

**“I REMEMBER WHEN ...”:
THE IMPACT OF TEACHERS’ STORYTELLING ON TEACHING and
LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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ABSTRACT

The quality of teaching and learning in higher education is enhanced when teachers draw on their own personal and professional experience to augment their teaching; in other words, their teaching draws on, and is enriched by, the stories they have lived.

This research took place in a previously under-explored area of higher education teaching and learning. Previous research in this area gave prominence to the students' version of storytelling and assumed that teachers were familiar with storytelling as an approach in teaching and learning in higher education. It was this assumption which drew attention to a gap in the research which needed to concentrate instead on a teacher-centred view. This helped to identify the main three research questions that governed the subsequent research methodology.

This PhD thesis research study found that whereas generally teachers did not initially associate storytelling with education, there were teachers who consciously incorporated storytelling within their teaching. Those teachers who admitted to being storytelling enthusiasts promoted the idea even further and incorporated their teaching into a thought-out over-arching storytelling approach.

The research study findings outlined what could be described as the short-term affective value of storytelling which derived from the attributes of the teacher such as charisma, credibility, and enthusiasm for, and practical experience of the subject being taught. Storytelling also has an affective value that derives from the relationship between teacher and student improving the latter's attention to the lesson and developing curiosity to connect the story to the taught subject. The findings also outlined what could be described as a longer-term effectiveness on student learning such as story recall with, in most cases, links to remembering the taught subject and a resultant better understanding of, and increased interest in the taught subject. The ultimate finding was that the real power of storytelling emanates

from the bringing to life of the taught theory via the life experiences of the teacher.

Recommendations are made in terms of teacher practice, teacher training and further post-doctoral research. While there are caveats in this respect, storytelling can overcome some of the teaching difficulties arising from the increasing widening participation and diversity of the current higher education paradigm. One of the caveats in this storytelling scenario must be the need to take care with the use of humour. This might potentially cause concerns with regards to taste and ethics and one must be wary of causing offence specially where race, colour and creed are concerned.

The hypothesis that a causal link existed between teachers' experiential storytelling and students' learning has been suggested, at least from the teachers' perspective. While there are some limitations to the scope of this research and the resultant findings, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the findings are important enough to be worthy of consideration as a teaching approach and as a subject for further research considering student attitudes to teachers' storytelling and also to test the generalisability of the research approach in other Institutions of Higher Education.

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CONTENTS

Title Page	1
Abstract	2
Acknowledgements	4
List of Contents	5
List of Appendices	10
List of Figures	11
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND	12
1.1 Introduction to the research subject	12
1.2 Background to the research project	14
1.3 Introduction to the research process	18
1.3.1 Grounded Theory	20
1.3.2 Stage 1 - Momentary perspective	24
1.3.3 Stage 2 - Exploratory Research – informal interviews	24
1.3.4 Stage 2 - Exploratory research – case study	25
1.3.5 Stage 3 - Literature review	26
1.3.6 Stage 4 - Workshop based survey groups	27
1.3.7 Stage 5 - Interviews	28
1.3.8 Stage 6 - Consolidation, Analysis and Conclusions	29
1.4 The Structure of the Thesis	30
1.4.1 Summary of Chapter 2 - Literature Review	31
1.4.2 Summary of Chapter 3 - Methodology and Methods	34
1.4.3 Summary of Chapter 4 - Findings	38
1.4.4 Summary of Chapter 5 – Conclusions, Findings and Reflections	40

1.5	Writing Style	42
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW		45
2.1	Introduction to Literature Review: structure and content.	45
2.2	The evolution of storytelling	49
2.2.1	Storytelling's roles from pre-history to social media	49
2.2.2	Storytelling's educational role in society	51
2.2.3	How storytelling works in the educational role	55
2.2.4	Word Meaning	56
2.2.5	Plot and Structure	58
2.2.6	Storytelling and Research.	59
2.2.7	How storytelling interfaces with time	61
2.3	Storytelling in higher education: setting the scene	65
2.3.1	The changing paradigm that is higher education.	65
2.3.2	Storytelling across higher education disciplines	69
2.3.3	Storytelling affects: imagination, memory and interest	72
2.3.4	Storytelling effects: the teaching and learning interface	74
2.4	Storytelling within student-centred practice	76
2.4.1	Personality-Types and Learning-Styles	77
2.4.2	Experiential Learning	80
2.4.3	Reflection	82
2.4.4	Student-centred and teacher-centred practice	84
2.5	Storytelling within teacher-centred practice	85
2.5.1	Storytelling uses experience of the real world	86
2.5.2	Storytelling needs real life sources	89
2.5.3	Storytelling: a case study – GM, GE and GEC	91
2.5.4	Storytelling: a Leadership and Teaching Skill?	93
2.5.5	Storytelling: a definition for higher education	96
2.6	The Research Questions	101

CHAPTER 3.0	METHODOLOGY and METHODS	104
3.1	The Research Methodology	104
3.2	Research Methods	116
3.2.1	Pilot Studies	116
3.2.1.1	First pilot study as Informal Interviews	117
3.2.1.2	Second pilot study based on a case study	118
3.2.1.3	Third pilot study as survey group	120
3.2.2	Workshop -based survey groups	120
3.2.3	Individual responsive Interviews	124
3.2.4	Other research methods considered	127
3.3	Credibility of research	128
3.3.1	Validity and triangulation	128
3.3.2	Reliability and inter-rater reliability	131
3.3.3	Generalisability and continuous improvement	133
3.3.4	Transferability	137
3.4	Ethics	138
3.5	How the research material was generated and managed.	142
3.5.1	Pilot studies research material	142
3.5.2	Workshop based survey groups research material	144
3.5.3	Interviews research material	151
Chapter 4	FINDINGS and THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	156
4.1	- Analysis process leading to findings and research questions	156
4.2	- The Relationship between the three research questions	161
4.3	- Research Question 1	163

4.3.1	Finding 1 - Affective value of storytelling	164
4.3.1.1	Attributes of the teacher	167
4.3.1.2	Attributes of the teacher-learner relationship	171
4.3.1.3	Attributes of the learner	176
4.3.2	Finding 2 - Storytelling has an effectiveness.	179
4.3.2.1	Memory of story and lesson	180
4.3.2.2	Understanding the lesson	182
4.3.2.3	Understanding the role of storytelling	185
4.3.3	Finding 3 - Storytelling can be powerful	186
4.3.3.1	Real life and reality	187
4.3.3.2	Coping with diversity	189
4.3.3.3	Student storytelling	190
4.4	Research Question 2	191
4.4.1	Finding 4 - As storytellers, research participants' draw on their own experiences	191
4.4.2	Finding 5 - Storytelling exists in different disciplines	196
4.5	Research Question 3	197
4.5.1	Finding 6 - Practitioners perceive storytelling in different ways	198
4.5.2	Finding 7- Storytellers use a range of sources	203
4.6	Some cautionary findings	206
CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS and REFLECTIONS		210
5.1	CONCLUSIONS	210
5.1.1	Contribution to knowledge	211
5.1.2	Relevance of the research	214
5.1.3	The impact of storytelling	216
5.1.4	Caveats	217
5.2	RECOMMENDATIONS	218

5.2.1	Recommendations for practice	219
5.2.2	Recommendations for further post-doctoral research	221
5.3	REFLECTIONS	224
5.3.1	Methodology	224
5.3.2	Definitions	227
5.3.3	Credibility of research	229
5.3.4	The search for doctorateness.	232
5.3.5	Limitations to research	234
5.3.6	Personal observations	236
	<u>REFERENCE LIST</u>	237

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – SUMMARY OF RESPONSES OF EXPLORATORY RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	279
APPENDIX 2 – POWER GENERATION CASE USED AS A PILOT STUDY.	281
APPENDIX 3-EXPLORATORY RESEARCH WITH YEAR ONE STUDENTS RE CASE STUDY AS FORM OF STORYTELLING	282
APPENDIX 4 – SUMMARY HEADINGS OF POWER POINT SLIDES FOR PRESENTATION AT TYPICAL ELECTIVE WORKSHOP STUDY GROUP	283
APPENDIX 5 – SUMMARY HEADINGS FOR PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FROM TYPICAL CONFERENCE ELECTIVE WORKSHOP STUDY GROUP	284
APPENDIX 6 – TYPICAL WORKSHOP SURVEY GROUP DELEGATE CONTRIBUTION FOR BLOG	285
APPENDIX 7 - MATRIX ALIGNING RESEARCH ANALYSIS STAGES WITH BRAUN and CLARK (2013, 159-274).	287
APPENDIX 8- MATRIX LINKING THEMES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS and FINDINGS.	288
APPENDIX 9 – SUMMARY INFORMATION FOR INTERVIEWEES	289
APPENDIX 10 – CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWEES	291
APPENDIX 11 - TRANSCRIBED PARTICIPANT NOTES FROM GROUP SURVEY NO. 1 FOR NVIVO	292

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 – Venn Diagram of Initial Research Elements.	19
Figure 2 – Main stages of the research study	23
Figure 3 – Workshop-based Survey Groups	121
Figure 4 – workshop-based survey group formats.	150
Figure 5 - Attributes of Storytelling's Affective Value in Teaching	167
Figure 6 – Attributes of effectiveness of storytelling	180
Figure 7 – Attributes of the power of storytelling	186

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction to the research subject

Storytelling has long functioned as a means of communication in both historical and social terms. Storytelling dates back to prehistory (Bahn and Rosenfeld, 1991; Gaur, 1992) since when it has formed an essential component to the communication of information essential to support the infrastructure of society (Hurlburt and Voas, 2011). Storytelling played a communications role in the development of the educational evolution of homo sapiens. (Pagel, 2012, 2016) suggests that storytelling may also have a role in the current evolution of higher education. The suggestion underpins this thesis' investigation into storytelling as a teaching approach in order to strengthen the link between the teacher-centred perspective and the student-centred perspective of teaching and learning in higher education.

Storytelling is a widely understood social phenomenon (Baker and Boyle, 2009; Blayer and Sanchez, 2002; Fox Eades, 2006; Gamson, 2002; Propp, 1968, 1984; Turner, 1999). Storytelling is increasingly used in pedagogy and is usually very affirmational with a dominant focus on pre-higher-education compulsory levels of education (Moon, 2010) and with a focus on the student as storyteller (Dös, 2015; Mokhtar et al., 2011). In the context of higher education, storytelling is widely acknowledged as a student-centred approach in teaching and learning (Abrahamson, 1998; Fawcett and Fawcett, 2011; McDrury and Alterio, 2003; Newman, 2004). However, there is little or no literature on storytelling as a teacher-centred approach.

Lincoln and Guba (1986) offer a useful definition of research as "a type of disciplined inquiry undertaken to resolve some problem in order to achieve understanding or to facilitate action" (549). This definition is useful in that it offers a starting point for a research study. In this particular study the problem to be resolved is that experienced by a teacher's wondering whether or not, and if so, how best to use storytelling in an attempt to improve the teaching and learning interface. The project culminates in finding answers to the research questions which derived from the literature review. The findings

that emerged from the resulting data provided answers to the research questions and achieved a conclusion that offered a greater understanding of the research subject.

This research is offered as a contribution towards assisting the evolution of teaching approaches in higher education as part of the general evolution of higher education as described by Franzel (2010) and Oakes (2011). The most recent views have focused on student-centred approaches summarised by Bryan (2015). He describes the context for that stage of HE's evolution in the following terms.

"Considering how, for example, life experience, state of mind, motivation and aspirations of the learner might affect his/her capacity to learn is a more recent interest of higher education research" (22).

Halpern and Hakel (2002) compiled a series of papers by concerned educational researchers who collected data on student and teacher feelings of satisfaction with various teaching approaches. Unfortunately, their data does not enlighten us to the extent by which a specific learning objective was achieved. It was my intention to make some effort to close this knowledge gap by assessing the effect that storytelling as a teaching approach might have on achieving learning objectives. This research concluded that the evolution of practice in higher education should not necessarily move from student-centred perspective to teacher-centred perspective but should instead seek to establish a means whereby some improvement in the quality of teaching and learning may be gained from both student-centred perspectives and teacher-centred perspectives to the mutual benefit of both the teacher and the student.

The ontology that lies at the root of this research study links together fundamental philosophical considerations such as communication, language and listening, as promoted by Heidegger (Dreyfus and Wrathall, 2007). Of the many variations of ontological philosophy (platonic, Ionian, atomism, etc.), of which Glenn (1929, 1951) gives a readable introduction, the category

into which this research most clearly resides is that of a more modern social ontology as propounded by Eldred (2008) which focuses on human beings as objects and communication between them as the epistemological means by which they know one another.

The epistemology that identifies the ontology of this research subject needs to recognise that storytelling is part of epistemological metaphysics which addresses the a priori and a posteriori acquisition of knowledge; that is respectively knowledge acquired by teaching and knowledge acquired by experience. As Eldred (2008) puts it: "Truth accepted on authority is not truth, but an adopted opinion based on trust or faith in another. For the truth to be appropriated, it must be disclosure to an *individual*, learning self" (5).

1.2 Background to the research project

This thesis reports on research which stems from observations made as a result of spontaneous storytelling by the researcher while giving a lesson to level one engineering students. This researcher's instinctive and therefore preferred teaching approach is to use storytelling. It is therefore to be expected that this thesis is written in a style that readily reflects this approach, though admittedly more so in some sections than others.

The idea for the research resulted from a "momentary perspective" (Rae, 2013, 407) which occurred while teaching a Level 1 Business Management class and which aroused curiosity in the researcher. The inspiration occurred while teaching to engineering students the fundamentals of costs, mark up, profit, and selling prices and the impact of these topics in turn on profit and loss accounts and balance sheets. The subject was a core element which the students did not opt to study. The class were struggling. Numerical worked examples were having no impact. As I mentioned the words 'company survival and growth' I recalled an incident from a previous life when I overheard a colleague explaining these principles to a potential customer who was trying to negotiate a price discount. I heard myself say to the class, 'I remember when ...' but went no further thinking, 'I should be teaching this class, not reminiscing.' I then apologised to the class for the diversion and

asked them to focus on the next worked example. In response to my 'Any questions?' one student raised his hand and said, 'I have a question, Sir. What were you going to tell us when you said, 'I remember when ...?'

With reservations, and not wishing to divert too much time, I recounted the anecdote. What happened next was apparently not unusual as Miley (2009) reported an identical reaction.

"The classroom atmosphere changed ... Students sat listening in absolute silence, without moving. Many sat forward as if waiting expectantly. Their body language indicated that they were totally focused ... Initially I found this unnerving ..." (362).

One student was sufficiently interested to ask, as he left my classroom, "Did your colleague get the order?" In fact, my colleague did, and without having to agree a discount. My own reaction to this storytelling incident was one of curiosity. Schostak (2002) puts appropriate words into the mouths of researchers: "What is going on here?" (20). Some students referred to this anecdote in their answer to an examination question some months later. Why did they remember the anecdote, which could have been regarded as a distraction or diversion? The anecdote did seem to help them in their learning as they recalled it in the correct context of an appropriate examination question. This required further investigation. The case for researching storytelling as an approach to teaching and learning in higher education was based on the potentially positive affect it had on students as listeners; as well as the concomitant effect storytelling has as a catalyst to learning. These both emanate from the power that stories and storytelling make available to the teacher as storyteller and has done since mankind's first attempts at communication using cave art (Bahn and Rosenfeld, 1991; Gaur, 1992) through to the current variations on the theme of social media (Hurlburt and Voas, 2011). As Crawford et al. (2015) put it, "All of us have stories to tell, and we tell stories every day" (39).

Much interest was shown by everyone with whom the idea of the research was discussed. This was especially so among colleagues who worked within

the same ethnographic area and within which the research would be carried out as an example of auto-ethnography. Full interest, support and encouragement emanated from a wide network of contacts and provided the impetus to complete the research such as it is. In fact, a few doubters would have helped to focus the mind on any potential research difficulties; but in fact, none were forthcoming. The researcher had to find his own misgivings. As well as such encouraging interest being shown by current colleagues in Higher Education, contacts outside higher education who remembered university life albeit a lifetime later also contributed to this early exploratory phase 1 of the primary research. The opportunity came to progress the investigation in assignments for the two-year part-time PGDE. The tutor for the PGDE explained that 'anecdotes' were part of the wider subject of 'storytelling' (Morris, 2007).

The idea for the thesis grew from these nascent ideas into the PhD research subject. Discussion with colleagues and potential research supervisors complemented study of research literature to determine whether the research proposal should have been based on a hypothesis or a research question. If the latter, should the word 'effectiveness' be included in the research question? Does effectiveness exist in the first place? How can you measure effectiveness? The effectiveness of storytelling could be measured by testing the extent to which stories are remembered. But that is not the criterion. The criterion of storytelling's effectiveness is in terms of the ability of storytelling to enable the associated subject matter to be not only remembered but understood by association with the more easily remembered story.

More recent anecdotal evidence emanated from higher national engineering students at a local College of Further Education where two students opted to take management degrees rather than straight engineering degrees. One student volunteered the information that he had made the change because "of the way you made management more interesting". The other student appeared on a work-based distance learning degree which I supported as a tutor. There may have been other similar minded students.

Having decided eventually on neither a hypothesis nor a research question but instead on a research subject, a research methodology was required.

Initially, consideration of available methodologies might well have led to converting the subject into one or more questions, which did happen as the research moved on from the literature review.

Bradbury et al., (2010) consider that in many cases it is useful to know something of the author's background and research experience in order to take a considered view of the author's work. As a contribution to a considered view being formed by readers of this thesis, the following brief bibliographic synopsis is offered. The author's perspective on higher education matured throughout a career in business management in which the author's reflections on lifelong learning provided a series of observations and experiences of a wide range of professional, further and higher education teaching approaches. I trust that the following summary is what Bradbury et al. (2010) had in mind. An engineering degree via a four-year thin sandwich course leading to a BSc was followed by a three-year part time Diploma in Management Studies course which was extended to four years while commissioning a project in the Middle East. Studies leading to Associate Membership of the Institute of Export were followed by a three-year distance learning MBA at Henley Management College. Further Education qualifications led to a PGDE at Lincoln University which seamlessly lead into the PhD programme. All these qualification courses, together with numerous in-house short courses at locations such as Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh, and the GEC Management College at Dunchurch, provided opportunities to observe teaching styles in many different scenarios.

Many of the styles were well recognised by Entwistle (1988) but one observation predominated; the most effective teachers were those who were able to illustrate their teaching with storytelling of their own practical experience. Experiential based learning has been acknowledged and researched for thirty years by Kolb (2015) who acknowledges that "... techniques of experience-based education have added vitality to my teaching" (xiii), although a specific means of measuring vitality was not forthcoming.

1.3 Introduction to the research process

This thesis is a story. Every story has a subject area, a beginning, middle, and an end; and, linking it all together, a plot (Moon, 2010). As Bernstein (1990) puts it, "Typically, we call the conceptual structure which binds the events of a story together a plot. Plots are not events, but structures of events. The meaningfulness of plot-structures is analogous to the meaning of human action in that they are governed by a teleological or purposive movement" (55). The purpose of this plot-structure is the better understanding of the original proposed idea regarding storytelling. This thesis is a story of a journey through research. The story begins from a simple idea, as research often does. In this case the idea stems from awareness of how a spontaneous in-class anecdote starting, 'I remember when ...' attracted the attention of a class and contributed to a positive learning outcome. The story progresses through the development of the idea during a postgraduate teaching diploma, then for the PhD via a literature review which is wide-ranging, but which identified a number of recurring attributes of storytelling (e.g. experience, 'the real world', memory, imagination), and research in a number of scenarios to develop the context of these attributes.

The research process for this project required the subject to be initially deconstructed both into basic elements and into the links between those elements whose relationship is represented in the Venn diagram below. This shows the three elementary research elements R1, R2 and R3 respectively, as well as in the three linked pairs of elements, and centrally in the overall research subject which combines all three elements. These elements are interlinked in pairs (R1 + R2, R1 + R3, and R2 + R3). The research subject is at the hub where all three basic research elements intersect. The Venn diagram illustrates the elements themselves, the links between the elements and the central research subject. The first part of the thesis structure corresponding with the literature review is based on those elements and links. Lea (2015) finds the Venn diagram useful. In this case it helps to explain the relationship between aspects of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Clough and Nutbrown (2012) also endorse this process by suggesting that the research student identify three key themes from the

research questions in order to develop sufficient focus for the research (111). Mapping these on to the Venn diagram enables a more precise focus for the literature research to become clear.

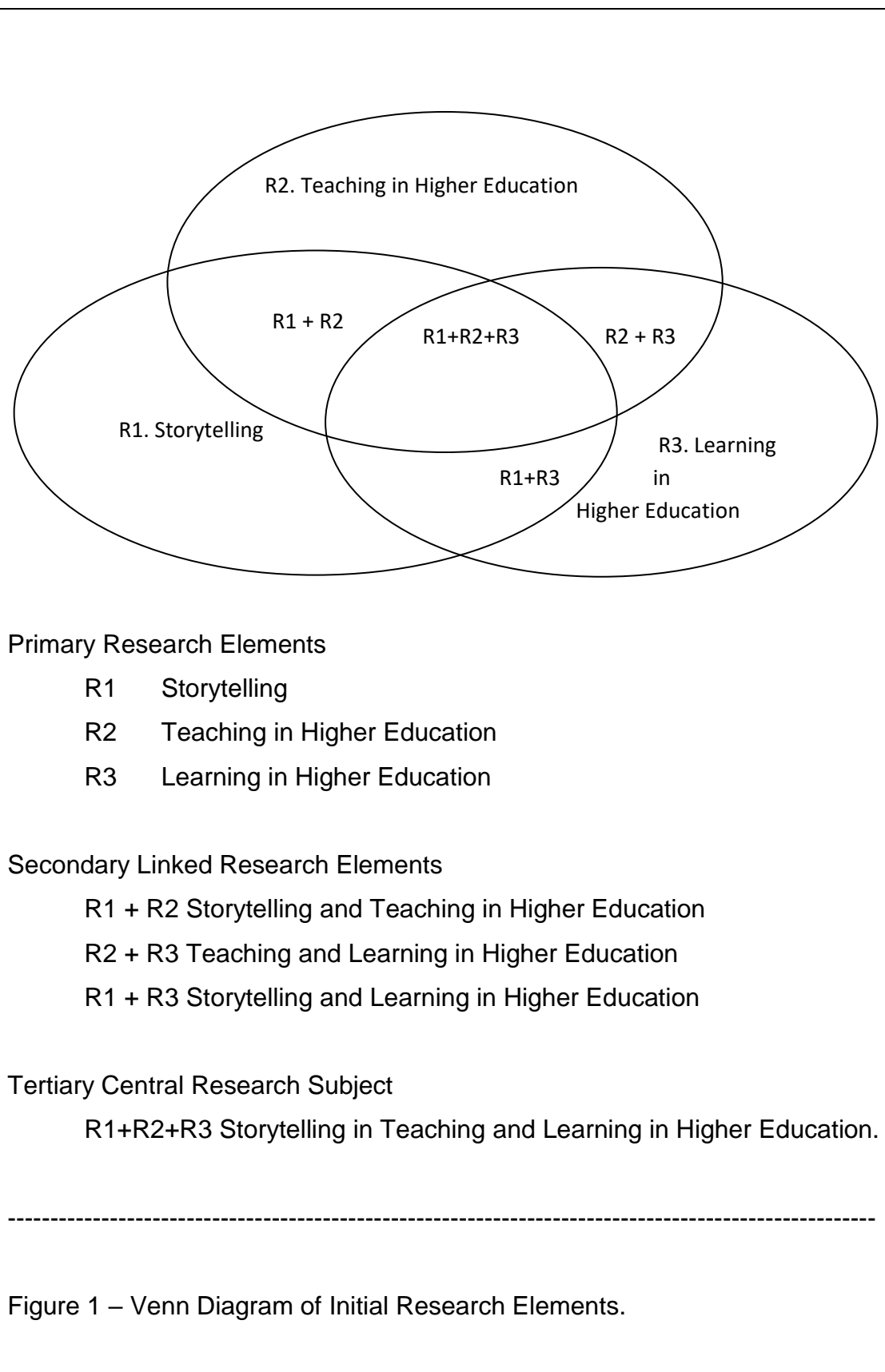


Figure 1 – Venn Diagram of Initial Research Elements.

The Venn diagram itself usefully produced further research questions.

How does each element interact with each of the other two?

How do all three interact together?

How shall each of the basic elements and four linked areas be researched?

1.3.1 Grounded Theory

The research process aligned with Grounded Theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss, 1999) in that the research process starts with the collection of research material from which data emerges as themes make themselves apparent. Sourcing research material in grounded theory methodology precludes preconceived hypotheses, but the process must remain sensitive to all possible theoretical relevancies (Glaser and Strauss, 1999, 194). The theorising process compares data from the research study's different source materials as well with existing literature and the aforementioned possible theoretical relevancies (Grbich, 2013, 189). Although there is much debate concerning the variations on the different emphases of both Glaser and Strauss (Higginbottom and Lauridsen, 2014), and of the Grounded Theory methodology itself (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007; Cresswell and Poth, 2018), the fundamentals of the above definition apply to the research as described in greater detail in Chapter 3 – *Methodology and Methods*. It is appropriate for this research process to be considered to be a variation on the Grounded Theory approach for three reasons.

Firstly, the research did not derive from a previously identified theory or hypothesis proposed by previous research. As described above in Section 1.2 – *Background to the Research*, the process emanated from curiosity aroused from a particular occurrence or phenomenon; the outcome of the phenomenon was unexpected and thus not anticipated by any particular theory or hypothesis.

Secondly, the research methodology itself followed an internally driven organic growth process whereby one level of research led to a subsequent level of research. At the very beginning, the research process developed from a particular occurrence and the resulting curiosity wondered about the

why and wherefore of that occurrence. This curiosity led to considering the barest minimal level informal social discussions on the subject of storytelling in higher education as a matter of general interest. These informal discussions moved into the first inklings of a research project when notes were made as records of such discussions which became more than just as a matter of interest. These notes comprised the first stage of research material from which data was extracted. Literature was perused in an early effort to answer the question posed by Schostak (2002) who, in providing guidance to qualitative researchers in education, suggests that an important question at times should be: "What is going on here?" (20).

Thirdly, data collection proceeded in parallel with literature review, another feature of Grounded Theory (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Following the initial incident, both primary research (exploratory, Survey Groups and interviews), and secondary research (the literature review), proceeded in parallel (Silverman, 2017; Wisker, 2008), each prompting and guiding the other.

A colleague provided initial research clues suggesting that anecdotes were part of the wider subject of storytelling (Morris, 2007) and recommended reading such as McDrury and Alterio (2003) who focus on the use of storytelling as an approach whereby students tell stories as a means of reflecting on their own personal experiences. In their approach which emphasises that educators should encourage students to tell practice-related stories (50), McDrury and Alterio (2003) overlook the potentially more important issue of the teachers' stories; although in passing they do suggest that the teachers could set examples for the students by telling stories to students, but give no guidance on how this might best be done.

While informal discussions with colleagues in higher education showed interest, enthusiasm and encouragement that the research subject would be worthwhile, more formal discussions were combined with preliminary surveys carried out to help the researcher delineate the problem (Evans et al, 2011). As the primary research progressed, preliminary findings suggested areas where support from further literature review was required. Literature review is an activity which bears on all areas of a thesis and "... all your chapters use

and interleave the literature, theory and arguments" (Wisker, 2008, 284). The intuitive decision to simultaneously carry out primary and secondary research is supported also by Silverman (2017) who suggests that the bulk of the reading is usually best done in and around the data collection and analysis. This is to be expected in the early stages of a research project, such as a PhD, where the researcher is endeavouring to identify a research direction and therefore needs to occasionally refer to a map, viz. the literature, to identify and locate key features of the local research environs. Both primary (direct discussions, survey groups and interviews) and secondary (literature review) researches were complicated by the various synonyms, such as anecdote, that exist for both stories and storytelling. The supportive role of anecdotes within academic writing itself is extolled by Rugg and Petrie (2005) who used anecdotes to support their 'Unwritten rules of PhD research' pointing out that "... the anecdotes are there to illustrate the underlying points and to help you remember them" (xi). Secondary research took the form of a critical review of literature, text books or journal articles (Garson, 2002; Hart, 1998) as well as 'grey literature' as recently discussed by Oliver (2012) and Ridley (2012). As stated previously, the research process developed in alignment with the basic tenets of the Grounded Theory methodology of Glaser and Strauss (1999). The research study as a whole evolved through ten stages as the objectives themselves evolved as the research and writing proceeded in parallel as Silverman proposes (2017, 25) and as information emerged from the interim ongoing analyses. Figure 2 summarises the ten stages. The starting point for this process was a "momentary perspective" (Rae, 2009, 407) which led to exploratory primary research comprising informal discussions and a two pilot studies. Secondary research of literature identified three research questions for which a methodology was devised comprising two additional research methods to complement the exploratory research as a first phase research method. The two additional research methods comprised workshop-based survey groups and individual in-depth interviews. Analysis of the research material from all three methods was triangulated and subjected to an inter-rater reliability exercise. The resultant data contributed to groups of findings which contributed answers to the three research questions. Conclusions, recommendations and reflections finalised the research study.

