends.

KATRIJN BALLET
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My life as an educational researcher still looks more like a short story. In the research for my master's thesis I collected and analysed beginning teachers' career stories and how they learned to play the game and to develop an identity. And then I started my own life as a beginning researcher, learning to play the game and to develop my own professional identity while studying head teachers using the stories of their professional development. About a year ago I embarked on a PhD project on teacher identities and the intensification of their work. An intruiging story that has just started and is still open-ended, though the plot line is unfolding, the layers of meaning have started to appear. And I...I am learning how to play the game, while playing...and telling about it...

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"I wonder, Dr Bridges, whether you would agree that your list of publications reflects, well, something of a butterfly mind?" — this, a question put to me in the interview for a Chair in Education at the University of East Anglia in 1990.

"Guilty, but unapologetic!" – is what I wish I had had the presence of mind to reply, but instead I spun an elaborate but entirely plausible story which demonstrated the threads of continuity and development through my apparently haphazard intellectual development. After all was not the systematic and sustained pursuit of an area of enquiry the hallmark of real scholarship?

But here I go again. It is nearly forty years ago since, as a history undergraduate in my final year at Oxford I revived the former Jesus College Historical Society in order to promote among the ill-assorted rag bag of college historians, whose ordinary preoccupations were booze, sex and, so

far as any remaining energy allowed, rugby football, some intellectual discussion about the nature of history. One of the first session which we had was on History and the Historical Novel, in which, as I recall, we explored the differences between and relationship between the two. As far as I can remember (tricky stuff this autobiography; I suspect my capacity for recall operates at about 5% efficiency) I had not thought seriously about this question again until a symposium at the 1998 conference of the British Educational Research Association on narrative research prompted me to revisit some of the issues which lie in the interrelationship between history, fiction and the historical novel.

The butterfly image is, perhaps, revealing. I am not a zoologist, but I suspect that there are two tales which can be told about the movement and the stationary moments of the butterfly: one tale of randomness, of unpredictability, of serendipity; another of underlying rationale related, perhaps to the evasion of predators; the discovery of food and a suitable place to reproduce; and the attraction of a mate – drives perhaps not a million miles away from the those shaping the behaviour of academic researchers living their brief, butterfly lives at their annual conference ?

I could almost certainly construct a narrative which joins the two events in my academic life across forty years. Certainly the Oxford experience provided the resources for a particular form of recognition of issues latent in the narratives debate which I encountered much later in Belfast. But serendipity plays an important part in creativity, and as I look out of my window and observe the decorative fluttering of the butterflies (albeit that their off-spring will I fear shortly shred my sprouting broccoli to pieces), perhaps I should not resist too strenuously the analogy between their movements and my intellectual life. 'Butterfly mind'?– indeed!

FREEMA ELBAZ LUWISCH
Faculty of Education
University of Haifa
Israel

An exercise I often give my students is to write a very short autobiography - my life story, just for today. We then read one another's stories, form groups and produce compound autobiographies; the group products are usually even more interesting than the individual efforts. So the reader is invited to interrupt my story with his or her own.

I was born in a northern climate and now make my home in a place that is all too hot. The coming together of people from different backgrounds

and cultures fascinates me, and I enjoy the learning and possibility of new connections that result, perhaps especially from situations of conflict. My parents escaped conflict in Europe to find safety in Canada. But in each of their life stories is an episode where their lives were saved by persons from a different group. When my father was arrested (for the crime of being Jewish) and ordered to leave Vienna in 1938, a Quaker family in England made arrangements for him to go there and took him into their home. My mother's family in Russia was hidden in the home of a local farmer and thus saved from anti-semitic pogroms. I carry these stories as if I experienced them personally, and perhaps they are the basis for my understanding of how stories shape our lives and teach us most of what we need to know in life.

