Socioculturally Situated Narratives as Co-authors of Student Teachers' Learning from Experience

Abstract

This paper reports on research into the ways in which student teachers' experiential learning is mediated by socioculturally situated narrative resources. The research uses Wertsch's idea of the narrative template as a co-author of individual narratives. This idea is developed to be useful in the particular context of initial teacher education. Transcripts from post lesson observation discussions between student teachers, school based mentors and university based tutors are used to analyse the processes by which beginning teachers master the use of narrative templates for making sense of and, therefore learning from, their experiences. This research is put into the context of debates about the centrality of 'on the job' learning to initial teacher education and developing interest in recent decades in models of teacher knowledge and teacher learning.

> The task of sociocultural analysis … is to explicate how human action
>
> is related to cultural, institutional and historical context (Wertsch,
>
> 2000, p.511)

Introduction

Since the early 1990s, under the influence of the policies of successive governments, Initial Teacher Education (ITE), in England at least, has moved towards increasingly more school based models and the school based component has been given increasing centrality and size in the process of learning to be a teacher. This trend has included the creation of School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITTs), the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) and Teach First. These three routes all privilege the process of learning 'on the job' (Schwille, Dembele & Schubert, 2007) over the learning that might take place in the higher education institution (HEI) during ITE.   In England this trend has continued up to the present day with the recent introduction of the School Direct route for ITE (Department for Education, 2011) in which schools can become the lead institutions in ITE. A similar, although less extreme, trend can be detected in Scotland to the present day with recent developments, prompted by government policy, in HEI/school partnership arrangements in favour of a more central role for schools and the desire to locate more continuing professional development in schools rather than in HEIs (The Scottish Government, 2010). While it can not be claimed that this trend is replicated in recent developments in ITE in all countries (Furlong, Cochran-Smith & Brennan, 2009; Schwille et al, 2007), it is the case that the nature and status of 'on the job' training is an important consideration internationally in the debates that have grown around the development of ITE since the 1990s (Furlong et al, 2009; Schwille et al, 2007).

This trend towards locating the central process of learning to be a teacher in the school rather than the HEI has been accompanied by interest in a succession of theories of learning to help

understand how this learning takes place and how it might best be facilitated in ITE. Initially these included Schon's model of the reflective practitioner (Schon, 1983, 1987), Argyris and Schon's double loop learning (Argyris & Schon, 1996) and Shulman's pedagogical reasoning and action (Shulman, 1987). What links all of these earlier theories of teachers' 'on the job' learning is the centrality of a cycle of reflection on experience leading to new insights and revised understanding and practice. What is less prominently explored in all of these models is the role of socioculturally situated cognition or situated rationality in mediating the process of making sense of experience. Situated cognition refers to the ways in which a wide range of mental processes, such as understanding and learning, are shaped by the socioculturally specific assumptions, beliefs, values and so on of the context in which the cognition takes place. Situated rationality refers more narrowly to the processes we use to reason about situations and plan action on the basis of that reasoning. Taking a situated rationality view acknowledges that our reasoning processes are not decontextualised and universal, operating in realm of 'pure' reason but also draw on a range of beliefs, assumptions, values and heuristics that are specific to the sociocultural context in which we do the reasoning. It would be possible for a reader of these models to see the learning teacher as a 'lone scientist' learning through reflection on their experience without sufficient explicit clarity about where the resources for the conceptualisation (Kolb, 1984) of experience come from. Where the resources are explicitly identified (e.g. Shulman, 1987, p.13) they could be taken to be bodies of research derived and validated decontextualised knowledge that are independent of any specific sociocultural context.

More recently this focus on learning as a cycle of individual action, reflection and revised action has been replaced by the popularity of a number of social practice theories in relation to professional learning. Most prominent among these has been communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) but there has also been interest in cultural historical

4

activity theory (see Roth & Lee, 2007 for a brief history) and, to a lesser extent in relation to teacher education, sociocultural theory (Wertsch, 1993). These models replace the lone reflective scientist with a model of learning to be a teacher as a process of socialisation into socioculturally situated shared practices and sense making. So, more recently, sociocultural context has been given a central role in the process of learning to be a teacher. As a sign of this trend it is interesting to note that Shulman's more recent work has made the idea of a "community of learners" a central feature of professional learning (Shulman & Shulman, 2004).

Within these models, as they are applied to teacher education, one area that has been relatively neglected is the role of socioculturally situated discourse as a form of mediation in the process of learning to become a teacher. I am referring here to discourse in its constitutive sense as something that creates our world rather than reflects it. It is also worth acknowledging Trowler's claim that social practice theories have often been seen as a relatively benign model of learning emphasising as they do community and sharing and that the actual inner processes of communities of practice, including power relationships, have been insufficiently explored (Trowler, 2005).

In a parallel development to identifying models of professional learning that can aid in the understanding and enhancement of teacher education, there has been an ongoing concern with defining the nature of teachers' knowledge (Ben- Peretz, 2011). Among these attempts have been some that have seen teacher knowledge as primarily narrative in form (Clandinin & Connelly 1995, 1996; Connelly & Clandinin 1999). If we consider Bruner's fundamental distinction between paradigmatic and narrative forms of knowledge (Bruner, 1986) it is clear that a significant element of teacher knowledge of teaching is likely to be narrative in form, dealing as it does with issues of identity, intention, causality and meaning. In connection with this it is also worth acknowledging the force of Polkinghorne's arguments on the

superiority of the narrative mode of knowledge for understanding the social world in general (Polkinghorne, 1988).