1-Momentary perspective – Light bulb moment

2-Exploratory research – Eight initial interviews plus 2 Pilot Studies – (a Case Study Questionnaire and the First Workshop based survey group) from which themes begin to emerge in elementary form).



3-Literature review starting with three interlinked research areas and resulting in more clearly defined themes and the three research questions.



4-Main research project comprising four survey groups (in addition to the pilot survey group) incorporated into conference electives as workshops.



5-Main research project comprising eleven in-depth individual interviews.



6-Consolidation of research material merging transcripts from exploratory research, the content of feedback forms from the survey groups and the transcripts of the interviews. Material then available for NVivo11 analysis.



7-Analysis initially by inspection of research material to identify data which was categorised in turn into themes with the assistance of NVivo11 leading to identification of seven findings related to the three research questions.



8-Conclusions –



9-Recommendations for professional practice and post-doctoral research.



10-Reflections on both research outcome and the personal research experience

Figure 2 – Main stages of the research study

The research study summary shown in Figure 2 was inspired by Barrett and Hussey (2015) who encourage the use of visualisations in doctoral writing. Introductory descriptions of each stage follow.

1.3.2 Stage 1- Momentary perspective

The starting point was the "Momentary Perspective" (Rae, 2009, 407) or Light Bulb Moment initiated when I heard myself, instinctively and in a totally unprepared and unrehearsed manner, utter the words, "I Remember when" My curiosity was aroused by positive reaction of the whole class to the subsequent spontaneous storytelling which made me ask myself, "What is going on here?" Curiosity aroused a need to explore this phenomenon and investigate the potential for further research.

1.3.3 Stage 2 - Exploratory Research – informal interviews

The exploratory research comprised thirteen informal interviews with colleagues and others who willingly reminisced on their past education (Appendix 1) in an effort to identify whether this or similar phenomenon had been previously experienced by them and whether this might be a suitable subject for further research. The interviewees showed a level of interest that included encouraging further research – so that now there was a need for wider input of more formal and focussed secondary research of the prevailing literature and primary first-hand research with teaching practitioners. Appendix 1 summarises the questions asked, and the responses received. Interviewees were asked about positive as well as negative learning experiences as both students and teachers. Additionally, the interviewees were encouraged to recall the circumstances that made the experiences positive or negative.

Preliminary textual analysis of the content of the responses indicates that three key issues emerged from this preliminary research exercise; issues that developed as themes throughout the research study from these early stage research exercises. The first finding, with nine relevant mentions, was that teachers who are remembered not only show interest in the subject but also

in their students. Mentoring featured when teachers showed a specific concern or provided encouragement by establishing rapport with students or empathy. There were five relevant mentions including mentor (twice), as well as related phenomena in words such as charismatic, sponsor, and rapport. A second initial finding volunteered by the interviewees was that memorable teachers were sufficiently relaxed and self-confident that they could communicate closely with students by incorporating humour in their teaching approach. They made five relevant mentions including humour (twice), joke and jokes, and enjoyed. A third initial finding subscribes to the more general overview that the following five relevant key words signify: context, relevant, effective, practised, and debate; namely that any research should include cognisance of a wider perspective of the paradigm of higher education in which storytelling may exist as a recognised teaching approach. Putting storytelling into a wider context was useful at this early stage in the research study as it helped to keep the research subject in perspective and not become too narrowly focused. The key issues summarised above suggest that further research following this exploratory stage would endeavour to establish whether storytelling featured in generating interest; whether close personal communication styles would include storytelling; and whether humour is an important element in memorable storytelling.

Stories and storytelling were each mentioned only once specifically by the interviewees. One of these key words was mentioned by an interviewee in the following context.

“BA Law was also boring until a new teacher arrived after practising as a lawyer came into FE teaching, made law really interesting by telling legal cases like stories.” (Interviewee reference A5)

1.3.4 Stage 2 - Exploratory research – case study

The opportunity was taken at this stage of exploratory research to question a class of students who were in the first year of an engineering degree at an FE college prior to completing their degree courses at nearby universities.

The research used a purpose-written topical power generation scenario (Appendix 2) as a pilot case study which was being considered at the time for any future storytelling research within this research study. A summary of the question and responses is attached as Appendix 3. The outcomes were inspected and analysed with a view to seeking clues regarding storytelling as a teaching approach. An initial overall observation demonstrated that these FE students had a pleasantly surprising broad perception of the issues. This perception was an indication of their maturity and learning from real-life experiences as they were viewing this exercise from the viewpoint of sponsored apprentices in the world of work. The first three key themes, interest, mentor, and humour, that came out of the previous exploratory research exercise were not mentioned specifically by any of the FE students when given the opportunity to consider the benefits or otherwise of case studies as a form of storytelling teaching approach. However useful related themes were identified in terms of key words such as "benefits, helps, show progression and problems, importance of re-evaluating, see action, downfalls, and manage". The fourth previous theme concerning the teaching and learning interface was exemplified by the FE students with such terms as motivating, experimentation, discovery, comprehend, experience (mentioned three times), ideas, realistic, beneficial, and the phrase good learning curve, which all initiated themes which developed as the research study progressed. A new fifth theme was suggested by the phrase 'comfort zone for students' which developed later in the research study into the theme that suggests that not all students will be comfortable with storytelling, either at all, or in certain circumstances.

1.3.5 Stage 3 - Literature review

Following the exploratory research, a secondary research of relevant literature investigated the history and current context of storytelling in both wider society as well as in pre- and post-compulsory education. The relevance was defined in terms of the three primary research methods. From this secondary research of the literature review, three research questions were identified which assisted with a definition of the primary research methodology and helped to decide on the research methods.

1.3.6 Stage 4 – Workshop based survey groups

The first survey group not only acted as a pilot for the subsequent survey groups but also demonstrated the feasibility of running a survey group in the form of a workshop offered as an elective in an education conference. The pilot survey group provided research material and data that promised to be meaningful and relevant such that it was decided to repeat the workshop-based survey group research method as opportunities presented themselves. A series of higher education symposia and conferences took place during the period of the research study in which elective workshops or presentations could be organised. Four additional survey groups were incorporated into symposia workshops. The pilot study demonstrated the usefulness of enabling attendees to provide anonymous written feedback or contributions. The format for each workshop survey group was provided in summary form together with the registration for each symposium which was provided as a handout to each workshop attendee and was affirmed in the Power Point presentation used as the guiding format for each workshop. A summary of a typical Power Point presentation is attached as Appendix 4. Useful research material was obtained via the research feedback forms of which a typical blank example is attached as Appendix 5. These were completed by the individual attendees thus providing anonymised research material from which data was extracted as evidence for preliminary findings. This research material was inspected visually and by NVivo11 to identify data which was categorised into themes. Bazeley and Richards (2000) do not presume any particular approach to data analysis in their introduction to NVivo implying that every research project is different, and it is up the researcher to adapt techniques as considered appropriate, which to be honest, was not a great deal of help. As Calman (2002) states, NVivo is a complex piece of software better suited to larger, more structured projects; implicitly larger than the average PhD thesis. The NVivo website itself says, "Remember that NVivo can help you to manage, explore and find patterns in your data but it cannot replace your analytical expertise" (QSR International). An early finding from the research indicated that the analysis of the research material had to take into account that contributors of research material used synonyms as the best words that came to their minds at the time of writing their survey group

feedback forms or when speaking during the interviews. The Word Search facility in NVivo11 proved useful as it incorporated a synonym facility which earlier versions of NVivo did not. In conjunction with the Find and Search facilities on MS Excel spreadsheets and MS Word documents the need to cater for the proliferation of synonyms in the research material enabled a much more comprehensive analysis to be carried out on the research material when seeking relevant data, and in categorising the data. The awareness of synonyms became closely associated with another phenomenon that occurs in qualitative research; the matter of definitions. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) consider definitions to be an important issue at the beginning of any research project (193).

Appendix 6 provides a sample summary from the workshop survey group feedback research material which was intended to be incorporated into a blog for attendees to access and respond to. Unfortunately, blogs at that time could not be limited to certain parties so this mode of communication was not pursued. The anonymity of the contributors made this impossible to email. The symposium organisers did not retain lists of those attending particular electives. For future reference, attendees at similar workshops could be asked to voluntarily advise their email addresses on a list to be kept totally separate from the feedback forms. These findings from the workshop-based survey groups provided a broad-based consensus of views which demonstrated a need for, and provided support for, more in-depth research which followed in the form of interviews.

1.3.7 Stage 5-Interviews

Eleven individual in-depth interviews formed the final phase of the primary research stage of the research study. The format was based on the responsive interview process advocated by Rubin and Rubin (2012) who proposed that such interviews should be regarded as discussions. Participants were drawn from a range of teaching disciplines within the Social Sciences School of the University. Rather than sit down in front of an interviewee with a prepared set of questions, not unlike a questionnaire, the core of responsive interviewing involves formulating and asking three kinds of

questions: main questions, probes and follow-up questions. The latter are critical as they create the interaction with the interviewee by responding to what the interviewee has previously said. The initial main question was by way of an ice-breaker and asked the interviewee to describe their route into higher education. This approach drew a comprehensive response covering previous career, factors that drew the interviewee into higher education, their favoured teaching approaches and their views on and use of storytelling. The resultant research material provided data which was analysed while triangulating with the data arising from the previous two phases and methods of the research study to enable sound findings to be identified and in turn aligned with the research questions.

1.3.8 Stage 6 – Consolidation, Analysis and Conclusions.

The sixth stage in the research methodology found that seven of the main findings aligned with the three research questions which had emerged at the end of the literature review and which provided the premise on which the primary methodology was based. The major findings were categorised into small groups pertaining to each research question.

Three major findings connected to the first research question related firstly to the affective value of storytelling, secondly to the effectiveness of storytelling and thirdly to the power of storytelling. The latter finding covered three themes; real life, diversity, student storytelling.

Two major findings connected to the second research question and affirmed that many of the survey group research participants who used storytelling came from a vast range of disciplines and had experienced storytelling as students in a wide range of learning circumstances and in a wide range of learning subjects. Similarly, they had used storytelling in a wide range of circumstances and disciplines as teachers. The more in-depth research with interviewees affirmed that individuals brought similar wide ranges of learning and teaching experiences, but within their own past experience as individuals.

The two major findings connected with the third research question affirmed that practitioners used storytelling in many different ways. Not only do teachers use storytelling to enhance their teaching but often reverse the focus and incorporate their teaching into storytelling which forms the overall framework of their teaching approach.

Teachers use a wide range of sources for their storytelling, adapting and fine-tuning stories to suit the teaching scenario. The source that generates the most positive reaction from students are those that are part of the teacher's own personal experience. "I remember when I" is more effective and has more affective value than "I know someone who ...", unless of course the storyteller wants to avoid too much self in the teaching or wants to hide behind a second character for some other reason.

There were also some cautionary findings. For example, delegates at the first study group were sufficiently aware to indicate that there were 10 types of dangers and pitfalls where storytelling was concerned as a teaching approach. These ranged from getting too personal, via humour causing offence, to self-indulgence by the teacher producing a reaction by students along the lines of, "Here he goes again ...". Interviewees stressed that storytelling must be in the context of the taught subject. Overlong stories will risk losing students' attention. The internationalisation of higher education results in classes that may include students whose background may preclude them from understanding the story or putting into context.

1.4 The Structure of the Thesis

The thesis comprises five chapters following in general terms the structure suggested in the University of Lincoln PhD Handbook 2015-16;

- 1 - Introduction and background,
- 2 - Literature review,
- 3 - Methodology and methods,
- 4 - Findings related to research questions
- 5 - Conclusions, recommendations and reflection.

The structure of the thesis evolved over time, particularly in terms of the numbers of chapters and their titles. There follow summaries of Chapters 2 to 5 as finalised, with an indication of the main outcomes of the research study.

1.4.1 - Summary of Chapter 2 - Literature Review

The Introduction (Section 2.1) to the Literature Review describes the initial research approach whereby the literature was reviewed in a logical sequence to establish an understanding of the key topics of the thesis title – storytelling, teaching, learning, then higher education. Each topic was researched in broad-spectrum terms by way of introduction and background, and then researched more specifically in terms of education generally and thence higher education in particular. During this process the following themes emerged. Storytelling's evolution from pre-history to social media accentuated its educational role in society. Having considered how storytelling works in this educational role, the changing paradigm that is the higher education scene led to a consideration of storytelling across higher education teaching subject disciplines. Storytelling works by affecting student attitudes in the immediacy of the teaching and learning interface and in the longer term bringing about a more effective learning outcome. The research identified a mismatch between the reported high volume of research on student-centred practice in higher education and the reported low volume of research on teacher-centred practice. This observation prompted the focus of this research study on teacher-centred practice and that the research methods would focus primarily on teaching practitioners in higher education. The resource limitations of a part-time time PhD determined that research into the broader area of student views would be a post-doctoral area for research which would require a very different research methodology. One possibility being to work with class teachers, observing teaching scenarios such as lectures, seminars, tutorials, and interviewing samples of students from those classes. An alternative route would be to work through library subject advisers who could bring a detached, less direct involvement as observers of the teaching and learning process.

The first objectives for the research study aimed at achieving definitions and

understanding of these three basic elements of the research and thence building the thesis by adding to the elements in sequence. In terms of the Venn diagram sections, the literature review progressed through the Venn diagram by considering in sequence the element R1, then elements R1 + R2 together, and then all three elements R1 + R2 + R3 together. In terms of subject matter, the process entailed first of all reviewing the literature on storytelling; secondly, reviewing the literature on storytelling in teaching and thirdly, reviewing the literature on storytelling in both teaching and learning in higher education.

The structure of Chapter 2 - Literature Review as written herein does not strictly follow the actual initial chronological sequence as described above. New themes emerged intermittently during the literature research which eventually suggested that it would be more appropriate and meaningful to design a structure for Chapter 2 which described the emergent research themes and developed the relationship between these themes. This structure also enables a rational relationship to be correlated with Chapter 4 - Findings and the Research Questions where similar themes emerged from analysis of the primary research material and data

The overall thesis story can be summarised as follows. Storytelling has had a role in communication from pre-history to modern social media. That role has been crucial to the development of education through the ages. Today, teachers at all levels of education use storytelling in a number of different formats with different mixes of spontaneity and prior planning. The subsequent research interviews of teachers in higher education assert that students appreciate stories in different scenarios with a wide range of reactions. The teachers' view is that storytelling in certain circumstances does affect students' attitudes to learning and can be effective in varying degrees in enhancing the learning process. One of the recommendations in Chapter 6 suggests that further research can be directed towards establishing the extent to which this belief can be corroborated.

This current research into storytelling as described in this thesis was instigated while teaching in the higher education discipline of business

management. Case studies, as a version of storytelling, have long been promoted as a teaching approach at Master level with Harvard Business School acknowledged by some to be to the fore (Christensen, 1987). There are also anecdotal reports in relation to storytelling as an approach in the teaching and learning of subjects related to general management (Harbin and Humphrey, 2010). Miley (2009) is a rare work in this area describing a storytelling experience while teaching accountancy.

One research question that emanates from this consideration concerns the availability of this raft of valuable material from the 'real world' to provide support in the teaching and learning of business management in higher education, particularly at undergraduate level. While the teaching of 'management' was the initial focus of the interest, research findings quickly affirmed that storytelling featured in most, if not all academic disciplines, as a topic of interest but not necessarily as a teaching approach. The research described in this thesis is intended to promote an approach to learning which many teachers practise instinctively and from which many others shy away. If, as a result of this research, more teachers consider pro-actively using storytelling as an approach, and agree that it is worthwhile, then the effort invested in this research will in itself have been worthwhile. An additional bonus will arise from any follow-up research which enthusiasts may carry out as a result of reading this thesis, or any of the related publications which are intended to follow this thesis.

Having described what this thesis is about, it is appropriate to describe what it is not about. It is not about storytelling or teaching and learning or higher education or management in general terms. The history, purpose, and analysis of these matters are covered in this thesis only to the extent that they have an influence on how they impact on each other as the elements of storytelling in higher education as the research subject.

The literature research affirmed a scarcity of research into the particular subject of storytelling as an approach in teaching and learning in higher education. The scope of further research is tremendous and of great potential benefit to the profession.

The primary and secondary (literature) research described in this thesis complement one another and result in conclusions and useful recommendations for both pedagogical practice and further research.

1.4.2 - Summary of Chapter 3 - Methodology and Methods

Qualitative versus quantitative methodologies were considered and researched in some depth and some experimentation carried out. In summary a quantitative approach incorporating questionnaires using a device such as the SurveyMonkey service might have identified the research themes that did in fact emerge. This approach might have worked but such emergence would have been by chance and identified by statistical happenstance. Instead I adopted the approach targeting specific objectives which produced results which could be perceived as having a greater degree of credibility.

With regard to the specific research area of education, Mulligan (2016) found that "giving teachers a voice and investigating teacher effectiveness through a qualitative lens can produce novel and original findings" as opposed to the anonymous impersonal draconian statistical results that have emanated from the numerous official quantitative based research that has been carried in compulsory level education. Such statistics do not readily give themselves to meaningful findings or recommendations for actions to remedy perceived failings in the system according to Richardson and St Pierre (2005). It is appropriate at this stage to comment on the relationship between qualitative research and the subject matter of this research study, namely storytelling. This relationship inevitably impacted on the writing style as commented on later. As Holliday (2007) puts it, "Qualitative writing becomes very much an unfolding story in which the writer gradually makes sense, not only of her data, but of the total experience of which it is an artefact" (Holliday, 2007, 122). The contrast with quantitative methods is described by Holliday as "... unlike quantitative work that can carry its meaning in its tables and summaries, qualitative work carries its meaning in its entire text... its meaning is in the reading" (959).

Three complementary qualitative methods were developed with a view to providing mutually supportive triangulation and which produced research material and data which worked together. This process produced findings which not only corresponded with the research questions, but which brought up some additional useful findings. Firstly, exploratory research after Wisker (2008), led to the second phase inductive research which in turn linked to the third phase deductive research. This follows the developmental process very much as described by Gibbs (2002, 2). The whole three phase research process also aligned with the basic principles of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

The exploratory research initially sought to affirm among colleagues and peers that the research would be considered worthwhile. Such consideration was appropriate as the research was to be carried within the ethnographic environs in which the researcher and these colleagues worked. This approach was successful, certainly in part, in that some of the individuals involved in the surveys offered to help with the later phases of the research such as interviews. The informal discussions provided early research material in the form of critical insights which were initially not recognised as such and therefore not recorded until a continuous thread or theme became apparent. This is very much akin to the example quoted by Glaser and Strauss (1999) affirming "that the researcher can get – and cultivate – critical insights not only during his research (and from his research) but from his own personal experiences prior to or outside it. It is most apposite that they continue, "to illustrate this point, we shall tell a story" (252).

The critical insights gained during the exploratory research were subjected to some critical thinking which led to some basic questions that needed some further research of a more focused nature. In the absence of a previously identified hypothesis, this research was of an inductive nature and provided some answers, even though they were only indicative at that early stage of the research project. After consideration of a number of alternative methodologies, the opportunities arose to incorporate into five higher education symposia elective workshops some preliminary research surveys of groups of higher education practitioners. The research material provided

by participants in these five workshops described in the main not only views on storytelling but also described by way of evidence stories of experiential events involving storytelling. As suggested by Halpern (1984), "in the inductive research method, you observe events and then devise a hypothesis about the events you observed" (95). Amalgamating these participants' own experiences of storytelling with my own enabled a number of preliminary findings to be identified.

A particularly useful outcome of the survey groups was the identification that management is taught in a number of Schools, such as the School of Engineering and School of Architecture, in addition to the School of Business. Furthermore, storytelling features across the higher education spectrum as demonstrated by the range of attendees who volunteered to attend these research-oriented workshops on the subject of storytelling; they came from many different teaching disciplines. At this early stage the research project thus gained enlightenment in these two overall respects which helped to define the scope of the research. This enlightenment enhanced the quality of the research material which emanated from the preliminary research surveys.

Storytelling is widely acknowledged as an approach in teaching and learning (Baker and Boyle, 2009; McDrury and Alterio, 2003; Newman, 2004; Propp, 1968, 1984), but there is little reported on its application to the teaching and learning of management as a specific discipline in higher education. There are also anecdotal reports in relation to storytelling as an approach in the teaching and learning of subjects related to management such as accountancy (Miley, 2009) but little in the way of focused in-depth research. Storytelling as a facet of management and the promoter of culture in organisations has been well documented (Boje, 2001; Gabriel, 1995, 2004, 2008; Watson, 2006), and in the particular arena of entrepreneurs as storytellers (Rae, 2005, 2009, 2013). A relevant question was posed by a survey group contributor.

"How can this raft of valuable material from the 'real world', for which more than one student has pleaded, be incorporated to

beneficial effect in the teaching and learning of management in higher education, particularly at undergraduate level?" (SG21)

This research study provided one answer by promoting an approach to learning which many higher education teachers practise instinctively and from which many others shy away. Research to date (Miley, 2009) indicates that storytelling does have a role to play in enhancing learning.

Having described what this thesis is about, it is appropriate to describe what it is not about. It is not about storytelling or teaching and learning or higher education or management in general terms. The history, purpose, and analysis of these matters are covered to the extent that they have an influence on how they impact on one another and as a conglomerate as the components of a research question. The ongoing dilemma of what to include and what to omit oscillated throughout the journey.

The primary research data did highlight a number of findings. Some of these aligned with findings that emerged from the secondary research literature review, and some were new. Common features of these findings contributed to the third stage of the research which pursued the research subject in rather more depth. For example, the research subject was explored with higher education practitioners on a one-to-one basis via in-depth interviews rather than repeat the survey groups of this research's stage two.

These two scope-related enlightenments that emanated from the preliminary research surveys were taken into account in designing the third stage of the research. The samples of practitioners for the in-depth interviews were invited not only from the teachers of management in the School of Business but also of other disciplines. Similarly, the samples included practitioners whose teaching subject was not management; such as psychology, finance, projects and lean production management. A number of alternative methodologies were considered for the third phase of the research using available technologies such as blogs and radio interviews but were rejected for reasons of access and ethics. The chosen methodology was akin to the traditional in-depth interviews. This further phase of research comprised

semi-structured or open-ended interviews with interviewees currently practising in higher education. Open ended interviews are advocated by Becker (1998) who prompts that researchers must learn to question what people think and believe. The description 'in-depth discussions' was coined in order to reassure the participants of a relaxed informal approach in which it was hoped they would be rather more forthcoming in their contributions. The interviews followed the style of responsive interviews advocated by Rubin and Rubin (2012).

This third phase research was considered to be a developmental stage in the process. Analysis of the first and second phase research comprised an inductive phase of the research as they provided useful themes worth investigating further in a more sophisticated methodology, with sufficient progress to enable a hypothesis to be suggested at least in outline form. The third phase of the research could therefore be considered as deductive. The third phase research, together with further parallel exploration of the literature did enable the hypothesis to be affirmed concerning the need to increase the profile of the less recognised higher education teacher-focused storytelling as a complement to the more widely recognised higher education student-focused storytelling.

1.4.3 - Summary of Chapter 4-Findings

The research study findings both from the literature and from the primary research indicate that teachers' storytelling has an impact on the relationship between teachers and learners.

The three main findings that responded to the first research question which asked whether a storytelling approach might support teaching and learning in higher education, developed from data categories that could be best described as contributing to firstly the affective value of teaching and learning, secondly the effectiveness of teaching and learning and thirdly the power of storytelling generally within the context of teaching and learning in higher education. The affective value of teachers' storytelling impacts the immediacy of the teacher and student interface. The affective value has been

expressed in terms of the attributes of the teacher whose charisma influences their attitude towards storytelling. The storytelling in turn enhances the teacher's credibility in the minds of the students. The credibility can be in turn enhanced by the teacher's experience in, and enthusiasm for the subject. Practitioners need to accumulate the story material to give their teaching that credibility. The relationship between the teacher and the learner depends on rapport and trust which can be established by honest storytelling by the teacher. Sharing memories enables the students to form an identity that they can ascribe to the teacher by appreciating something of the teacher's background and experience. The research established a premise that previous reported research has tended to predominately concentrate on a student-centred focus. This current research study tends to redress the balance by concentrating on a teacher-centred focus. Relating personal experiences to those of some of the students' own similar experiences encourages an integration of the student-centred and teacher-centred approaches. This amalgamation of both approaches in a synergistic way further enhances the learning effectiveness of higher education, thus supporting a finding that storytelling aims to merge student-centred and teacher-centred approaches. The teacher and learner interface is also affected by the attributes of the learner in terms of their attention being attracted by the prospects of an interesting story to at least introduce some variety into the teaching scenario. If the storytelling has its intended affect then some interest in and curiosity for the subject might be engendered in the student, if the students' interest does not already exist.

Additional findings emanated from the research study that were not directly related to the research questions, but which have an indirect impact. Storytelling is practised by many teachers in higher education, but it is not recognised by those same teachers as a specific approach: it may be more regarded as a teaching style.

1.4.4 - Summary of Chapter 5 – Conclusions, Recommendations and Reflections

The overall conclusion is that the quality of teaching and learning in higher education is enhanced when teachers draw on their own professional experience to augment their teaching; in other words, who have lived the story. While there are some limitations to the scope of this research study and the resultant findings, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that this affirmation is worthy of promotion as a teaching approach to complement other approaches and to add variety to the teaching and learning experience.

The contribution to knowledge closes the gap between the teacher-centred focus and the student-centred focus by researching the teachers' views on one teaching approach that is under the specific control of the teachers, namely teachers drawing on their own professional experience to augment their teaching by including storytelling in their repertoire of teaching approaches. This proved to be something of a deficit in the theoretical knowledge behind higher education.

On a broader front, storytelling is commonly used in higher education but has not yet been recognised as an approach worthy of research hitherto. Gaps in the literature review and enthusiastic interest by research participants suggest that this omission needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Storytelling has a number of positive features which will enable teachers to cope with a number of increasingly important issues arising in higher education. Students increasingly perceive themselves as paying customers and expect value for money in terms of a quality education. This means being equipped on graduation with the knowledge necessary to enable them to develop a career in the real world. Stories of the real world need to feature in the teacher's armoury, especially stories based on the teacher's own experience outside academia in the alternative 'real world'. As far as PGCE tutors are concerned, the classroom is an appropriate 'real world'. Students can tell from the teacher's involvement whether their stories come from genuine personal first-hand experience. The links between practice and theory can be further established by the students' part-time jobs, a year out,

a period as an intern, or by meaningful stories told by practitioners who have been there, seen it, done it and lived the story.

The first group of recommendations focuses on teaching practice with a view to strengthening the sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2016). Storytelling can encourage this through the affective values and effectiveness discussed previously. Teacher-based storytelling needs to be encouraged by both publicising the approach to current practitioners and including the approach into post graduate teacher training courses that focus on higher education. The second group of recommendations are in terms of a research need to look deeper into the effectiveness of stories, how they work best, whether they should be pre-planned or spontaneous or a mix of both. Is the ultimate to incorporate the teaching into a story rather than a story into the teaching? Such research could look at, for example, the affective value and effectiveness of storytelling under different teaching scenarios and teachers' individual styles. A similar concern was expressed as recently as 2016 by Mulligan who researched concern over teaching effectiveness with fourth class primary school teachers and concluded that,

"what needs to occur during classroom interactions to optimally promote student achievement in mathematics has remained elusive within the literature, despite decades of quantitative research into teacher effectiveness ... and communicating a strong positive attitude towards mathematics to students" (201).

A third group of recommendations concerns the lessons from the Research Process as experienced throughout the project. These lead on to reflections on the learning process that this research study provided to the researcher.

The researcher reflects on the research methodology, how it was designed initially and subject to an ongoing performance improvement process to maximise the research opportunities presented by the three research methods that comprised the research study. Further thoughts are given to the dichotomy between quantitative and qualitative approaches and how they were interpreted and could have been interpreted for this research study.

Some views on questionnaires, statistics and definitions are considered. The credibility of the research is related to the inter-rater reliability exercise which provided some corroboration of research material and data interpretation. Ethical considerations occurred throughout the methodology and such consideration of the ethics of storytelling contributed to constraints on the research in terms of time and resources.

