Narrative in Education: Annotated Bibliography

The following annotated bibliography highlights the following areas: history of narrative, narrative and professional development, narrative in classroom practice, narrative inquiry and reflective practice, narrative as a method of data analysis, narrative and qualitative research methods, critical pedagogy, culture, global education, intercultural education, and world language education. Each of the areas presented focuses on narratives in education and my research interests. I have learned that this document is not static and will continue to evolve its strains will be woven together as I continue to shape my experience as a doctoral student.

History of Narrative


This work provides a comprehensive look at the meaning of narrative, the history of narrative, and narrative in practice. The author suggested that narratives were cognitive devices used to create meaning. Human beings, therefore use narratives to organize thoughts and transmit them to others using a universal plot. This constant schema aids in the transmission of events and experiences. Human ability to capture, organize, and retell data from past events dates back to the study of history in Egypt and Babylon (Polkinghorne, 1988). From its origins, narrative has been used in numerous fields to examine and explain human action. It is through an awareness of narrative that research can continue to explore the meaning of human experience.
Narrative and Professional Development


Cooper (1991) stated in reference to M. Belenky, B. Clinchy, N. Goldberger, and J. Tarule work *Women’s ways of knowing* that “…The development of voice was particularly important in the establishment of epistemological perspectives that locate one’s self within the context of one’s culture (p.97). The connection between one’s narrative and one’s understanding of their culture is intriguing to me. Cooper here did not explicitly quote Van Manen’s (1990) notions of reflection, but she did stress the importance of journaling or keeping a diary. She describes the process as a way of “witnessing” and “remembering” lived experiences. I also found her narrative about her journaling class interesting because she talked about how the students used their written work for reflection and sharing, which was a learning process.


The authors posited that narratives create a context that interconnects humans, experience, and time. “Story has an immediacy about it; every good story, whatever its era, seems to be happening right now. Yet, story also enables us to preserve events, to hold them constant and study them” (Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995, p. 28). Stories then become a vehicle that educators can use to exchange beliefs and share experiences. “…Teachers’ stories are an appropriate way of getting started with any of these reflective thinking practices as well as an avenue for attaining the highest levels of professional insight” (Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995, p. 218).

Schubert (1991) discussed the Teacher Lore Project, an “inquiry into the beliefs, values, and images that guide teachers’ work” (p. 207). The project itself consisted of interviewing nominated “best teachers” to gain knowledge about their praxis. This initiative was guided by the desire to reconstruct the image of the “deskilled teacher” and shed a professional light on the teaching practice. The authors posited that through inquiry both the direct and indirect approaches to a teachers’ praxis could and should be identified to add value to the professionalism of the field. Schubert (1991) pulling from Deweyan philosophy stated that “experiential insights held by each teacher constitute a repertoire – that is their personal constructs or theories of action” (p. 210). This repertoire although difficult to explicitly identify constitutes professional practice. The research found after interviewing and observing the “best teachers” in the Teacher Lore Project, found that those teachers that resisted being deskilled (1) maintained a holistic perspective about problem solving, (2) enjoyed time with students, (3) were able to use student’s experience outside of class, (4) valued the importance of teaching, (5) exhibited a love for students, (6) built on student strengths, (7) had a clear sense of vision couple with a skill for revision, (8) had a quest for what was just, (8) found developmental appropriateness a challenge in new situations, and (9) were involved in self-education (Schubert, 1991). Each of the stories shared by teachers during the interviews conducted brought about added insight into experiential knowledge and praxis of teachers. It was the author’s intention
that through interaction with teacher lore our own stories would be “more fully revealed to us” (Schubert, 1991, p. 223).


