

1-1-2007

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Recommended Citation

Hooley, N. (2007). Establishing Professional Identity: Narrative as Curriculum for Pre-Service Teacher Education. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 32(1).
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2007v32n1.4>

This Journal Article is posted at Research Online.
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ESTABLISHING PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY: NARRATIVE AS CURRICULUM FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

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As great as the conditioning power of the economy may be over our individual and social behaviour, I cannot accept being completely passive before it. Paulo Freire (2004, p. 33)

Introduction

It is unclear to what extent Australian teachers over recent years have resisted the impact of globalisation, marketisation and commodification on education generally and their daily work in classrooms specifically. Do teachers still see education as a public good, of personal and democratic importance in its own right regardless of the socio-economic background of students, or is education a critical component of material gain and individual, competitive advancement? Have teachers confronted these issues in reference to their own professional identities, in developing a strong relationship with their own knowledges as the essence of their educative role with young people? This paper suggests that such matters are still being played out in Australia, although the apparent weakness of the relationship that teachers have with their personal professional knowledge has contributed to an increasing commodification of education, especially in regards the Year 12 certificate. It is proposed that reconstructing initial teacher education on the basis of systematic narrative inquiry might collectively refocus the practice of teacher educators and pre-service teachers so that a community indeed moral imperative to learning is established. The discussion outlines connections between professional identity and narrative research and questions of credible and authentic learning for teacher education.

Professional Identity

Is it the case that teachers in Australian schools do not work with the guidance of a professional code of ethics? When was the last time that teachers disciplined one of their colleagues for a recognised misdemeanour, perhaps removing their right to teach? What is the role of teachers in determining their own structures, positions and duties within the education system? Do teachers design, implement and evaluate the curriculum? Each of these tasks falls within the general category of professional responsibility, yet teachers are removed from all of them to a greater or lesser extent. This may be of their own making for not having taken appropriate action over the decades to enhance their professional standing and capacities. But it may also be due to their status as employees, where employers take it upon themselves to decide the organisation and procedure that will dominate how schools will function.

A professional is someone who has completed a program of rigorous initial preparation involving specialised knowledge as decided by the profession and who has been approved by the profession as a registered practitioner with the right to exercise autonomous, professional judgement (see Smith and Lovat, 2003, pp. 90 – 96). Most importantly, professionals negotiate the nature of the relationship with members of the public who come to their door. A professional undertakes regular professional updates, is a member of the professional organisation reading and contributing to the professional journal and acts in a professional manner according to the established ethical code. Because of their dedication to the field and its participants, professionals are committed to take whatever action they see fit to protect and enhance the manner in which they conduct their work. This is usually done through the aegis of a professional body to which all members of the profession belong.

Despite the formation of teacher registration boards in various Australian states over more recent times, it is significant that Australian teachers have never had a professional organisation of this type, an organisation that controls entry and career paths, oversees ethical conduct, accumulates experience, documents practice and engages research. Some might even insert the ‘moral imperative of educational practice’ or ‘vocational calling’ at this point for all those who work with students. Under this definition and at this time, teachers may not completely fit the professional mould. There are however many aspects of professionalism that comprise their daily activities and most importantly that determine their relationship with students, their parents and with each other. While it is unlikely that most teachers will resign en masse to reconstitute their relationship with employers, it should be possible for a range of initiatives to be taken to strengthen their independent professional role. Perhaps the most important of these is a clarification of the relationship that teachers have with their own knowledge.

Some years ago, the noted American educator Lee Shulman (1986) proposed a number of teacher knowledges that all teachers bring into play every day. These involved curriculum knowledge, subject content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and general educational knowledge. He pointed out in his Melbourne lecture held at Monash University in 1995, that it is more important for students to develop a depth of understanding of a smaller number of key ideas, rather than to skim across the surface of large tracts of subject content. Shulman also suggested other forms of teacher knowledge such as knowledge of specific cases where students learn or have difficulty in learning and strategic knowledge that enabled different approaches to be used when judged applicable. Whether or not Australian teachers see themselves and their work in relation to these knowledges is not known.