1.5 Writing Style

The ongoing debate over doctorateness and writing style is reflecting a tendency to enable, if not encourage, researchers to write naturally in the belief that conventional doctorateness results in a stilted unnatural writing style which at times can inhibit the researcher from expressing clearly the research study findings, to say nothing of their true feelings and opinions (Thody, 2006; Tribe and Tunariu, 2017). Wellington (2013), having considered five scenarios of doctorateness, suggests that we need to not so much to look for a definition but to look for family resemblances within a range of successful theses. Notwithstanding other criteria, one of Wellington's (2013) interviewees emphasised that, "... good writing is increasingly important for me as a criterion for 'doctorateness'; you should be communicating your knowledge clearly" (1499).

Three related issues emanated during the writing of this thesis.

The first issue concerned the dichotomy between objective writing and a subjective description of the research journey. Such a description is important to enable readers to better understand the research study which evolved over several years. I cannot help but explain its evolution as a journey, a phrase used by one of the interviewees quoted by Wellington (2013). This explanatory style is not applicable to the whole thesis but applies particularly to the Background section of this Chapter 1. The explanatory style also applies to Chapter 3 – Methodology and Methods as the subject matter did indeed evolve and develop with a view to continuous improvement as the research study progressed towards its conclusion. In contrast, a more objective rather than subjective academic style does more appropriately

apply to the Introduction section of Chapter 1, Chapter 2 – Establishing the research questions, Chapter 4 – Discussion of findings related to the research questions, and Chapter 5 –Conclusions, recommendations and reflections. In these latter sections of the thesis, some subjectivity may inevitably appear as this research study is a very personal individual experience. The approach to writing this thesis has in some part been influenced or governed by the subject matter of the research study. Bearing in mind that the key word in the thesis title is storytelling, then it is not unexpected that the thesis overall tells a story of a research journey. Harrison (2009) describes a journey in learning towards what she refers to as 'doctoralness'. A thesis about storytelling is, unsurprisingly, a story about storytelling. This research journey entailed free writing and generative writing as well as numerous drafts, "A variety of writing activities ... can help us to find the type of story that our thesis will tell." (Murray, 2017, 117). Thody (2006) expresses a similar view.

"Telling a story' is what writing research is all about. ... The 'story line' must sing clearly throughout every chapter or section, with each part uncovering some of the solution but not revealing the whole until the last chapter" (59).

The second issue debated whether the first or second person is appropriate for a PhD thesis. Knight (2002) considers that "it is quite normal to write in the first person, to enjoy the words they use, to write with passion" (194). Thody (2006) endorses this view. More recently, Tribe and Tunariu (2017) consider that some researchers prefer the passive voice as they believe that it is more professional and avoids the use of the word 'I'. However, qualitative research positions the role of the researcher rather differently to that of positivist paradigms and thus encourages the use of the active voice (62). Hyland (2002) analysed journal papers in various subject fields and found that the first-person style dominated in social science papers.

Harrison (2009) tells her very personal story about learning 'doctoralness' using the first person throughout. In order to improve the readability of this present thesis, the word 'I' or synonyms thereof such as 'the author' or 'the

researcher', has been minimised. Any statements not readily attributable to a reference, being either in inverted commas or as a paraphrase, can be assumed to be mine. The key word in the title of this thesis – storytelling – indicates not only my particular interest in storytelling as a teaching approach but is also my predominant teaching style. Inevitably it is the dominant style in certain parts of this thesis. I hope it tells an interesting story for you.

The third issue concerned the debate as to whether the thesis should be written in the present or past tense. Allison and Race (2004) express views on this and related aspects of thesis writing styles. Taking their views into account, I have taken the usual, for me, compromise route. Where statements explain the thesis as is, then the present tense is used; including comments on authors. For example, "Hertz (1997) stresses that the best sources of stories are from our own experience" as his views are expressed in the referenced work and therefore still extant. This mode of expression is preferred to, for example, "Hertz (1997) stressed that the best sources of stories are from our own experience". The latter form confusingly mixes past and present tenses, something to be avoided for the sake of smooth reading. Where statements concern the research study, then the past tense is used; as in describing the background to the research study in Section 1.2 below.

There is also some debate about the need or usefulness of appendices. Where appropriate I have included summaries of the content of the appendices in the text so that readers do not need to interrupt the flow of their reading. The appendices do serve a purpose in that they provide evidence of the research material, data, findings, and conclusions.

Quoting from the British Psychology Society's *Guidelines for the assessment of the PhD in Psychology and related Disciplines (BPS 2000)*, Murray (2017) suggests that "The text should be clear and 'tell a story'" (69). I sincerely hope that this thesis does indeed tell you a story about one teaching approach for storytelling within higher education.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to Literature Review: structure and content.

Rocco and Plakhotnik (2009) see the literature review as casting a broad net around an area to explore the topic, including the history and chronology of the topic (125). As the first few literature sources of this nature were identified, further leads enabled the search to mature. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) liken the literature review process to a funnel shape, broad at the top and narrow at the bottom, eventually identifying a knowledge gap to be followed by research questions (59). This process led in turn to the research design aimed,

“... to make sense of what we observe or what people tell us; we may draw on the richness of our own experience; particularly if what we are studying we have also experienced” (Hertz, 1997, xiii).

Hertz (1997) stresses that the best sources of stories are from the richness of our own experience. Similarly, we are in a better situation to learn from other people's stories if we can empathise with them having a shared or similar experience. The inference is that telling stories based on our experiences is linked to teaching and learning. This study asked whether storytelling can support teaching and learning in the particular paradigm of higher education. This preliminary research question provided the entry point into the literature review.

At this stage in the research project a definition of storytelling was considered to be useful in order to at least initially guide the research into the literature (Garson, 2002; Hart, 1998; Oliver, 2012). Rather than try to define storytelling in an educational context at this stage a more general definition of storytelling kept open more optional research avenues at this early stage in the research study. Salmon (1992) supports this approach stating that,

"... for doctoral students the very early definition of research questions does not merely pre-empt the outcome of what should entail a long creative process. It also acts totally to obscure the inescapably personal and personal-social character of all questions" (12).

Avoiding any inclination to anticipate particular themes such as education, a very gentle nudge in the direction of a general definition of storytelling was provided by Georges (1969) who defined the origin of stories in terms of storytelling events, not unlike the theme initialled by Hertz (1997) quoted above.

"... storytelling events are distinct events within continua of human communication and that they are unique social experiences for those individuals whose social interactions generate them."
(Georges, 1969, 327)

Hertz (1997) also provides links between reflexivity in terms of reflecting on personal experiences and using those reflections in storytelling as a teaching approach within the context of education. Other definitions of storytelling are appropriate to other contexts such as Fog et al (2010) in a marketing context and Moreau (2018) in the context of health professional.

The key words to note are "continua" which suggests history, "communication" which suggests interaction between humans, and "social" which suggests that storytelling features across society as a whole. This literature review thus started by considering these three key words and identifying material from literature which then enabled the research to progress. In this way a conceptual framework constructed itself and thus categorized and described concepts relevant to the study and mapped relationships between them as suggested by Rocco and Plakhotnik (2009). As the review progressed, various concepts, or theoretical perspectives (Wisker, 2008, 170), were indeed perceived and pursued. The ultimate concept is that the literature review arrived at an end point which enabled the outcomes from the literature research to be readily identified. The end point

was recognised as reaching a stage at which the researcher considered that a baseline of two fundamental criteria could be defined from which to develop the methodology for the primary research.

Firstly, there will be a definition of storytelling specific to higher education as opposed to the more general definition of storytelling with which the literature review started. This more specific definition is developed in Section 2.6 and it is anticipated that it will help to focus the research methodology subsequently developed in Chapter 3 – Methodology and Methods.

Secondly, a clearer statement of the research questions emerged from the literature review. The research questions contributed to formulating the primary research methodology.

The Review proper starts with Section 2.2 which takes as the starting point the initial general definition of storytelling (Georges, 1969) which included the key word 'continua' taken to indicate that the history of the subject matter is fundamental to storytelling. Storytelling is thus reviewed in an historical context. Rocco and Plakhotnik (2009) do suggest that the history and chronology of a topic be appropriately researched in a literature review. Storytelling started as cave art in pre-historic times and continued through the stages of social communication via pictorial, then written representations, and more recently to the virtual world which is prevalent in many different aspects of human society today (Baker and Boyle, 2009; Blayer and Sanchez, 2002; Fox Eades, 2006; Gamson, 2002; Propp, 1968, 1984; Turner, 1999;).

Section 2.2.1 selects particular examples of historical storytelling in traumatic times of war to illustrate how perception and interpretation can affect the veracity of the story as perceived by the story-listener. Section 2.2.2 focuses on the use of art forms to demonstrate storytelling's educational role in society, albeit in only one aspect of society, that of higher education, due to a need to keep the scope of this research to manageable proportions. Some consideration is also given to storytelling as a means of communication by considering the elements of communication. The artistic theme continues by

considering the role of illustrations, music and film as media through which storytelling can be enacted. Section 2.2.3 endeavours to explain how storytelling works more specifically within the educational role. The relative importance of word-meaning as well as plot and structure are considered, followed by some thoughts on the circumstances which surround the storytelling opportunity. Not only does time advance between the story event and the telling of that event, but stories themselves do evolve over time with each telling (Propp, 1984). Each telling of a story is thus a unique phenomenological event in itself.

Higher education is a changing paradigm (Section 2.3) in the context of which both the role of storytelling as a learning approach in higher education (Botzakis, 2013; Nowakowski, 1990) and of storytelling as a teaching approach in higher education (Bowden, 2012; Entwistle, 1998; Helyer, 2011) need to be considered both in themselves and as they relate to each other. In many respects, both approaches influence the impact that storytelling might have on the teacher / learner relationship as well as on the effectiveness of the teaching / learning process. Storytelling also features as an aspect of the ongoing current debate over the research versus teaching dichotomy (Lea, 2015; Sharp et al., 2013) as well as in the technology led growth of MOOCS (Yee, 2014), the virtual campus (Kaushnik, 2015), and work-based distance learning options (Helyer, 2011; White, 2012). A number of disciplines within higher education have tentatively explored storytelling as a teaching approach, particularly for example management as a taught subject in business schools. The affects (Sturm, 2002) and effects (Schostak, 2002) of storytelling are considered with a view to understanding better how storytelling might work within the higher education paradigm.

The guidance that emerged from the literature review affirms that there is a preponderance of literature researching storytelling as a *learning* approach for students in higher education. This is mainly based on the view that advocates self-reflection by students learning from their own experience. The emphasis aligns with the student-centred practice prevalent in recent years (Section 2.4). At time of writing (2015), there is little evidence of research having been carried out into storytelling as a *teaching* approach, although the

thesis research suggested that there is some interest in teachers learning from their own experience as professionals (Section 2.5). This indicates that this is the area that might benefit initially from the further research implemented in the primary research for this thesis.

Sections 2.6 and 2.7 develop the two main contributions to the research subsequently to be discussed in Chapter 3-Methodology. Firstly, the search for an appropriate definition considers storytelling in the context of education generally and higher education specifically. A definition of storytelling in higher education was derived after taking into the account the subtle difference in meaning of the synonyms for stories and storytelling that appeared in various contexts, together with a review of the findings of the literature review. Secondly, Section 2.7 affirms the research questions.

2.2 The evolution of storytelling

2.2.1 Storytelling's roles from pre-history to social media

Pre-history refers to the era before the development of writing (Gaur, 1992). As identified by Tedesco (2007) the first human artistic representations, markings with ground red ochre, seem to have occurred about 100,000 B.C. in African rock art. All were created in the period before the invention of formal writing, and when human populations were migrating and expanding across the world. Over the millennia researchers have pondered on the origin and meaning of these erstwhile stories etched on cave walls (Sassoon and Gaur, 1997). Hurlburt and Voas (2011) do recognise such visual delights as representing the essence of the storyteller's art (4). From these earliest times, interpretation of stories has been, and still is for the cave art with no supporting material, part of the process whereby stories assist in the educational process of teaching and learning (Robinson, 2002). Archaeologists have that very problem of interpretation in that, as Propp (1984) surmises, certain tales were part of the cult and were secret, implying that knowledge of ancient times comes in effect from stories in the form of such carving and ornaments which cannot be understood without knowledge of their legends and wondertales (118). A particular example from Sassoon

and Gaur (1997) refers to the aborigines of Australia who have mystical maps, known as *charingas*, that tell the story of a particular totemic ancestor and the land on which a particular clan lived (21); thus, providing the current generation of that aboriginal clan with some education into their ancestry. That this process is ongoing is demonstrated in the context of theatre as art by Payette (2015) who considers that values placed on the stories of today's indigenous peoples will, in fifteen years' time, be educating the next and future generations from the year 2030 onwards. Coming further up to date and nearer home, research into medieval wax seals at the University of Lincoln is opening exciting windows into past lives and deepening our understanding of our medieval ancestors (Hoskin and New, 2016, webpage). Jensen (2008) expresses an opinion that, "... throughout human history stories have been relevant to understanding ..." (180).

The development of pictorial language led to the written form (Pagel, 2012 and 2016; Pinker, 2002; Turner, 1999), and thence to the use of both verbal and written language to the telling of stories, researched as folklore by Propp (1984). Propp (1984) wrote of folklore commemorating momentous past times and yet he himself experienced momentous times at first hand having spent the Russian revolutionary and first world war years 1913 – 1918 as a student at the University of St. Petersburg, where he majored in Russian and German philology (ix). In that same tumultuous era, the traumatic events of World War 1 generated stories in the form of myths and legend that were confused with truth and reality. Evers (2008) recounts an example illustrating how remembered events become intertwined and confused. A narrative construction of a particular past event will be haunted and distorted by the whispers, echoes, and fantasies of different but similar past events (Evers, 2008, 217). While direct experience or first-hand accounts were not available to him, the storyteller referred to by Evers (2008) imagines what his father experienced, although his father never spoke of his trench warfare. The second world war also inspired a sense of the edge between lived and imagined history as written by a group of young men about the war they were too young to have experienced, their fathers' war (Byatt, 2001, 12). Such myths of those days have already lasted over seventy years although writers such as Hayward (2002) have endeavoured to separate myths and legend

from truth and reality. The historical novel, described by De Groot (2010) as being in robust health, critically, formally and economically, fulfils a purpose described by Manzoni (1984) as providing not just the bare bones of history but something richer, more complete, to put the flesh back on the skeleton that is history (67-68). De Groot (2010) does describe the content of historical novels as very much a variation on the theme of storytelling.

When trauma, drama or stress imposes, the emotional impact of war impedes impartial accounts. Grossman (2005), according to his editor, was not a dispassionate observer. The power of his writing came from his own emotional responses to the disasters of 1941. Grossman's notes have been translated and edited into the final work to provide perhaps the finest descriptions ever of what Grossman himself called "the ruthless truth of war" (xvii). A reader's interpretation of what Grossman experienced will be haunted and distorted by Grossman's emotional responses, by the difficulties in translating from Russian into English (xix), by Beevor's influence as editor of Grossman's work and by the reader's own standpoint. The 'ruthless truth of war' was written by Grossman in his role as a special correspondent for the Red Army newspaper, *Krasnaya Zvezda*.

These examples of storytelling emanating from extreme traumatic events illustrate the strong emotional need for people to tell such stories lest events be forgotten with the passage of time (Evers, 2008). That such stories have an educational role is propounded by Blayer and Sanchez (2002).

2.2.2 Storytelling's educational role in society

Blayer and Sanchez (2002) link storytelling to both the historical context and the societal context with their collection of readings from an international conference on storytelling. Both authors consider that stories are the threads that weave cohesion into our existence as stories link us to both our ancestors and our descendants (Preface). Students in higher education have been and are surrounded by storytelling, particularly at all levels in compulsory education leading up to higher education (Moon, 2010; Thody, 1997). Storytelling in higher education should be something that for the most

part they naturally expect when they begin to experience teaching and learning at higher education level according to Abrahamson (1998), Bradley (2012) and Siedel (1991). Bennis (2015) appreciated the importance of this ecology of learning in his foreword to Kolb's (2015) seminal work on experiential learning, noting that Kolb (2015) shifts the ecology of learning away from the exclusivity of the classroom to the workplace, the family, the carpool, the community, or wherever we gather to work or play or love (ix). It is not irrelevant to note that society's relationship with higher education is a changing story in itself as typified by Stuart (2012).

Scenarios in which storytelling features as a teaching approach include graphic art which in turn includes paintings and sculptures (Wollheim, 1980) as well as story cloths (van der Merwe, 2014); and performing arts such as music (Barnett and Storey, 2001; Schmidt, 2010), film (Cohan and Shires, 1988), and theatre (Burnham and Kai-Kee, 2011). Wollheim (1980), in applying rigorous philosophical analysis to the meaning of art, expresses a view which highlights a feature of story-based communication. Within each communication there are two stages of representation. The first stage intervenes between the artist and his creation. The artist tries to convey a particular message and trusts that the artistic creation represents that message. The second stage intervenes between the creation and the visual or aural observer. The observer may or may not decipher the same message from the artistic creation. The relationship between these two perspectives has been described by Wollheim (1980) in terms of a process whereby the artist's intention is to tell a story via his works of art and thus implant a message in the mind of the observer.

Wollheim's term *intention* corresponds with the artist's initial message; and Wollheim uses the term *result* to correspond with the received message as perceived by the observer. Wollheim's intent can be understood in terms of an analogy with conventional wireless communication parlance. The terms transmitter and receiver (Sayre, 2008) would in turn correspond with artist and observer as used above. The artist codes the message into an art form and the observer receives and decodes the art form in order to extract the message. The art form represents a story and the communication of that art

form is the art of storytelling. Storytelling is evidenced in other rather more subtle art forms of which van der Merwe (2014) provides an example. The embroidered story cloths produced by the Mogalakwena Craft Art Development Foundation are a means of giving previously silent native women a voice, allowing them to communicate and raise awareness despite their lack of education and certain language barriers (Abstract). Their story cloths are the medium whereby the women's stories, which would otherwise remain untold, are told to observers.

Whether the message transmitted (story told) is the same as the message received (story heard) depends on a number of factors, the most important being that of interpretation; especially by the observer as affirmed by Burnham and Kai-Kee (2011) in the most appropriate example of teaching in an art museum. Under the guidance of an expert tutor who is encouraging a group of students to look ever more closely at a painting, the group's experience has moved beyond the telling of a single story (7). Another group in a museum compare and contrast two sculptures; and to them time seems to slow as their perception of the sculptures sharpens (7). In another similar example, Devine (2014) describes a successful storytelling-based display methodology at a Scottish Transport Museum. Telling stories about specific objects is an approach which she (Devine, 2014) believes encourages a depth of analysis and avoids bland summaries.

Illustrations, as a storytelling medium in themselves, to some extent predate language but have a continued usefulness after the advent of written language in that illustrations complement the written storytelling. Hurlburt and Voas (2011), in introducing an article on digital communication, feel obliged to put their subject into the context of storytelling's history by covering the period from cave art to digital media affirming that visualisation still requires illustrative art (7). Behind this statement one has to appreciate that storytelling can be partially defined in terms of providing assistance to understanding by promoting a mental visualisation of that which is being taught. Illustrations accompanying words can be regarded as stories within stories. Hurlburt could well have repeated the old adage, *one picture paints a thousand words* which, suggests Martin (2010) is used in numerous

scenarios; too many to provide a useful research trail.

The link between illustration and accompanying words is considered important in the educational role by encouraging children to read and also to enable them to better understand what they are reading (Wray and Medwell, 1991). As children become more adept at decoding the implications of illustrations through shared readings and discussions with parents and teachers, they can derive increasing levels of nuanced complexity in the story (O'Neil, 2011, 215). This technological age still uses storytelling as a fundamental art or skill, albeit in blogs on the Internet, Youtube, Twitter, or Facebook, downloaded onto a Kindle (Hurlburt and Voas, 2011; Kress, 2003), or using software such as Adobe scriptwriting (Mills and Wardle-Cousins, 2016). Telling stories through these modern media adds to the tradition of family stories at children's bedtime as well as storytelling in public libraries, play school etc and, as Ohler (2008) reports, in the classroom itself. Botzakis (2013) endeavours to demonstrate that comics offer much in terms of literary, entertainment, and content-area learning for all types of readers, elementary to higher education by encouraging discussion on the authors' intentions with the art (69).

As well as illustrations accompanying text, music is also a useful enhancement to stories as suggested by Barnett and Storey (2001); "in many ways hearing a story is like hearing a song" (83). Barnett and Storey appear to be reinforcing Propp's (1984) philosophical views on the links between lyrics and history. Cohan and Shires (1988) provide an appropriate definition. "Akin to song, a lyric is a monologue about feeling or a state of consciousness" (1). They then compare and contrast lyrics with narratives, story, play and drama. Moving on to consider the immediacy of film, they conclude that the story is mediated by its telling – its medium of communication – so that the two are integrated to form a unique entity (1). Barnett and Storey (2001), Burnham and Kee-Kai (2011), Wilson (2006) and Wollheim (1980) placed storytelling in the context of art as but one media through which storytelling is used to communicate. Paintings, sculptures and other artefacts are representational media from which more than one story

can be gleaned depending on each observer's point of view and perceptions (Wilson, 2006).

In summary, storytelling's educational role in society is a phenomenon which appears in the majority of social activities, not just in a strictly and ostensibly educational scenario. All forms of art tell, or endeavour to tell, a story where the artefact is the medium of communication. Interpretation enables the observer to fashion an appropriate story from the artwork, but the observer's story may not be the story that the artist originally intended. The march of technology enhances rather than diminishes the role of storytelling in society opines Yee (2014) while reflecting on teaching and research as two inseparable components in higher education. As participants in all these disparate activities, teachers and learners in higher education are very familiar with storytelling in various aspects of their everyday lives outside higher education. However, what does not seem to be quite so familiar is the use of storytelling as part of teaching and learning practice within higher education itself. The role of storytelling in higher education appears to be not particularly well known or particularly well researched. Storytelling is increasingly used in pedagogy and is usually very affirmational. Lots of writing in this area is about schools, as acknowledged by Moon (2010), and there is literature on effective teaching in higher education (Hefferman et al, 2009), but it says little about storytelling or how it might work in higher education.

2.2.3 How storytelling works in the educational role

Having set the scene to a certain extent by illustrating *where* storytelling works across sample scenarios within society, it is as well as to set the scene in terms of *how* storytelling works, both in general terms and particularly in an educational role. The scene for storytelling in the paradigm of higher education itself will be set in Section 2.3.

The components of story; as in beginning, middle, end, plot, and golden thread are well documented (e.g. Baker and Boyle, 2009; Cohan and Shires, 1988; Egan, 1986; McDrury and Alterio, 2003; Simmons, 2002) and do not need further investigation as this is certainly not a gap in our knowledge of

the subject. Where there may be a gap in our knowledge is in understanding how storytelling works in an educational role. To provide some initial guidance by way of a definition, Bernstein (1990) defines a story as a conceptual structure of events, thus re-emphasising the importance of the terms structure and events to the very concept of what a story is. Key concepts that contribute to an understanding of how storytelling works by communicating through a story's structure and events are expressed in a number of different ways; by producing an amalgam of other concepts such as word-meaning according to James (1948); woven with themes and objectives into a plot and structure in the manner of Genette (1972); told in appropriate circumstances and as opportunities arise such as in research as suggested by Eisenhardt (1991); and by linking theory with practice and the real world as described by Bruner (2004). The relationship between theory and practice in education is, and has been, a challenging relationship according to Wankel and DeFillippi (2005, 49).

Storytelling includes an element of flexibility enabling stories to evolve with each telling. Storytelling imbues life and existence into a story with the original version adapted to accord with the storyteller's own particular memory of the story and with emphases influenced by the storyteller's own personality. Storytelling interfaces with time; a story is never the same in subsequent telling, even by the same storyteller (Cohan and Shires, 1988). This selection of views on the fundamentals of storytelling gives an appreciation of its potential usefulness as a tool within higher education. The following sections will consider further the concepts of word meaning, plot and structure, circumstance and opportunity together with research in an effort to identify how storytelling works in an educational role. The evolution of storytelling over time will also be considered. These considerations will contribute to a more meaningful understanding of storytelling when the particular paradigm of higher education is reviewed in Section 2.3.

2.2.4 Word meaning

"The relationship between language and meaning, between words and what they refer to, is a highly complex one." (Cohan and Shires, 1988, 3).

Storytelling's epistemological role in teaching and learning is essentially the route that enables many researchers to initially acquaint themselves with the ontology of a research subject, enable its existence to be better understood and thus in turn build knowledge of that subject. The point at which information is transformed into wisdom is the place at which knowledge and intelligence require storytelling skills (both listening and telling) according to Simmons (2002, 197). Stories can be analysed from the detail of letters and words, through sentences to overall structure in terms of plots, themes and structure. Taking letters and words as starting points, etymologically, the Latin word 'littertura' is derived from 'littera' (letter), which is the smallest element of alphabetical writing (Klarer, 2004, 1). Individual letters are important as components of words, but it is the words themselves that convey meaning, with their associated power and magic. In discussing metaphysics, James (1948) reminds us that *words* have always played a part in magic (145). Making the use of words meaningful has concerned linguists such as Fowler (1930), Gowers (1962) and Quiller-Couch (1916); the latter particularly reminds us not to forget the vast increase in the part played by the written word in our affairs, both personal and of state (264).

Words do change their meaning over time. One word can have several different meanings. On a wider basis, the same word can have different meanings in different languages and across cultures. Pinker (2002) has the opinion that the creative powers of English morphology are pathetic compared to what we find other languages although he condescends later that English holds its own in 'derivational' morphology, where one creates a new word out of an old one (122). Pinker (2002) points out that the way language works, then, is that each person's brain contains a lexicon of words and the concepts they stand for, known as a mental dictionary, and a set of rules that combine the words to convey relationships among concepts known as a mental grammar (76). As well as the meaningfulness that can come from analysing the lexicon of a particular story, much depends on the plot and structure which guide the progress and route that is conveyed by the telling of a story.

2.2.5 Plot and structure

Pinker (2002) considers that it is important that words be analysed as they comprise the building blocks that in turn form the structure of a story. The structure provides a framework within which the story's plot can be developed. A rather more in-depth exercise in literary analysis is Genette's work *Narrative Discourse* (1972). This is a good example of the genre being a structural analysis of narrative which focuses in this instance on Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*. Culler (1980), in the Foreword to Genette (1980), endeavours to define structuralist in that structuralists devoted considerable attention to plot structure, or the 'grammar' of plot, and to the ways in which different types of detail in a novel are organised to produce effects of suspense, characters, plot sequences, and thematic and symbolic patterns (8). The latter are key words that describe the attributes of storytelling. Genette (1980) considers that it is the plot that puts a story's objective into a storyline and provides an organised continuity throughout the text of a story; plot is the logical interaction of the various thematic elements of a text which lead to a change of the original situation as presented at the outset of the narrative.

On a smaller scale of analysis, Bruner's (2004) research mini-project uses four self-narratives to explore how life stories can be interpreted to identify different structures and plots. His admittedly somewhat curtailed research scope prompts Bruner to proclaim that, had his research team followed a different procedure they doubtless would have obtained different accounts, or plots. Additionally, Bruner then summarises the narratives in order to assess whether there is in each account a set of selective narrative rules that lead the narrator to structure experience in a particular way. Bruner (2004) regrets that some autobiographies, his main interest in this area, lack interpretation or 'meaning'. This suggests that he considers application of analysis and opinions to be a useful if not important feature of 'life-telling'. As Bruner puts it, "... mind is never free of commitment." (2004, 709) The reader's own mentality affects the reader's interpretation of what is read. An author's own mentality influences a narrative and the reader should try to take this into account when trying to form of view on the writing. If you are to understand a

poet you must understand him as the product of his age complete with assumptions, audience, success, failure and artistic standards (Gardner, 1956, 31) and not only in the context terms of the reader's perceptions.

Using slightly different terminology, Chatman (1978) starts his Preface with, "The French, with their new-found etymological enthusiasm – have coined the word *narratologie*, the study of narrative structure" (9). He describes the 'what' of narrative as its 'story' and the 'way' is called its 'discourse'. He elaborates the components of 'story', events and existents (character and setting) and discourse as the means through which the story is transmitted. Chatman's primary concern has been to work out, as clearly as he could, the ramifications of the story-discourse dichotomy (10). Every narrative – so this theory goes – is a structure with a content plane (called 'story') and an expression plane (called 'discourse') (1978, 146).

A major consideration for the use of storytelling in education is that "... the most profound and influential characteristic of storytelling is its power to entrance those who listen" (Sturm, 2002, 15). Resulting from his initial research, Sturm (2002) describes the six experiential stages through which listeners are transported as they are engaged by an enthralling story. The stages range from initially setting the scene through to coming back into real world. At no time does Sturm consider the after-story scenario; whether there is a longer-term permanent or even temporary effect of the story on the listener, although he does admit that he hopes to pursue "further research into the story listening trance" (25). A seventh experiential stage could be the offering. His specialist areas are described as storytelling and children's literature, but he has not taken this most interesting research into higher education.