Witherell explored the paradoxes that exist when addressing the self and the other. She explained that through story and dialogue human beings could gain awareness and understanding. There are also both philosophical and psychological uses of narrative. One topic that emerged from the text that is not discussed much in the field is the notion of “self-deception.” This takes place when imagination alters the narrative. Witherell took an unpopular position stating that “…self-deception may serve to find the creative process” in the narrative and reflective processes (Witherell, 1991, p. 89). The use of narratives was also discussed as a way of engaging participants (teller/ listener & self/ other).

**Narrative in Classroom Practice**


This book is unlike others that I have read by D. J. Clandinin. It is intended to illustrate the experiences of two teachers as it relates to teacher thinking and experiential knowledge. The
The author posited that little research has been done to understand the complexities of teachers’ experiential knowledge. Research has focused on the implementation of theoretical knowledge by teachers in classrooms, which is very different from their experiential knowledge. The problem posed by Clandinin (1986) was that:

It is a commonplace that teachers use their experience when called upon to act spontaneously in instructional settings. It is impossible to imagine that it could be otherwise. To assume that a teacher could somehow be cut free of her history and approach each situation without benefit of past experience would be absurd (p. 3).

The value placed on theoretical knowledge as opposed to experiential knowledge underscores the position of teachers in the educational hierarchy. I found this book to be helpful because it has helped me ground my research interests. It has opened my eyes to the importance of understanding how experiential knowledge impacts teacher practice and more importantly teacher decision making.


The author examined the need for teachers to put storytelling into practice. Storytelling moves beyond the superficial and towards a more effective means of communicating with children. The author presented a story-form model to replace existing status-quo lesson plan models. The story-form model consists of (1) identifying importance, (2) finding binary opposites, (3) organizing content into story form, (4) conclusion, (5) evaluation. Using a story-form model can facilitate student engagement. Without such change in planning many students will be excluded from effective engagement with the curriculum and the content presented within it.

This article highlights the value of narratives in teacher education as transformative tools. The author stated that “…narratives of teaching make an invaluable contribution to understanding what it takes to teach well” (Preskill, 1998, p. 344). As teachers uncover the storied lives of educators they become able to create a second self. The second self emerges according to the work of R. Inchausti through one’s search for meaning, discovering, and purposeful reconstruction as a moral leader. Educators can read and write narratives to facilitate their creation of a second self. Narratives are also powerful tools for teacher learning and development. The narratives discussed in this article included (1) narrative of social criticism, (2) narrative of apprenticeship, (3) narrative of reflective practice, (4) narrative of journey, and (5) narrative of hope. Each of these forms provides an avenue for further discovery, development, and growth that not only can help create a second self for teachers, but also build more meaningful interaction between both teachers and their students.


This article explores the need for parables in teacher education. The author suggested that parables have the ability to provide a space for problem solving and analysis that cannot be attained by case studies or narratives. More research should be conducted that explores parables
and their use in teacher education because an increased knowledge of self can create an alternate way of viewing the world.

**Narrative Inquiry and Reflective Practice**


In this book, Van Manen examines the nature of lived experience in human science research. He described phenomenology as a study of lived experience before reflection and that when we bring reflective awareness to past experiences transformation and education occur (Van Manen, 1990). This reflective process can take place in the form of writing which has the power to teach what is known and the way in which it is known. Therefore reflective or “minded writing” is fundamental in the understanding of life and praxis.