Does a primary or secondary teacher for example think of himself or herself as a poet or mathematician, working with their own intimate knowledge and insight? On the other hand, does a teacher deal with the remote knowledge of others, of literature before recess, a teacher of mathematics after recess, a curriculum labourer at the end of the day, a purveyor of homework in the evening? In this concept, the teacher is made up of a series of separate, chilly, disconnected parts, with a true moral and intellectual ‘centre’ lying somewhere else. Is there another more holistic knowledge, that embraces yet extends beyond the traditional teaching role? Could it be that individual subjects while important in their own right, merely illustrate how we think the social and physical universes work and provide some indicators for making sense and meaning? Is there baseline teachers’ knowledge of this type that is missing? If teachers as professionals cannot readily identify or do not substantially agree on the

nature of their work and the integrated knowledges that they need to invoke, then their relationship with the full range of teachers' knowledge will be diminished and their professionalism weakened. Being a teacher under such circumstances will be very much a hit or miss affair.

In writing about the ideas of the British sociologist Basil Bernstein on the current political and social pressures on and changes to professionalism, Beck and Young (2005, p. 184) commented:

Bernstein, with his penetrating sociological imagination, perceived more clearly than most that what was pivotal to these changes was a restructuring not merely of the external conditions of academic and professional practice, but even more fundamentally of the core elements of academic and professional *identity*.

According to Beck and Young, Bernstein had located the driving force of professional identity as being centred on the relationship that practitioners have with knowledge, a relationship characterised as 'inwardness' and 'inner dedication.' Bernstein's analysis suggests that professionals operate within a context that includes not only the *external conditions* of change, but the *internal basis* of change and that an awareness of the interrelationship between the two at any particular time determines the nature of professional consciousness, commitment and rigour. For example, a primary teacher who has little background or interest in science, but is required to present information regarding the ecology of the local river system, may do so with little enthusiasm, narrowness of perspective and lack of commitment. This is the basis of change, a weak inner dedication. Such a teacher may easily agree to a diminished emphasis on science in the curriculum when a new principal arrives at the school determined to strengthen literature studies. These are the conditions of change. Without an articulated and defensible approach to teaching and knowledge, the professional character of the school and the teacher's role lacks definition and clarity and is subject to whim.

The British philosopher Paul Hirst may have an important contribution here. In a famous reversal of his earlier views, Hirst (1993) commented that education is not so much about the transmission of known subject content through assumed abstract procedure, but rather immersion in social practices through a process of practical reasoning. If the latter, but reality is the former, there will be inevitable tension between student and teacher which will make the pursuit of learning extremely difficult in schools. This idea of exploring social practices through practical reasoning as the basis of the school curriculum may be the missing knowledge that teachers need to strengthen or re-establish. Should we really be concentrating on so-called 'disciplinary' knowledge, or instead, how children work with the historical and cultural basis of their personal and community interest, so that they can build and extend their own understandings and meaning? Practical reasoning that encourages a personal theorising across all experience has little place in the passing on and examination of predetermined facts and figures.

The role of teacher as technician has gained precedence over recent years, with an emphasis on what is called 'teacher quality' (Rowe, 2003). This has come from the 'effective schools' movement where analogous to industry schools are seen as being run by an efficient manager and where 'expert' staff work within the company ideology and direction. Correspondingly, the notion has arisen that factors within schools such as the teacher are more important than factors between schools

such as family background, cultural experience and government provision. An emphasis on 'teacher quality' means that not only is the teacher responsible for most outcomes, but can overcome nearly all outside influences. This is a heavy ask for employers who are usually excluded from the key formative aspects of the educative process. It remains to be seen whether work that has been undertaken in Australia over recent years and is ongoing on the connection between professional standards and quality learning outcomes, will influence the way in which teachers see their professional roles and identity (Ingvarson & Semple, 2006; Victorian Institute of Teaching, 2006).