The so called narrative turn has had an influence on the study of teaching and teacher education. A recent review of literature in the area (Philpott, 2013) found forty papers published in peer reviewed journals between 2005 and 2011 that explored some aspect of the relationship between narrative and teachers' knowledge, learning or identity. Doubtless there are more than the review found. There is a diversity of theoretical models of narrative underpinning these papers with a significant minority offering no explicit theoretical model at all. The single most influential explicit model is the narrative landscape model developed by Clandinin and Connelly (Clandinin & Connelly 1995, 1996; Connelly & Clandinin 1999). While this model does explicitly consider the relationships between teachers' personal narratives of experience, practice and identity and the narratives that make up the sociocultural landscape in which they operate, this is largely conceptualised as a relationship of constraint in which teachers navigate around narratives in the sociocultural landscape that might be inimical to their own preferred narratives. The original source of their own narratives of teachers and teaching and the extent to which they might be a form of situated rationality constructed from socioculturally situated resources in their professional context is never explored in any detail. One of the consequences of this is that this model does not sit comfortably with the current popularity of social practice models of learning in teacher education as it bears many of the hallmarks of a container model of the relationship of individual thought and action to context (Fenwick, 2008).

Although narrative has been an important concern in recent years for researchers interested in teachers' learning, knowledge and identity, it has played a surprisingly marginal role in research on tutoring and mentoring processes in ITE. Philpott (under review) found that the act of narrating practice during mentor and tutor feedback was either ignored or explicitly

marginalised. Narration of classroom events is seen as a low order activity of less interest than those parts of the tutoring and mentoring process that are explicitly about evaluation and advice (Engin, 2012; Spear, Lock & McCulloch, 1997; Tsui, Lopez-Real, Law, Tang & Shum, 2001; Vasquez, 2004; Wright, Grenier & Channell, 2012).

The purpose of this paper is to outline an approach to understanding learning on the job in ITE that addresses several of the gaps identified in this introduction. This approach:

- Acknowledges the centrality of constitutive discourse in processes of socialisation in teacher education

- Explores in detail the processes of socialisation into these discourses, including power relationships

- Provides a model for the ways in which teachers' individual narratives of understanding are related to the socioculturally situated narrative resources they find in their workplace

- Focuses on narrating as an important part of the mentoring and tutoring process

In addition, it is important to note that much of the academic literature on mentoring and tutoring argues that on the job learning is more effective when mentors, tutors and students are conscious of, and reflective about, the processes of learning in which they are engaged Akcan & Tatar, 2010; Arnold 2006; Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Ben-Peretz & Rumney, 1991; Brandt, 2008; Copland, 2010, 2012; Gibson, 2006; Hudson, 2007; Hyland & Lo, 2006; Le & Vasquez, 2011; Spear et al, 1997; Vasquez, 2004; White, 2009; Wilkins-Canter, 1997). This paper seeks to analyse the nature of this learning process so that mentors, tutors and students can become more aware of it and, therefore, take a more critically reflective approach to it and its strengths and weaknesses.

Conceptual Frame

During the last two decades Wertsch has developed and applied a theory of the way in which narratives provide culturally situated tools that are used as "co-authors" (Wertsch, 2008a) in the creation and maintenance of collective memory (Wertsch, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2008d, 2009, 2011). Wertsch describes how culturally situated narratives are applied to historical experience in what he calls (after Frederick Bartlett) the "effort after meaning" (Wertsch, 2008a, p.144, 2009, p.124). The research reported in this paper focuses on the role of narratives in the 'effort after meaning' that is required in order to learn from experience during initial teacher education. In Wertsch's work on memory he has described how the co-authoring role of culturally situated narratives means that individual memories are shaped by a shared cultural tool such that people within a particular culture are likely to construct memories that resemble one another's in important ways. In the same way, the research into learning reported here explores how the experiential learning of individual students is co-authored by the narrative tools that are available in particular institutional contexts, meaning that what is learned is not individual but tends to reflect the culturally situated sense making of the institution.

The application of Wertsch's theory away from the topic of national and ethnic memory means that it requires adaptation. I will first give a brief outline of Wertsch's theory as he has explicated it in relation to collective memory. I will then summarise in the methods section how it has been adapted for this research

An overview of Wertsch's framework for narratives as cultural tools

In his work on the role of narratives in collective memory Wertsch has emphasised a distinction between two levels of narrative: specific narratives and schematic narrative

templates (Wertsch, 2002, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2008d, 2009). In summary, the distinction is that

> Specific narratives are organized around particular dates, settings and actions, whereas schematic narrative templates are more generalized structures used to generate multiple specific narratives within the same basic plot (Wertsch, 2008a, p.140)

Narrative templates are characterised by a number of features. To their users they have a tendency to be "transparent" (Wertsch, 2009, p130) because "they are largely inaccessible to conscious reflection" (Wertsch, 2008b, p.49) and "those who use them typically do not recognise their power to shape the interpretation of events" (Wertsch, 2007, p.30). This transparency is in turn connected to the fact that "narrative templates are notoriously resistant to counterargument and impervious to evidence" (Wertsch, 2007, p.31). As Wertsch argues "[b]eing abstract, narrative templates are difficult to falsify and hence ideal instruments for supporting beliefs that can not be challenged by counter evidence" (Wertsch, 2008b, p.52).