This chapter explores the intersection between reflective inquiry and narrative inquiry. It uses J. Dewey’s philosophy of education to explore experiential constructs in teaching and learning. The authors explained that experiences contain both continuity and interaction. Development therefore comes from the movement across and between various experiential interactions. Each interaction by teachers and practitioners can bring about doubt and uncertainty. Reflection in and on action is an essential movement by practitioners from doubt to doubt resolution and to the
creation of more doubt (Schön, 1995). For narrative inquirers uncertainty and unexpectedness is a part of lived stories. Narrative inquiry itself focuses not on a particular situation or interaction but on the stories that surround a situation to gain understanding. Reflective inquiry on the contrary focuses on understanding the specific situation. A 3-dimensional narrative space exists when there is “backward and forward (continuity), inward and outward (interaction), attentiveness to place or series of places (situation)” (Downey & Clandinin, p. 385). The authors posited that even though both reflective inquiry and narrative inquiry contained a 3-dimensional space the manner in which each approach examined participant experiences and the results of each method of inquiry was different. Reflective inquiry looked for “concrete evidence to corroborate a story” and narrative inquiry “would do the opposite, honoring the story by inquiring into the stories that live on its edges as a means to better understanding” (Downey & Clandinin, 2009, p. 398). “While there is also uncertainty in this moment, in narrative inquiry, we do not intend to reassemble the bits but rather to enter the strewn bits of a person’s life in the social, and place dimensions within an ongoing life. Attending to the multiplicity of what each “bit” or shard in order to compose multiple possible story retellings or ways to move forward in imaginative and narratively coherent ways” (Downey & Clandinin, p. 391).


The article examines preservice teacher education in the Netherlands. Korthagen used math educators in the Stichting Opleiding leraren (SOL) teacher college. The teacher education program at the university assumed that “…it is impossible to prepare prospective teachers for
every situation they may encounter during their careers. However, prospective teachers could be trained to reflect on their experiences as a means of directing their own growth in the teaching profession” (Korthagen, 1985, p. 11). Reflection occurs in five phases (1) action, (2) looking back on the action, (3) awareness of essential aspects (4) creation of alternative methods of action, and (5) trial. This form of reflection becomes reflection that is directed at the improvement of practice. It is specific, focused, and critical.


Reflection is not just thinking it is about “deep learning.” Korthagen and Vasalos presented models of reflection and critique their evolution over time. Korthagen’s ALACT model is modified because practitioners were superficially using the steps (action, looking back, awareness creating alternative methods of action, and trial). The Onion model was the modified ALACT model which looked at the environment, behavior, competencies, beliefs, identity, and mission. The success of both models in my opinion depends on personal awareness.

Korthagen mentioned if one reflects without full awareness of both the personal and professional being superficial reflection will occur.

Lyons, N. (2009). Reflection and reflective inquiry: Critical issues, evolving conceptualizations,

Lyons addressed the critical issues facing the field of reflective practice. She emphasized the need to be aware of the changes occurring in the world and the direct impact they have on professional practice. Dewey, Schon, and Freire are credited as theoretical contributors to reflective practice, more specifically though inquiry, knowing through action, and critical consciousness. These pillars are similar to that of narrative inquiry and in the future researchers of both reflective inquiry and narrative inquiry may benefit by collaborating.


This article explores how participants in an Advanced Studies Teaching and Learning program learn about reflective practice. Reflective practice allows practitioner to examine their practice. The authors conducted a qualitative study that examined the beliefs, dispositions, future actions and attitudes that practitioners had about reflective practice. The study yielded that through reflective practice participants were able to begin to analyze their experiences.

**Narrative as a Method of Data Analysis**

McCormack (2004) provided an alternative way to approach data analysis of interviews called storying stories. This approach is intended to fill a gap found in the narrative research paradigm, which has not provided adequate methods for data analysis. The goal of this article is to move the reader past traditional coding and analysis to a research and participant-based re-construction of storied data. This narrative reconstruction is composed of two main steps. The first requires the participant to recall his/her experience and the second calls on the researcher to interpret the experience creating a new beginning, middle, and end of the narrative. Both the researcher and the participant then work together to create a personal experience narrative based on the data obtained in the interview. This alternative approach allows “both the participant and the researcher to hear their voices and see their experiences in the interpretive story and invite the reader to interact with the stories” (McCormack, 2004, p. 234).