So what does all this mean for the professionalism of teachers? It means that the perception itself needs to be reconsidered and its various aspects strengthened in the daily operation of schools. Hargreaves (1994, p. 165) for example, in raising issues of individualism, isolation and privatism associated with teachers' work, spoke of 'cultures of teaching' as comprising 'beliefs, values, habits and assumed ways of doing things among communities of teachers who have had to deal with similar demands and constraints over many years.' It is these 'cultures of teaching' that give 'meaning, support and identity' to the work of teachers and hence their professionalism. Accordingly, it is this sense and understanding of professionalism that will either be asked to accommodate new demands for work intensification, accountability and technicism, or instead will defend the teacher's educative role. In particular, the various knowledges of teachers' work need to be identified in a holistic, ethical way and strengthened across the curriculum. The relationship that teachers and students have with their own knowledge, as distinct from that which teachers are expected to pass on to students, needs to be elaborated and become the basis of curriculum design and structure. Curriculum is then transformed into a dynamic, personal endeavour for both teacher and student, not something that is imposed from outside for political rather than educational intent. I'm not sure whether teachers feel identified by their 'teacherness' in the same way that others may see themselves as Indigenous, European or Australian, as Catholic or Buddhist, as swimmer or marathon runner. As one example, I suspect that the value of progress with learning is held deep down to be more important than examination results. It may be that teacher identity is still an obscure property, still being constructed in relation to external pressures as the defining feature of the education field.

There does not seem to be a groundswell of support from amongst teachers for the creation of a new professional body to take up these issues, to describe identity and by so doing, to fundamentally change the nature of teachers' work. Organisations that currently exist could perhaps be adapted to incorporate the tasks mentioned above regarding ethical conduct, initial and continuing registration of members, journal contribution and professional action. This could however be the inadequate option. To make the point of professional weakness may demonstrate at the same time that the commodification and marketisation of education has proceeded without restraint precisely because teacher identity, the relationship between teachers and their own professional knowledge, has been feeble and vulnerable. It should be centre-stage.

Qualitative Research and Narrative Forms

Professional identity for teachers and as will be discussed below, teacher educators, is a constant process of negotiating the many socio-cultural forces, trends and structures within which they work and the relationship they seek to develop with

knowledge, with students and their families and with other professional colleagues. There are questions of location in historical time, of the conflicts and harmonies between local and global understandings, of the changing aspirations of teachers, parents and children. Issues of social class, race and gender underpin such considerations. Over the past sixty years since World War II, the stronger economies have developed their education systems remarkably although direction and purpose are not settled in every sector. A mass secondary system of schooling for example contains many tensions between personal growth, a broad liberal education for the common good on the one hand and vocational needs and further education on the other. It is understandable that teachers and teacher educators are pushed and pulled under such pressure and can find it difficult to establish a morally and educationally defensible benchmark. There is continuing investigation, of construction and reconstruction, of becoming, of change.

In reporting their study of school restructuring, Cherednichenko et al (2001) described the vigorous and challenging time and space geography that teachers and students inhabit and engage, as a 'discursive environment.' Taken from Giddens (1984) and his ideas on agency, the term according to Cherednichenko et al (2001, p. 10) suggests that:

To have a discursive understanding is to be able to answer questions about why one acted in a particular way, or to give reasons for an unexpected occurrence. For teachers in schools, the discursive environment appears when teachers collaborate in planning, evaluating and giving evidence about the practices of teaching and learning. At those times when teachers become aware of their shortcomings in their teaching or the way schools are organised, the discursive environment also appears to encourage argument and critique.