Lately, however, I feel that the old stories may not be sufficient, and we need to create new stories to serve us in these difficult times; watching my three kids become adults, I am often very scared by the world they are entering. To cope with this fear I try to remember, over and over, to savour the moment. A high point of the last year was managing the 3 km ski trail in Oulu (after not being on skis for over 30 years). Yesterday morning, after a night of rain there was a gentle mist and the smell of new growth in the garden. This morning, brilliant sunshine. This afternoon, there will be a meeting of an in-service program in which a group of teachers from the Jewish and Palestinian communities of Israel meet to learn together about multiculturalism. When I think about the meaning of these different ways I spend my time, I am comforted by an expression of Ghandi: What you do is insignificant, but it is very very important that you continue to do it.

RAIJA ERKKILÄ
Department of Educational Sciences and Teacher Education
University of Oulu
Finland

It was written somewhere that, in our postmodern time, people change their identities like the clothing their wear. This idea made me stop. I wonder? In my busy everyday life I am a researcher, an educator, a mother and a wife. I drown myself into the narratives of others and the concerns of my seven-year-old daughter. But still I believe that, like an onion, I have something deep inside me that remains the same. Once in a while I need to go into a forest or down to a river and listen to the wind, the sound of white water or just silence, and there I am.

Eila Estola
Department of Educational Sciences and Teacher Education
University of Oulu
Finland

Who am I? Where do I come from? These questions were asked by Chekhov's governess in The Cherry Orchard. I find it difficult to answer them, too. I know that my current research topic, relational ethics in teachers' narratives, is intricately intertwined with my own life, maybe even more so than I dare to admit. I do not know if the teachers' narratives made me question my own life or vice versa, but I have been pondering about myself in relation to other people: me as my mother's daughter, my husband's wife, my children's mother, a friend, a colleague, a teacher.

Trivial things may be important for identity formation. The family magazine Kotiliesi ('home hearth') has been part of my life for as long as I can remember. My hate–love relationship with this magazine has been symbolic of the stable and changing parts of my identity. When I was very young, my mother used to read me the Kieku and Kaiku cartoon with its simple, moralistic adventures of a rooster and a pig. To my student self, the magazine represented the conservative worldview with its stories of unimaginative middle-class life, which was something I abhorred. When I started a family, my mother subscribed Kotiliesi for me, despite by occasional feeble objections. I thought that was part of her efforts to make me a "proper housewife". I worked, I taught novice kindergarten teachers, I was the head of a school, and I even tried to continue my studies. I kept receiving Kotiliesi, though I could often only spare a couple of minutes to leaf through the most recent issue. I wanted to be a modern and efficient woman, and Kotiliesi did not fit in with that image.

When my mother died, I realized I could not face a life without Kotiliesi and continued to subscribe it for myself. Each new issue is like a visit by my mother, which helps me to continue my story as her daughter. Nor do I mind being a housewife looking for good recipes and variation for daily meals. And more and more often I find myself picking up the magazine just for fun: to enjoy life with its everyday activities, at home, around the hearth.

Sigrun Gudmundsdottir
Department of Education
Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Norway

Who am I? I would like to re-phrase this question and ask instead; what is my identity? The basis for my identity is my extended family on my mother's side who lived out their lives in a small house, in a small fishing village on a small island off the south coast of Iceland. Life was physically hard for the fishermen as well as dangerous. In their small fishing boats they had to go out to sea in the hostile North Atlantic where the Atlantic becomes the Artic Ocean, where warm winds and currents from the south meet the icy currents and weather system of the Artic regions, creating some of the most dangerous conditions in the world. Life was hard and people worked hard, both men and women. Leisure and holiday were unknown phenomena. The only activity that could be "classified" as leisure was when the storms were so violent that boats could not get to the fishing grounds. People were "forced" to do something else on these long days and nights, when "the weather gods were angry", as they would say. Then they would gather together around the kitchen tables all over the village and tell stories.