In relation to specific narratives Wertsch explains that, in contrast to narrative templates, "the events involved in specific narratives are uniquely situated in space and time" (Wertsch, 2008d, p.122). They include "concrete information about settings, times characters and events" (Wertsch, 2008a, p.141). In relation to specific narratives Wertsch (2002) makes a distinction between "two poles of the text" (Wertsch, 2002, p.15), a phrase that he borrows from Bakhtin (1981). The first pole is "the properties of structure or form" which are the "repeatable aspect of text" (Wertsch, 2002, p.15) and that is a "cultural tool". The second pole is its use "by a speaker in a unique unrepeatable way in the production of any concrete utterance" (ibid 15). So the 'concrete utterance' presents a third type of narrative (or perhaps more accurately a particular instantiation of the specific narrative) that is more particular than

the specific narrative. These three instantiations of narrative as a sociocultural tool can be represented as in table 1

Table 1 here

Method

Applying Wertsch's framework to narratives of teaching and learning in initial teacher education

The context of the research reported here is a one year post-graduate course of initial teacher education (ITE) at an English university. The specific focus is on the ways in which beginning teachers on this course narrate their classroom experiences as part of the process of learning from them. The sociocultural dimension of this research is to analyse this process of narration in terms of the "co-authoring" (Wertsch, 2008a) of these narratives by narrative cultural tools that are available within the cultural context of secondary education in England and in the cultural context of particular schools or subject departments. There are diverse definitions of narrative as a unit of analysis in the literature on narratives and narratology. For the purposes of this research Wertsch's work on narratives was elaborated by a definition of narrative taken from Bruner (1991) in which narrative is seen to characterised by nine features. In summary these features are that narrative is about specific "durative" (Bruner, 1991) experience that has human significance and involves agency. Narratives are not created by sequencing "aboriginal" (Bruner, 1991) events into chronological order and causal relationships. Rather, narrative composition is 'top down' in that the overall significance or

meaning of the whole narrative determines how a continuum of experience is subdivided into events and how those events are given meaning. Narratives are centrally concerned with how experience can be understood in relation to cultural norms. This definition of narrative was adopted because it is compatible with Wertsch's work on narrative but it brings greater clarity to what defines narrative as narrative and, therefore, to the features of discourse that need to be explored when researching narrative.

The research was carried out by recording and transcribing three way conversations that took place between student teachers, school based mentors and university based tutors after all three had participated in an episode of teaching led by the student teacher. In total ten transcriptions were made. The data from five of these transcriptions are used in the paper. These were chosen for illustrative purposes as they offered the clearest and most succinct examples of the processes discussed here. The transcripts are designated transcripts A-E and the participants are called students A-E, mentors A-E and tutors A-E. The conventions used for these transcriptions are shown in table 2.

Table 2 here

After transcription the transcripts were analysed using an approach to reading and re-reading based on the hermeneutic circle (Heidegger, 2008). This approach involved attributing provisional meaning to specific sections of the transcript and using this to build up a picture of the significance of the whole transcript and the group of transcripts. Once a first understanding of the meaning of the whole transcript and the group of transcripts was established, this was used to inform re-readings of the specific sections now that they could seen as part of a greater whole. This process was repeated several times and from this an understanding of the narratives in the transcripts was generated. This approach was adopted

because of the centrality of Bruner's idea of hermeneutic composability for the concept of narrative adopted here. Hermeneutic composability identifies the way in which narratives attribute meaning to the events they contain in a 'top down' way such that the structure of the whole narrative confers meaning on the individual details rather than the details having meaning in themselves.

The early readings of the transcripts identified a number of different types of narrative. The data were read as showing that these different types of narrative fall into two groups:

1. narratives about teaching and learning experiences
2. narratives about the student's progress as a teacher.

Constraints of space in this paper mean that I will only deal here with the first group of narrative, narratives about teaching and learning experiences. The readings of the narratives suggested that this first group can be subdivided into three distinguishable subtypes of narrative about teaching and learning. The first subtype of narrative is the narrative that deals with specific teaching and learning incidents in the lesson being discussed. An example of this is:

I mean I think I allocated twenty minutes for the first part of the task where I wanted them to we actually go over the worksheet with them read for a bit and have a class discussion but as you saw it ran over by about ten, fifteen minutes?

Transcript B, Student B

The second subtype of teaching and learning narrative read in the transcripts is one that deals with the broader or longer term picture of how things generally are in terms of teaching and

learning in this school or department, or how things generally are in terms of teaching and learning with this class or pupils in the class. An example of this kind of narrative is.

> And usually with usually with that group I'm quite comfortable in knowing that
>
> when I've told them something straight away they usually know what I'm doing
>
> Transcript C, Student C

It needs to be recognised that these general behaviours and events still relate to particular pupils and groups of pupils so they are not general in the sense that Wertsch's narrative template would be.

These first two subtypes of narrative are clearly evident as narratives in the transcripts, as can be seen from the examples above. The third subtype of teaching and learning narrative may be less immediately evident. This is the narrative of teaching and learning implied ,at the time of this research by the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in England (TDA, 2008) and by officially provided guidance on teaching and learning such as that produced for the National Secondary Strategy (www.education.gov.uk/schools/toolsandinitiatives/ nationalstrategies). These may be less immediately evident as narratives because the Standards for QTS, for example, are not obviously narrative in form. Some individual standards may be short or fragmentary narratives in themselves for example:

Q18   Understand how children and young people develop and that the progress and well-being of learners are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic influences

(TDA 2008)

However, overall the Standards are presented as a set of objectives or goals for student teachers to achieve in order to qualify rather than a narrative. Nevertheless, the Standards taken collectively do imply a narrative of teaching and learning. As Bruner (1991) argues, narratives have an ontological function in that they establish what discrete phenomena or events there are in the situation being narrated and how they are related. The Standards for QTS constitute linguistically the salient features of the teaching and learning process. They also imply a causal connection between these different features. What is true of the Standards for QTS is also true of the guidance that has come from official sources in England in recent decades such as guidance on teaching, learning and assessment strategies from the Secondary National Strategy. These narrative fragments, narratives and implied narratives set up a normative model of what the narrative of teaching and learning events should be. They are the officially sanctioned narrative or the canonical narrative (Bruner, 1991) of teaching and learning. In terms of Wertsch's framework they can be seen as a form of narrative template. This implied canonical narrative or narrative template of the teaching and learning process surfaces frequently in the transcripts. Examples include:

> Em but I suggested em that I you didn't really do in that lesson was modelling
>
> Transcript C, Mentor C

> Were you were you attempting a three part lesson there?
>
> Transcript C, Tutor C

Modelling is a recommended teaching strategy in which teachers demonstrate the tasks or activities they want pupils to complete. The three part lesson has been the officially recommended lesson structure for teaching in England. These examples show that there is a canonical narrative of the teaching and learning process that is derived from official guidelines on teaching and learning and that this is incorporated into the narrative making activities in this situation.