2.2.6 Storytelling and research

Intuition is not unknown in teaching research as a subject as Gibbs (1981) recalls in describing how a textbook which he wrote did in fact derive intuitively from a booklet that he had written some time previously. Initially he felt that the approach he had adopted when trying to teach students to

research was intuitively correct and seemed to work. The sources used for the textbook enabled him to relate that initial intuitive approach to later important developments in research into student learning (viii). Schostak (2002) has similar views on research. "Imagination is just as essential to the project as the empirical data collected by the researcher. ... Without an imaginative grasp the data fall dead. Without a vision, there is no journey to project." (232)

Eisenhardt (1991) considers whether stories and storytelling are an integral part of research reporting, whether researching multiple cases or allegedly single cases. She ponders the question whether "better stories versus better constructs" is a false dichotomy? (621). Of classic case-studies she considers that good storytelling may make these studies entertaining to read. Entertaining may not be the most appropriate word to use when considering storytelling as a constructive component of teaching and learning unless one argues that stories that are entertaining enable the students to more easily remember the story and also that which is being taught. Baddeley et al. (2015) highlight the relevance of word association in memory's role in the acquisition of language "... with interest focussing on the influence of pre-existing associations between words on ease of list learning." (97). Associating a list of words with a story makes the list easier to remember. The theory propounded by Baddeley et al. (2015), enhanced by that of Eisenhardt (1991), suggests that storytelling assists the role of memory when learning, whether from simple lists to case-studies. As well as assisting learning, storytelling's role in that other academic activity, research, is worthy of consideration.

The interface between storytelling and research is longstanding but not always harmonious. Polkinghorne (1988) expressed his concern that he has not found "the findings of academic research of much help in my work as a clinician (practising psychotherapist), something that I find disconcerting" (ix). The doubt that is raised by Polkinghorne's statement is whether academic research will be of much help in improving practice. Polkinghorne decided to look at what could be learned from the practitioners about how research should be done. The assumption may have been that the practitioners, were

better common-sense epistemologists than academics. What he found was that practitioners work with narrative knowledge. They are concerned with people's stories (x).

Polkinghorne's (1988) debate between 'narrative knowledge' and 'people's stories' is more concerned with the usefulness of the narrative knowledge and does not seem to be too concerned that the narrative knowledge may not accurately reflect the stories as they actually happened. Sufficient that Polkinghorne should be able to get something useful out of the narration. Polkinghorne seems to be of the opinion that academic research and practitioner research are alternatives. It is possible that they may well be better regarded as being complementary to one another. The latter, practitioner, research would probably come under the banner of 'action research'. Polkinghorne does not refer at all to the term 'action research', first coined by Lewin (1946), but relates 'narrative' and 'events' as in "The narrative account that is constructed ties together and orders events so as to make apparent the way they 'caused' the happening under investigation." (Polkinghorne, 1988, 161) and "The theme or point of the story ... requires inference and interpretation on the researcher's part" (1988, 169). The complex relationship between storytelling and research is demonstrated by Myers (1989) in his discussion of the popularised story by Watson (1968) that described the discovery of split genes and the double helix.

2.2.7 How storytelling interfaces with time

Storytelling interfaces with time in four respects. Firstly, there is a time lapse between the occurrence of the phenomenon which the storyteller endeavours to relate in story form, and the first occasion on which that story is told. The major influence at this stage is the storyteller's memory and perception of the experience (Propp, 1984). Secondly, there is the trend whereby the story changes over time from the occasion of the first telling to subsequent re-tellings. The major influences at this stage are the repeat storytellers' memories and the compound effect of their respective perceptions. Thirdly, there is the suggestion that some stories have lives of their own that result in

a story evolving over time (Genette, 1972). Fourthly, the story itself comprises a time element from beginning to end (Cohan and Shires, 1988).

With regard to the first of these interfaces between storytelling and time, Propp's (1984) view that storytellers do not believe in the reality of their tales (29) recognises the remoteness in time between the happening of the event and the telling of that event; between the past story and the later writing and even later reading of the narrative. Propp (1984) voices a concern about the relationship with reality suggesting that the relation to reality in epic poetry is different from that in the folktale, yet the singers of epic poetry give diverse and contradictory answers when asked whether they believe in what they sing about (1984, 29).

With regard to the second of these interfaces between storytelling and time, Propp (1984) implies that time is a dominant influence on stories, differentiating between the original events which the story recalls, later narrative and even later discourse; the consequential doubts are raised concerning how much faith or belief we can place on the suggested truth of what is eventually relayed to us, knowing how fragile and selective are our memories, and how influential are our bigotries, biases and prejudices (Fiarman, 2016). Similarly, Baddeley et al. (2015) are concerned at memory loss by storytellers, or at least loss of accuracy with time. They reported from research that testing people after 1 day and retesting after 2½ years found a substantial drop in memory (2004, 313). Any story originates as a narrative describing a momentary perspective (Rae, 2013) of the real world (Bruner, 2004), but then memories (Baddeley et al., 2015) influence the emphases as a story is retold and thus the story evolves over time (Genette, 1972). Any story has a life of its own changing as subsequent storytellers subconsciously allow their own perspectives to influence the plot, theme and purpose of the story. The circumstances of the storytelling also influence the way the story is told.

The third attribute of the relationship between storytelling and time is identified by Genette (1972), although implied, in that novels, stories, have lives of their own. The ongoing revisions to Proust's *A la recherche du temps*

perdu even until shortly before this death suggest that the novel was undergoing change, as if it were a living organism. Even long after Proust's death the novel has undergone changes as differing editions and translations were published over time. Genette (1972) regards Proust as an open book, suggesting that the *Recherche*, more than all other works, must not be considered closed (21). This idea of a story's evolution is a recurring theme throughout Genette's study of Proust's *Recherche* from the first page of Chapter 1 *Order*

"The temporal duality ... referred to by German theoreticians as the opposition between *erzählte Zeit* (story time) and *Erzahlzeit* (narrative time) ..." (33) through to "The chief temporal determination of the narrating instance is obviously its position relative to the story. It seems evident that the narrating can only be subsequent to what it tells..." (216).

This relationship between story and narrative complements the enlightenment concerning the relationship between narrative and discourse, again by Genette (1972). This view is corroborated by Bruner (2004) who suggests that we seem to have no other way of describing 'lived time' save in the form of a narrative (692). Cohan and Shires (1988) agree with Genette's view that narration itself also occurs in time by noting the time of the telling and that of the reading, watching or hearing too. Narrational time is not therefore the same as story time. Commenting on the views expressed by Genette (1972), Cohan and Shires (1988) suggest that the differential relation between them can be analysed in terms of chronology, frequency, and duration (84).

Cohan and Shires (1988) describe the fourth of these relationships between storytelling and time by considering that the events of a story *count* as significant points in time only insofar as they are recounted by a narrative. Such events, having a memorable or momentous significance to participants, witnesses or readers of the story, are referred to in other contexts as moments noting that a narrative rarely recounts a story either in its entirety or in a strict chronological sequence (84). Such anachronisms interpose events

out of sequence as far as the general timekeeping of the plot is concerned. They are usually inserted in order to put particular incidents into context, focus on themes rather than chronology, and enable the reader to better understand, for example, the relationship between characters. In response to the question, 'How else might a reader recall a story?', Pinker (2002) suggests that, after reading a book, what a listener takes away is a general impression of the story's plot embellished by the listener's own individual predilections (90). Pinker's research discovered that readers claim to recall sentences that do not exist in the text yet can summarise the plot in some detail; suggesting that the story as eventually re-told by the readers would be in their own words.

In summary, the original story is lived at a certain time, or over a certain period of time. At a later time and in another place a version of the story is imagined by the reader, listener or viewer on receipt of the narrative account of the original events. Stories reproduce events from the past and depend on the accuracy of the storyteller's memory. Word meaning, plot and structure as well the influence of time on storytelling will contribute to a better understanding of some the more important and yet infrequently considered underlying principles of storytelling. The duration or length of time it takes to tell a story works in combination with the circumstance and manner of the storytelling as an enhancement to teaching. A short precise perceptive joke may be remembered but "if jokes are to be effective as a learning device, the material to be learned must be the focus of the joke" (De Winstanley and Bjork, 2002, 19). Extending the time frame of the telling is beneficial in certain circumstances as reported by Smith and Rothkopf (1984): "... teaching a lot in a short time is inefficient ..." (341) and supported by Rohrer (2015): "...long-term learning is best achieved when the exposures to a concept are distributed over time periods that are longer rather than shorter" (635). Such an understanding will enable teachers in higher education to professionally consider storytelling as a teaching and learning approach.

2.3 Storytelling in higher education: setting the scene

Within the higher education context, storytelling has been found to feature to a limited extent as a teaching approach internationally (Botzakis, 2013; Nowakowski, 1990) and across a range of teaching disciplines such as Law, (Blissenden, 2007), Nursing and Social Care (Johns, 2006), Accounting (Miley, 2009), Psychotherapy and Psychiatry (Brown, et al., 1996), healthcare (Crawford et al., 2015) as well as management in organisations, generally but more commonly in business organisations (Boje, 2001, Grisham, 2006 and Watson, 2006). Storytelling's attributes as discussed previously in more general scenarios could have similar affects in no less an important role in higher education within the contexts of imagination (Sturm, 2000), memory (Yates, 1966), and interest (Blissenden, 2007). These affects are interlinked to storytelling's effects of enthusiasm (Fallows and Ahmet, 1999 and Lea, 2015), motivation (Guber, 2011), and learning (Giorgi, 1989). Such reflection leads on to subsequently consider student and teacher centred approaches in Section 2.4 and 2.5.

Crawford et al (2004) do focus on the practitioner-led stories, especially with the element of feeling that has an affective impact on the listener and which contributes to a story's memorability and subsequently its effect on a student's learning. "Part of the art of becoming a story creator is being able to use one self as a resource ... our own experiences can provide the raw material for anecdotes, but perhaps more importantly, it is worth attending to our feelings as we hear (tell?) stories or reminisce about our own experiences. The chances are that if we find a story sad or uplifting it will have a similar effect on others too." (Crawford et al, 2004, 122)

2.3.1 The changing paradigm that is higher education.

Higher education itself has been a story of constant change since universities and their equivalent came into being (Franzel, 2010; Bryan, 2015). Recent changes are much as forecast by the Dearing Report (1997) which was written with a 20-year view and here we are 20 years later in 2017. Much has been researched recently on the societal changes taking place in and around

higher education, many of which impact on widening participation and globalisation. Widening participation (Morris, 2009) and globalisation (Lea, 2015) have resulted in students from different cultures and backgrounds providing different challenges for higher education practitioners. The challenges derive from the fact that these students “may learn in different ways and may come to the learning setting with different sets of prior knowledge” (Nowakowski, 1990, 305). Lewis (2002) responded to Dearing’s concern over widening participation (WP) on behalf of HEFCE with an emphasis on institutional learning and teaching strategies. Although not detailing particular teaching approaches, Lewis (2002) encouraged the development of those teaching strategies that might enable WP to be accommodated.

Readily available international travel and the influence of the Internet contributes to globalisation as a major societal change. In writing on the commercial criteria and economic incentives affecting higher education policy, Stilwell (2003) writes,

“... universities are not—and perhaps cannot be—insulated from the processes of globalisation, structural economic change, and the pressures of an increasingly competitive economic environment” (52).

Reflecting on the impact that these phenomena have on teaching styles and approaches, Botzakis (2013), explains why he teaches using comics in higher education pointing out that many of his students might not have the patience or willingness to keep up with learning when they struggle or find themselves confused, so they require particular types of attention (69). Although Botzakis (2013) admits that all was not straightforward as some of his teaching education students did admit that “they hate comics” (69) there is no evidence of research by Botzakis to further investigate positive or negative student reactions to the promotion of comics in higher education, or into identifying any evidence of the effectiveness of this approach by practitioners.

Willis (2009) reports on a case study using storytelling, drama, costume, poetry, music and performance art as part of engineering lectures by one lecturer keen on this teaching approach. The report was developed as part of the Engineering Subject Centre Teaching Awards 2009, from data gathered through observations of the teaching component; interviews with the tutor; a questionnaire to students and a student focus group. Quoted comments include, "Story telling is seen as "a way in for some quite complex stuff", and "I would encourage people to use story more. I think everyone likes stories and one can remember being told stories whether anecdotes or whether they're jokes ...I think there's room for that in most modules" (3).

HEFCE (Lewis, 2002) was also of late concerned with the financial aspects of higher education as a problematic area with the perceived trend towards commercialisation, together with associated concerns over student employability (See also report QAA, 2017) marketisation, and consumerism in particular which can be considered to be "somehow anathema to the whole notion of being a student at university" (Nowakowski, 1990,180). That notion of the student as a consumer of knowledge is perceived as being potentially at odds with the alternative notion of a university student being a producer of knowledge (Neary and Winn, 2009). Another possible area of contention lies in the debate between the two academic activities of research and teaching; they both compete for teachers' as well as students' time and resources (Lea, 2015, 61). Rather than competing, research and teaching could be mutually supportive although the relationship between the two leads to a further dichotomy; that between research-informed teaching and research-led teaching (Sharp et al., 2013). Murray (2008) considers that research and teaching are basic ingredients of scholarship; a view supported by Yee (2014) who describes research and teaching as inseparable components in higher education. While also commenting on many of the previously mentioned issues, Yee (2014) also draws attention to the impact of advancing technology on higher education course design, prominent in which are MOOCs, Massive Open Online Courses, and WBDL, work-based distance learning courses. MOOCs have been researched among students whose opinion is favourable given certain preconditions in terms of the students and the configuration of the course (Abeer and Miri, 2014). Whereas

the 49 researched students had completed their course, further research on MOOCs needs to examine relationships between participants' motivation, achievement goals, and learning outcomes with relation to types of MOOC completers, as identified by Abeer and Miri (2014). Research in this subject to date is available from literature reviews such as that by Kaushnik (2015). White (2012) provides a useful introduction to the challenges, benefits and impacts associated with work-based learning and concludes with the suggestion that HEI's need to consider whether to develop a specialised academic role to act as the interface into the knowledge of the traditional academic and with the workplace (17). This may partially answer the question posed by Carol (2014) while researching history training in higher education.

Helyer (2011) considers that work-based students bring learning, ideas and expertise to academia with them; they are not blank canvasses – they are already in possession of knowledge and keen to build on it. They have professional knowledge (which, if of a specialist nature, sometimes exceeds that of the lecturer they encounter) and are usually operating at levels higher than any existing formal qualifications suggest. When these learners apply their workplace and life learning in an academic setting, they create a powerful synergy – an opportunity that should be embraced and built upon by HE, not treated as suspect (2011, 96).

Looking to the future of higher education, Jasman, et al. (2013) blandly state that,

“Quality teaching at the individual academic level can no longer be about preparing an interesting, conceptually clear and well-constructed lecture which includes appropriate media and ICT, ...”

but avoid indicating what changes might be necessary; preferring to state that this,

“presents an ongoing challenge to academics and those interested in knowledge creation, management and distribution which should

be the subject of further research relevant to the increasingly diverse contexts in which 'learning' at this level takes place" (2013, 668).

It is the ambition of this research study to proffer a practical suggestion to enhance what might be basically "an interesting, conceptually clear and well-constructed lecture which includes appropriate media and ICT, ...", as Jasman et al. put it (2013, 668), as well as to provide affective impact value and effective learning results.

2.3.2 Storytelling across higher education disciplines

The use of storytelling to varying degrees is reported intermittently in higher education literature (Bowden, 2012; Johns, 2006; McCloskey, 1990; Meyer, 2014). The scope of this thesis precludes in-depth pursuit of any one discipline, but examples are given here to whet the readers' appetite. Storytelling is associated with research and post graduate studies as well as such disciplines as Economics, Nursing and Social Care, Law, Accounting, Design and Business Organisation Management. There follow a series of short paragraphs to provide an anecdotal overview demonstrating how storytelling is used within different disciplines, as well as research at undergraduate, postgraduate and postdoctoral levels, all in higher education. The selections, beginning with postgraduate teaching, provide an overview of storytelling in higher education generally rather than to consider any one particular activity or discipline in detail, as well as to identify initial indications of potential findings to help define the methodology, and research methods.

McCloskey (1990) entitles his paper, *Storytelling in Economics*. He describes how it happens but not why. The only indication that McCloskey gives that stories have a use is that they assist explanation and the modes of explanation are more closely balanced in economics. An economist explains the success of cotton farming indifferently with static modelling arguments or emotively with dynamic storytelling arguments (6). There is the suggestion that models, alias metaphors are 'static', and stories are 'dynamic' but unfortunately McCloskey does not elaborate. McCloskey's view is that

storytelling is best adapted to explaining something that has already happened, and that storytelling, for example, makes it clearer why economists disagree (10).

A particularly influential application of storytelling occurs in Nursing and Social Care (Johns, 2006) whereby the stories are told by patients as part of their self-empowered therapy. In a closely related discipline, Bowden (2012) found that the need to bridge theory and practice was indicated by an outcome from a social care programme that students often complain that much of the academic learning appears too distant to grasp (6). This view is corroborated by Edwards, M. (2014) suggesting that story has originality in itself, over and above theory, assessment and reflection.

One profession in which storytelling is endemic is that of Law, as demonstrated by Meyer (2014). A very full bibliography on the uses of storytelling in the practice and teaching of law has been compiled by Rideout (2015) on the occasion of the 4th Conference on Applied Legal Storytelling. From the specific teaching point of view, Blissenden (2007) reports on storytelling being used as a teaching model in a Law School and confirms that the students were able to ignite interest and engage in the learning process (274). This research thesis builds on that of Meyer (2014), Rideout (2015) and Blissenden (2007) by investigating the impact of teachers' storytelling across different disciplines, restricted in number by the very nature of a post graduate project in terms of time and facilities, but which nevertheless provides pointers for potentially worthwhile research across even more that of disciplines. One potential outcome of this research thesis which complements that of Meyer (2014) in particular is a conclusion that optimum beneficence is gained from a combination of the student-centred and teacher-centred approaches. Additionally, Blissenden adds that retelling in the classroom the story behind the case also enables the teacher to assist students in the learning process and where necessary streamline the discussion (274); thus, he advocates a combination of the student-centred and teacher-centred approaches.

In researching the effectiveness of mathematics teachers, admittedly at compulsory education level but no less relevant, Mulligan (2016) extols the virtue of the teacher qualification of holding consecutive years of experience at the same grade level. This was believed to positively influence teacher pedagogical knowledge as well as student learning and achievement in mathematics. Unfortunately, the impact of teacher's experience outside teaching where mathematics was used in practical applications was not considered at all by Mulligan (2016). Such would be a source of stories to enhance the teaching process. If I may be allowed a personal observation here. My A-level Mathematics teacher was an ex gunnery officer and explained trajectory, velocity, and vectors in a way that I still remember and understand 60 years later. Crawford et al. (2015) relate similar examples but mainly from the area of health humanities.

Tully's (2012) research in the field of design in higher education affirms that, while storytelling has long been part of a child's educational development, its use as a learning tool in higher education has not been adequately explored and offers great potential in supporting the learning process (7). Tully (2012)'s paper sets out to consider storytelling in design education and concludes that while the intervention was small, and the research evaluation limited, it is clear that this type of intervention warrants further consideration. Thody (1997) uses three examples of storytelling to demonstrate their use in research, teaching and learning in the subject of primary school education management.

Certain disciplines, such as Business Management, have recognised the importance of storytelling, not so much as a teaching approach but in terms of recognising the importance of storytelling within organisations, and particularly within business organisations. Attempts have been made to chronicle the growth of management learning in business schools as it developed initially in the USA and later globally (Williams, 2010). One of the several factors that held back management education in the United Kingdom was the widely held belief that management education attached to universities would be too theory driven and insufficiently practice driven, reflecting a view that very few British managers in the first half of the past

century had experience of higher education (4). Although Williams (2010) provides no academic underpinning for this and similar statements, a corroborating statement comes from R. Hawley when interviewed for the IEE (Institution of Electrical Engineers).

"You can be taught management skills on courses, but until you practice the art of management those skills don't necessarily mean anything. People learn far more doing the job than they ever could on an MBA course." (Moore, 1993, 95)

Contrasting with this view, there is a consensus that suggests that the best learning opportunity comes from a combination of some management experience with an MBA, but best preceding the MBA. Derby University requires that a minimum of 2-3 years supervisory experience is required before applications are accepted for their online MBA course and the experience must be evidenced with the application (Derby University, 2015, website). Brace-Govan and Powell (2005) build on awareness that increasing interest in reality-based or experiential learning has brought a focus on internships and service learning (116). As well as reporting valuable outcomes in the interns' soft skills of communication, interpersonal skills, problem solving, and putting theory into practice, there is the reflection that the interns provide in their journals which conveys in vibrant tones the excitement that they feel from their first experience of practical, real world marketing (2005, 142).

2.3.3 Storytelling affects; imagination, memory and interest.

Storytelling brings about a number of significant affects and effects on story-listeners. The affects of storytelling are more immediate and short term such as stirring imagination (Schostak, 2002 and Sturm, 2000), generating interest (Fallows and Ahmet, 1999; Lea, 2015) and activating memory, which is a basic attribute to learning, according to Giorgi (1989). Memory has also been researched by Yates (1966) and the arousal of interest in the story's subject matter is commented on by Smith (2010).

Sturm (2000) describes the first characteristic of his research into storytelling trance as "experience realism". Participants often experienced a story as if it were real, as if the story's plot and characters were not just the results of imagination (291). Sturm (2000) highlights this as a danger inherent in the use of storytelling in education in that, even if the source of the story is outside the realms of fact, and if the storytelling achieves the desired affects, then the sense of realism experienced by the listeners can seem to be complete (282). It is interesting that Sturm's report suggests that he believes that a story's reality evaporates when the story ends. While Sturm (2000) hopes that more research into the story-listening trance phenomenon will be sparked, he makes no mention of the longer-term effects of the phenomenon; no mention of storytelling's role in education and certainly no consideration of its role in higher education. As an assistant professor in a school of information and library science, he does admit that this could be regarded as a lost opportunity which may be taken up by others. Schostak (2002) has the derived opinion that to explore a world within a story is to engage with the particular process through which it is imagined (17). As Paté-Cornell puts it in a recent paper suggesting that 'black swans' and 'perfect storms' are avoidable to some extent.

"Reasoned imagination is thus an important part of risk assessment because it implies, first, anticipating by systematic analysis scenarios that have not happened yet, and second, recognising and communicating these unusual signals," (Paté-Cornell, 2012, 1825).

Yet this is not the whole story. To imagine how a story event occurred is to have imagined a state of affairs in which the story-listener envisaged himself as an active and embodied participant, according to Casey (2000, 45). Imagination is fired by flashes of inspiration, colloquially known as light bulb moments (Brown and Kullick, 1977) or more definitively as momentary perspectives (Rae, 2013). Imagination is the intermediary between perception and thought; it is the image-making part of the soul which makes the work of the higher processes of thought possible according to Yates (1966, 47). In this context of education, it is worth noting the view by Casey

(2000) that one's given imaginative powers are capable of being trained, through disciplined exercise, to overcome marked deficiencies or to strengthen further one's already existing capabilities (83). Schostak (2002) emphasises that it is ethereal powers described as motives, desires, or purposes, rather than any mechanical cause and effect, that enables the imaginary order to take life (18).

Yates (1966) relates a story allegedly ascribed to the poet Simonides (556–468 BC) describing the principles of the art of memory; that orderly arrangement is essential for good memory (17). The importance of memory not only before the age of printing but probably before writing was commonplace, was noted by Yates (1966) who also offers a link between memory and images, again from Grecian times. Few people know that the Greeks, who invented many arts, invented an art of memory. This art sought to memorise through a technique of impressing 'places' and 'images' on memory. It has usually been classed as 'mnemotechnics' and in the ages before printing a trained memory was vitally important (1966, 11). At the very incarnation of letters and writing, doubts were expressed about this elementary innovation in the art of communication as reported by Socrates in *Phaedrus*. Socrates tells a story of Thamus who, extolling the virtues of his invention of letters is advised by Theuth that, "You have invented an elixir not of memory but of reminding; and you offer your pupils the appearance of wisdom, not true wisdom ... they are not wise, but only appear wise" (Yates 1966, 52). Memory and wisdom are not necessarily so closely interlinked, as discussed also at length by Moraitou and Efklides (2012) in their consideration of wisdom and its relationship with memory, affect and hope in a study of aspects of aging.

2.3.4 Storytelling effects: the teaching and learning interface.

Blissenden (2007) reports on storytelling being used as a teaching model in a Law School and concludes that the students are able to ignite interest and engage in the learning process (274). Smith (2010) links engagement and interest resulting from the telling of a story being used to enhance teaching using a case study. As Smith observes, a certain professor used the

techniques of visual examples and storytelling to stimulate student engagement in a particular case study. He began the lessons by showing a slide of newspaper clippings which announced massive layoffs at the company featured in the case study and this created a level of heightened interest (20). Storytelling's role in student engagement is further developed by Bryson (2014) and Fallows and Ahmet (1999). Lea (2015) proposes that the key role of any educator is to not just to arouse interest in a subject but to inspire students to become independent and well-motivated learners. Educators must aim to not only transfer factual items of knowledge and introduce the key debates of the subject to students, they must also deliver enthusiasm and influence students to learn (1). Speaking of his experience in film making (Rain Man, Batman, and Midnight Express), Guber (2011) suggests a further stage in the process; storytelling not only affects listeners in the immediacy but has longer term effects. Moving on from interest and enthusiasm, stories not only move us, they motivate us because we can see in them possible new life-directions for ourselves (81). Further indications that such themes are inter-related is suggested by Casey (2000) who, in a particular regard, considers that perception is a condition of imagination; to be in-the-world is necessarily to be a perceiving being (172). He thus links perception with imagination and the 'real' world. A typical momentary perspective in this regard was provided by Aristotle, whom Yates (1966) credits with the observation that memory belongs to the same part of the soul as the imagination. The intellectual faculty comes into play in memory for in it, thought works on the stored images from sense perception (47). Giorgi (1989) relates learning to memory by analysing what he describes as 'memorial descriptions', or later in his article, 'stories' especially when describing the experiments on memory carried out by Bartlett (1932, 1954). Bartlett had subjects learn stories, anecdotes, discussions and other types of 'realistic' materials, that is, materials that were identical to those encountered in everyday life (Giorgi, 1989, 110). Giorgi was concerned that the stories were too remote from the participants' own personal experiences. It would be different if the subjects had to generate their own stories, but that was omitted from Giorgi's research methodology. Thus, within the research tradition, only the phenomenological approach was alleged to capture the intrinsic relation of the subject to his or her memory (110). Merleau-Ponty

(2002) provides us with a link between imagination and reality. Merlau-Ponty demonstrates how a reality-based story can promote imagination rather than just describe reality.

"I weave dreams round things. I imagine people and things whose presence is not incompatible with the context, yet who are not in fact involved in it: they are ahead of reality, in the realm of the imaginary" (xi).

Students in higher education need to be encouraged or enabled to develop interest in their subject which may in turn lead to enthusiasm, and they need to exercise their memory skills as a contribution towards their learning; storytelling may well be one means by which these steps may be achieved in the context of student-centred practice in higher education.

2.4 Storytelling within student-centred practice

Recent years have seen an emphasis on a student-centred or learning-based approach rather than a teacher-centred or teaching-based approach. Variations on the student-centred approach include experiential learning (Kolb, 2015), brain-based learning (Jensen, 2008) and reflection (McDrury and Alterio, 2003; Schön, 2013). Tulbure (2012) reports research investigating the relationship between teaching strategies and learning styles in higher education, but without any consideration of storytelling as a teaching approach or strategy. For the purposes of her research project, five teaching strategies were defined as graphical organisation of information, cooperative learning, investigation, debate and problem solving. These were applied to three subjects: Educational Sciences, Economic Sciences, and Foreign Languages. Four learning styles commonly considered were derived from Kolb (2015); assimilators, convergers, divergers and accommodators. The first two styles use abstract conceptualisation to perceive information and the latter two styles perceive information through concrete experience. Tulbure (2012) concludes by suggesting that in order to effectively validate the results, future studies may include a greater number of students as well as a greater variety of teaching strategies for a longer time (72). The

research as reported included five teaching strategies with three subject disciplines combined with four learning styles. That is a potential research base of $5 \times 3 \times 4 = 60$ different combinations of variables. The primary research as suggested would require substantial resources in terms of time, cooperation with teachers, teaching, observations, survey groups and interviews with students, as well as pertinent secondary research. Rather than be so ambitious, more meaningful results might have resulted from a more focused project with one teaching approach such as storytelling. Aspects of this current research study into storytelling as a teaching approach have focused on the teacher-centred approach and have highlighted the need to consider the range of both teaching and learning styles that will influence the reactions of learners to storytelling. Developing an idea from Tulbure's (2012) research variables, one of the research questions that looked likely to emerge from this review of literature was moving towards asking whether storytelling as a teaching approach is applicable across different subjects or disciplines. Given the imprecise outcomes of previous research, it remains to be seen whether primary research participants later in this research study will consider that learning styles are important factors influencing the effectiveness of storytelling as a teaching approach. This may apply especially to interviewees who have more time and privacy to express their views.