From an early age I was there, in my grandmother's kitchen, sitting on my Grandfather's knee and listening to the storytelling. Although I didn't understand much at the time, I later realized that I had indeed learned something important, so important that it cannot be taught, only learned: To listen to a story in such a way that it can teach you something important, to let it become an essential part of your identity. Later in my life I have realised that these storytelling events have, indeed, made an impact on how I think and perceive the world, my identity as a researcher and as a person. Like the storytellers in my grandmother's kitchen I don't separate my work from my life. They had not choice. But I had. Now, story is an important part of my professional and private identity.

Professionally for me there is only narrative because I see "narrative" as privileged when it comes to describing experiences, be in on the oceans or in the classrooms, be it the fishermen talking about their lives or biographies of teachers.

Hannu L. T. Heikkinen
Open University
University of Jyväskylä
Finland

Who am I? Actually, it is hard to find a simple answer to that question. In academic contexts, I usually tell people that I'm a researcher in education who is currently working for the Academy of Finland. At the same time, I am working as a planning coordinator of teacher education for the Open University at the University of Jyväskylä. In addition, I am working as a teacher educator at the Teacher Education Department. Somehow I love to operate within these different fields at the same time, although sometimes I wish I could have said "no" to some requests.

But there are other stories of myself apart from this professional narrative. I could tell a story of being a father and a husband, wanting to give my best to those I love. I could tell a story of a biker who has lived most of his life with motor bikes. I could compose a story of an ex-thriathlonist who never reached the top but was ultimately happy with that. Or there could be a story of a designer, a kind of artist perhaps, a man who loves drawing and building beautiful things with his own hands, such as motor bikes, houses, furniture, etc.

All of these stories tell something relevant, but simultaneously exclude a lot. But life is like that. You have to go on working to answer the question of who you really are for the rest of your life.

Rauno Huttunen
Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy
University of Jyväskylä
Finland

Who am I? I don't know anymore. There was a time when I was sure of who I was and what my destiny would be. As a teenager I started to read Marxist-Leninist philosophy and later developed some level of professionality in that area. This was quite a natural course of action for me, because my mother and my stepfather were members of the Communist party (as were my grandfather, my grandmother's farther, the headmaster of my school, etc.) I was active in the Marxist youth-movement. I even made a national appearance. Back then I was able to point out the "bad guys" and the "good guys" and knew what the path of destruction and the road to salvation were for me and for the whole world.

In this spirit I began to study philosophy at the University of Jyväskylä. Unfortunately, the epoch of Marxism was over in the Finnish universities and the bogey of postmodernism was beginning to emerge. After a few years of participating in student debates, after one divorce, after the falling of the Berlin Wall, etc., the bogey of postmodernity finally caught up with me. I wrote my doctoral thesis on the philosophy of education and tried to discover, at least in that area, what is good and what is bad. Perhaps I succeeded, perhaps not. Now the academic world of philosophy and educational research is my "homeland". That much I do know, although I have yet to discover who I am.

Leena Kakkori
Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy
University of Jyväskylä
Finland

I am a philosopher and a kindergarten teacher. About six years ago I told a story of how I was going to write a doctoral thesis about Martin Heidegger's philosophy, art and truth. Now the story that I didn't really believe in is true. But shall I do now? What will be my new story? Maybe I will tackle the most serious philosophical problem that there can be: What is the essence of the cat. Heidegger asked questions about the essence of metaphysic, technology and art, but he never considered the essence of the cat. According to Heidegger, it is easier to understand even God than a cat or other animals. Nonetheless, I am going to find out what is the catness of the cat and how the truth is manifested in the cat's purring.

