A Pedagogical Narratology?

Exploring the Narrative Turn in Educational Studies and Philosophy

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“What does this consolidation consist of, and in what ways can narratology be said to diversify? Are narratologies, in the plural, evolving toward narratology, in the singular – possibly to become a discipline in the full sense of the term? Does diversification imply more double-entry narratologies, or does it, perhaps simultaneously, involve a look at the various scientific cultures underlying research programs in narrative theory, past and present, but also non-Western? As theoreticians address issues of cognition and context in narrative, in what ways should the role of poetics in narratology be rethought?”

*homo narrans*, the storytelling animal
How are narrative concepts adapted in ES, and how can they be ‘enriched’?

Narrative in Educational Studies?

Learning/teaching through Narratives

Teaching as Narrative
The Narrative Turn in Educational Studies and Philosophy
“The imaginative application of the **paradigmatic mode** leads to good theory, tight analysis, logical proof, sound argument, and empirical discovery guided by reasoned hypothesis. … The imaginative application of the **narrative mode** leads instead to good stories, gripping drama, believable (though not necessarily "true") historical accounts. It deals in human or human-like intention and action and the vicissitudes and consequences that mark their course”

Opposition within social sciences
“In arguing for a new form of what Goodson calls narrative learning (Goodson, Biesta, Tedder, & Adnair, 2010) we want to point out that as one of the major sites of self-construction, life narrative (research) is a site for learning. … In this book, we want to further explore this kind of learning, especially how narrative as a pedagogic process can nurture, more explicitly, a positive shift in one’s sense of self.”

… as a descriptive tool
“In a study of blogging, we argue that narrative construction is core to engaging with Web 2.0: narrative construction in order to “make sense” of ... practice across blogs makes considerable demands of the creative and semiotic work to be done by the user, as each blog is a unique configuration of the resources available, organized with varying degrees of attention to “readability” and “accessibility” by the blogger”

... as a descriptive tool
“a narrative theory of learning, one that connects experiential learning and the notion of narrative as a sense-making medium.”

- Learning through narratives (hearing or telling)
- Learning as narrative
Our ‘Narrative’ Work in Teacher Education (for language teachers)
“Narrative is the very stuff of teaching. Teachers love to tell and hear stories about teaching. In the telling, they set the stage, construct a plot, and provide characters and a real-life problem. Moreover, most Language teachers have active and lifelong reading histories. They know not only what stories are but understand what stories do. Indeed, many English/Language Arts teachers chose their career because it involved narrative”

Mary Kooy, “The Telling Stories of Novice Teachers”
Professional teacher identity
a first principle of teacher education
“what beginning teachers believe about teaching and learning and self-as-teacher”

Bullough, 1997, p. 21

“a popular movie that is in some way (even incidentally) about an educator or a student”

Trier, 2000, p. 3

Paul Ricoeur’s *narrative identity*
“a self instructed by cultural symbols, the first among which are the narratives handed down in our literary tradition”
Contextual anchoring & identity

1. ... a story prompts its reader to search for ANALOGUES between fiction and his/her own context (reality)
   - The idea that learn something about ourselves while reading

2. ... the relation between fiction and reality can prompt him/her to REVISE his view on reality
   - A ‘review’ of who we are
Graphic Novels

Intermediality & Cultural Literacy

Framing
“storytellers can be likened to guides who invite readers, listeners, and viewers to create, inhabit, familiarize themselves with, and hence better appreciate exemplary as well as exceptional varieties and modes of action” (Herman 2002: 55)

Action representations (i.e. teaching practice) as examples for reflection
The Teacher as Storyteller
A good curriculum should tell a story. That story should be one in which the student plays one or more roles. Those roles should be roles that normally come up in such a story. ... The roles should be ones that the graduate of such a program might actually do in real life or might actually need to know about ... The central argument here is that good education requires good stories, not solely stories that one is told, however. A good education relies upon the creation of stories that a student can participate in and feel deeply about.
We are not only the authors but also the classroom narrators of our courses. Just as teaching drama is reinforce by the theatrical space of the classroom, and teaching poetry is enabled by the oral and communal aspects of recitation, so too teaching fiction provides an opportunity to play with the teacher’s narrative role and perspective ... Every literary technique of realist, modernist, or postmodernist/metafictional narrative can be adapted into a pedagogical technique as well; every literary convention of narrative structure can be turned into a classroom practice.
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“If we want children to learn to read the most important step is to give them reasons for bothering. … Endless skills and sub-skills to be mastered for some vague utilitarian end are hardly an adequate incentive or justification for the effort required, especially for children whose home background does not provide the incentive or justification”

- Kieran Egan, 1986, p. 88
Lessons should be “good stories to be told rather than sets of objectives to be attained”

A coherent sequence of relevant events and activities
Tension between values – oppositions