2.4.1 Personality-Types and Learning-Styles

Education has long been intrigued by the possibility of students possessing different learning styles depending on mainly their personality types. Testing for styles and types developed as a post-modernist adjunct to social science and matured with the system developed by Myers and Briggs growing from the theoretical ideas of Jung (Berry, 2000). The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is described in detail on the Foundation website (Myers-Briggs Foundation, 2015). The MBTI has been applied in numerous professions and nationalities such as nursing in South Korea (Go Mi Ja, 2014), armed forces such as the USAF (Devlin and Singh, 2010) and in human resource management of which Coe (1992) is a typical research paper voicing awareness of the misuses as well as uses of the results of MBTI tests.

Further misgivings are expressed in a personal story by Caitlin (2015) who tried the MBTI on herself, resulting in some personal self-doubts which in turn led to some concerns regarding the process for interpreting the results of the MBTI indicator.

Myers-Briggs relate their tests only to learning styles. The only mention of teaching styles by Myers with Myers (1980) is that with type SF (Sensing plus Feeling) "... the teaching styles these people developed would be found to vary accordingly" (46). As for stories and storytelling, they noted that extraverted sensing types ESTP and ESFP are, among other attributes, "... they stick to experience... are pleasant people, good comrades, and jolly boon companions... frequently good storytellers "(101). This corroborated some of the early findings from the exploratory research carried out in anticipation of and in parallel with this literature review whereby interviewees fondly remembered teachers who were charismatic (pleasant people), became mentors to their students (good comrades), had a sense of humour (jolly boon companions) and did tell stories. The relationship between experience and storytelling became a theme to be investigated in the primary research. A longer-term view could include extending the Myers Briggs test to teaching styles to complement the extensive work to date on learning styles. Such research could build on that as reported by Davis (2010) who considers that,

"... a basic understanding and better appreciation of our own strengths and weaknesses, as well of others, can assist in augmenting the process of human relationships, both in and out of the classroom" (28).

As well as personality types that might impinge on a student's receptivity to storytelling, learning styles have been promoted by, among others, Honey and Mumford with a manual (1982) and a later a questionnaire (2000). A critique by Caple and Martin (1994) queries aspects of the Honey and Mumford learning cycle and suggests that the questionnaire identifies a personality type in a similar manner to Kolb (2015) rather than a learning style, although admitting that the two attributes may be linked. With some

concern regarding the number and diversity of students enrolled in higher education Carol (2014, 256) arranged for forty-nine history students to complete the Honey and Mumford questionnaires in an attempt to determine whether new teaching approaches might be identified. The conclusions were not conclusive resulting in the suggestion that further research would be required before any workable insights were identified before reconstructing the academic curriculum (261). Even as recently as the date when this thesis was approaching its final draft, Lake et al. (2017) identified learning styles as a cause of much confusion to researchers and suggest that terminology needs precise definitions (5). Definitions may well differ with the particular role of the researcher or teacher in the latter-day paradigm that is today's higher education with its virtual media variations. Strand et al. (2000) did investigate this relationship using the MBTI and concluded that, "By determining successful teaching styles for on-line courses, we can develop more effective faculty development programs to assist others in successfully transitioning into the cyber-teaching and learning environment" (11).

White (2012) suggests that a specialised academic role might be needed where new teaching approaches are identified such as with work-based distance learning (wbdL). Within distance learning, students' stories are seen as a means of facilitating the learning process in on-line discussion groups such as is found in e-learning environments. E-learning, from which wbdL could be considered as an offshoot, does not preclude storytelling. As suggested by Watkins (2005), learners can add their stories to the conversation thus building community, engaging the learners themselves in the course and improving the learners' retention of course material (154). Raybourn (2014) widened the research considerations to include MOOCs and considered that transmedia storytelling can be defined as crafting a narrative or consistent message in the form of a story across multiple media (472).

Brain based learning is another post-modernist educational phenomenon developed by Jensen (2008) from ideas originating from work such as that of Hebb in 1949 and later Harmon in 1951. The problem with brain-based learning, as suggested by Sternberg (2008) is that brain research has yielded

too many contradictory findings for educators to know with certainty which policies and practices to adopt (418). Damasio (1999) seems to have a rather more positive approach when considering the workings of the brain through the process of learning something new. Extensive studies of perception, learning and memory, and language have given us a workable idea of the brain's processes, particular when encountering something new as part of the learning process (182). Mather (2014) links the brain's interpretive processes to the senses whereby, for example, "the huge complexity of the central nervous system is brought to bear on the problem of making sense of the retinal image" (177). Mather (2014) also suggests that another piece of the jigsaw that makes up image aesthetics is organisation: the arrangement of objects and features (161) which could form the elements of a story. Jensen (2008) intermittently extols the virtue of storytelling but rather by way of encouraging story swapping between students (92) than suggesting it could be a part of a teaching approach: "Use the power of family history, stories, myths, legends, and metaphors to help make learning relevant for students" (180); but no mention whether stories based on teachers' own experience might be important. Although the titles of both the works by Jensen (2008) and Caine and Caine (1991) cite brain and teaching in the titles, the contents prove to be all about the learner's brain rather than the teacher's brain, and more about learning than teaching. Jensen (2008) as well as Caine and Caine (1991) dwell more on the virtues of experiential learning by students, although students' experience of life is relatively marginal compared with the teacher's longer term and broader experience.

2.4.2 Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is described in Kolb's (2015) seminal work in which he defines the process of experiential learning as "how learning takes place" (7). Gibbs (2013) emphasises the process of learning by reflection on experience. This process continues through life as identified by Piaget (2001) in terms of four major stages of cognitive growth from birth to about the age of 14 – 16; this latter stage corresponding with "the possession of hypothetico-deductive reasoning". If Piaget had continued his work with students over 16 years of age he might have been able to contribute his

ideas to the age range of students in higher education and considered not just the *possession* but more importantly the *application* of hypothetico-deductive reasoning. The use of this method of reasoning comes at an advanced stage of storytelling described by Haberman (2011), quoting Wolfson (Jewish Virtual Library, 2018)). Hypothetico-deductive reasoning tries to determine the true meaning of what is said by tracing back the story of how it came to be said, and why it is said in the manner in which it is said (Haberman, 2011, 122).

Such further research by Piaget (2001) may also have contributed to clarifying the problem area identified by Kolb (2015) when considering the implications for higher education emanating from the development of his process of experiential learning.

“The educational issue is how and when to intervene in a way that facilitates this development. The “hows” are not easy.” (Kolb, 2015, 284)

Kolb (2015) admits that while this discussion has focussed primarily on the course level units of learning environments, it is difficult to conceptualise the effect on teaching or practical application. The only other mention of teaching that Kolb (2015) makes is as an item in two listings of career choices for students with particular learning styles. He gives no consideration to the challenge that the process of experiential learning will provide to teachers in higher education in both the implementation and practice. Experiential learning is but one example of the student-centred approach to higher education that has prevailed over recent years, with little or no apparent consideration of the alternative counter-balancing approach of an experiential teaching approach. Fallows and Ahmet (1999) report that a course in management education was remodelled using evidence on experiential learning and mentoring; this allegedly resulted in increased student enjoyment (43). Although no indication of the remodelled course’s improved learning was indicated, there is an indication of inconclusive results with the report stressing that new teaching material needs careful planning (52). More recent progress in this direction has been described by Beard (2008) who

argues that,

“...in contradiction to the existing literature, ... with noteworthy exceptions, the body, the senses and the affective states are far more important in pedagogic encounters than is acknowledged” and goes on to admit that “... there is still much more fieldwork to carry out in deepening my understanding of the rich and complex world of learning ...” (32).

That there is still a lot further to go in this realm of higher education approaches is demonstrated by Gold and Holman (2001) who report on the use of Learning Styles tests by Honey and Mumford (1992) and by Kolb (2015) in their lead up to an assessment of an evaluation of storytelling by work-based Management students; an evaluation which “has so much further to go with this approach” (393).

2.4.3 Reflection

McDrury and Alterio (2003) promote learning through storytelling in higher education but mainly through promoting the idea that students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning experiences; but McDrury and Alterio (2003) do admit that students have to rely on the educators to create a storytelling culture among them. Stories based on the educator’s own experiences are not given any consideration. The premise is that student learning is enhanced by reflection and builds on the growth of a reflective paradigm which suggests that telling stories is a means of making sense of experience; a learning process promoted initially by Schön (2013) He further advocates that reflection be included in teacher training and professional development. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on and thereby learn from their individual teaching experiences. This is exemplified by Schlein et al. (2015) whose work is based on members’ reminiscences of the AATC (American Association for Teaching and Curriculum) organisation at the 2015 AATC Conference. The outcome of the work produced the story of the AATC since its inception based on the stories as told by the members themselves. However, there was no analysis of the effectiveness of the process to answer

the question whether members' stories were the best way of doing this? Members were invited to consider how present actions might be paving the way toward the future intentions, activities, and outcomes of those who are connected to AATC. There was no input from outside the organisation from teaching practitioners who had not joined AATC. Their answers might have been enlightening.

A previous application of this paradigm is reported by Liu and Donalds (2013) in the context of a Service Operations Management course in which students reflected on the links between theory and practice. Although this reported research is based on a simple self-assessment exercise, the authors consider that it shows sufficient promise to expect more methods targeting reflective learning to be designed (797). A similar pilot study was carried out among Business School lecturers, but not among students, by Dennison (2012). Dennison did not interview students as he relied on the lecturers' opinions of student reactions to self-reflection. Through his resultant report he expresses reservations with Kolb's (2015) experiential learning theory (ELT), provides links to numerous articles in support of his view and suggests that the self-reflection aspect of ELT is not a useful model for higher education. Learner-centredness is part of the concern expressed by Dennison (2012) and relates to the student-centred approach applying reflective practice as a recommended learning process for students. Dennison's research in the sporting arena considered the importance of the trainer/coach and the crucial difference between learning and true discovery by an athlete of their own physical performance potential by actually experiencing performance at that potential level. If this can be translated to academic potential and performance, then the experience of realisation by doing rather than reflection suggests that ELT is not a useful model for higher education, that its attractions (learner-centredness, grounded in 'reality', the need for a teacher down-graded) are partly illusory (Dennison, 2012, 2).

Whereas Dennison (2012) researched with teachers, Biggs and Tang (2011) researched with students rather than their teachers who also promoted self-reflection but in e-learning environments. Reflection was encouraged by using narrative: students telling each other their stories and what they had

learned. This experiment is ongoing as the results indicated that many students did not progress their learning as they needed scaffolding on which to construct reflection. Their portfolios contained reports of experiences but no reflective thoughts on what they might have learned from the experiences (61). Although limited in scope, numbers and achievements, these works are an interesting precursor to the vast range of more detailed and meaningful research which could follow.

2.4.4 Student-centred and teacher-centred practice

Students have experienced storytelling in various forms as they have progressed through successive stages of compulsory education towards higher education. Fox Eades (2006) consider the use of storytelling to build emotional, social and academic skills across the primary curriculum. Elementary schools in the USA cover the age range generally from kindergarten to pre-secondary, the range in which Egan (1986) promotes the idea of teaching as storytelling. He does indeed promote storytelling as a teacher-centred teaching approach rather than as a student-centred learning approach and states that children's imaginations are the most powerful and energetic learning tools when reacting to teachers' stories. The idea "is about how to use the power of the story form in order to teach any content more engagingly and meaningfully" (2). McGinnis-Cavanaugh et al. (2015) also link storytelling with imagination in their description of a STEM teaching approach in Springfield, Ma. USA whereby developmentally appropriate stories are designed to engage children's imaginations and help them structure what they learn. These stories are designed to frame engineering theoretical concepts into practical applications (15). The approach is aimed at children and young teens in Grades 4-6.

These issues all make for a complex higher education paradigm of interlinked scenarios in which to carry out small scale educational research as described by Kelly (2008) and Skerratt (2008) who provide research examples covering both student-centred and teacher-centred approaches. In the 1990s, reports such as that by Gow and Kember (1993) suggested that a student-centred learning environment is less likely to induce surface or shallow learning

achievements. Consequently, researchers such as Prosser and Trigwell (1999) claimed at that time that a transition in curricular and instructional approaches is needed: from teacher-centred to student-centred learning environments. Such a transition, they suggest, will only be successful when the main actors, i.e., teachers and students, understand and agree with the underpinnings of so-called 'student-centred learning environments'. In other words, a smooth transition requires a mutual adaptation of students' and teachers' instructional conceptions (Lowyck et al., 2004). More recent research by Elen et al. (2007) considered the relationship between the two centres from the perceptions of students as research participants and found the results rather inconclusive (106). Similarly, Leung et al. (2008) compared these teaching approaches in Hong Kong and China mainland universities and concluded that "Both teacher-centred and student-centred teaching approaches perform different functions in construction education. It is difficult to conclude which is the best approach" (144). Storrs (2009) reports that, although she did not intentionally plan to implement a pedagogy around C. Wright-Mills' sociological imagination to a mixed Class of Chinese students and Japanese students in Tokyo, "... the students' response to my initial use of my own personal story ... led to my continued reliance on stories as a pedagogical strategy" (37). A variation in the use of storytelling was applied by Hanna (2016) in helping minority group students in politically sensitive scenarios to find themselves in the story unfolding around them; in comparable scenarios whether in both Northern Ireland and Israel.

2.5 Storytelling within teacher-centred practice

Fallows (2003), writing of student skills development, considers that tutors occupy a variety of roles in their relationships with students, such as lecturer, tutor, coach, and mentor. Bowden (2012) suggests that tutoring, using one to one inter-actions, becomes conflated with mentoring, and agrees that tutors, who are also lecturers, do indeed play a multiplicity of roles. In particular, storytelling is more befitting the role of tutor as Bowden (2012) found in his small-scale (5 colleagues) research study into the tutorial role in a social care professional training degree programme. The lack of detail in this study leads to a consideration that the role of the tutor is a largely unwritten one (3)

suggesting that more research is needed.

Kember (1997) identified two broad orientations, as he called them, namely student-centred learning and teacher-centred learning. While much research around the early 1990's had focused on the former, Kember (1997) found only thirteen references related to the latter to guide his research into academics' conceptions of teaching; research which concluded by recognising the importance of student-teacher interaction. A teacher-centred learning environment, which is similar to traditional instruction, is said to discourage students from adopting a deep approach to study according to Entwistle, (1998), although in an earlier work, Entwistle (1988) agrees that teaching styles also needed to be understood more. Whereas it is the students' role to actively engage in learning processes, it is the teachers' role to actively engage in supporting that learning, according to Elen et al (2007, 107). One version of a teacher-centred teaching approach, rather than as a student-centred learning approach, is advocated by Egan (1986) as a story-form model of organising lessons; although admittedly in elementary schools rather than higher education. Nowakowski (1990), in commenting on the perceived quantitative versus qualitative struggle described by Reinharz (1990), comes some way towards recognising the need for mixed methods and introduces the concept of a combination of teacher centred as well as student or learner-centred approaches. Paralleling these changes in the vision of learning is a reconceptualisation and renewal of the ways we think about expert teaching and professional development (Reinharz, 1990, 305).

2.5.1 Storytelling uses experience of the real world

Bowden's (2012) ethnographic research among colleagues on the notion that experiential learning provides a grounding for experiential teaching produced one observation that "it's easier if you have been there and done it and you know the challenges that are involved" (8). Dewey (2004) strongly supports this notion of experience being important in education. An ounce of experience is better than a ton of theory simply because it is only in experience that any theory has vital and verifiable significance (Dewey, 2004, 158). Such a pragmatic notion has not always been so readily accepted, as

James (1948) notes, pondering why the Schiller – Dewey view of truth has been so ferociously attacked by rationalist philosophers (159). In talking of pragmatism, James relates truth and experiences by asking, "How will truth be realised? What experiences will be different from those which would obtain if the belief were false?" (1948, 160). Experiences are the phenomena from which stories are derived. James (1948) wonders how stories of experience can be interpreted to realise the underlying truth.

Links between storytelling, truth and the real world have previously been considered in the context whereby the real world is regarded as being the source of stories. For example, Propp (1984) relates epic poetry to reality. As a corollary, Evers (2008) describes how myths and legend can be confused with truth and reality. There is much debate philosophically on the definition of reality, typical of which is McWhinney (1997) who asks us to note that, in describing these realities, he makes no statements about what truly exists or what really causes what to happen. He takes reality to be essentially unknowable; any image we have of reality is, at best, a belief (24). The storytelling circle is now rounded fully as the teacher-cum-storyteller becomes the link between the student-cum-story-listener and the real world. Referring to the former role, Bowden (2012) explains that the role stories play is to act as a bridge between the rigid surface of the academic programme and the interactive world of practice (2). Schostak (2002) brings together current themes of reality and imagery, which can be regarded as the results of imagination.

“... the researcher makes manifest the relationships between the Real, the symbolic systems that map it out, and the imagery through which consciousness perceives the world as a reality that can be talked about, touched and manipulated” (55).

The importance of imbuing a sense of reality into storytelling is also advocated by Schostak (2002) pointing out that the narrative, in whatever form, is a powerful rhetorical device for representing the sense of reality, the sense of being there. If practitioners are to be the audience (implicitly or explicitly) of a particular report, thesis or publication then the ‘smell’ of reality

in the text is important. The reader can say, "Yes, I recognise that. Yes, that represents the complexity of my experience" (167). In dedicating her book to the memory of Gertrude Bing, Yates (1966) links reality with images in this thesis by succinctly describing Bing's concerns with the problems of mental images, of the grouping of reality through images (14).

Students' concern over the prospects for future employment post-graduation are heightened with the gradual commodification of higher education, as asserted recently by Berg et al. (2017) and Schech et al. (2017). Students are concerned that their studies should link with the real world and for this the students rely on their teachers to provide those links. This provision is provided via two routes; firstly, via student-centred practice by encouraging students to reflect on their own experiences, of whatever nature, and describe the result in a story-form. The second route is via teacher-focused practice whereby the teachers provides the stories from their own experience. This is researched further by Helyer (2011) who affirms a holistic view of aligning higher education with the world of work.

"Employed learners tend to take responsibility for their own learning and their own time management. Higher education has always claimed to produce learners like this; independent self-starters, creative and intellectually curious, capable of thriving with minimal tutor contact" (103).

Moon (2010) utters a word of caution with regard to storytelling from the real world in that the real world is full of dissonant messages and we need practice in managing them and to develop the ability to think critically (37). It would be remiss not to acknowledge that storytelling can be used to play to the emotions for malevolent intent as with the notorious Ponzi pyramid and similar schemes described by Konnikova (2015). Bruner (2004) promotes the constructivist view that 'stories' do not 'happen' in the real world but, rather, are constructed in people's heads (691). It all depends on how one defines story and how one defines the real world. A rather different perspective of the real world is displayed by Bruner's (2004) case study family which has an internally generated culture whereby the central axis is 'home', which is

regarded in sharp contrast to what they all refer to as 'the real world' outside (703). According to Daniels (2005), Vygotsky advocates stories and storytelling a number of times in his exhortations on the values of culture.

Fallows and Ahmet (1999) point out that learners are always inspired by examples of how abstract principles are applied in real life by real people in real situations. Students, especially in traditionally 'abstract' subjects are enthused by real examples, tangible to their world. Being taught to work out accounts in relation to the home and the family in a mathematics appreciation course is far more motivating than, as one of their students put it, "the drudgery of trying to complete copious amounts of stupid problems" (173). The student's description of the problems as stupid probably indicates that the student does not see how the set problems relate to either the real world as perceived by the student, or even relate to the theory that forms the underlying basis of the lesson. A further allusion to the usefulness of storytelling is described by Binks (2015) who considers that the chances are that every one of us, even if unwittingly, has dealt with a difficulty by redefining it in more expansive terms, discovering an analogous instance as a story where it has been overcome and tailoring the solution to suit our circumstances. There is much to be said for shifting from a problem in the specific (the real life) to the general (the story) and then back to the specific in order to identify a potential solution within a similar but different context. Binks (2015) further asserts that potential solution can be taken back again to the specific problem (to real life) and adapted and applied with a different insight, and a successful outcome.

2.5.2 Storytelling needs real life sources

This research originated in the discipline of Business Management where stories abound in business practice as propounded by Gabriel (1995, 2004, 2008) but not necessarily in business education. In the same way that recent higher education practice has focused on student-centred approaches rather than teacher-centred approaches, business storytelling has focused on storytelling within business organisations (Watson, 2006) rather than on storytelling within the teaching of business management within higher

education. In order to focus the research, the following section will investigate the literature associated with this particular discipline.

There is a need for real life stories with a focus on business management as a taught discipline. (Ayas and Mirvis, 2005; Holman, 2000; Johnson et al, 2011; Teale, 2009). This could be in the form of a story bank of the type described by Aaker and Smith (2010) in developing the use of social media as a source of stories. These efforts can yield hundreds, if not thousands of stories. But once you've got them, where do you put them? The answer is in a story bank, or a central online repository where you can easily and quickly find a story that enlivens whatever point you want to make (86). The plethora of management stories from all types of organisations in which management is practised is demonstrated by Boyce (1996) whose critical review of organisational story and storytelling contains 115 references, many of which suggest an array of approaches to story and storytelling that have been utilized in organizations (12) but none of which suggest that such stories could be utilized in the teaching and learning of management in higher education. Johnson et al. (2011) describe a common type of management story; namely the stories told by members of an organisation to each other, to outsiders, and to new recruits. These may act in themselves to embed the perceived or actual organisation's culture in its organisational history, and flag up important events and personalities. They can be a way of letting people know who and what is important, albeit unofficially, in an organisation, (199). By inference, stories in themselves are an important communication device, and as such they may well be able to carry that importance over into the teaching and learning of management in higher education.

The products of Czarniawska's (1998, 2004) research could be seen as being relevant to a teaching practitioners' quest for material representing 'real life'. Such material could be used to enhance the teaching and learning of organisation management in higher education. Critically evaluated organisational stories (Boje, 1995, 2001; Gabriel, 1995, 2004, 2008; Watson, 2006) might be useful sources of teaching exemplars. Gabriel (1995) describes not only the technicalities of an exploding fire extinguisher incident but widens the story to research the reactions to and effects of that incident.

Accounts of the incident throughout the organisation varied poetically, symbolically and in the way the culture was embedded within them (Gabriel, 1995, 481). As an alternative to considering accounts of a particular incident, Bojé's (1995) view of Tamara-Land exemplifies an overall view of a typically complex organisation with its diversity, multiplicity, and difference of storylines intertwined in the Tamara-land of contemporary organisation (1031). The author provides to the reader simultaneous views of Tamara land enabling the reader to perceive a particular scenario from several different points of view, not just physically but in terms of attitudes, and at times with the view distorted by applications of bias, bigotry and prejudice.

To come back to considering the views of those students contemplating self-employment, the learning experiences of entrepreneurs in a mail-order business, a marketing agency, and an independent radio station group (Rae, 2005, 325) are described using a model for which there is scope which can be developed for educational use, in entrepreneur education and beyond, in new venture creation, in business incubation, and in small firm growth programmes. (332)

2.5.3 Storytelling: a case study – GM, GE and GEC

The importance of connecting teaching with real life via storytelling, and in particular within the paradigm of teaching business management has been discussed in somewhat theoretical terms. The literature does offer examples of applications, and in an effort to clarify the ideas being propounded the stories of three major businesses are summarised here in terms of the leadership styles of the three men leading those businesses, both as individuals and their working relationship. Two of these businesses still exist, one, GEC of UK, does not; perhaps readers can appreciate why.

Biographies and autobiographies such as those of General Motors' Sloan (1964), General Electric's Welch (2001), and GEC's Weinstock (Brummer and Cowe, 1998) will have a story-like use in, for example, comparing leadership styles and how they have changed over time. Sloan (1964) describes the managerial / leadership style of General Motors in the period

1918 to 1946 as a factual approach to business management (xxiii) focusing on committees, decentralisation versus centralisation and administration (141). The only condescension to training generally was to provide GM car dealers with well-trained mechanics and well-trained sales personnel (296). The only approach to specific management training or education was described in terms of a foreman-training program of which GM was especially proud (391).

Welch says of GE's early days that facing reality was not one of the company's strong points. The changes at the nuclear reactor business post 3-Mile Island did give him important stories to demonstrate what he then wanted GE to 'feel' like. He told those stories again and again to every GE audience at every opportunity. For the next 20 years, he used that same story-telling technique to get ideas transferred across the company. Slowly people started listening (104). Of very recent date, the storytelling emphasis has changed with GE retrenching rather belatedly from the coal and gas steam generator business with the news that "General Electric Co. plans to cut 12,000 jobs in its power business as the company's new leaders look to slash costs and stabilize the beleaguered manufacturer "(Clough, 2017; Crooks and Samson, 2017).

Welch's corresponding industrialist on this side of the Atlantic was very much focused on financial numbers. On the basis of the information a colleague brought back from a visit to Welch's GE in USA, Weinstock built seven key ratios by which their operating companies would be measured (Brummel and Cowe, 1998, 98). As a result of Weinstock and Welch collaborating on a number of such joint ventures, Welch was able to develop two views of Weinstock.

"Outside the office, he was great storyteller, charming and gracious. ... Inside his drab office, he was the original 'green eyeshade accountant' ... hunched over massive financial ledgers" (Welch, 2001, 306).

This focus on mechanistic management contributed to the conclusion by Brummer and Cowe (1998) that ultimately GEC's shortcomings were the result of a failure of leadership – a failure to project the values of the company in the 1990's and to create the condition in which managers and the group could grow. At the beginning of Weinstock's reign, his clarity of purpose provided the necessary recipe for financial success, but later a lack of understanding of people was considered to be Weinstock's key weakness (281).

2.5.4 Storytelling: a Leadership and Teaching Skill?

After the global financial crisis of 2007-2008 that erupted in the real world, the Association of Business Schools Professionals deemed it necessary to respond to press speculation which linked the crisis to Business Schools' MBA programmes, particularly in the USA (Slack, 2009). Slack claimed that the particular teaching and research emphasised the more complex stakeholder models of business and society and the resultant leadership and management values and practices which unfolded (6). Note that the phrase 'leadership' precedes 'management' in his statement.

In a typical complex model Weick et al. (2005) asks of sense making, 'What's the story here?' (410). His definition of leader links to that of the storyteller as part of a creative and sense making role within complexity. The leader attempts to answer the question by saying, "I don't know what the story is but let's find out" (Weick, 2012, 265). Leaders' roles in complex society are as storytellers when making sense of the chaos. In a teaching / learning context the power of story is its ability to translate complexity into easily understood terms (Lawler, 2012, 23). There is much debate comparing and contrasting management and leadership (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Pendleton and Furnham, 2012; St. George, 2012). In this context, storytelling would appear to be regarded as prominent among leadership skills (Gardner, 1997; Harbin and Humphrey, 2010; Ibarra, 2015; Kouzes and Posner, 2011; Lawler, 2012; Nirenberg, 2012; St. George, 2012). Whatever one's view on that debate, Grisham (2006) suggests that, by using both terms interchangeably, both management and leadership are in need of a storytelling approach. After all,

people have for centuries used metaphor, poetry, and storytelling to engage, educate, and bond with one another. It is time that business management and leadership resumed this tradition (Grisham, 2006, 500). While Grisham (2006) focuses on cross-cultural leadership in organisations where many business transactions are now conducted on a cross-cultural platform (486); he includes 'to educate' in his list of purposes of storytelling.

In support of that proposal it is worth noting the suggestion by Lawler (2012) that stories are effective at teaching leadership itself (24). Harbin and Humphrey (2010) agree to the extent that business programmes could include a class on the art of storytelling – after all they are producing the leaders of the future. Being able to tell the right story, at the right time, in an effective manner, would seem to be an essential leadership skill (105). A similar view is expressed by Kouzes and Posner (2011).

“In simple daily acts, effective leaders set an example for others as they *Model the Way* – from the stories they tell, the way they allocate their time, and the language they use to the recognitions, rewards, and measurement tools they choose. In putting this essential practice into action, leaders build commitment into action by affirming and communicating shared values that all can embrace and engaging others in achieving common goals” (2).