Geert Kelchtermans
Center for Educational Policy and Innovation
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Belgium

How do people in general (and educators and teachers in particular) make sense of their lives? Why do they do what they do in caring, teaching, guiding and supporting others? What makes it worthwhile for them? What keeps them going? How do they make their choices and justify them? And while doing so, how do they develop their own lives and identities? This cluster of questions reflects a deep interest and fascination in my professional life as an educationalist. It runs as a red thread throughout my work as a

teacher educator, an in-service trainer, a university professor, a supervisor of research projects... But it also has a part in my actions as a husband and father or when enjoying a nice meal, reading a novel or listening to song lyrics. It is even playing in the back of my head in the thrill when skiing down the slopes or hiking through silent, impressive, wide landscapes. I guess it fundamentally reflects the ongoing search for the answer to the question "who am I?".

Thinking and talking about these questions and sharing them with others can only be done by telling stories and funny anecdotes, by using metaphors and autobiographical accounts. That had become clear to me quite soon. But as, somewhere in the mid-eighties, I became aware that narratives also held a strong potential for educational research, the contours of my life as a researcher were drawn. A challenging, but fascinating agenda was set. And it still keeps me going, wondering, puzzled and enjoying it.

ARTO LAITINEN
Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy
University of Jyväskylä
Finland

A first-year philosophy student got excited about the idea of plural identities and a related shirt-metaphor. "What if there is no stable core to one's identity, but we rather change our identities like we change shirts? You wear one shirt when you visit your granny, another one when you go playing soccer and yet another when you go to movies!" He was very excited about the idea and told it to his girlfriend, who was less excited about it: "According to that theory you at least seem to have a very stable identity."

HELI MERILAINEN
Department of Educational Sciences and Teacher Education
University of Oulu
Finland

For me doing a research is to counterbalance my life with small children: the ones at school and those two diamonds at home. Withdrawing from class teacher's hectic work for a while, I have finally time to breathe freely and think through what it means to be a teacher. I am alternating different lenses: The ones I wear as a mother and a wife, another ones I'm looking

through as a teacher and also the ones I can try on as a researcher. Through those lenses I have to face myself and still notice that it was just one encounter in that time.

Maarit Mäkelä
Department of Educational Sciences and Teacher Education
University of Oulu
Finland

Under the tutelage of an efficient and energetic mother, I grew up to be – guess what?- an efficient and energetic young woman. I had many hobbies and a huge circle of friends, and my life was full of constant coming and going. Quietly in my mind, I smiled at people who spent their time only 'at home'. To me, those people seemed stagnant, non-perceptive and hopelessly bogged down in the lukewarm apathy of an unlived life. I filled my days by teaching education in college and later by teaching and doing research in the teacher education programme at the university. While doing that, I discovered biographies and was completely engulfed in the stream of narrative-biographic research.

When listening to and reading other people's life stories, I have mirrored my own life against them. I have stopped to consider the meaning of life and my own identity and have begun to discover new connections between them. Retreats in silence, a search for peace and the presence of nature have become the most important matters in my life. The things I used to run away from have become the cornerstones of my identity. I appreciate the northern light and landscape. I especially love the moment when a cold winter day turns into dusk and daylight fades into the softest blue shimmer. The whole world seems to come to a standstill and be immersed in blue twilight. Sounds and activity vanish, and busy everyday life seems very distant. Those moments make me pause and ask: Who am I and where am I going?

Torill Moen
Department of Education
Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Norway

Twenty-two years old, and just finished my Certificate in Education, I got my first job at a school located in a suburb. In this area some of the children

lived in difficult and very complicated domestic situations. Many of these children were unruly, unfocused and had learning difficulties. Later, when I became a special teacher, I was particularly concerned with the students having emotional and behavioral problems, and I started wondering why some teachers succeeded in dealing with these children while others did not. This is still a question of current interest. Today, many years later, I am privileged to be a doctoral student, and my thesis will deal with the same topic; Studies of how teachers act and think when dealing with children with emotional and behavioral problems in their classes.

In addition to this very brief professional narrative, what else can I tell? I am living in Trondheim, Norway. I have been married for nearly 25 years. I have two children, a boy of 22 and a girl of 17. Besides being occupied with my research, I enjoy being with my family, reading novels (some of my favorite authors are Amy Tan, Isabelle Allende, John Irving, John Le Carrè...). I also like hiking in the woods, mountain walking and, of course, frequent cafès with good friends.