If we relate this group of narratives to Wertsch's original model we can develop the framework for analysing socioculturally situated narratives of teaching and learning in this particular sociocultural context as shown in table 3.

Table 3 here

From this point onwards, I will refer to the three types of narratives as particular, general and canonical rather than using Wertsch's original terms narrative utterance, specific narrative and narrative template. As with Wertsch's original model, each level is created by drawing on the resources of the level below in the table. So a particular narrative about teaching and learning will either be made consistent with the general narrative of teaching and learning in the school or department or, if it deviates, it will need to explicitly address and justify this deviation. This second case is related both to the idea of addressivity (Bakhtin, 1981), which Wertsch adopts from Bakhtin, and to Bruner's (1991) claim that narratives are often explicitly articulated to repair narrative breaches where events deviate from expected or canonical narratives. Similarly, the general narrative of how things are in the school will either be consistent with the canonical narrative of teaching and learning or it will need to explicitly address and justify this breach.

Findings and Discussion

How do beginning teachers master and/or appropriate narrative templates of teaching and learning?

A distinction needs to be made between appropriation and mastery (Wertsch, 1997, 2000). Mastery is the ability to use a cultural tool. Appropriation is accepting the legitimacy of the cultural tool. It is possible to learn to use a cultural tool proficiently (mastery) without necessarily accepting it as legitimate (appropriation). It is beyond the scope of this paper to decide whether the transcripts analysed here are evidence of appropriation or of mastery alone so I will restrict the discussion to the term mastery. I want to begin exploring the question the mastery of narrative templates by considering the origin of narrative templates. Wertsch writes that he takes "schematic narrative templates to be structures that emerge out of the repeated use of a standard set of specific narratives" (Wertsch, 2008c, p.66). This origin of narrative templates is linked to their mastery. As individuals we master the narrative templates of our sociocultural context through repeated exposure to specific narratives in that context. These specific narratives have themselves been constructed using the narrative template of the sociocultural context as a resource. The narrative template then, in turn, becomes a resource for constructing our own additional specific narratives in that context. This is a reciprocal relationship with narrative templates being used to shape specific narratives and specific narratives in turn renewing and perpetuating narrative templates.

The analysis of the transcript data used for this research suggests three key processes that are important in producing the mastery of narrative templates in beginning teachers.

1. The use of the canonical narrative by tutors and mentors in invitations to student teachers to narrate their experiences

16

2. Invitations to re-narrate experiences in terms of specific foci or in terms of particular interpretations that are consistent with the canonical narrative

3. Individual role and power related processes by which differing narrative interpretations are resolved

1. The use of the canonical narrative by tutors and mentors in invitations to student teachers to narrate their experiences

In articulating their own narrative accounts of teaching and learning, tutors and mentors draw on the canonical narrative of teaching and learning. This sets the narrative ontology that students use when articulating their own narrations. In the extract below targets such as "clear instructions" and "differentiation" are informed by a canonical narrative of teaching and learning that constitutes the discrete elements of teaching and learning and the relationships between them. Their prior use by tutors and mentors creates the narrative ontology that is used by the student in his narration. The PD2 referred to in the extract is a form used for synoptic assessment of the student's progress.

Tutor	… have you got an idea about what the targets were from the PD two
Student	Yes there were there were four targets one one of them was pitching
	em pitching and and differentiation other one
	[was
Tutor	[hang on pitching I'm just going to write this down so I've got it down
	em pitching levels of lessons would do
Student	levels of lessons
Tutor	mhm (.) yeah (.) ok

Student	and clear sequential instructions
Tutor	yeah (.) ((*writing notes*)) and
Student	differentiation
Tutor	yeah (.) ((*writing notes*)) (.) and you say there was a fourth one
Student	yes yeah um it's gone em
Mentor	Was it the effective communication ?
Student	em that one comes under clear
Tutor	right em instructions and communications
Student	( ) *communications* ( )
Mentor	right yah
Tutor	right
Student	( )
Tutor	forgotten four maybe it'll come back maybe if you
Student	um yes
Tutor	I've got them em written down there so it just reminds me um as we go along say I have read um your PD two but obviously I haven't got it with me this morning (.) so it's just helpful for me to have a em a recollection of what they were. So do you want to start off by saying something about you know a ha what kind of progress you think you've made um in the last few weeks whilst you've been here and where you are coz obviously this is the first time I've seen you teach

Transcript C

2. Invitations to re-narrate experiences in terms of specific foci or in terms of particular

interpretations that are consistent with the canonical narrative

When the first narration by the student is complete the tutor invites a re-narration of specific

aspects of the narrative that has just been completed. This re-narration is framed in terms of

the canonical narrative of teaching and learning derived from the Standards. So the student is

invited to reconstruct specific aspects of their narrative in terms of this canonical narrative.

This can be seen in the extract below from Transcript B.