Stories can be told in a variety of performative scenarios such as case studies (Christensen, 1987) and films. Marks (2009) writes of film scripts that finding the theme of a story often entails peeling back layers of meaning until you begin to see a reflection of your own life: your choices, your sacrifices, your illusions, and your pain. It takes a lot of processing to identify a theme, and there are no shortcuts (97). The effort is worthwhile as Denzin (2013) considers that the performed text is lived experience which re-presents those experiences as an embodied performance. This enables another's experience to come alive again for performers and audience alike (133). Role play as another variation on the theme of enactment is advocated by Gibbs (1981). Adams and Mabusela (2013) studied role-play as a teaching method for a Special Educational module. While they researched the students'

perceptions, they did not study the teachers' views. Pre-teaching experience does count for a lot, especially where management is the taught subject (Dewey, 2004; Harbin and Humphrey, 2010; Hertz, 1997; Miley, 2009;). Post teaching experience can quickly accumulate an understanding of the appropriateness, or otherwise, of humour as Struthers (2011) discusses; as also do Powell and Andresen (1985).

Collaborative and / or co-operative learning (Bruffee, 1995), experiential learning (Beard and Wilson, 2002), distance learning (Ruth and Connors, 2012), and work experience (Ashworth and Saxton, 1992) are experiential ways of acquiring the 'feel' for management that stories might convey. Stories could act as a complement to alternatives by, for example, explaining case studies, introducing a subject, or concluding a subject. Clawson and Haskins (2007) point out that the underlying intent of the case method is to narrow the gap between theory and practice by placing students in the midst of a real situation they are likely to encounter, and then to analyse, decide and defend that decision (119); but neither author make an attempt to suggest that storytelling might enhance the process. Smith (2010) deduces from one of her observations of a professor using a case study at Harvard Business School, the home of case studies, that telling the story of the case enhanced the students' involvement with the case material.

Ayas and Mirvis (2005) have the opinion that studies find that management training that rely on classroom experiences, even with case studies, small group exercises, and computer simulations, fall short of developing the wide range of skills and learning capabilities managers need to master real-life situations (94). This is reminiscent of the comment on this subject noted from Hawley (Moore, 1993) that people learn far more doing the job than they ever could on an MBA course (95).

As a reaction to this type of opinion, Teale (2009) and his colleagues developed an applied learning approach to teaching operations management because they considered that some students undertaking a business degree often have preconceived ideas relating to some business functions such as sales, merchandising, marketing, accountancy and personnel management,

but are largely unaware of, or are often uninterested in the notion of operations as a business function. Teachers of related subjects might consider that their subject disciplines require a similar approach in order to disabuse students of those preconceived ideas (44).

One major contribution to the chaos which can be said to characterise the real world is the unpredictability of human behaviour according to Henisz (2011) who, for example, is concerned at the unfulfilled promise of progressive management which would train managers for the world as it is, instead of for a world that can only be if we ignore basic elements of human behaviour (313). Holman (2000) acknowledges that there is also a belief that management education is too theoretical and needs to become more practical and pragmatic. One way of achieving this is to base management education on descriptions of real and generic management action (2000, 207). He describes this in the context of experiential vocationalism, best extolled in the context of developing appropriate competences as suggested by the Management Charter Initiative of the early 1990's (CMI, 2008).

Having looked at storytelling in higher education from both historical and current perceptions, from both the students and teaching approaches, as well as disciplines in general and the teaching discipline of business management in particular, the stage has been reached at which it should be possible to achieve three interim research objectives. The first objective is to produce a definition of the subject matter. The second objective is to describe the identified gap in the extant knowledge of the subject matter. This will provide the basis for the third objective of identifying the research questions derived from the literature and which will guide the methodology and methods for the primary research of this project.

2.5.5 Storytelling: a definition for higher education.

The preamble to this Chapter 2 Literature Review noted a general definition of storytelling as a starting point for the secondary research phase of the PhD thesis. This definition focused on storytelling as an educational influence in the themes of continua as history, communication as human interaction and

society as a whole. This established a conceptual framework upon which the secondary research progressed to achieve a baseline of criteria upon which a more specific definition could itself be achieved. This more specific definition is expressed in terms of storytelling as it features in higher education and then contributes to the base upon which the research methodology will be developed.

According to Hospers (1967), at the beginning of any systematic discussion one is expected to define terms, even to the extent of philosophising about the definition of 'definition' itself. Hoskins deferred any attempt at defining until he had examined some problems about definition in general (1967, 1). The widespread use of storytelling throughout history and in modern society results in a wide variety of meanings. Storytelling has long been a form of communication in many scenarios where the message is usually educational or informative (Moon, 2010). The definition that is required in this current research project is one which appertains specifically to the use of storytelling in teaching and learning in higher education.

The need for a useful definition is not to be dismissed lightly, nor is the difficulty in finding or deriving an appropriate definition for a research topic. Hart (1998) describes a range of methods that researchers can use to construct and analyse definitions advising that clear definitions are essential, especially in the social sciences where the use of analogies is prevalent as researchers attempt to clarify their very particular vocabularies. His advice is specific. It is the responsibility of the research student to work at understanding the language of a subject (Hart, 1998, 113). In a similar vein, Muñoz et al. (2015), in researching different approaches to tacit knowledge in management literature, had to conclude that it has been argued that within management-related disciplines there is no single agreed definition or meaning associated with the term tacit knowledge (290). Again, a search for the definition of paradigm was not encouraged by Guba (1990) stating that most persons will be unable to offer any clear statement of its meaning (17). Masterman (1970) alleges that Thomas Kuhn, the major promoter of the concept of paradigm, used the term paradigm in no less than 21 different ways. Accepting that storytelling is a form of figurative language, it is worth

noting that the distinctions between different kinds of figurative language are vague in themselves (Leino and Drakenberg, 1993, 9). Bortolot (2003) demonstrates this vagueness when he mixes several of the synonyms when describing storytelling on a Metropolitan Museum of Art website devoted to a way of recording African history.

“While some narratives, such as those detailing the origins of a nation or royal lineage, were mythic in scope, others were much more prosaic and might have concerned legal codes or accounts of village or clan history. Some historical texts, especially epics, were components of greater performance traditions in which the verbal artistry of the narrator was as significant as the story itself” (unpaged website).

The University of Lincoln (2016) undergraduate prospectus on line does not define education, or higher education as such, but it does include phrases that are reminiscent of some of the themes that recur in this literature review. “Our hands-on approach includes real-world scenarios, ... when you graduate, you are equipped with the confidence, skills and knowledge you need to make a positive difference to society and achieve the future you want” (unpaged website). Teachers may well take the opportunity to use storytelling based on real-world scenarios from wider society which are outside the teachers’ direct subject discipline experience, but which are supportive of a particular teaching circumstance.

Moon (2010) identifies a number of readily interchanged synonyms for story and storytelling. In the search for an appropriate definition of storytelling, definitions for the various synonyms of storytelling were sought to provide some guidance. Both primary research and further secondary research will benefit from an understanding of those synonyms which occurred most frequently in this literature research. The three most common synonyms are metaphor, analogy and parable. Limitations of both time and space preclude consideration of other synonyms; these may well be considered in future works on the subject matter of this thesis and related subjects.

The objective of the exercise is to develop a workable definition for storytelling that will be appropriate for the purposes of better ensuring that the further research is focused, worthwhile and meaningful in the particular research paradigm of higher education. The prevalent use of metaphors is not unlike that of storytelling as suggested by, for example, Lakoff and Johnson (1980). In his Preface (1980), Lakoff's linguistic evidence indicates that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life; as is storytelling according to Georges (1969) and Hertz (1997).

The pursuit of a definition of metaphor presages a similar route to that of a definition of storytelling. After much philosophical contemplation in an attempt to define metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) conclude, admittedly somewhat lamely, that metaphor means metaphorical concept. Their conclusion is followed by 24 different definitions within the concept resulting from their literary search. The word concept appears in other definitions of metaphor suggesting it is a key word in definitions of the genre. Leino and Drakenberg (1993) conclude that they had not yet found any definition that would adequately suit the purposes of education as perceived by them (34). Derrida and Moore (1974) try to define metaphor as it is used in philosophy but soon after considering text, form, necessity and incidental, declare their confidence was quickly lost.

In terms of function, metaphors provide a bridge from the known to the unknown (Leino and Drakenberg, 1993, 61). The concept of bridge is endorsed by Fábíán (2013) who, while explaining the background to research into metaphor analysis, provides a view on the use of metaphors in education.

"Integrating metaphors in the practicum of the teaching and learning process gives the learners inspiration and motivation, facilitates understanding relations, similarities and differences, bridges elements of the known and the unknown world, and furthermore, assists the process of conceptualising new knowledge." (1026)

Demonstrating that it is a matter of interpretation, Alvesson (2010) links metaphor and storytelling as in the phrase storyteller metaphor. He introduces a further link as in the phrase "storytelling image" (204). Czarniawska (2004), in discussing McCloskey's (1990) *Storytelling in Economics*, a subject very close to business management which does attempt to attempt to distinguish between metaphor and story, states,

"Metaphors (models) and stories (narratives) seem to be two competing but complementary modes of knowing. A metaphor can bring a point to a story while a story can exemplify a metaphor. ... The two work best in specific areas: metaphors in predictions, simulations and counterfactuals, and stories in explaining something that actually happened" (108).

Metaphors have indeed been written on at length. (Crowell, 2005; Czarniawska, 2004; Derrida and Moore, 1974; Harrison-Barbet, 2001; Hospers, 1967; Lossi, 2010; McCloskey, 1990; Mouraz et al., 2013; Natanson, 1998; Pepper, 1982; Rorty, 1980; Scruton, 1994; Skirry, Website - No Date). That a similar range of authors on storytelling could not be so readily assembled suggests that storytelling, certainly in higher education, is an area in which further research could be justified.

Further attempts at defining storytelling incorporate such synonyms as anecdotes (Morris, 2007; Rugg and Petrie, 2005), folklore (Byatt, 2001; Evers 2008; Grossman, 2005; Hayward, 2002; Propp, 1984) and myths (Campbell, 1973; Partenie, 2009). Holyoak and Thagard (1996) express similar sentiments to Hart (1998) who suggests using analogy as another synonym for storytelling in the context of suggesting that analogies might help social science theories to be understood (112). In a similar context, when considering course content, Entwistle (1988) asks, "Have enough concrete illustrations, analogies and models been included?" (265). Turner (1999) puts this phenomenon into a literary perspective, linking story with another principle that is occasionally used as a synonym for story – 'parable'. His definition links storytelling, or the projection of one story on another, as akin to a parable; a basic cognitive principle that shows up everywhere, from

simple actions like telling time to complex literary creations like Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* (1999, Preface).

Storytelling in higher education is a concept whereby real-life stories from the teachers' own experience support the quality of teaching and learning, both for the lecturer-teacher and student-learner and the overall education process extant in the teacher-student interface. The reliability of this definition will be tested in the primary research; especially in terms of affirming whether students as story-listeners appreciate the genuineness of storytelling based on the teacher's own personal experience especially when that experience is within the area of the specific discipline subject being taught. Research with the students as story listeners is beyond the scope of this research, but that does not preclude post-doctoral complementary research which will accompany the research carried out in this current study which focuses mainly on teacher-centred storytelling.

2.6 The Research Questions

As the literature review started the research question was stated in very general terms; whether storytelling can make a difference to the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the particular paradigm of higher education. A number of themes emanated as the literature review progressed prompting the development of three research questions, finding the answers to which became the objectives of this research project.

In this specific case, three research questions emerged from the literature review:

1. Does the storytelling approach support teaching and learning in higher education?
2. Is a storytelling approach more appropriate to certain discipline subjects than others?
3. In parallel with the previously described consideration of different discipline subjects, does the personal life experience of the teachers

influence their understanding of and attitude towards the use of storytelling as a teaching approach?

One subsidiary concern considered the reaction of students as story-listeners and whether they appreciated the genuineness of storytelling based on the teacher's own personal experience especially when that experience is within the area of the specific discipline subject being taught. As this thesis focused on the theme of a teacher-centred approach, I decided that this subsidiary concern, being a feature of the student-centred theme, was to be taken into account in the later analysis stage.

Additionally, a number of research gaps were lacking in the literature research material. These have been consolidated into defining a research area where further research of a primary nature will not only aim to clarify knowledge but also lead to a better understanding of the changing paradigm that is higher education. Such additional knowledge may well suggest how teaching practice might be improved in but one area that is part of the broad spectrum of higher education.

The Research Contribution affirms at this stage of the PhD research project that there is a gap in terms of the research, literature and knowledge of the teacher-centred approach in higher education, not just in itself but in terms of the use of storytelling.

Consideration of the synonyms for storytelling has highlighted an issue that needed to be taken into account during the next phase of the research. In more specific terms a range of synonyms for storytelling was used in the research literature and needed to be recognised and acknowledged as such. In terms of writing style, the methodology developed as the research study progressed through pilot studies to the affirmation and implementation of the primary research methods. Chapter 3 was therefore written in the main as the description of a story in order that you the reader may better understand how the methodology developed. A particular feature of this development was the continuous improvement process that was aimed to ensure that the final outcome was the best possible that could be achieved and that the

process was not constrained by the imposition of any immutable initial preconditions. The continuous improvement approach is a metric to measure "behaviour change" in the business process known as Lean Practice (LP). "Lean is a management model strategy that focuses on creating "value" to the customer so as to deliver quality products/services in time at a low cost" (Leandro et al, 2016, 468). It is relevant to note that May and Perry (2017) resort to storytelling in an effort to answer the question "What is reflexivity?" (3). Their three-part definition considers that an awareness of oneself is necessary for any exercise; our practices require monitoring; and any guidelines require deliberation and action (5). Berger (2015) also searches for a definition of reflexivity and provides: "Reflexivity is commonly viewed as the process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome" together the succinct: "reflexivity is the self-appraisal in research" (220). As well as the influence of self on the autoethnographic nature of the research, the interrelationship between researcher and researched needs attention in the form of performativity which "enables the shifting back and forth between Self and Other, researchers and researched, to examine what comes out in the wash" (Tomaselli et al, 2013, 589). The parallels between reflexivity, performativity and continuous improvement is that they are respectively concerned firstly with the self as researcher / practitioner, secondly with the relationship between researcher and researched, and thirdly with the exercise, practices and guidelines of the research process. The best outcome of any exercise benefits from the application of self-reflexivity and performativity to the practice of continuous improvement.

CHAPTER 3.0 METHODOLOGY and METHODS

3.1 The Research Methodology

The methodology for this research study developed in stages chronologically as described here in what might be regarded as story form. The aim of this chapter is to enable the reader to appreciate the methodology of the research study by understanding how the methodology was initially identified and then further refined as the research progressed from the literature review onwards. To describe the methodology as finally implemented would beg lots of questions, which this format endeavours to answer in anticipation. In describing how I developed the research methodology towards what emerged as grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), this chapter is written in a style which is much more oriented towards a subjective description of the research journey. It is written in the first person rather than the third person and, for the most part, in the past tense. The writing style of this thesis overall does indeed vary according to three issues. Firstly, there is a dichotomy between objective writing and subjective description of the research journey (Murray, 2017; Thody, 2006). Secondly, there is also a debate concerning whether to use the first person or the third person (Knight, 2002; Thody, 2006; Tribe and Tunariu, 2017). Thirdly there is a debate over whether to use the present or the past tense (Allison and Race, 2004; Hertz, 1997).

The research methodology process for this research study started, not with the completion of the literature review (Merriam, 2009; Rocco and Plakhotnik, 2009) but much earlier with the initial momentary perspective experience (Rae, 2013) which was the instigation of the research study and which helped to define three initial parameters of the literature review; namely Storytelling as a teaching approach, Teaching and Learning as a process, and Higher Education as the research environment. Their relationship is shown in Figure 1. These three initial parameters guided the research design methodology at the stage at which the research study began the literature review. They performed an important function in that without them the literature review would have lacked direction. The literature review developed

and matured to identify relevant research themes from the literature, identified a gap in the literature, especially in terms of reported research into aspects of teaching and learning in higher education at the teacher to learner interface, and concluded by formulating three related and clear research questions. This clarification from the secondary research enabled the formulation of a set of research questions which established the starting point for the primary research and from which the methodology for the primary research developed.

It is worth clarifying that primary research does not mean the first phase chronologically, nor the most important phase but describes research which is carried out with direct contact with the primary sources of research material. In this research study the primary research consisted of three different types of research. Firstly, the exploratory research entailed discussions with individuals who proffered their early views on the feasibility and likely worth of the proposed research study. The exploratory research included pilot studies which helped to develop the two following research methods. This exploratory exercise refined the early stage methodology enabling me to identify the most appropriate research directions for the literature review, i.e. the secondary research. The outcome of the secondary research, the literature review comprised the three main research questions. The need to find answers to these questions was the driving force behind the next phase of the primary research. There followed the second type of primary research in the form of a series of survey groups. These were incorporated into workshops held as elective break-out sessions at higher education conferences. The third type of primary research comprised a series of eleven interactive individual interviews providing a more in-depth view of storytelling as experienced by and used by teaching practitioners in higher education. The methodology differed in its immediate purpose between each secondary and primary stage of this research study. The relationship between these interdependent research stages is illustrated in Figure 2.

Secondary research does not imply that such research followed on from primary research, nor that such research might have been of secondary

importance but that the researcher was but one step removed from the original source of research material. The secondary research in this research study comprised the review of literature, literature that consisted of text books, journal articles, internet reports and all those references incorporated in the reference list appended to this thesis. The exploratory field research continued in parallel with the literature review. Thody (2006) and Wisker (2008) advocate such a parallel approach to research.

The research methodology development benefitted from the principle of continuous improvement applied throughout the research study. Mertens et al. (2016) promote such an approach arguing that developments in mixed methods design such as cyclical designs are providing frameworks for flexible designs in which information from early phases of the study inform the later phases of the research (223). Bodily et al. (2017) apply a version of continuous improvement to Open Educational Resources (OER). The nature of OER enables users to modify material to suit particular teaching scenarios, but the authors found it most useful that "faculty can modify their content after a course concludes based on student performance and other feedback" (2017, 104) thus applying the principle of continuous improvement to learning material; the object being to improve subsequent repeated teaching scenarios. The principle of continuous improvement was applied to this research study in practical terms by taking feedback notes and transcripts from each of the three elements of the exploratory research, from each workshop survey group and from each individual interview. These notes were examined as soon as they became available and examined before the next research event. The examination at this early stage had two objectives in mind. The first objective was to identify how each subsequent discussion, survey or interview could produce not necessarily a greater quantity of research material but a more refined quality of research material in terms of producing data more conducive to a successful research outcome in terms of relevant findings and answers to the research questions. The second objective was to identify any potential findings which could be more specifically targeted as the research progressed. This is described subsequently in further detail as is appropriate for each research method, starting with the pilot studies which were complemented by the following two

methods of primary research, the workshop-based survey groups and interviews. The three methods taken together formed an integrated whole as each method contributed towards a triangulation of the research material. Research material from the pilot studies was as relevant as the research material from the primary researches and was thus included in the analysis process. The most promising optional research methods were trialled via the pilot studies, and then designed into the primary research programme.

The development of the research methodology has been described in some detail here to satisfy two requirements. The first requirement is to help the reader to better understand how this research developed in the way that it did and how it developed from one stage to the next. The second requirement is to help any reader who wishes to repeat this research, or some very similar research. The only caveat I would add is that, as with the theme of continuous improvement, that any such research should be an improvement on this study. One way in which this can be better assured is to read the Recommendations of Chapter 5 in which will be found some suggestions which are included with the benefit of hindsight. For example, I did not consider that age and gender were significant influences on this teaching approach. They were initially considered to be insignificant compared with the much more significant attributes of qualifications, training and experience which were shown to be more widely differing variables across the range of research participants. Linking age and gender with a propensity to storytelling would either be in quantitative terms statistically dubious with the small numbers of participants, or in qualitative terms very reliant on psychological or other related factors, both of which are outside the skills scope of this researcher. In addition, I did not wish to transgress any ethical issues such as ageism or genderism.

The idea for the research resulted from a singular experience the thoughts on which were rounded out in conversations with interested parties who were able to contribute meaningfully having either operated within the higher education sector or who had experience of the sector either directly or indirectly. This rounding out was an elementary form of research methodology as found in the autoethnography (Dyson, 2007) which

represented this early stage in the research study. The methodology transformed into auto-ethnography as these early conversations with others contributed towards the exploratory phase of the research.

This background aligns with the definition of autoethnography by Pelias (2013) as "the use of personal experience to explore cultural practices" (384). The auto-ethnographic nature of this thesis aligns with the description provided by Adams et al, (2012) that "Autoethnographic stories are artistic and analytic demonstrations of how we come to know, name and interpret personal and cultural experience" (1). An important component of autoethnographic practice is reflexivity which in turn contributes to the principle of continuous improvement practised with this research methodology. Reflexivity is reflected by describing researchers who "acknowledge how their own identities, lives, beliefs, feelings and relationships influenced their approach to research and their reporting of findings" (Adams et al, 2012, 22). Experiences of storytelling in the course of lifelong learning influenced my recognition of that initial personal momentary perspective that initiated the research journey. The autoethnographic approach in this thesis has already generated one reader to react by saying, "I see you in the text." This is reminiscent of the response of an editor to an article on desert travels that he could "smell the dust" (Tomaselli, et al, 2013, 576). The coalescence of pertinent research philosophies can be illustrated by understanding that grounded theory describes how the research methodology was applied whereas auto-ethnography describes how the research methodology was approached. The end purpose, as Pelias (2013) puts it results in him being "most satisfied when my performative acts turn my learning into instruction ... when my words work, personally, poetically, politically" (401).

The exploratory phase of the research produced the first pilot study when it was realised that some of the specific issues from these conversations were considered worthy of recording as anonymised annotations These provided research material which contributed to exploratory research after the manner of Wisker (2008). The annotations also contributed to the development of research themes which formed the basis for the first of the survey groups.

The themes included recognising synonyms of all key words to enhance data analysis, relevance of storytelling as a teaching approach, the relationship between teacher and student-centred education, recognising sources of stories, acknowledging research participants' experiences inside and outside academe, use of such experience as a source of stories, and the use of alternative sources of stories. By way of an example of how the methodology developed, the second research question concerned teaching discipline, a research theme that emanated from the pilot study survey group. Only one of the participants in that group volunteered almost as an aside information about their specialist teaching subject. Realising that that this data would be useful in formulating a response to the second research question, the subsequent survey group workshop feedback forms were slightly redesigned to enable research participants to indicate their teaching discipline

Moore et al. (2017), in their analysis of submissions achieving recent TEF2 (Teaching Excellence Framework Year 2) awards, note that: -

Along with teaching and research credentials, the third area coming out in submissions in relation to staffing aspects was professional expertise and memberships. Overall just under half (48%) of submissions referred to the importance of a professional / industrial background of members of staff, or the maintenance of staff roles as a current practitioner or industry professional (including membership of professional bodies). (Moore et al., 2017, 40)

They give no indication how such professional / industrial background might enhance the quality of teaching by, for example, such a background providing teachers with a source of storytelling. However, they do comment that some providers have made much of new approaches to teaching and learning without demonstrating the efficacy for student outcomes (Moore et al., 2017, 107). Thus, there is scope here to develop further this research study, particularly in terms of demonstrating the efficacy of teachers' storytelling as a teaching approach.

Moving on from the exploratory research, the methodology then became more focused as the outcomes of the pilot studies helped to identify the most pragmatic and relevant research methods. A consideration of some authors' views on the difference between research methodology and research methods helped to clarify the process for this research study. Wisker (2008) provides an explanation of the difference between research methodology and practices whereby the means to answer research questions are considered in terms of identifying the overall research philosophy appropriate to the research subject and research scenario. This scenario comprises the researcher's personal interest towards the subject matter and the research study; the facilities available such as interview rooms, access to survey groups; resources including finance, time, and scope for selecting research participants on an ethnographic basis if appropriate to the research; circumstances (post graduate, post doctorate or professional researcher); acquisition of material from which data which will be extracted and analysed to produce findings. Within this scenario, methods are the vehicles and processes used to gather the data (Wisker, 2008, 67). Wright Mills (1959) offers a more straightforward relative definition of the relationship between methodology and methods in that methods are the procedures used when trying to understand or explain something whereas methodology is a study of those methods (58). Wisker (2008) considers the main qualitative research methods to be interviews, focus groups and observation (191) as well as grounded theory (as a method), case studies and journals (213). Grounded theory may be regarded more as a theory rather than a method; a theory which supports a methodology that derives, not from a hypothesis but from experience, observation and practice and works towards either support for a previously defined hypothesis or support for a new hypothesis that proposes further corroborative research. Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggest that the research findings that emerge from a grounded theory methodology, "constitute a theoretical formulation of the reality under investigation, rather than consisting of a series of numbers, or a group of loosely related themes" (24).

As far as prescribing a methodology is concerned, a further overall consideration was considered. Firstly, the feasibility of the research project

needed to ensure that the research can be completed within the timescale available before a report or thesis is due for submission. The part time nature of this research study meant that opportunities for research had to be grasped as they occurred. The opportunities for the survey groups manifested themselves in the form of invitations to organise workshops or electives for timely conferences on higher education. The opportunities for interviews manifested themselves as fellow practitioners in higher education made themselves available for an hour within their busy schedules.

Further enlightenment on the purpose of research methodology and research methods was provided by Clough and Nutbrown (2012) who remind us that the purpose of much research at Master or Doctoral level is not so much to prove things, but more to investigate research questions, enquire into phenomena, and explore issues (4). Answers to such research questions required the development and adoption of a research methodology and thence selection and application of appropriate research methods. Such a research methodology usually emerges as one of the outcomes of the literature review with guidance provided by the methodologies adopted by previous researchers in the field as suggested by Hart (1998), as well as Rocco and Plahotnik, (2009). Fink (2013) suggests that literature itself "can be used to identify methods of doing research" (8).

The literature reviewed for this current research subject was not forthcoming in terms of research methods. While much research has been carried out in the field of education generally as well as higher education in particular, little or no research has been carried out in the area of storytelling in higher education, especially in the use by practitioners of stories based on their own personal experience. The absence of any prior guidance meant that the methodological approach for this current research was initially established after consideration of the basic principles of educational research (Abrahamson, 1998; Adams et al., 2012; Adams and Buetow, 2014; Bamber et al., 2009; Biggs and Tang, 2011; Bloom, 1956; Boud et al., 1985; Clough and Nutbrown, 2012; Gibbs, 2013; Glaser and Strauss, 1999; Gow and Kember, 1993; Hammersley, 1990; Hughes, 1990; Kelly et al., 2016; Kretchmar, 2015; Lea, 2015; Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Mooney Smith,

2012; Moses and Knutsen, 2012; Murray, 2008; O'Hear, 1981; Pring, 2015; Prosser and Trigwell, 1999; Race, 2010; Richardson, 2004; Rubin and Rubin, 2012; Rugg and Petrie, 2005; Schostak, 2002; Scott and Usher, 1999; Sharp et al., 2013; Siedel, 1991; Silverman, 2017; Skerratt, 2008; Sternberg, 2008; Struthers, 2011; University of Surrey, 2017; Wisker, 2008; Yee, 2014.)

The methodology for this research study categorised itself eventually as a form of grounded theory via the pragmatic view of research typically as advocated by Dewey (2004) especially within the higher education scenario. Consideration was also given to the applicability or otherwise of post-positivistic (Harrison-Barbet, 2001) rather than positivistic (Wisker, 2008) philosophies, qualitative versus quantitative methods (Gibbs, 2002), including mixed methods and combined approaches within qualitative methods (Creswell, 2002), and inductive versus deductive research processes within a grounded theory context (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Braun and Clarke (2013) usefully discuss the broad differences between qualitative and quantitative research (4). Research areas included Unit 6, Qualitative Research of the University of Surrey's useful website (University of Surrey, 2017).

This categorisation guided the transition from methodology to methods. This research subject of storytelling in higher education does not have an extensive history. The methodology therefore inclined towards a pragmatic approach to the selection of methods, and then a detailed approach to define the objectives and aims which those methods were required to achieve. The detail in the approach had to acknowledge that there was a need to keep all options open as demonstrated by Bodily (1994, 176). In practical terms, this meant that opportunities should have enabled research participants to make maximum contributions without any limitations imposed by pre-conditions such as might be implicitly imposed by a questionnaire comprising a number of questions which assume a certain expectation by the researcher. This principle applied to both the survey groups and the individual interviews.