There is a nice link here between the need for professional identity noted above and the discursive conditions under which such identity might be obtained. Within the discursive environment, the Cherednichenko et al report provided some detail regarding what they called 'authentic learning' for both teachers and students; authentic learning being defined as a set of 'social practices enabling students to act knowledgeably and powerfully in the classroom and world' (p. 10). Such practices included respectful and collaborative relationships between all participants, thoughtful awareness and response, appropriate communication in undertaking projects and tasks, participatory leadership and significantly, 'personal commitment to students and the morale needed to initiate change' (p. 10). While the issue of teachers' knowledge is not dealt with explicitly, the creation of facilitating conditions for authentic and discursive learning is a very similar concept to what was called the 'missing' knowledge above. The remainder of this paper will elaborate this point.

It is now proposed that, in terms of knowledge production, authentic and discursive learning environments will draw upon the understandings and perspectives of qualitative research more than quantitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p. 4) describe qualitative research as 'a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible' and additionally, practices that 'transform the world.' For professional identity, an approach to knowing that relies on empirical data alone and which does not include a community of learners is inappropriate for teachers. Denzin and Lincoln go on to say that qualitative researchers endeavour to understand human events 'in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (p. 4), a process that enables the bringing together of divergent views and the creation of new understandings and

insights as must happen in classrooms every day. There is a wide variety of methodologies available within the qualitative framework, but I will emphasise narrative inquiry here, based on unpublished research (Hooley, 2005), to bring professional identity and knowledge generation together within discursive settings.

The multiplicity of social, cultural and educational factors that exist in classrooms can be qualitatively investigated through narrative inquiry because, as Beattie (2001, p. vi) has suggested:

Professional learning begins in an examination of practice, or experience and of the stories we enact in our lives, our schools and our society. It involves understanding one's own story, learning to hear and understand the story of others and continuously scripting the stories of self as teachers and of schools, community and society. Rescripting the story is about inventing the future, about imagining how things can be otherwise and working with colleagues to bring about a better world for all people.

Beattie's view is broad in scope, encompassing at once individual classroom activity and a better world for all. It draws upon the work of Dewey (1938) in seeing experience and education as being dialectically connected. This view of narrative where stories of life are told and retold, scripted and rescripted enables the exploration of experience and meaning within a community of learners. Connolly and Clandinin (1990) see two integrated processes at work here, narrative as phenomenon in terms of story and narrative as inquiry in terms of method. Of significance is the notion of not merely telling stories to each other, but to reconstruct experience for new meaning and understanding, so that new approaches to issues can be contemplated and implemented. In other words, narrative if structured appropriately, can order experience and lead to ends of social justice. As Polkinghorne (1998, p. 161) notes, the use of narrative in the human sciences can either be descriptive or explanatory. In descriptive narrative, an account of experience is presented perhaps in a layered form from different points of view. In explanatory narrative, the intention is to go beyond mere description and to seek or unravel the explanation as to why experience occurred and to explore causal links between the events uncovered. For teachers, the construction of narrative in written or other forms opens up a window onto practice that can lead to both self-reflection and collaborative action for teaching and learning improvement.

Clandinin and Connelly (1994) outline an approach toward narrative that involves a movement between three sets of questions: transition from field experience to field texts, from field texts to research texts and finally from research texts to the research account. How formally a group of teachers want to conduct a narrative inquiry is of course, a matter for their determination, particularly if a first cycle investigation. It may well be that each participant decides to keep notes or journal entries over a period of time which are then expanded for discussion amongst colleagues. The stage at which such entities become field texts will depend on how the group intends to structure its discussions and to begin to make the 'world visible' as Denzin and Lincoln proposed. What is being suggested at this point is that systematic narrative inquiry can form the basis of teachers investigating their own classrooms and schools so that the key features of authentic and discursive learning as practised can be elaborated and become available for ongoing change and improvement. This enables a further step to be taken beyond that of narrative as

method for researching classrooms, to that of narrative becoming a key principle of learning, teaching and curriculum design within classrooms themselves.