In this example the initial student narrative is a narrative of success. Even though parts of the

lesson did not go as planned (for example, timing) or according to the canonical narrative of

teaching and learning (for example, the plenary) the lesson is narrated as a success because

"they'd actually understood what they had to do". The tutor's response ("Do you think they

achieved the learning outcomes?") invites the student to rethink the narrative in terms of a

feature of the canonical narrative of teaching and learning that they don't appear to have

included in their original narration.

Tutor:	So how er you tell us first how you felt the lesson went. What you felt was good about it
	[and ( )
Student:	[I thought to be honest what was good about it was the way the boys actually I mean I prepared a handout for them and it was I mean (.) the text book we've got in school at the moment the ( ) book isn't up to their level and they're a very like to be challenged they don't like to be they like to be constantly kept on task erm the thing, overall I thought the lesson was good, erm, on paper erm but as with these this group as

I've noticed in the past I can set lots of different activities for them like today and we always run out of time because they're a very very, I mean I think I allocated twenty minutes for the first part of the task where I wanted them to we actually go over the worksheet with them read for a bit and have class discussion but as you saw it ran over by about ten, fifteen minutes? It ran over BUT I thought it was suitable to actually let it to run over because I didn't want to rush through it with them and say you know read through it real fast and say there you go go and do your questions because if I'd have done that it wouldn't it would be, the effectiveness of the lesson would have gone erm again we didn't have time to do a plenary, that just went out the window erm but on the whole through talking to the children as I walked round erm you know reading looking over their shoulder reading through questions I could obviously tell they'd actually understood what they had to do

Tutor: Do you think you achieved the learning outcomes?

Student: Yeah as, yeah I really do I mean they know what a ( ) is that was fine erm they can identify ( ) because we went through the ( ) and we went through the ( ) so yeah I think they can actually do that and they can relate it back to their own lives because of the final task that I did with them you know what important events in your life and if you can actually relate it back now so I think all the actual learning outcomes were achieved erm

Transcript B

The apparent hesitation and uncertainty of the student's first attempt to narrate in terms of this aspect of the canonical narrative of teaching and learning suggests that it is not an aspect of the canonical narrative that they had considered before in their narration. They are being invited to reconstruct their narration in a way that draws on the resource of the canonical narrative of teaching and learning and which is, therefore, consistent with it.

This pattern of the tutor inviting re-narration in terms of specific aspects of the canonical narrative is repeated throughout the transcripts of the meetings. The tutor and mentor repeatedly invite the student to narrate their experience in response to specifically identified phenomena, relationships or events constituted by the canonical narrative of teaching and learning. Through this process students are progressively inducted into creating narratives of their lesson and, therefore their teaching and learning practice, which draw on the resources of the canonical and general narratives and are consistent with them.

3. *Individual role and power related processes by which differing narrative interpretations are resolved*

As a preface to this section it is useful to consider the ways in which the different participants in the meeting make different use of the canonical and general narratives as a resource in their particular narratives. Reading the transcripts shows that whereas tutors' narratives and focus setting for student narratives draw most frequently on the canonical narrative of teaching and learning, students' narration often draws on the general narrative of how things typically are in this school or with this class as well as the canonical narrative. This is also true of the mentor. This general narrative (because it is specific to the school or department) is a resource to which the student and mentor have more access than the tutor and therefore this resource is most frequently used in dialogues involving the mentor and the student.

That data shows that for the most part the general narrative of teaching and learning is a localised instantiation of the canonical narrative and, therefore, consistent with it. However, sometimes this narrative is used to repair breaches between the canonical narrative and the particular narrative or to call into question the value of the canonical narrative. It is used to repair breaches between the canonical narrative and the particular narrative on those occasions when it is used to suggest that the events just observed are not typical and that in typical circumstances the narrative of particular teaching and learning events would be closer to the canonical teaching and learning narrative. For example, in the extract from transcript C below the student makes use of a general narrative about usual experiences with this group of pupils to explain why the particular narrative departed from the canonical narrative.

Tutor	Well why you didn't kind of spend more time doing more explanation ( )
Student	ah it was the time and em you know to do do do the timing of the timing ( ) ( ) of the tasks ( ) bit behind ( )
Tutor	mhm
Student	and usually with usually with that group I'm quite comfortable in knowing that when I've told them something straight away they usually know what I'm doing
Tutor	yeah
Student	they usually know what I'm telling them to do so
Tutor	mhm
Student	so I didn't spend as much time as I us usually do and I was a bit to be honest I was a bit flustered as well bit bit fl fl

Transcript C

On other occasions the general narrative is used to question the canonical narrative. On these occasions it is used to argue that the canonical teaching and learning narrative is inadequate or inappropriate in this situation. The extract below from transcript E shows an example of this.

In this extract the tutor refers to a C1. This stands for consequence 1. The idea of a framework of incremental consequences of increasing severity which is understood by teachers and pupils and used consistently is part of the canonical behaviour management narrative of assertive discipline. Also part of the canonical narrative of the Standards for QTS is the expectation that student teachers will use the policies and procedures of the schools that they are placed in. So in two ways this student's particular narrative appears to breach the canonical narrative. However, this student uses a general narrative to argue that the canonical narrative is inappropriate in this particular incident. This is an example of the general narrative being used for repairing what Bruner calls a breach in canonicity.

Tutor	Yeah, em I just wondered about the child that you'd spoken to three or four times by the end of the lesson and whether that perhaps you should have taken a step at some point in the behaviour management
Student	yeah
Tutor	and actually giving them a C is it C1 d'you think?
Mentor	mhm mhm
Student	I think with the group they don't respond at all well to
Tutor	right
Student	it doesn't usually have a stabilising effect

Tutor	right
Student	because they're so used to getting 'em
Tutor	mhm
Student	and I suppose ( )
Tutor	( ) I noticed the same name come up a few times
Mentor	mhm yes
Student	yeah
Tutor	yeah so that *I was just [wondering*
Student	[I think they're so used to getting these now
Tutor	yeah
Student	it means very little to them
Tutor	mhm
Student	lesson after lesson
Tutor	yeah
Student	and they're altogether lesson after lesson
Tutor	mhm
Student	so I've tried using that before and it doesn't it doesn't tend to have much of an effect because they're all just used to it

Transcript E

When considering the individual role and power related processes by which differing narrative interpretations are resolved, it needs to be noted that the transcripts contain three kinds of shared narration:

1. mentor, tutor and student sharing narration.