“what’s next?” – rhythm – plot
   “powerful principle of coherence and a criterion for selecting what is relevant at work in any good story” … and lesson

Affective responses – Humanizing content
Away from “inhuman structures of knowledge” / “Grasping […] things in terms of human intentions, emotions, hopes, fears”
The Story Form Model

1. Identifying importance: Why should it matter to children? / What is affectively engaging about it?
2. Core binary opposites / values
3. Organizing content into story form: selection according to …
4. Conclusion: resolution / mediation
5. Evaluation: How can one know whether the topic has been understood?
Our question in the actual project was specific: is the alternative of *teaching as story telling* a valuable alternative or complement to the officially recognized way of planning teaching in secondary education? … This project functions as a illustrative case study for a larger research question: namely, what can this experiment and its results teach us about narrative as a mode of thought, when it is implemented in education?
The Project
Data Collection & Selection
2010-2011 and 2011-2012
pre-service teachers (language and literature)
make a lesson on either literature, grammar & language, or on a specific theme that include language skills.
critically discuss Egan’s proposal
83 papers; the second year 91 papers.
Data Analysis

Potter and Whetherell's - "interpretative repertoires" (1987) "recurrently used systems of terms used for characterizing and evaluating actions, events and other phenomena." (149) "to capture the 'doxic' (Barthes, 1977) – Response via 'sedimented' beliefs

Rothbart and Bartlett (2008): once accepted "these repertoires provide easily accessible narratives that speakers use to rationalise, justify or condemn their actions and those of others to a particular audience at a particular time, the community proxy for individual cognition, at times replacing individuality with blind obedience to the norm" (233).

the collective discourse of students as a whole and what they feel others expect them to think about
Results 2010-2011

(minus)
could not be applied to all topics or subjects, especially in grammar education
model is time-consuming
too abstract, vague or hard to understand
only suitable for primary schools or small children

(plus)
motivating students … reflecting on its relevance
interactive teaching … learner participation
justification of lessons
a good way to remember content
Results 2011-2012

(minus)
could not be applied to all topics or subjects, especially in grammar education
model is time-consuming
not be fitted in the standard 50 minutes of class time
did not provide adequate structure to their classes

(plus)
student-centered … learner participation
the structure of the model
integration of diverse teaching methods and media
teaching across disciplines
Main Insights

(minus)
could not be applied to all topics or subjects

Bruner’s paradigmatic versus narrative paradigm

too abstract, vague or hard to understand

How do you make a good narrative? / narrative interpretation vs. production of narrative (Design, see Krogh Hansen)

(plus)
a good way to remember content

Herman’s story logic: “a powerful tool for rendering the world cognizable, manageable, and rememberable” (24).
“man is in his actions and practice, as well as in his fictions, essentially a story-telling animal”


“Does narrative itself (operating in a feedback loop of some sort) help shape people’s ability to emplot their experiences, to mold their worlds into storyworlds?”

-David Herman, *Story Logic,* p. 9
Media Support
Mauern in Deutschland und in der Welt

Algemene Talendidactiek: taak 3 – Ellen Dobbelaeere (00703443)

Bekijk het onderstaande filmpje en probeer de volgende vragen te beantwoorden:
- Waarover gaat het in dit filmpje?
- Wat heb je gezien?
- Welke gevoelens wekt dit bij je op?

Berlin Mauer (Berlin Wall) 1961 - 1989

Herken je hetzelfde verhaal in onderstaand lied?
- Welk verhaal wordt aan de hand van het lied "Wir sind wir" van Peter Heppner en Paul van Dyck verteld?
- Welke elementen uit de Duitse geschiedenis herken je in het clipje van dit lied?
- Hoe zou je de titel van dit lied interpreteren?
Theoretical Adjustments
A narrative trail is not merely a linear path but ‘a chain of events organized into a coherent schema from a personal perspective (i.e. that of the narrator). And a narrator’s perspective brings to light intentions, interpretations, and evaluations related to these events’

– Kevin Walker, “Story Structures: Building Narrative Trails In Museums”
  p. 109
A WebQuest is a scaffolded learning structure that uses links to essential resources on the World Wide Web and an authentic task to motivate students' investigation of an open-ended question, development of individual expertise, and participation in a group process that transforms newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuests inspire students to see richer thematic relationships, to contribute to the real world of learning, and to reflect on their own metacognitive processes.

– Thomas March, 2007, also Dodge, 1995
basic terminology

Need for ‘enriching’ classical concepts in Educational Studies
- Narrator techniques (e.g. as gate-keeper/provider of (deferred) information)
- How do you create a ‘story-world’?
I'M SORRY. I JUST GOT CARRIED AWAY. THAT'S ALL.

BIEN SÛR. A GOOD STORY CAN DO THAT TO YOU.
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