Bodily (1994) reported research into a nursing shortage in Illinois in the 1980's. He used a questionnaire which for the most part made use of

structured or fixed-choice questions and the subsequent statistical analyses proceeded in a conventional fashion (176). Perhaps by "conventional" Bodily infers that the results were not particularly noteworthy or exceptional. Of much more interest to the qualitative versus quantitative debate, Bodily was intrigued by the contributions of the 1,333 people who responded to the invitation in the survey for respondents to provide additional comments. Having expressed his view on the relative shortcomings of fixed-choice questionnaires, Bodily then described how these voices gushed forth. Excuse the longish quotation but it is important to get a flavour of my active and spontaneous positive reaction to Bodily's narrative.

"As I began reading the written responses, I was immediately struck by not only the diversity of what was written, but by the sheer volume of writing. Many respondents answered the open-ended questions succinctly in the space provided, while others let their long, thoughtful reflections flow up and down the margins and over the top of the survey questions. While many comments qualified or elaborated upon previous responses, other respondents offered anecdotes, proverbs, poems, newspaper clippings, letters, formative job experiences, stories of frustration, and many other poignant reflections that make up the lore of nursing. It was clear these respondents had a lot to say and the survey provided a discursive space within which they could say it; it functioned as more than a mere tally sheet for demographics and attitudes." (Bodily, 1994, 176)

It was also during his first reading that Bodily experienced what was probably a momentary perspective (Rae, 2013). Bodily began to note a concept that formed the basis for much of his future research. This concept did not come from statistical analysis of answers to fixed-choice questions but as a result of Bodily providing the respondents with an opportunity to voice themselves in their own narrative.

The lesson for this current research study was to consider how best to elicit responses from respondents with that same degree of enthusiasm as shown

by Bodily's respondents, and which would provide a purpose for into the research into storytelling as a concept in higher education from the teachers' viewpoints. Methodologists routinely urge researchers to assess the fit between purpose and method (Maxwell, 2013; Richards and Morse, 2013). Bazeley (2013) stresses that the choice to use a qualitative approach should be determined by the research question and purpose rather than be determined by the prior preference of the researcher (2). Bazeley (2013) further affirms that qualitative methods will be chosen in situations where a detailed understanding of a process or experience is wanted, where more information is needed, or where the only information available is in non-numeric form (2). The prime purpose of this primary research focused on research participants' views and opinions based on their teaching experience. There was an element of quantitative research which emanated from the data in what could have been regarded as a version of mixed methods biased towards the qualitative. Some statistical data has been extracted from the gathered research material in order to round off the picture. The concepts of quantitative and qualitative social research are often linked with deductive and inductive logic respectively, as illustrated by Robson and McCartan (2015) in their work on real world research for social scientists and practitioner-researchers.

Contributions of research material were made during the first workshop-based survey group; the material from which, as one of the pilot studies, contributed to the formulation of the methodology. One example was expressed as follows:

"Something to consider – When storytelling becomes a "method" will it lose its value? As in-there are people who are natural storytellers but others who are not; if people are making up stories will this be effective?" (Workshop Study Group Research participant reference SG2)

This comment prompted the researcher to consider the importance of storytelling based on teachers' own experience both in terms of general experience and in terms of teaching experience which could both be used as

a basis for storytelling. This picked up on the theme relating experience to teaching which recurred several times in the literature review.

Other similar contributions from exploratory research participants suggested that it might be useful to include students in the research. This was considered, and some students were indeed included in the exploratory discussion on an in-class case study which comprised one of the three pilot studies. Due to a change in the researcher's teaching role from in-class teaching to distance learning, further pursuit of the case study pilot study was not possible but was put on hold pending an opportunity within the proposed research scenario. It was realised that to pursue a line of research with in-class students would require resources that were considerably in excess of that which were available for the current research study which was to focus at least initially on the teaching-centred approach rather than student-centred approach. To be professionally implemented, class research would require liaison with class teachers to establish their attitude towards teachers' storytelling as a teaching approach and their willingness to participate in the research, given the ethical concerns over of anonymity and confidentiality. The class students could be made aware that some observations regarding teaching were being made without specifying teachers' storytelling as the research subject. This could be explained at some late stage during subsequent interviews with individual students and groups of the in-class students shortly after the lesson. It could be considered important that student research would require an approach that would appeal to students' lifestyle, particularly including modern technology, social media, and blogs. Hughes (2009) considers higher education in a Web 2.0 world in terms of the online lifestyle of young people going into higher education. A simpler form of such research was described by Kelly (2008) whereby, during the last ten minutes of a lecture period, question-cards were handed out seeking feedback on learning achievements by the students.

Social media approaches were considered and tried for this research study with the assistance of University IT and research experts but discounted for two main reasons. Firstly, the technology did not enable a survey to be carried out within a limited group such as university staff. Secondly, the

research material contributed by participants could not be anonymised and confidentiality could not be controlled. Some software security improvements are taking place since the time when blogging was considered as a research method for this research study and care will still need to be taken if these research methods are to be considered.

3.2 Research Methods

3.2.1 Pilot Studies

This research study grew from the germ of an idea which was immediately nurtured by three pilot studies which have been grouped together and are described here as the First or Exploratory Phase of the primary research. The format of two of these three pilot studies contributed to the formulation of the subsequent two primary research methods the third was not pursued due to a change in the researcher's teaching responsibilities. The research material from all three was maintained to be amalgamated with research material from subsequent phases of the research. The first pilot study comprised the acquisition of learning and teaching experiences from interviewees with whom was discussed the potential for the subject as a research study. The informal nature of the interviews at this pilot study phase matured to become the responsive interview process advocated by Rubin and Rubin (2012) who proposed that such interviews should be regarded as discussions. Such an approach aims to obviate the stilted narrow restricted conventional interview whereby a set list of questions is adhered to and opportunities are lost which might have enabled the interviewees' ideas to be pursued and developed. The second pilot study entailed acquiring feedback from students who had experienced a case study version of storytelling as described in Appendix 2. This could not be repeated due to changes in the researcher's teaching scope from in-class teaching to distance learning. However, the feedback from the in-class pilot case study students was retained as it contained some useful relevant research material. Appendix 3 attached to this thesis contains the transcribed feedback from the students of the second pilot study which is based on the case study. Prior to this case-study based exercise, a most useful discussion with the students provided

the inspiration for the survey group developed as the third pilot study. The third pilot study was tried out at the higher education level as a survey with a group of fellow PGDE students and chronologically was implemented before the PGDE was completed and before the PhD programme was started. The research material from this survey group was also so useful that it was included as the first of the series of five formal -survey groups.

3.2.1.1 First pilot study as Informal Interviews

The development of a useful research design format reinforced the appropriateness of this research methodology. It was decided to continue throughout the duration of the research study with further exploratory discussions on an ongoing basis to reinforce the direction of the research design suggested from the early informal discussions. Opportunities arose during meetings and events as serendipity decreed. The idea for these discussions emanated from realisation of the auto-ethnographic nature of the author's research and that opportunities should be grasped to enhance the quantity and quality of material available to support the early informal discussions. The quality of these later informal discussions was enhanced by that same realisation that they provided ongoing support and encouragement. Dyson (2007) describes research limited to auto-ethnography as a means of telling his story describing his teacher training experience (37). Dyson expressed a view which implied concern at the limiting nature of auto-ethnography. Appreciation of this concern reinforced the decision to broaden the scope of this research study across a wider ethnographic plain. Dwivedi et al. (2015) emphasise that exploratory research is a first priority in deciding whether a research subject is worth investigation. This research could also be regarded as a form of pilot study. Dennison (2012) found such an early pilot study useful as a preliminary to later research into Kolb's experiential learning. Discussions in the form of informal interviews developed as a mode of research in the exploratory phase of the research. The informal nature of the interviews reflects the fact that the discussions at the pilot study phase were social conversations which were directed towards seeking views on the research study subject. The conversation often moved naturally in the direction of discussing academic

studies and teaching careers. After explaining that a PhD was being considered and after getting an expression of interest the question was asked, "Would you mind helping me with a bit of research?" In response to an affirmative answer I would ask the following question. "Thinking back to your University, College or School days, is there some particular lecture, lecturer or learning experience that sticks in your memory?" The exploratory research invited friends, relatives and colleagues to recall the most memorable moments from their previous education whether higher education, further education or high school including secondary, grammar, comprehensive, technical, or 6th Form College. This survey took place informally as opportunities arose in social discussions. The responses highlighted the participants' wide range of circumstances, diversity, language, and discipline in both undergraduate and postgraduate level, and was one factor which suggested that such research could justify a PhD project. The argument in favour of such a research method comes from the delegates and interviewees who had experience of student storytelling in varying circumstances.

The preliminary indications from the pilot study data indicated areas of research that required some complementary and more detailed research material in order to determine the extent to which teaching staff acknowledged storytelling as a teaching and learning approach; and further that such an approach is, or at least may be, worthwhile. This affirmed the need to develop the methodology from broad based survey groups to a series of more focused in-depth Individual interviews with higher education teaching practitioners.

3.2.1.2 Second Pilot Study based on a case study

A specially written case study assignment was presented to a class of engineering management students at level one corresponding with the first year of an engineering degree. On completion of their assignment, members of the class were asked for their views on whether, and if so how, they saw the case study as an effective teaching approach. These students were considered to be an appropriate cohort of research participants as they were

in the main employed student engineering apprentices who could bring to their input some experience of the world outside academe. This case-study exercise was an opportunity for the students to not only perceive the case study scenario as a part-finished story but then to enjoy completing the story themselves as an active and embodied participant (Casey, 2000, 45). The members of the class were furthermore appropriate research participants as, while preparing their response to the assignment preparation in groups, they had expressed certain initial informal opinions on the efficacy of the case study as a teaching approach, as a learning medium and as a means of testing their understanding of the taught material. It therefore seemed an ideal opportunity to do some exploratory research with them on the subject of teaching approaches.

As a preliminary to a more formal research approach an informal discussion with these work-based students indicated that they appreciated stories being incorporated into teaching; but also readily contributed stories of their own to the learning process, linking to their own practical experiences, an experience reported by Helyer (2011). The students were asked to comment on the case study as a teaching approach and the results were used in the early stage research. The question asked, and the student responses have been transcribed and incorporated in the data analysis and contributed to the research findings. Some of the responses were gratifying as indications that the respondents were taking the question seriously. Case studies can be a useful basis for developing theory, as advocated by Christensen and Carlile (2009, 243).

Despite the potential illustrated by this pilot study, the case research method was not pursued as the educational practice of the researcher changed. No class teaching was available at the time the primary research study began as the author became part of the team developing and implementing the work-based distance learning programme for the School of Business.

3.2.1.3 Third pilot study as survey group.

The first workshop survey sample of research participants comprised fellow PGDE students who agreed to participate in what was described as a pilot study for the PhD project.

The positive feedback from these research participants affirmed that these surveys formed a most appropriate source of relevant research material. This material provided a broad basis of data which complemented and triangulated with the more specifically focused individual interviews that formed phase three of the research study. A further four workshop study groups followed this pilot study. In total the five workshop survey groups were incorporated into five Conferences as indicated in Figure 3 below.

3.2.2 Workshop-based survey groups.

Reflection on the results of the exploratory research described earlier suggested that while there was interest in the principle of storytelling, further research would be required to establish the extent to which storytelling featured as a teaching approach practised by peer colleagues in Higher Education. Opportunities were therefore taken to incorporate surveys into workshops at five education conferences thus putting into practice the most appropriate type of sampling for the purposes of this research, quota sampling, whereby:

“... an attempt is made to make the sample represent as closely as possible the characteristics of the population being surveyed.”
(Scott and Usher, 1999, 70).

This principle applied to both the phase two workshop survey groups and the phase three individual interviews of this research study. Selection of research participants for the workshop survey groups depended on conference attendees electing to attend the workshop as described in the conference announcements.

First survey group-CERD Lincoln Symposium, 18th June 2009;

Second survey group-Post Graduate Student Conference, Lincoln, 25th February 2011;

Third survey group-CERD Lincoln Research Conference, 3rd June 2011;

Fourth survey group-RAISE Conference Nottingham Trent, 15 September 2011;

Fifth survey group-EDEU Festival of Teaching and Learning, Lincoln, 20th June 2014.

CERD was the Centre for Educational Research and Development based at Lincoln University from 2007 to 2013.

RAISE, Researching, Advancing & Inspiring Student Engagement, an ongoing academic network accessible on <http://www.raise-network.com/>.

EDEU-Following a review, the Educational Development and Enhancement Unit at Lincoln University closed in September 2016.

Figure 3 – Workshop-Based Survey Groups

While the workshop attendees were not selected directly as a group or as individuals, by conducting the research in a conference workshop, a certain type of attendee was targeted. Attendees at conferences can be regarded as unrepresentative of the vast majority of teachers in higher education who do not regularly attend conferences for whatever reason. Speculation of these reasons is not within the scope of this research, but it could form the basis of a research study in itself. The one assumption that will be made for the purposes of this study is that higher education practitioners who do attend conferences are interested in finding out more about their profession and, as

attendance at these workshops demonstrated, are interested in making a contribution to knowledge of their profession, and particularly in the specific area of storytelling as a teaching approach. The phrase 'making a contribution' is used by both Clarke and Lunt (2014) and Rugg and Petrie (2005) in their attempts to describe the objectives of doctoral level research.

These elective workshops were attended by peer colleagues from a range of FE and HE institutions as well as Sixth Form colleges and equivalents who selected the workshops on the basis of the conference programme which included synopses describing each elective workshop. The storytelling workshop synopses included reference to the fact that a research element was included whereby attendees would be able to anonymously contribute research material to the PhD project of the workshop facilitator. The research participants were thus self-selected and willing and voluntary contributors to the research. The researcher's previous experience with surveys heightened awareness of a number of disadvantages and distortions in the organisation and operation of the survey group process. Steps were taken to minimise these effects and maximise the value of the findings that might emanate from the survey group material, data and analysis thereof.

The primary research for this study comprised one pilot survey group plus four further survey groups. A total of 96 respondents participated in the research activities and contributed written research material on feedback forms in response to the workshop exercises. The format of the forms is shown in Appendix 5. Each workshop comprised an introductory presentation by the author followed by a discussion in which all participants were encouraged to contribute. The presentations generally followed the format shown in Appendix 4. The presentations and discussions were not sound recorded or annotated as delegates were enabled to effectively summarise their own personal individual post-discussion views in written anonymous responses to the workshop exercises, and forms were provided to facilitate this process. This process aimed to enhance the quality of the findings from the survey groups by avoiding the basic disadvantage whereby agglomerated material supposedly representing a group 'consensus' was examined for data, themes and findings by the researcher from one record of a group

discussion. Each individual member of each group thus had an opportunity to better ensure that their views were put forward for consideration by the researcher. Being in written form the individual views of each focus group member were thus not subsumed during the discussion by the survey group.

The second disadvantage of the traditional survey group report is inherent in the traditional requirement whereby an individual scribe agrees to volunteer, or is volunteered, to compile a summary of the group members' views. The scribe's own views, shortage of time, dominant voices within the group, misinterpretation of scribbled notes and abbreviations, lost or mislaid sheets (even if the size of a flipchart!), can all misrepresent and diminish the quality of the research process and overall research achievement. Enabling the individual survey group participants to scribe their own summary overcomes this problem.

The third disadvantage, unfortunately unavoidable where the research analysis is being managed by a single researcher in a single project, is inherent in the process whereby material is summarised from the participants' original input, and the extraction of data from that material may be subject to an interpretation that unintentionally aligns with the researcher's own inherent opinions, as well as by views that may have been formed while recording, monitoring and analysing the recorded material, in whatever form that material might take.

The discussion groups were not developed as conventional focus groups whereby a group discussion is sound recorded or annotated and then transcribed and efforts made to analyse the transcript. The different approach as described above was taken in recognition of the advice from Bloor et al. (2001) that analysis of individual interview transcript material is difficult. Analysis of a focus group discussion sound recording is difficult to the point of probably not producing meaningful data and even less so meaningful outcomes. A resume of typical problems annotated by Bloor et al. (2001) include unfinished and interrupted speech, inaudible speech, strong accents, more than one person talking at once, repetition, hesitation, deviation, speech defects such as stammering, words suggested by others, sentences

started by one speaker and finished by another, laughter, shouting, coughing and sneezing, and speaker identification. To say nothing of the view that, "... an hour of focus group discussion is commonly said to take 8 hours to transcribe" (Bloor et al., 2001, 92) and at what cost and to what effect? Furthermore, "... the distinct nature of focus group data raises problems for the analysis." (Bloor et al, 2001, 59). It is precisely in order to circumnavigate and counter these problems that the process as described evolved for the workshop-based group studies. The process adopted in this research endeavoured to overcome these disadvantages at least to some extent, by ensuring that the participants had an opportunity to put their post discussion views forward for inclusion in the research material. As Bloor et al. (2001) put it, "... the composition and conduct of focus groups are subject to too much uncertainty, variation and frailty to permit belief in anything but highly context-sensitive sets of results." (98)

3.2.3 Individual responsive interviews.

The purposive sampling (Jupp, 2006, 245) for the eleven formal individual responsive interviews that comprised phase 3 of the primary research was based on the following premise. As the evidence from both the secondary and primary research indicated that this was the first research to be carried out in this particular area of storytelling in higher education, it was appropriate to consolidate the views of those practitioners who demonstrated a positive and supportive attitude towards the research study subject in order to provide a firm well-understood foundation on which further research could be based. The samples of practitioners for the in-depth interviews were invited not only from the teachers of management in the School of Business but also of other disciplines within the Faculty of Social Science. The selection was initiated to some extent during Phase 1 of the research when participants in informal discussions volunteered to assist with further research when the research study reached a stage where individual interviews might be helpful.

The inter-disciplinarity of storytelling was reflected during the sampling process by aiming to have a range of disciplines as practised by the

interviewees. The intention here was to produce research material from which data could contribute findings which would lead to answers to the second of the three main research questions. Interviewees were chosen based on their interest in storytelling as well as their teaching discipline. It became apparent during the discussions that most interviewees were specialists in more than their current teaching discipline. This range of previous experience was not completely known to the researcher at the time the interviews were arranged. As well as the disciplines in which the research participants were practising at the time of the interviews, their professional work experience included employment in the armed forces, human relations, support services, nursing and social work, self-employment, project management, business, data management, software development, finance, prison service, NHS, psychology, educationalist, community worker, teaching at the Open University, midwifery, public health, dental school and general medical school, teaching research methods, computing, business degree, as well as running a beauty and hairdressing salon. However, this also fortuitously presented a tremendous range of sources for storytelling based on the interviewed teachers' personal experiences.

I decided that the number of interviews should continue until a state of diminishing returns was attained. Glaser and Strauss (1999) do advise that "The continual intermeshing of data collection and analysis bears directly on how the data collection is brought to a close ... the collection of additional data can be a waste of time for categories already saturated..." (73). This was a timely reminder to keep an eye open for indications that further data collection may be reaching the stage of data saturation or diminishing returns. This policy also aimed to avoid data overload which would have been in danger of producing data-for-data's sake as well as duplicating data which might well have exaggerated or distorted the proportionate influence of certain findings.

When it came to selecting a sample of interviewees, I put into practice the advice of Rubin and Rubin (2012) who counsel that,

“When using in-depth qualitative interviewing ... researchers talk to those who have knowledge of or experience with the problem of interest. Through such interviews, researchers explore in detail the experiences, motives, and opinions of others and learn to see the world from perspectives other than their own.” (3)

This advice was timely, but I would suggest that the nature of research interviewing requires the researcher to “listen to” rather than “talk to” those who have knowledge. The researcher talks to the interviewee only long enough to initiate the discourse. In this research study those who have the knowledge of teachers’ storytelling are the teachers themselves and it is those practitioners in higher education who comprised the sample of interviewees for this research study.

Jacob and Furgerson (2012) provide guidance for what they call “Interview Protocols” covering consent forms and questions, as well as pre-interview introductions and post-interview summing up. The first stage of the protocol as implemented comprised a personalised invitation to a prospective interviewee. The personalised aspect made reference to a previous discussion between the researcher and the potential interviewee on the research subject. In this discussion, the respondent’s reaction was positive, and this therefore augured well for a supportive interview. As well as referring to previous discussion as a lead-in, the invitation provided a brief summary of the research subject, a description of the interview’s research context and was accompanied by two other documents. Appendix 8 shows the *Summary Information for Research Interviewees* in which interviewees were provided with more information regarding the format of the interview and how it fitted into the overall research study methodology. Appendix 9 displays a *Consent Form* as required by the University of Lincoln Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Humans (University of Lincoln website, 2017).

The format of the interviews followed further advice from Hammersley and Trajanou (2012); Jacob and Furgerson (2012), Rubin and Rubin (2012). The structure of the questions and management of the interview process is described later.

3.2.4 Other Research Methods Considered.

A questionnaire was considered but not pursued. This decision was based partially on the experience of Bodily (1994) described above. Additionally, a more considered perspective based on literature reviews of the comparative relevance of qualitative and quantitative methods supported this decision. The advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires are listed in a learning skills portal (University of Surrey, 2017). The main advantages relate to quantity of data rather than quality, large numbers, speed, and ready analysis process. These are not the attributes that this study research needed. The main disadvantages of quantitative method relate to lack of understanding of responses, lacking validity, and suffering from undue researcher influence on questioning approach and analysis of answers. Richardson (2004) further expressed specific concerns that the construct validity and content validity of questionnaire-based surveys of student learning were open to question. The number of surveys is not quantified in his report in which he recommends more carefully constructed inventories. He also recommended that questionnaires should reflect concerns over response bias and the accuracy of respondents' understanding of the purpose of questionnaires. In the light of such issues existing in the SPQ (Study Process Questionnaire) and ASI (Approaches to Studying Inventory) monitors, a purposive questionnaire would probably not produce the quality and depth of research material, data and findings that would have been preferred by this research study. A pertinent consideration of this dichotomy is provided by Paté-Cornell (2012), who demonstrates that at times statistics are not enough. This research study developed a new area of research within higher education and which had as its priority the establishment of a wider research project. Questionnaires could well be appropriate for future investigations once this research study had established such base of knowledge.

During consideration of the primary research methodology the use of a blog to generate research material was considered and experimented with but, despite the assistance of experts in the School of Education and the University IT department there was a continuing technical difficulty in controlling the scope of the blog audience and in saving responses in a

manner which would be readily amenable to categorisation and analysis. The nature of open-web CMS, content management systems, is such that Clobridge (2016) affirms that such websites are an easy target for people looking to take advantage of unsecured websites, (61). More recently, an institutional licence has been purchased for a promising piece of software called Qualtrics (Winn, 2017, email). An offer to publicise my work via an interview on Siren, the University's radio station was made following a PhD presentation I gave at a Graduate School event. Investigating the feasibility of this format quickly revealed very similar problems in terms of the management of access and of the feedback from listener responses as meaningful research material.

3.3 Credibility of Research

Williams (2011) endeavours to demonstrate that there are acceptable standards for conducting qualitative inquiry in ways that will encourage readers to find the conclusions credible and useful. These include a wide range of criteria such as validity, reliability, generalisability, consistency, dependability, transferability, confirmability, and meaningfulness, all of which are explained to various extents in Williams' Wordpress blog (2011). All the criteria listed by Williams (2011) apply to this research study. The criteria of validity, reliability and generalisability relate most closely to the three thematic research practices of triangulation, inter-rater reliability and continuous improvement respectively; three practices which the researcher focused on as the research methodology developed.

3.3.1 Validity and Triangulation

Williams (2011) suggests that the validity of an argument is best assured when the goals and objectives are clearly defined and operationalized. The goals for this research study were defined in terms of drawing the profession's attention to one aspect of a teaching approach that some practitioners have found useful and which others may consider worth trying. Some practitioners may well find that they are using this approach instinctively and could make better use of it on reflexion. This research study

defined the objectives in terms of finding answers to the three research questions identified by the literature review.

Validity and triangulation have different definitions in the qualitative and quantitative approaches to research. In an effort to clarify the issue, Moses and Knutsen (2012) suggest there are two variations on the validity theme. *Internal* validity "means control ... so tight that that we can confidently say that correlation equals causation. ... *External* validity means generalisability, or the degree to which we can trust that the lessons learnt from experiments 'in the laboratory' are extendable to the real world." (60). The paradigm that correlation does unequivocally equal causation rules out any possibility that a quantitatively based statistical result can be allowed to contain an element of uncertainty or an element of coincidence in the final result. Qualitative research may be more successful at establishing the validity of data than positivistic quantitative data for the reason that "... interpretivism focuses on capturing the essence of the phenomena and extracting data that provide rich, detailed explanations" (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 65). This view infers that quantitative statistical research is only interested in p-numbers, averages, means, standard distributions, etc, and not interested in what those numbers mean or why they exist. Qualitative research is more interested in meaning and existence.

The validity of the survey groups is supported by the application of the continuous improvement principle whereby the outcome of each survey was immediately examined with a view to implementing any perceived potential for improvement in subsequent surveys. The validity of the interview research material was heightened by the manner in which interviews were conducted by ensuring that the interview venue was in neutral territory using seminar rooms throughout the university campus and was in a department other than that with which the interviewee or interviewer was associated. This obviated the possibility that the interviewee might be distracted by colleagues or students passing by the interview room. Most of the available rooms were glass walled. The disadvantage was that distractions were more likely. The advantage was that passers-by were aware that nothing more than a face to face discussion was taking place between two relaxed individuals. The

responsive interview technique was thus being utilised in a manner which encouraged the interviewee to relax and thus be more forthcoming in the views expressed and thus enhance the validity of the research material.

Williams (2011) advocates that triangulation is an important feature of the qualitative research theme. Variations on the theme include "observation, interviewing, reviewing documents and others" (Website, np). Triangulation has been implemented in this research study as a feature of the relationship between the three methods of this study's primary research process. This may be regarded as a form of triangulation as described by Flick in Jupp (2006).

"Here, different research perspectives within qualitative research are combined with one another in a targeted way, to complement their strong points and to illustrate their respective limitations" (2006, 305).

The three research phases comprise three different and complementary research methods applied in chronological succession as the research moved through a progressively deeper investigative process and at the same time provided mutually supportive triangulation of data. The preliminary indications from the pilot study data showed that some complementary and more detailed data was required to determine the extent to which teaching staff acknowledged storytelling as a teaching and learning approach, and further that such an approach was worthwhile. This affirmed the need for the series of in-depth individual interviews with teaching practitioners in higher education. The three research methods thus provided mutually supportive triangulation. Triangulation has additional connotations in research of this nature. The three-phase complementary approach of the current research described in this thesis can also be regarded as a pragmatic approach. Thayer (1982) provides a useful introduction and coverage for the writings of pragmatists Peirce, James, Lewis, Dewey and Mead. Polkinghorne (1988) is of the same genre; storytelling uses experience of the real world.

3.3.2 Reliability and Inter-Rater Reliability

Williams (2011) offers a definition of reliability as the ability to be relied on or depended on for accuracy, honesty, and achievement. Collis and Hussey (2009) consider that "For a research result to be reliable, a repeat study should produce the same result" (64); but they do not explain whether the same result is in terms of the research material gleaned, the data extracted from the research material, or the findings that emerge from an analysis of the data. All of these stages of a research study are very much influenced by the persona of the researcher as well as the circumstances of the research. With the passage of time, circumstances in any particular scenario will change. In an institution of higher education, the student population, the curricula, staffing, and societal influences will make it impossible to repeat a study in every detail. It would have also been useful for Collis and Hussey (2009) to have explained what they meant by "a repeat study" in terms of any fixed criteria they had in mind to define *repeatedness*. The applicability of both validity and reliability is questioned by Glaser and Strauss (1999) who claim to "...have raised doubts about the applicability of these canons of rigor as proper criteria for judging the credibility of theory based on flexible research" (224). They suggest that criteria of judgement be based instead on the detailed elements of the actual strategies used for collecting, coding, analysing, and presenting data when generating theory, and on the way people read, interpret and apply the theory (224).

Salutary lessons can also be learned from experiments described in Moses and Knutsen (2012, 205) in which students managed to make sense of random yes/no answers to their questions put to purported personal advisers via an intercom. Interpretivism needs triangulation or control in order to better ensure that the data, and the results of data analysis, are believable and reliable. While the current research is not historical, there is something to be learned from the historian's focus. "... there is no substitute for an analyst's familiarity with a data set or set of sources" (220), especially where the data is generated by the analyst who is also the researcher. As a measure of this research's reliability, all the interviews concluded by ensuring that interviewees were happy with the way the interview was conducted.

Interviewees were also asked if they had anything to add that was not covered in the conversation. For example, one interviewee had expected some actual stories might have cropped up in the discussion. As it was, this particular interviewee was pleased that we had discussed so many different aspects of storytelling as a teaching approach and to have included example stories would have been a distraction from the discussion of fundamentals.