2. mentor and tutor sharing narration with a differing student narration.

3. mentor and student sharing narration with a different tutor narration

In the first case, where all three agree, no resolution is necessary. In the second case, where the tutor and mentor share a particular narration, this narration becomes the shared or accepted narration through the process previously described in which the student is repeatedly prompted to reconstruct their narrative until it is consistent with the narrative of the mentor and tutor. The excerpt from Transcript B below shows this process. In this excerpt the shared narration between the mentor and the tutor is that the student spent too long on a particular aspect of the lesson and this led to difficulties. The mentor and tutor persist with this narration until the student accepts it as her own narration too.

Mentor: The main thing I I picked up on again was the time I just wondered

             whether you spent too long at the beginning going over work that they

             had done, is it three weeks

             [( )

Student: [we needed

Mentor: you spent maybe a little too too long on that and

             [( )

Student: [we needed to do that though because I wanted them to see the

             importance of actually the caste system

Mentor: [*mmm*

Student: [and

             the reincarnation bit was really important to the lesson because of the

	( ) and I wanted them, it was to do with
	[( )
Mentor:	[*mmm*
Student:	the higher three
	[castes
Mentor:	[*yeah*
Student:	in the ( ) actually go (through) it don't they
Mentor:	*yeah*
Student:	they're the ones who participate in it the lower ones don't now I
	wanted to make sure before I
	[started
Mentor	[*yeah*
	that they could recall this information and I didn't just want to go in
	and say the three
	[( ) participate in this
Tutor :	*((to Mentor))* [did
	did you feel it was just the first bit that was too long or was it (.)
Mentor:	I think it was the the discussion just overall that they were getting a
	bit restless and one or two of them when you look round were getting
	a little bit fidgety and ready to move on to something because
	sometimes you have to change things if you think right you know I'll
	cut that (out) a little bit and and you know move on *((training nodding*
	in agreement throughout this))
Tutor:	you need to monitor how they're responding

Mentor:	they were getting ready for some written task
Student:	[they was
Mentor:	[you know I thought you know they have enjoyed their discussion but I think one or two were just getting a little bit you know
Student:	I mean I could have gone on longer with them (as) I wanted to talk about marriage with them and a few things like that [(and I thought)
Tutor:	[you have to remember that a lot of the time you're talking they're just sitting
Student	*((laughing))* I know
Tutor:	and you've got to put yourself on the
Student:	[mmm
Tutor:	[on the other side of the desk well how long have I actually just been sitting and listening
Student:	right
Tutor:	[ok
Mentor:	[especially the quieter ones who don't sort of join in the discussions as you know as ( )
Student:	as much yeah

Transcript B

The third type of shared narrative is the mentor and student sharing narration with a different tutor narration. In the extract below, from Transcript E, the student offers an alternative narrative to the tutor drawing on the general narrative of teaching and learning, in this case in relation to her own experiences with this class in this school. This is an occasion where the

general narrative as articulated by the student deviates from the canonical narrative although it has to acknowledge the canonical narrative through its addressivity. In other words, it has to acknowledge that it is a deviation from the canonical narrative and justify this in narrative terms. It also needs to be recognised that the tutors' narrative in this case is also an example of a general narrative based on familiarity with the school. This is shown in the reference to C1 which is part of the general practice of this school. However, the tutor's general narrative is one that is consistent with the canonical narrative that assertive discipline is good practice in terms of managing pupils' behaviour. What is significant in this extract is that the mentor seems to accept to student's assertion that the general narrative of teaching and learning in relation to this class is more appropriate than the canonical narrative as way of narrating this aspect of this lesson. As a result, the tutor accepts the student's narration in preference to their own.

Tutor	Yeah, em I just wondered about the child that you'd spoken to three or four times by the end of the lesson and whether that perhaps you should have taken a step at some point in the behaviour management
Student	yeah
Tutor	and actually giving them a C is it C1 d'you think?
Mentor	mhm mhm
Student	I think with the group they don't respond at all well to
Tutor	right
Student	it doesn't usually have a stabilising effect
Tutor	right
Student	because they're so used to getting 'em
Tutor	mhm

Student	and I suppose ( )
Tutor	( ) I noticed the same name come up a few times
Mentor	mhm yes
Student	yeah
Tutor	yeah so that *I was just [wondering*
Student	[I think they're so used to getting these now
Tutor	yeah
Student	it means very little to them
Tutor	mhm
Student	lesson after lesson
Tutor	yeah
Student	and they're altogether lesson after lesson
Tutor	mhm
Student	so I've tried using that before and it doesn't it doesn't tend to have much of an effect because they're all just used to [it
Tutor	[So
Mentor	[What I'm finding with classes who for whom that's true, and there are, em sometimes it can be, not threatening's not the right word to use but almost as threatening as saying you are not doing what I want you are now getting a consequence and doing the whole pantomime and it being exposed and in front of everybody it can be just as effective to just walk over to the pupil and lower your voice and get down to their level and say *( )*