Creative Dissent: Teacher Education as Narrative

Currently, the Parliament of Australia is conducting an enquiry into teacher education, but its report is not yet available (Parliament of Australia, 2005). A similar and recent report to the Victorian Parliament (Education and Training Committee, 2005) concerning the suitability of current pre-service teacher training courses in Victoria, acknowledged the 'excellent calibre' (Executive Summary, p. xvi) of teachers who continue to meet the needs of children and the economy. On the negative side however the report 'revealed a wide variation in the standards within teacher education courses and the skills and expertise of graduates of different courses' (p. xvii). The report indicated that while beginning teachers may have a theoretical understanding of their role, they were not always 'teacher ready' (p. xvii) in terms of the practical experience required. It was noted that improvement in this area could only occur through more participation of pre-service teachers in schools during their initial preparation. Comments of this tenor need to be taken seriously in the prevailing political climate, although they are not unusual in teacher education. They reflect the view that teaching is primarily a practical act rather than a reflective process and that situating teacher education in universities inevitably means an over-emphasis on what is called 'theory.' How we see the notion of 'theory' will influence markedly how we assess 'teacher readiness.' The tension or 'dissent' that exists between practice and theory in the curriculum of teacher education and indeed the school curriculum remains a major unresolved contradiction in education and one that impacts directly on professional teacher identity. Conceptualising teacher education as narrative may be a first step in coming to grips with this contradiction.

While it is accurate to note that narrative has been incorporated into curriculum in various ways, this has not been common in all areas, with mathematics and science being particular omissions for example. In reviewing the development of narrative in the curriculum, Conle (2003, p. 3) points out:

Yet within this astonishing proliferation of a field that was in its infancy 15 years ago, there has been no comprehensive delineation of its various components, no differentiation in the educational functions of these components and no extensive proposals on how one might see the connection between narrative and curricular learning outside the traditional use of narrative in literary education.

If this is so, then the task ahead becomes one of identifying the components of narrative so that they can be incorporated into teacher education across all areas of knowledge. In suggesting that teacher education in its entirety can be considered as beginning with a blank slate as it were upon which personal narrative is then writ large, a major statement is being made concerning knowledge generally and teachers' knowledge in particular. Pinar's (2004, pp. 192 – 193) discussion of the curriculum is most helpful here when he draws on the work of Polanyi in reminding us that even the most 'scientific' ways of knowing are finally 'grounded in the tacit knowledge of participants in the dialogue out of which the field is constituted.' Pinar raises the question of the curriculum being a 'complicated conversation' and that far from being a conversation isolated in classrooms, it constitutes the cultural and traditional nature

of professional practice. Here we see a connection between the ideas of discursive environment, narrative and complicated conversation that can begin to reference teacher education programs and become the means of bringing practice and theory, or theorising, together.

Pre-service teacher education in Australia whether a four-year undergraduate Bachelor of Education degree, or a one-year Graduate Diploma of Secondary Education generally consists of a mixture of disciplinary and curriculum studies together with classroom experience. While it can be argued that such programs contain aspects of discursive and authentic learning, the approach being proposed here is much more extensive in scope. A pre-service teacher undergraduate program based on a narrative construct could consist of the following broad features:

- A philosophical approach to knowledge and learning that places personal practice and discourse at the centre of all learning.
- An organisational approach to learning that emphasises integrated block time for maximum interaction amongst participants.
- Narrative writing and conversation that incorporates a range of discursive styles including autobiographical, self-study, case and case study, springing from school – university partnerships.
- Knowledge production that emerges from personal experience, which is then available for theorising and for further investigation in practice.

These points could be seen as a template to be laid over existing structures and subjects, but to bring the power of narrative into full effect and to liberate the potential for learning of all participants, it is more appropriate that all existing subjects be replaced entirely by the narrative frame. This means of course that predetermined knowledge does not dominate the learning process and that the beginning point of learning, as too the continuing reference, is the personal narrative of each pre-service teacher, a narrative that is documented for public exhibition and defence and forms the direction of the learning project. Subjects or imposed knowledge strictures become unnecessary, as the imperatives of learning are identified in practice and are taken up by the community for investigation. This inevitably leads to contact with the broader understanding of others and the utilisation of theoretical concerns as the working through of issues proceeds. The role of critical friends, facilitators, or elders is brought into play in ensuring that knowledge external to the learner and external to the group is available.