PENTTI MOILANEN
Department of Teacher Education
University of Jyväskylä
Finland

Who am I? A fifty-year-old father, husband and lecturer in education. The last description is the most important for me. But still, I would rather have no job than lose my wife or children.

I like lecturing and having dialogue with my students. Lecturing gives me a touch of power. I have the power to make my students wonder things that previously seemed naturally self-evident to them. It feels great to see the intensive attention of students and to be sure that I can offer them something that is new and extraordinary. In dialogue the students have the power to change their own thinking through their own questions.

In philosophical writing I try to combine hermeneutics and realism. My key idea is that social reality consists of interpretations, and these interpretations are facts that should be understood in social science. This idea may be one-sided but it preoccupies my mind, nevertheless.

In spite of these contradictions, I am just an ordinary man. No fancy hobbies, no special gifts. It seems funny to say that I enjoy being nothing special. But I think it is true (in the sense of the correspondence theory of truth).

Leena Syrjälä
Department of Educational Sciences and Teacher Education
University of Oulu
Finland

When I was a child, making up stories was easy and fun, especially in the bathroom and aloud. At school, I used to read stories written by other people: I recited poems in school programmes from kindergarten to graduation. I believed that the big, black ram of a Finnish story book really had horns and that Mr. Pii Poo, who was a wizard, did not die after all. I lived in a world of fairy-tales, poems and books.

While a student and young researcher, I searched for truth in different narratives: figures, statistics, propositions. I lost my own words and stories. It was only later, as a senior researcher listening to the autobiographies of teachers and telling others about them, that I began to outline my own story. My long-lost and newly discovered words began to make up fragments and gradually meaningful wholes. Pieces of narrative by different tellers were combined and made up a new story, which is also true to life and has begun to live in all of us.

Today, I'm going on with my story. I met students who enrolled in the teacher education programme this autumn and were willing to share their stories, and I will continue to work with them. Next week, we will discover the new turns of the students' collective story after their first teaching practice period. And when readers join our stories, we will have a completely new story again.

Paula Vainio
Department of Teacher Education
University of Jyväskylä
Finland

At this very moment I am looking out of the window and I see a teacher walking down the street, followed by twelve kids. I wonder if I am ever going to be a teacher. I am studying to be one and at the same time having doubts. Still, without losing the passion, I hope, I am very satisfied with my life. Although, too much satisfaction may be dangerous.

Who am I? I do not know. I prefer the question: How do I see myself? I see myself as superior to everybody else. I am obstinate, selfish, ambitious (with a question mark) and plain-spoken. The worst part of it is that I am also very proud of every single one of those traits. I am cynical but not at all

bitter. I am not an optimist, rather a realistic pessimist. And still, I'm not afraid of the future. I am a person who wants to have control over everything.

My name, Paula Vainio, even though it is irrelevant and, after the above description, no-one might want to know it, is an unambiguous part of my personality. What is the blind spot, then? It is the point of view I am so eager to reach. I am fascinated by the power of stories. They are my extra eye. To widen my view, I am willing to tell as many stories as it requires. The story so far is not complete. Aiming at that blind spot of mine.

Why do we tell our life stories? What is the point of studying narratives? What is the truth of narratives? How are narratives collected and studied by researchers? In this book the voices of teachers, education researchers, student teachers and philosophers join to form a polyphonic voice that attempts to answer these questions. They try to shed light on the obscure world of narrative research.

This book contains both theoretical articles and empirical examples of narrative research. The theoretical articles introduce and develop the basic concepts of narrative research and focus attention on its philosophical foundations. The empirical articles apply the narrative approach in a multi-dimensional way and provide a clear illustration of narrative research in action. The narrative data consists of teachers' stories about teacher education and school practice.

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ISBN 951-39-0982-4