Tutor	mhm
Mentor	and go completely the opposite
Student	yeah
Mentor	because you're actually in their space
Tutor	mhm
Student	yeah
Mentor	[( )
Tutor	[and it's a very personal word as
	[well
Mentor	[and you're not making a pantomime of it *( )*
Tutor	yeah hmm
Mentor	*( )* quiet ( ) that can
Tutor	Yeah or the opportunity because it was break at the end to just say, can I just have a word on the way out? You know, you're not in trouble but I've noticed. Next lesson I don't really want to do this again so lets have a target for next lesson that I actually don't speak to you like that four times because I've done it four times today yeah ?
Student	yeah

<div align="right">Transcript E</div>

In the extracts above we have seen two cases of resolution of conflicts between alternative narratives. Where the tutor and the mentor shared a narration, this narration replaced the student's narration. Where the student and mentor share a narration the result is that this narration tends to replace the narration of the tutor. How the differing narratives are resolved

in these transcripts, therefore, depends on whether the mentor collaborates in narrating with the tutor or with the student. This, in turn, influences which of the possible narratives becomes the accepted narrative and, therefore, contributes to the formation of the narrative template.

Conclusion

The transcript data used for this research, of which a small part is reproduced here, suggest that post lesson observation conversations are a key site for students to master the narrative template of their particular sociocultural context. This, in turn, suggests that mastering appropriate narrative templates is a central part of learning to be a teacher on the job. Narrative templates organise the sense that student teachers make of their experience and, therefore, what they learn from their experience as part of their "effort after meaning". Narrative templates "co-author" the knowledge of professional practice and identity that students develop and in this way are both a structural enablement and a constraint on how beginning teachers conceptualise themselves as teachers, their pupils and teaching and learning. As, previously stated, this is a reciprocal relationship with narrative templates being used to shape specific narratives and specific narratives in turn renewing and perpetuating narrative templates. So as beginning teachers learn to use narrative templates they are perpetuating or renewing the culture of the school. The data for this research was generated when the Standards for QTS were still in operation. Since that time the Teachers Standards (DfE, 2011) have taken their place. However, this does not affect the underlying processes outlined here.

I have suggested (after Wertsch) that narrative templates are "transparent" because "they are largely inaccessible to conscious reflection". This seems like a strange claim to make about

the Standards for QTS (and their successor Teachers' Standards) as they are highly visible and tangible in the form of the many documents that include them and the attention they are given during ITE processes. However, the data generated for this research suggests that they are, in themselves, rarely the explicit focus for negotiation or contestation during the types of ITE processes researched here. Whether particular actions on the part of beginning teachers are consistent or not with the Standards may be debated but whether the Standards themselves are legitimate is not. So their transparency may be seen in the way that they are "resistant to counterargument and impervious to evidence".

Using this model to explore the processes of 'on the job' learning to be teacher has a number of implications for the practices of ITE. One is that students' learning from experience is, initially at least, bounded by the narrative templates of the particular sociocultural context in which they learn. This means that the ontology of the narrative templates of their sociocultural context influence the identities, intentions, relationships and causality of the model of teaching that they construct. Identities, relationships, and causality that are not part of the ontology of the narrative template will be harder to conceptualise and will, therefore, be less likely to be used in conceptualising and learning from experience. This process is particularly powerful because of the, hitherto, relatively invisible role of the narrative template in co-authoring what is learned. This invisibility results from both the nature of narrative templates and from the lack of attention and importance accorded to narrating in much research on mentoring and tutoring in ITE.

Understanding the nature of this process and how it operates will allow students, mentors and tutors to attain a critically reflective distance from it. They can pay conscious critical attention to the nature of the narratives they make and the ways in which they constitute the identities and practices of teaching and learning. This critical distance from their narratives is a prerequisite for deliberately experimenting with the construction of alternative narrations

for experience that might constitute the world of teaching and learning differently and might,

therefore, make learning 'on the job' more expansive (Engestrom, 2001).

References

Akcan, S. and Tatar, S (2010) An investigation of the nature of feedback given to pre-service English teachers during their practice teaching experience, *Teacher Development: an international journal of teachers' professional development*, 14 (2), 153-172

Argyris, C. and Schon, D.A. *Organizational Learning II; Theory, Method, and Practice*, Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley

Arnold, E. (2006) Assessing the quality of mentoring: sinking or learning to swim? *ELT Journal*, 60 (2), 117-124

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981) *The Dialogic Imagination*. Austin: University of Texas Press

Beck, C. and Kosnik, C. (2002) Components of a Good Practicum Placement, *Teacher Education Quarterly*, Spring 2002, 81-94

Ben-Peretz (2011) Teacher knowledge: What is it? How do we uncover it? What are its implications for schooling? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(1), 3-9

Ben-Peretz, M. and Rumney, S. (1991) Professional Thinking in Guided Practice, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 7 (5/6), 517-530

Brandt, C. (2008) Integrating feedback and reflection in teacher preparation, *ELT Journal* 62/1, 37-46

Bruner, J. (1986) *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. London: Harvard University Press

Bruner, J. (1991) The Narrative Construction of Reality, *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 18, no.1, pp 1021

Clandinin, D.J. and Connelly, F.M. (1995) *Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes*. New York: Teachers College Press

Clandinin, D.J. and Connelly, F.M. (1996) Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes: Teacher

    Stories – Stories of Teachers – School Stories – Stories of Schools, Educational Researcher

    April 1996 24-30

Connelly, F.M. and Clandinin, D.J. (1999) (eds) *Shaping a Professional Identity: stories of*

    educational practice. New York: Teachers College Press

Copland, F. (2010) Causes of tension in post-observation feedback in pre-service teacher education:

    An alternative view, *Teaching and Teacher Education* 26, 466-472

Copland, F. (2012) Legitimate Talk in Feedback Conferences, *Applied Linguistics*, 33 (1), 1-20