**Narrative and Qualitative Research Methods**


This article uses narrative portraiture to describe the lived experiences of two teachers and their teacher education programs. This article uses portraiture, a narrative approach as a tool to teach *preservice* teacher educators how to better prepare inservice teachers for work in rural communities. The authors defined portraiture as “…an ethnographically oriented method of inquiry that seeks to capture and explain the ever changing complexities of life and experience”
(Burton & Johnson, 2010, p. 378). In this qualitative study two participants related their experiences with both teaching and learning in rural areas. The research findings from this article concluded that “to help recruit and retain teachers who desire to teach in rural communities, preservice teachers needed to encounter a teacher education context that valued the synergy between identities and relationships” (Burton & Johnson, 2010, p. 384). I found this particular article relevant because of its use of portraiture, a narrative approach in qualitative research.


This seminal work provides a foundation for narrative inquiry in qualitative research. It captures the importance of narrative as a research tool and method. Narrative inquirers negotiate relationships between participants, data, and the field. This negotiation requires the telling and retelling of stories by each participant. This work also outlines the key elements such as voice, signature, and audience when composing a research text. Researchers when writing research text must move past their interim text to encompass the complete inquiry. I found the notion of interim texts to be helpful because it emphasizes both the researcher’s constant negotiation and his/her realization that narrative inquiry is a process that requires reflection at each stage.

Clandinin, D. J., Huber, J., Huber, M., Murphy, M. S., Murray Orr, A., Pearce, M., & Stevens, P.

This book described the lived experiences of teachers, students, and administrators as they negotiated life in school. The authors used narrative inquiries to examine and shed light on the challenges facing multicultural urban schools. I found the chapter “Shifting stories to live by: Interweaving the personal and professional in teachers’ lives: to be valuable because of its alignment to my research interests. The focus of the chapter was on teacher identity and how teacher identity shaped teacher knowledge and practice. The authors contended that it was not only valuable to research the professional lives of teachers, but also to use narrative inquiry to extend the research spectrum to encompass teachers’ personal experience because of the effects personal experience have on teacher decision making and classroom pedagogy. “A teachers’ identity is understood as a unique embodiment of his/her stories to live by – stories shaped by the landscapes past and present in which s/he lives and works (Clandinin, Huber, Huber, Murphy, Murray Orr, Pearce, & Stevens, 2006, p. 112). Teacher identity is dynamic, ever changing as new experiences are added.

This book is also valuable for its attention to method. Most narrative inquiry research refrains from any discussion of data analysis. This absence of detailed methods may cause readers to minimize the validity of narrative inquiry as a research method. The authors demonstrate their use of methods to code and analyze narrative data. One data analysis method used is called “word images.” The “word images” reminded me of the “I-clauses” used in the Listening Guide.
(Gilligan, Spencer, Weinberg, & Bertsch, 2003). This could be a good method to use to compliment “storying stories” (McCormack, 2004).


I found this chapter to be of relevance to my research interests because of the role of voice in narrative inquiry. Research is political, but research involving narrative is highly political because of its use by marginalized groups. The authors of this chapter highlighted the importance of understanding the politics of narrative research. They warned against the uneven balance of power in having only the researcher retell the events and present co-authorship as a collaborative alternative. Collaboration between the researcher and the participant in the retelling of events requires reflection on the part of all agents involved. The author also expressed the importance of realizing that written text ends and the politics involved in the narrative are ongoing.

In this work, Polkinghorne attempted to define narrative. Narrative research has historically been complex because of multiple roles that narratives can play in research. Polkinghorne attempted to simplify the complexity by breaking narratives up into two categories (1) paradigmatic type and (2) narrative type. The paradigmatic type of research collects stories as data and analyzes the storied data. The narrative type in turn looks at descriptions of events and/or actions to create a storied account. Each type can be used in qualitative research to yield information that benefits the field of education. I am not sure if I agree with the dichotomy presented by Polkinghorne, I think he misses the mark by not acknowledging that there are grey areas in all research, especially qualitative research. Why can’t narrative research contain elements of paradigmatic and narrative types?