Will a teacher education program based on systematic narrative inquiry resolve the issues noted in the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry above and ensure that graduates are more ‘teacher ready’? Obviously this proposition needs to be investigated in practice and evaluated as time permits. What has been outlined thus far will hopefully take up the issue of professional identity in terms of the teacher’s relationship with professional knowledge and attempt to strengthen this relation through the establishment of discursive and authentic learning environments that enable the construction of personal knowledge through narrative. The linking of the personal and social worlds as nominated by Beattie, will demand that systematic narrative inquiry has an articulated structure and process that will lead to the generation of credible knowledge, knowledge that emerges from personal practice and reflection and which develops in relation to the knowledge of others. It may be thought unlikely that university authorities will sanction a ‘blank slate’ curriculum involving handbook entires that do not detail subject content and assessment procedures. Dissenting voices of this type, conservative voices that support the status

quo and see knowledge as being transmitted at the undergraduate level rather than being personally constructed, will need to be realistically combated.

Constructive Solutions: Professional Identity and Discursive Learning

Publication of *The Reflective Practitioner* (Schon, 1983) highlighted the issue of 'technical rationality' and the need to better understand the essential character of the work of professionals. Schon contended that professionals do not simply apply the knowledge of science, but work instead with practical knowledge in situations that are confusing and are not readily resolved in a technical, algorithmic manner. As has been argued above, the practical knowledge of teachers is difficult to pin down, particularly when, as Schon suggests, there are concepts involved such as the epistemology of practice, knowing-in-practice and reflecting-in/on-practice. The difficulty in arriving at an agreed language (based on an agreed understanding) of how to describe practical knowledge is shown by this comment from Clandinin (1992, p.125):

We see personal practical knowledge as in the person's past experience, in the person's present mind and body and in the person's future plans and actions. It is knowledge that reflects the individual's prior knowledge and acknowledges the contextual nature of that teacher's knowledge. It is a kind of knowledge carved out of and shaped by situations, knowledge that is constructed and reconstructed as we live out our stories and retell and relive them through processes of reflection.

If the education profession is to take such views seriously, that teachers' knowledge is something more than technical rationality and is more holistic knowledge-in-action, then Bernstein's advice (Beck & Young, 2005) regarding the teacher's relationship with knowledge is useful although still in need of greater elaboration. Fullan (2003, p. 4) adds detail when he discusses the reform 'horizons' that have been crossed over the past four decades by education systems. He suggests that the 1970s involved 'uninformed professional judgement,' the 1980s 'uninformed prescription' as state-based reforms became more prevalent and the 1990s were a period of 'informed prescription' as performance and accountability measures were emphasised. Fullan somewhat optimistically describes the 2000s as 'informed professional judgement' due to an increasing recognition by the state that 'top-down' reform without the full participation of the profession is unlikely to succeed. He claims that what is particularly required is 'moral purpose, defined as making a difference in the lives of students' and 'reducing the gap between high and low performers at all levels' (p. 18). This type of approach may provide the missing teachers' knowledge that is being sought through what now might now be called systematic and moral narrative inquiry.