Department for Education (2011a) *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers* Norwich:

    The Stationery Office

Department for Education (2011b) *Teachers' Standards,* Norwich: The Stationery Office

Engeström, Y (2001). Expansive Learning at Work: toward an activity theoretical

    reconceptualization. Journal of Education and Work, 14: 1, 133-156

Engin, M (2012) Questioning to scaffold: an exploration of questions in pre-service teacher training

    feedback sessions, *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 36: 1, 39-54

Fenwick, T. (2008) 'Understanding Relations of Individual-Collective Learning in Work: A Review

    of Research' , *Management Learning* 39: 3 227-243

Furlong, J., Cochran-Smith, M. and Brennan, M. (Eds.) (2009) *Policy and Politics in Teacher*

    Education; International Perspectives, London: Routledge

Gibson, S. (2006) Lesson Observation and Feedback: The Practice of an Expert Reading Coach,

    Reading Research and Instruction 45 (4), 295-318

Heidegger, M (2008) *Being and Time*, New York: Harper Perennial

Hudson, P. (2007) Examining mentors' practices for enhancing preservice teachers' pedagogical

> development in mathematics and science, *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*,

> 15 (2), 201-217

Hyland, F. and Lo, M.M. (2006) Examining interaction in the teaching practicum: issues of

> language, power and control, *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 14 (2), 163-

> 186

Kolb, D.A. (1984) *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*.

> Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991) *Situated Learning; Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge:

> Cambridge University Press

Le, P.T.A and Vasquez, C (2011) Feedback in teacher education: mentor discourse and intern

> perceptions, *Teacher Development: an international journal of teachers' professional*

> *development*, 15:4, 453-470

Philpott, C (2013) *The Story of an Hour; a sociocultural understanding of student teacher narratives*

> *of experience* (unpublished doctoral dissertation) Lancaster University: Lancaster, UK

Polkinghorne, Donald E. (1988) *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*. Albany: State

> University of New York Press

Roth, W-M and Lee, Y-J (2007) "Vygotsky's Neglected Legacy": Cultural-Historical Activity

> Theory, *Review of Educational Research* 77: 2 186-232

Schon, D.A. (1991) *Educating the Reflective Practitioner; Toward a New Design for Teaching and*

> *Learning in the Professions*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Schon, D.A. (1991) *The Reflective Practitioner; How Professionals Think in Action*, Aldershot: Ashgate

Schwille, J., Dembele, M. and Schubert, J. (2007) *Global perspectives on teacher learning: improving policy and practice*, Paris: UNESCO

The Scottish Government (2011) *Teaching Scotland's Future; Report of a review of teacher education in Scotland*, Edinburgh: The Scottish Government

Spear, M., Lock, N.D. and McCulloch, M (1997) The written feedback mentors give to student teachers, *Teacher Development: an international journal of teachers' professional development*, 1(2), 269-280

Shulman, L.S. (1987) Knowledge and Teaching: Foundations of the New Reform, *Harvard Educational Review*, 57: 1, 1-22

Shulman, L.S. and Shulman, J.H. (2004) How and what teachers learn: a shifting perspective, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36: 2, 257-271

TDA (2008) *Professional Standards for Qualified Teacher Status and Requirements for Initial Teacher Training*, London: Training and Development Agency for Schools

Trowler, P.R. (2005) A Sociology of Teaching, Learning and Enhancement: Improving Practices in Higher Education, *Revista de Sociologia*, no. 76, pp. 13-32, 2005

Tsui, A.B.M, Lopez-Real, F., Law, Y.K., Tang, R. and Shum M.S.K (2001)Roles and Relationships in Tripartite Supervisory Conferencing Processes, *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 26 (4), 322-344

Vasquez, C (2004) "Very carefully managed": advice and suggestions in post-observation meetings, *Linguistics and Education*, 15, 33-58

Wertsch, J. V. (1997) Narrative Tools of History and Identity, *Culture and Psychology* 3: 1 5-20

Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of Practice; Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Wertsch, J.V. (1993) *Voices of the Mind; a Sociocultural Approach to Mediated Action*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press

Wertsch, J.V. (2000) Narratives as Cultural Tools in Sociocultural Analysis; Official History in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia, *Ethos* 28: 4 511-533

Wertsch, J.V. (2002) *Voices of Collective Remembering*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Wertsch, J.V. (2007) National Narratives and the Conservative Nature of Collective Memory, *Neohelicon XXXIV*: 23-33

Wertsch, J.V. (2008a) Collective Memory and Narrative Templates, *Social Research* 75:1 133-156

Wertsch, J.V. (2008b) A Clash of Deep Memories, *Profession* 2008 46-53

Wertsch, J.V. (2008c) Blank Spots in Collective Memory: A Case Study of Russia, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 617:58

Wertsch, J.V. (2008d) The Narrative Organisation of Collective Memory, *Ethos* 36: 1 120-135

Wertsch, J.V. (2009) Collective Memory, in, Boyer, P. and Wertsch James V. (eds) *Memory in Mind and Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Wertsch, J.V. (2011) Beyond the archival model of memory and the affordances and constraints of narratives, *Culture and Psychology* 17: 1: 1 21-29

White, S (2009) Articulation and re-articulation: development of a model for providing quality

feedback to pre-service teachers on practicum, *Journal of Education for Teaching:*

International research and pedagogy 35 (2), 123-132

Wilkins-Canter, E.A. (1997) The nature and effectiveness of feedback given by cooperating teachers

to student teachers, *Teacher Educator*, 32, 235-249

Wright, S., Grenier, M. and Channell, K. (2102) Post-Lesson Observation Conferencing of

University Supervisors and Physical Education Teacher Education Students, *Mentoring and*

Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 20 (3), 379-392