**Critical Pedagogy**


Freire’s work encourages both reflection and action in the movement away from oppression and towards liberation. Educators must remain conscientious of their narrative and the institutionally oppressive narrative that they are depositing in students. If educators do not take the time to reflect on their narrative the systemic cycle of oppression will continue. After the reflection step comes action which leads to liberation. I hope that my research incorporates narrative, reflective process and sociopolitical contexts because they shape human experiences.

**Culture**


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This article looked at both the role of culture and its integration into foreign language classrooms. The researchers conducted a study of licensure candidates from the east coast and the west coast in the United States. This narrative inquiry used thematic coding of participant reflections and interviews. The finding of the research suggested that teachers were looking for ways to “embed” culture in the curriculum, instead of teaching the Four Fs. This provides evidence of a movement away from foods, fashions, festivals, and folklore. This article briefly touched on the use of experiential learning as a strategy in teaching licensure candidates, which could also be applied to “teaching” culture in foreign language classrooms.


This article examines the effects of culture integration in language classrooms. The authors concluded that culture integration leads to increased student motivation and an increased positive outlook about cultural awareness and international mindedness. The research study conducted looked at participants’ perceptions about culturally integrated language courses. This article made many valuable points and it opened my eyes to the fact that the integration of culture in language classrooms is a challenge all over the world, but as a reader and scholar I want to know what this model looks like. The benefits appear to be clear, but how is the approach implemented?

Language and culture are connected and if the teacher does not explain or teach culture misunderstandings can occur. This point reminds me of Byram and Feng (2004). Qu (2010) described culture as all aspects of shared life in community.

**Global Education**


This chapter discusses a collaborative project designed to develop awareness of global education amongst *pre-service* teachers. The project provided professional development and mentoring to university students in an education program. Reflective practice was used in the work with *pre-service* teachers to highlight the importance of viewing theory and practice from multiple perspectives. The authors posited that through reflective journaling *pre-service* teachers were able to expose their ethnocentric biases while learning to teach global perspectives in the classroom (Dove, Norris, & Shinew, 1997).
Intercultural Education


This chapter attempted to discuss cross-cultural narrative research through the researcher’s experience with participants around the world. The complexities of the researcher and participant relationship were addressed in the context that researchers working within multiple cultures must be cognizant of issues of power.


The use of self-narrative inquiry fosters reflective practice. Reflection through narrative grants teachers the opportunity to reflect on cultural differences between themselves and their students. The author posited that “to be effective in culturally diverse classrooms teachers must confront certain contradictions in their own identity” (Garcia, 1997, p. 146). This self-discovery can shape a teacher’s pedagogical decisions in his/ her interaction with diverse learners both nationally and internationally. Self-narrative inquiry is rarely incorporated in teacher education programs, but can provide preservice teachers with the reflective space to begin a critical dialogue that will inform their decisions as culturally responsive teacher practitioners.

Grimshaw’s main argument is that language is never neutral. Linguistic imperialism promotes existing power structures and looks at non-European languages as deficient. Grimshaw discusses the notion of a “false consciousness” that international educators have. This concept can be connected to Freire’s ideas about narratives and institutionalized oppression. Are teachers not sharing their cultural narratives because of their “false consciousness” and ideologies of dominant language and cultures?

**World Language Education**


This research article argues that preservice foreign language teachers cannot distinguish between the 5Cs (communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities) and the Four Fs (food, fashion, festivals, & folklore. After interviewing several preservice teachers their responses showed that they had theoretical understanding of the two approaches to teaching foreign languages, but that the textbooks adopted by school districts did not lend to using the 5Cs approach. Although this article focuses on preservice teachers’ awareness of critical pedagogy and multicultural education, it does not address teachers’ own experiential knowledge and how this knowledge can be used in the foreign language classroom. Díaz-Greenberg and Nevin
discuss the implications for applying the deficit model to students, but I argue that teachers apply the deficit model to themselves every day when they do not share their experiences with students.