The application of moral purpose by teachers is no easy task. Teese (2003) for example notes that reforms conducted throughout the 1990s in Victoria required devolved management but a re-centralisation of curriculum. This approach to education may indicate a liberal view of school administration, but a tightening of a conservative grip on subject content. Teese comments that 'Achievement patterns in the VCE suggest that market liberalisation pursued within the framework of curriculum centralisation had the effect of increasing the vulnerability of the weakest populations to academic failure, or at the very least did little or nothing to reduce this vulnerability' (p. 1). The speed at which the Year 12 Victorian Certificate of

Education (VCE) over the past twenty years has contributed towards and commodified the outcomes of secondary education, has been quite remarkable. Recently, the introduction of other Year 12 certificates with a more applied and vocational intent has resulted in the VCE becoming more abstract in character and more firmly linked to university selection. Associated with these changes, it seems unlikely that a majority of teachers one-sidedly advocate high examination results as the foremost rationale for schooling. If however a mix of parents, teachers, commentators, politicians and university personnel do adopt this position, then the impact of the economy and conservative political trends on schools have not been substantially resisted or mediated by the profession generally. Implementation of Fullan's 'informed professional judgement' to the extent that it is able to combat vulgar market forces, or support the idea that successful completion of secondary schooling is a social good in its own right and where the vulnerable are more engaged with learning, may not quite yet be in full bloom.

The work of Connell (2003) regarding the relationship between working class families and education offers a counterpoint to the influence of the Year 12 ideology and reports that the market agenda is not as prominent as might be thought. This small study casts doubt on the capacity of the current research base regarding teacher education to meet the many questions arising from the above discussion. In her overview of educational research in Australia, Gill, (2004, p. 13) notes the need for both large-scale and small scale studies that expose 'the close-grained locally embedded work' so that broader insights can be located more particularly in educational practice. For instance, how does a teacher education program that begins with pre-service teachers constructing their own narratives as curriculum and not with specified subjects, deal with content knowledge that is covered by schools, with pedagogical knowledge and the like as outlined by Shulman? (For a discussion of a teacher education program that moved some way in this direction, see Hooley and Moore, 2004) The answer is of course, as required.

The view that pre-service teachers need to be instructed in such knowledge in a step-wise fashion reflects the view that teachers are primarily engaged in the passing on of predetermined adult subject content, in predetermined packages. At some stage, the modern school will move past this concept and encourage all students to actively participate in the construction of student knowledge for mutual and intrinsic benefit. The professional identity of teachers does then not reside in managing and policing knowledge, but as participant in the production of knowledge. The fact that such a paradigm shift has not as yet occurred, allowed Wison, Floden and Ferrini-Mundy (2002, p. 191) to state that 'we found no reports meeting our selection criteria that directly assessed prospective teachers' subject matter knowledge and evaluated the relationship between teacher subject matter preparation and student learning.' It would seem that teacher education programs have made many assumptions on this point.

Of course, systematic and moral narrative inquiry as teacher education curriculum raises just as many dilemmas at this time as it attempts to resolve. There will be criticisms of what may be seen as a postmodern perspective regarding the nature of knowledge as a personal interpretive construction relative to the knowledge of others, issues of knowledge subjectivity and objectivity, knowledge legitimation or truth claims and problems regarding how experience is represented in text. These matters appear to me however to be the concern of all knowledge systems, including those that are essentially positivist in character. Bruner (1996, p. 39) for example makes the point that:

There appear to be two broad ways in which human beings organise and manage their knowledge of the world, indeed structure even their immediate experience: one seems more specialised for treating of physical ‘things, the other for treating of people and their plights. These are conventionally known as *logical-scientific* thinking and *narrative* thinking.

If Bruner is advocating here that all humans use both forms of thinking, then it follows that research programs, formal education courses and our general understanding of knowledge, learning and teaching, need to include both as well. Moore and Young (2001) contribute to this debate when they discuss the neo-conservative or traditional view of curriculum and whom they call, after Raymond Williams, ‘industrial trainers’ (p. 447), where curriculum serves the economy. They propose instead a further view ‘that brings knowledge itself back into the debate about the curriculum without denying its fundamentally social and historical basis’ (p. 446). Systematic and moral narrative inquiry that is undertaken in cycles of investigation over long time frames and which develops in reference to the knowledge of others may enable the professional identity of teachers to strengthen in ways that current arrangements do not.

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