Inter-rater reliability proved to be especially useful when judgements can be considered relatively subjective data (Williams, 2011). Judgements are prevalent in qualitative as well as quantitative research in the analysis of research material, identification of emergent and the subsequent process that leads to the recognition of findings and alignment of the research findings with research questions. An exercise in inter-rater reliability was implemented to provide a detached overview of the overall research analysis process. The research material was studied by two reviewers with a view to providing this overview of the researcher's identification of data from the research material taking into account the research subject, the categorisation of the data and the findings that had emerged. The criteria for selecting the two reviewers were different in order to bring contrasting perspectives into the exercise and more meaningful end results.

The first reviewer was selected as he had recently completed his PhD and thus was aware of the most recent requirements for a successful PhD. He also knew of my subject from previous discussions. The second reviewer was selected as she was aware of my interest in doing a PhD at a very early stage and had previously offered to help as an informal mentor rather than supervisor. Both reviewers had since left the University, and each was thus able to bring a detached view to bear. Both were provided with a copy of the Excel spreadsheet depicting anonymised transcriptions of the notes made by the participants in the conference elective workshop survey groups. They were also provided with different anonymised transcripts of two of the eleven individual interviews. The outcomes of the two reviews are summarised in Chapter 4 in so far as they contributed to the findings in two respects. Firstly, in general terms they corroborated the main findings as previously identified

by the researcher. Secondly, they both added suggestions for further research.

3.3.3 Generalisability and continuous improvement.

Glaser and Strauss (1999) affirm that whereas "... substantive theory is grounded in research in one particular substantive area ... A theory at such a conceptual level, however may have important general implications ... to the development of a grounded formal theory" (79). Storytelling has a useful contribution to make in one particular substantive subject discipline, that of business management, but an early research finding was that storytelling was generalisable to other higher education disciplines. "Generalisation is concerned with the application of research results to cases or situations beyond those examined in the study" Collis and Hussey (2009, 65). This realisation re-focussed the research subject and promoted the transfer of the research study from the School of Business to the School of Education. An example of generalisability of this genre of research subject is provided by Miley (2009) writing of his experience of the effectiveness of storytelling in the teaching of accountancy; this can be regarded as a subject area with close affinity with the substantive subject area of business management. Unfortunately, Miley does not seem to have taken his research any further, either in terms of generalisability, or in terms of repeatability with another accountancy class of similar students.

Although all the interviewees for this research study were based at the same university campus, they all came from different disciplines. As has been discussed in other parts of this thesis, one of the important findings of this thesis is that storytelling as a teaching approach is to be found across the full range of those disciplines. A recommendation for further research suggests that the generalisability of this research study might be explored on another campus in an attempt to determine whether the culture that might encourage particular teaching approaches differs from one campus to another.

Continuous Improvement is a technique adopted from engineering manufacturing processes and has more recently been superposed by 'Lean'

engineering. Beauregard, et al. (2017) provide an introductory production engineering application of 'Lean' principles. Simmons and Young (2014) apply 'Lean' engineering principles to academic experience. The philosophical principle is that any product or process can be improved by an ongoing iterative process. This process was applied in order to improve the quality of the research throughout each phase of the project whether an informal discussion in the ongoing Phase 1, a survey group in Phase 2 or an individual responsive interview in Phase 3. The ongoing continuous improvement process which was instigated as a feature of the methodology for this research study was further improved when devising the workshop exercises of successive group surveys. The research study design incorporated the continuous improvement feature into each of the workshop survey groups so that the survey programme as well as the overall programme could be improved to incorporate lessons learned from previous programmes. One such lesson learned that emerged almost immediately from the first workshop was demonstrated when the first word association exercise pitched straight into a discussion of storytelling with questions such as, "What experiences have you of storytelling in HE, both as a teacher and as a learner?" There followed three other questions providing delegates with opportunities to provide further detail. This effectively precluded any other approaches other than storytelling that might be relevant. This was in fact a lost opportunity to put storytelling into context relative to other comparable teaching approaches and to define what was meant by storytelling within higher education. This was a lesson learned by the researcher which improved the second workshop in that no mention was made of 'storytelling' as the core research subject; rather it was played down as but one of a series of approaches being researched. This was an attempt to avoid pre-empting the direction of the discussion, to avoid over emphasising storytelling's role in higher education, and to enable other approaches to come the fore in the discussion and thus put 'storytelling' as an approach into a context that might include other approaches. This methodology worked to the extent that storytelling did not feature greatly in the responses to describing light bulb moments. Interestingly, because of this change, the use of interchangeable synonyms for stories and storytelling appeared,

corroborating corresponding findings on the subject of synonyms that appeared in Phase 1 of the primary research.

As previously indicated, an ongoing process improvement approach has been adopted throughout this primary research study and is applied no less so to the series of interviews. On reading the transcript of the first, 'A's interview, I realised that this interview, being the first of the series, was somewhat more guided by the interviewer than Rubin and Rubin (2012) suggested based on their concept of responsive interviews. A number of findings from the previous phases 1 and 2 of the primary research were introduced into the interviewer's contribution to the discussion. However, this did not unduly disrupt the research process as the interviewee responded with some appropriately interesting and relevant contributions.

As a final note on methodology, and referring to the previously noted occasional chronological narrative, it was decided that the number of interviews should continue until a state of diminishing returns was attained. Glaser and Strauss (1999) do advise that "The continual intermeshing of data collection and analysis bears directly on how the data collection is brought to a close" (73); they also warn that "... the collection of additional data can be a waste of time for categories already saturated..." This is a timely reminder to keep an eye open for indications that further data collection may be reaching the stage of diminishing returns.

Other criteria listed by Williams (2011) and which are worthy of comment in the context of this research study's reliability are consistency, dependability, transferability, confirmability, and meaningfulness. Some of these criteria relate to the research study inherently and others relate to the research study extrinsically in that they relate to other research, usually subsequent research that might use this research study as a basis or guide. Schwandt et al. (2007) support this view of the "conventional paradigm: internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity" (18), though the authors do devise parallel criteria to which they give much detailed consideration; viz. credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability,

Consistency is a standard which contributes to the reliability of the research and is identified by an alignment of the content of the research material contributed by research participants. In this research study the research participants contributed either in the Phase 1 Informal discussions, the phase 2 workshop survey groups or in the phase 3 individual interviews. These complementary research methods were sufficiently different to provide research material in different formats, viz. annotated discussions, survey group participant notes and interview transcripts. The material was analysed continuously as the research study progressed and again as the research concluded. The consistency of the themes which emerged demonstrated a consistency of approach by the researcher throughout the three phases of the research study as well as a common understanding of the research subject by the various types of research participant.

Establishing confidence in the dependability of a research study entailed an exercise in assessing the appropriateness of how the study was conceptualised. The process comprised firstly, defining the research subject, then reviewing appropriate literature which enabled the research questions, as well as designing a research methodology which answered those research questions. The methodology identified appropriate research methods which produced relevant research material from which data was extracted, categorised and analysed to produce findings which answered the research questions. This standard of 'dependability' was related to the previous standard, that of consistency, in that the consistent approach of the research through the three stages of the research provided more dependable results. (Williams, 2011). One measure for confirmability takes into account the extent to which the findings from the literature review support the findings from primary research (Williams, 2011). Schwandt et al. (2007) would agree that a comprehensive research report such as this PhD thesis provides the requisite audit trail in which the process, aka methodology, results in a dependability judgement and the data and findings result in a confirmability judgement (19).

3.3.4 Transferability

Transferability relates to the appropriateness of the current research study to be transferred to another research scenario. The appropriateness is measured by the thoroughness with which the original research has been planned, implemented and reported. This will enable researchers to assess the suitability for future research studies to endeavour to repeat the research in another, probably similar scenario. The concept of thick descriptions as a methodological approach in ethnographic research was initiated by Ryle (1968) who stressed the importance of thinking about and interpreting our experiences and observations in order to produce a thick description. In the context of a description of boys winking, he defines the thick description as “a many-layered sandwich, of which only the bottom slice is catered for by that the thinnest description” (Unpaged internet) The same context and idea was used by Geertz (1973) in his considerations of culture in some specific (e.g. Indonesia) and some very general terms (e.g. religion) Later, Lincoln and Guba (1985) comment that, “the advantage of the case study reporting code for the naturalistic enquirer is that the case study provides the “thick description” so necessary for judgements of transferability” (359). Williams (2011) suggests that a “... thick description of the phenomena under study and as much of the context in which the study took place as possible is the most powerful technique for facilitating transferability decisions” (Blog). Schwandt et al. (2007) use a similar phrase, “thick descriptive data” while pointing out that it is by no means clear how “thick” a thick description needs to be and leaves it to any prospective researchers to judge how to transfer all or part of the findings elsewhere (19).

The research study reported in this thesis enhanced its transferability by describing in detail the origins and development of this research study’s methodology and research design in this thesis. In this particular context, the research could quite feasibly be applied to educational institutions similar to the higher education institution in which the original study was researched. The transferable meaningfulness of this particular research study was established at the outset when the researcher discussed the proposed research subject with colleagues in the ethnographic professional environs

within which the research would be carried out, and also, more importantly, within which the results might have some application. Enthusiastic support was received not only from those colleagues but also from contacts outside the profession. This support indicated that the research subject was considered to be meaningful; support that was confirmed later in a critical stage in the research study.

Findings from the initial research causing a change in research focus from business management education to a broader scope within higher education and thus a transfer from the School of Business to the School of Education was implemented. This coincided with the need to find a new research supervisor as the original research supervisor left to take up a post abroad. The transfer of the research study to a different school resulted in successively both the interim Head of School and the subsequently appointed Head of School both deciding, after interviewing the researcher, to take on the role of first supervisor themselves. This in effect showed support for the meaningfulness of the research study and "a rationale providing justification for the study" (Williams, 2011).

3.4 Ethics

Ethical issues needed to respect the humanity and dignity of the participants by ensuring that their input to the research was handled responsibly and sensitively, that their anonymity was respected and assured, and also that the data was handled, stored and eventually disposed of securely. The University of Lincoln Graduate School EA2 Ethical Approval Forms were submitted and approved annually throughout the research study.

The current research study researched with participants who were practitioners in higher education and familiar with research in the area in which they practised. To some extent this could contribute to a relaxed attitude to ethics as depicted by Hammersley and Trajanou (2012) who contributed comprehensive checklists on the ethics of research as well as a most extensive and comprehensive bibliography on the subject of ethics.

"Generally speaking, research which does not involve any major intervention in the lives of the people being studied is less likely to generate serious ethical issues. While there will be some occasions when major problems do arise, in our judgment these are not very common. Needless to say, our views on this matter are far from universally shared by educational researchers or by other stakeholders. However, this fact simply underscores what has been one of our main points here: that there is considerable room for reasonable disagreement about research ethics."

(Hammersley and Trajanou, 2012, Last page of commentary on website; pages not numbered)

Despite the reassuring words from Hammersley and Trajanou, (2012), sound ethical steps were taken in the current research study. Ethical issues were considered in three main aspects of this research study; firstly with regards to the research participants and their contributions to the research material, secondly with regards to the research participants and their physical and mental wellbeing while participating in any research activity; and thirdly to ensure that not only participants but also those indirectly concerned with this research study, including readers of the thesis cannot be harmed or offended in any way. If any such does occur, then it is without any intention to do so. At all times participants were made aware that any contributions they made to interviews, workshop survey groups or interviews would be incorporated into research material for the PhD research study and as such anonymised, saved securely and disposed of when the research material was no longer required.

Research participants came from a range of different sources for each of the three phases of the research. The differing format for each phase of the research resulted in different types of research participant who took part in each phase. However, they all had in common a right to experience a research process that provided justice and fairness in the pursuit of truth; an expectation that ethical principles will be practised as can be reasonably expected in all human relationships (Graham, 2004, 201). This research study also noted the view of Wetherell et al. (2001) who emphasises the

detachment that the researcher must practice as the leading human participant in the research. The researcher manages the process that produces "knowledge with the status of truth; it is enduring, and it is separate from the opinions and values of the researcher" (11).

At the exploratory pilot study stage, informal conversations included discussion of the fact that I was considering researching a particular subject. By taking the conversation round to the higher education, the other parties voluntarily contributed a memory and / or an opinion on what they remembered of their own experiences. At the time of these exploratory conversations I pointed out in the conversation that I was thinking about researching a particular aspect of higher education and that their views would help me to identify which particular aspect that would be. The interviewees were happy with that explanation indicating that there were no ethical issues as far as they were concerned. These early conversations were being conducted at the exploratory stage in which assessing the feasibility of research was the main interest. All conversations were verbal and thus no formal written introductory statement had been prepared. However verbal and written statements were prepared for the later first workshop pilot study and subsequent survey groups.

An announcement was made at the beginning of each workshop-based survey group advising attendees that the workshop they were attending was aimed at assisting me to acquire research material for a research-based PhD project. These announcements complemented the written statement in the conference material to the same effect and which were made available to the participants in advance of the conference. At the workshops themselves, information such as age, gender and highest qualification was not requested of workshop survey group research participants as I had stressed that their contributions would be treated anonymously and confidentially. This is also why attendee names and affiliations were not requested on the feedback forms. This approach was intended to recognise the autonomy of participants and encourage them to be totally unconstrained with their contributions. At the conclusion of one workshop survey group, one of the participants did ask for the feedback form to be returned, a request which was duly complied with

immediately. The one drawback of this approach focussing on anonymity was that no follow up work could be pursued in respect of any really interesting or unusual content in the feedback research material. This proved to be acceptable as any such content was incorporated into the agenda of subsequent workshops, or interviews as appropriate. One further connection with ethical concerns was identified by a research participant (SG51) in the third Workshop Survey group who suggested that, recounting a story of his own, that "Stories themselves could raise professional and ethical attitudes" (SG51). The ethical influence of storytelling is one issue to be included for consideration in a future post-doctoral research study.

For the phase three interviewees, ethical issues were recognised and acted on in that the venue for each interview was in neutral territory. Before the interview began, a detailed statement of explanation had been prepared to ensure that interviewees understood the basis of the research, how the data would be handled, and how their confidentiality would be safeguarded. In order to promote interviewees' informed consent, interviewees were offered the opportunity to view the transcripts with a view to either accepting them as they were, requesting modifications or deletions, or asking that they be not included in the research. They were advised that transcripts would be typed up by an independent service whose confidentiality was assured and who was recommended by the university. To maintain confidentiality, interviewees were allocated identities corresponding with the NATO phonetic alphabet 'A'-Alpha, 'B'-Bravo, 'C'-Charlie, etc. The phonetic alphabet was applied to interviewees in chronological order of sequence of interviews and identities are not gender specific. Links back to the interviewees' original names were incorporated in password protected files which register the transition between recording and transcript.

These various measures were taken to implement throughout the research study the principle of beneficence (Al-Bar and Chamsi-Pasha, 2015; Ali, 2006) whereby a balance is struck between maximising the benefits of a course of action such as research, with the risks that might occur in the implementation of that action. The management of the research material was an inherent ethical concern in this research study as it relied solely on the

input of human participants, albeit requiring an intellectual contribution of material rather than a physical contribution.

3.5 How the Research Material was generated and managed.

3.5.1 Pilot Studies Research Material

The informal discussions usually developed from a conversation on a social or topical subject and at an appropriate juncture the author took the opportunity to introduce the subject of the possible (at that stage) research subject of storytelling. This initial stage of the primary research involved taking opportunities to introduce into social conversations the topics that led the direction of discussions towards personal experiences of previous education whether primary, secondary, further or higher education. Steering the conversation in this direction meant that reminiscences almost inevitably elicited memories of particular experiences which influenced the individual's learning at any one time. Some of these memories were negative and many were positive, and indeed many were sad or amusing. These conversations did not initially allude to storytelling as the researcher's intention was to put storytelling in the context of other examples of memorable learning experiences. One early response from a retired teacher prompted the researcher to extend the design of this elementary level of research conversation in two ways. Firstly, conversationalists with teaching experience were invited to reminisce on particularly memorable teaching experiences from the teacher's, as opposed to the student or learner's point of view. What made those experiences memorable and what were the circumstances in which that memorable phenomenon occurred? Secondly, each conversationalist was invited to recall incidents they had witnessed as a third-party observer that could have been perceived as examples of good teaching in situations where the learning became a memorable experience because it occurred in unexpected circumstances. These conversations contributed to the methodology and research design for the more profound phases of the study, especially the light bulb moment and learning experience exercises in the survey groups.

Two preliminary findings were noted from these pilot study interviews as part of the exploratory phase of the research that influenced future considerations of research methodology. The first preliminary finding to influence the developing methodology was that, while these reminiscences included a wide range of types of learning, and / or teaching experience, many of these views did in fact allude to storytelling or to synonyms such as anecdotes, narratives, or tales. It was this observation that provided the first indication that this subject might be worthy of further investigation rather than being, at this nascent stage of the project simply regarded as a matter of passing interest. This observation also led to the incorporation of word association exercises in the survey groups. It was expected that these would prove useful as a lead in to the research subject as well as act as an ice-breaker.

The second preliminary finding to influence the development of the research methodology was that many examples of good teaching occurred outside the traditional areas of compulsory and post compulsory education. These areas included organised societies such as youth clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, apprentice training schools and the armed forces. A couple of elderly gentlemen had fond memories respectively of a forceful but effective Sergeant Major and Royal Navy Petty Officer who had taught them routines or procedures that they still remembered as examples of effective teaching and learning and that after a lifetime since they experienced National Service. The effectiveness of the teaching came in the form of stories telling what had happened previously when orders had not been obeyed, and what would therefore be likely to happen in a similar scenario. This second preliminary outcome suggested that storytelling has an educational role in a wider context other than in the context of formal education. This role of storytelling in a wider social context also emerged from the literature review. This broadening of the field of learning beyond conventional pre- and post-compulsory education led to the adoption of a principle in the research design that would enable research participants to contribute research material that might prove valuable in this wider sense.

The methodology which this exploratory research utilised was aimed to produce material that would not have been forthcoming in a more formal

didactic research procedure. Spontaneous informal tales do not appear on multiple choice questionnaires, as Bodily (1994) discovered and reported. This methodological approach was retained in the two subsequent phases of the research, the survey groups and interviews, where the overall approach was more formal, but the conversational approach provided similar opportunities for survey group participants, and later interviewees, to provide data at a more meaningful level. Gergen (2001) advocates that it is through our interaction with others that we acquire narrative skills; not through our being acted upon by others (249). The research methodology for this study was aimed at enabling just such an interaction to be facilitated.

Exploratory research after Wisker (2008), as well as inductive and deductive research after Gibbs (2002), is in turn linked to grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Exploratory research endeavours to assess the feasibility of a research project and initiate a research design. "... the final stages of your research design will be defining terms, establishing your methodology and giving an indication of expected outcome" (Collis and Hussey, 2009, 112). Serendipity is a not-unexpected feature of research according to Salmon (1992). "Given the erratic way in which creative work proceeds, PhD students need to allow for the unexpected, to take advantage of serendipitous discoveries and encounters" (110). Thody (2006) does suggest something which approximates to the approach as planned at this stage in the study. Thody's (2006) approach had to be a combination of writing while "the methodology emerges and data gathering commences" (92).

3.5.2 Workshop based survey groups research material

The second phase of the primary research comprised a series of survey groups of increasing sophistication to corroborate, or otherwise, the responses from phase one. The research methodology for the survey group workshops can be described as having four stages which utilised four slightly different types of complementary activities. Firstly, potential delegates read the conference invitation and workshop résumé which described the format of the workshop as well as the subject matter and explained that attendee

contributions would become research material for a PhD study. Attendance at the workshop and participation in the survey and contributing to the PhD research was considered to entirely voluntary and open. Secondly, there was a verbal welcome and introduction by the researcher who reiterated an explanation of the structure of the workshop and that the subject matter was part of an ongoing PhD research project with a brief description of the study thus far. Thirdly, the workshop itself provided an opportunity for delegates to discuss with fellow practitioners the various approaches to teaching and learning in higher education. Delegates recorded their own contributions in writing as a way of being assured that their own personal contributions were not going to be overlooked or disregarded. Delegates did not have to rely on a scribe or workshop facilitator who may or may not note their views. Fourthly the contributions as research material were analysed to identify findings. The crucial part of the workshops as far as the research was concerned were the feedback forms which were the routes by which delegates were able to contribute to the research material. The structure of the exercises changed slightly between each successive survey in order to implement improvements.

Small scale surveys were appropriate for this stage of the research as they provided the wide but shallow trawl which was required to help identify the general direction of the research. Pring (2015) recommends surveys as a way of evading some of the difficulties that arise from observations in which the observer's eye is selective, and that arise from discussions early in a study when the agenda may be unclear. Survey groups can call upon the views of those who matter but does so in a way that can lead to generalisation (51). The surveys were carried out with groups of practitioners in conference workshops or electives. The programmes did differ with each of the five workshops. The programme developed from feedback resulting from the first survey group workshop which was effectively a pilot survey. Each workshop programme incorporated power point slides. The only individual contacts with survey participants were via the anonymous feedback forms on which the research participants responded to the workshop exercises. This methodology followed the ethnographic views of Hammersley (1990). "The choice of small samples represents a trade-off

between studying cases in depth or in breadth. Ethnography usually sacrifices the latter for the former; survey research does the reverse" (9). Ethnography in the form of individual interviews therefore followed in this research study and complemented the survey groups as well as providing triangulation of research methods in the study.

Survey groups in the form of workshops was a research method utilised by Race (2010) in gathering material for the second edition of his book on *Making Learning Happen*; "running hundreds of workshops ... around the UK and in various other parts of the world ... talking to thousands of teachers and learners ..." (vi) He also uses data from the National Student Surveys (NSS) to assess, as far as such data goes, student experiences of higher education. On a critical note, "talking to" should be reworded as "listening to" as a probably more accurate description of the more productive aspect of the exchanges that would have taken place at Race's workshops. The NSS (National Student Surveys) are considered to have some limitations in that students record their views of only the one higher education institution of which they have experience and without the opportunity to compare or contrast with other HEIs. In a related vein, Brown et al (2015) expressed some concern that student satisfaction ratings may be influenced by context in ways that have important theoretical and practical implications (14).

The methodology of the survey groups endeavours to avoid the criticism that, "... survey researchers are not responsive to what is being researched" (Scott and Usher, 1999, 4) by the fact that the surveys were conducted by the researcher rather than delegated to a third party. Steps were also taken to avoid the criticism that researchers carrying out surveys "... prespecify which data are to be collected and in what way" by wording the questions in such a way that storytelling was not to be the answer. In fact, the emphasis on storytelling was changed as the surveys progressed (Scott and Usher, 1999, 4) putting into practice the idea of continuous improvement. These surveys were carried out as opportunities arose to run workshops as electives in five conferences. Attendees at these events were fellow academic practitioners from a range of teaching disciplines who were able to provide focussed and professional responses.

The questions on the survey form for the first survey group, which was the pilot survey group, paralleled the questions asked during with the early stages of the Phase 1 – Exploratory Research. The later stages of Phase 1 of this study, the exploratory research phase, took the precaution after initial discussions of omitting specific mention of the word storytelling in order to avoid pre-empting storytelling as a likely feature of the memorable moment. This would enable the respondents to indicate features of their remembrances of education other than storytelling and thus put storytelling into a more general educational context. This same research decision was taken after this first survey group in that question 1 was modified for the second survey group. For this reason, and the fact that the duration of the second workshop was reduced to fifteen minutes, I decided to design this survey into a format which would maximise the scope for the delegates to contribute useful research material. A theme from the early days of the study was used as the focus, namely the light bulb or momentary perspective phenomenon.

The feature of memorability emanated from these workshop surveys in parallel with its emergence as a consideration from within the literature on storytelling (for example Baddeley et al., 2015; Pinker, 2002). Again, the results of the workshops were awaited with interest to see whether storytelling, or synonyms thereof, appeared. This attempt to step backwards from the research subject and avoid pre-empting answers from survey participants was considered important in order to increase the validity of the research material.

“Validation of claims about understandings of human experience requires evidence in the form of personally reflective descriptions in ordinary language and analyses using inductive processes that capture commonalities across individual experiences.”
(Polkinghorne, 2007, 475)

In the third, fourth and fifth workshops a compromise was reached whereby a combination of the previous two workshop structures was devised.

'Storytelling' was used as the basis of the word association exercise without suggesting that it was the crux of the matter but just a starting point for discussion and encouraged lateral thinking or imagination; in anticipation of later consideration linking storytelling more closely to one of the affects of storytelling, namely imagination (Casey, 2000; Marks, 2009; Winter et al, 1999) with a further intermediate link to one of the effects of storytelling, namely memory (Yates, 1966).

The third survey provided a further opportunity to render the exercise more worthwhile by merging the learning experiences of the previous two surveys. The changes applied to each of the successive survey exercises were not fundamental but developmental aimed at rendering each successive survey more capable of generating meaningful material from which research data can be extracted. By making incremental rather than fundamental changes the surveys remained mutually complementary and thus were all able to contribute to the overall objective of this early preliminary research work. This intermediate objective was to specifically identify what additional research might contribute by way of recurrent or new themes to the thesis findings. This all had to acknowledge the time and resource limitations of the research project.

The format for this Third Survey group changed somewhat in order to make this particular survey, as well the overall research, more worthwhile. Additionally, the 45-minute duration of the workshop, rather than the 15-minute duration made available for the previous workshop, provided more scope for delegate feedback. Four exercises were devised comprising 1- Word Association (the word being storytelling); 2- Your Most Recent Learning Experience; 3 – A Light Bulb Moment; 4- Your Thoughts on Storytelling. These exercises were introduced at intervals during the workshop in order that a short introduction and discussion could take place between each question. It also made the workshop more interactive in that the delegates were aware of progress being made and thus their interest was maintained. Delegates also had opportunities to note their thoughts onto the feedback sheets previously distributed. The first exercise developed from the realisation from both previous surveys that there were a number of synonyms

for storytelling. Delegates were provided with an opportunity to contribute to the researcher's vocabulary in this respect by indulging in a 'Word Association' exercise; the operative word being 'storytelling'. As well as introducing delegates to the key theme of the workshop, this was done in a way that doubled as an ice-breaker. The second exercise resurrected the 'learning experience' of the second survey. It was anticipated that responses from the preceding Word Association exercise would assist in identifying synonyms for storytelling not only in answers to this second question but also to similar answers in previous surveys and thus lead to some opportunity to correlate research material. The third exercise resurrected the second survey group's single 'Light Bulb Moment' (Momentary Perspective) activity which proved to be effective in terms of the quality of the research material which was provided. The fourth exercise maintained the theme of continuity by bringing storytelling back to the fore and provided delegates with an opportunity to note their more general views on the key theme of the workshop.

The format for the fourth survey group followed closely that for the third workshop survey group on the basis that further change would not have been beneficial to the study at this stage. These research surveys were as relevant as they needed to be for this stage of the research. Preliminary analysis of the research material indicated from the repetition of themes revealed a reduction in the frequency of new ideas and that this phase of the research was reaching data saturation with diminishing returns. It was envisaged that the format was as good as it was going to get. The format proved to still have value in that one relatively new theme tended to dominate the discussion of this fourth workshop-based survey group and that concerned the relative importance of student centred and teacher centred approaches which interestingly came full circle to the same theme that emerged from the latter stages of the literature review. An important consensus concluded that the best compromise was to accord both approaches to be of equal importance and that both approaches be merged to form one mutually supportive complementary role. This finding complemented a similar finding that arose from the literature review in terms of recent changes that had taken place in higher education. This finding is quoted as a demonstration of the efficacy of

the close attention paid by the researcher to the detailed development of the research method.

The format for the fifth workshop survey group was simplified to give delegates free rein to express their views. Although 45 minutes was allowed in the third and fourth survey groups, four exercises in 45 minutes proved to be rather rushed, as animated discussions encouragingly occupied a good proportion of the 45 minutes. The fifth workshop was thus devoted fully to a discussion with delegates encouraged to make their own notes at intervals during short breaks. This free and open discussion provided much data that corroborated that provided by the previous survey groups and pilot studies as well as the two inter-rated reliability exercises.

<u>Group</u>	<u>No. of Attendees (Coded)</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Feature</u>
1	5 (SG1-5)	60 minutes	PGDE students – Pilot Study
2	30 (SG6-35)	15 minutes	Light Bulb Moments
3	21 (SG36-SG56)	45 minutes	Exercises-Word Association, - Learning Experience, - Light Bulb Moment, - Thoughts on Storytelling.
4	16 (SG57-SG72)	30 minutes	Exercises - as Group 3.
5	21 (SG73-SG93)	45 minutes	Exercise – Annotated contribution to discussion.

Figure 4 – workshop-based survey group formats.			

Any shortcomings identified as part of the findings from the workshop survey groups research material was taken into account when formulating the methods for Phase 3 of the primary research; namely the individual responsive interviews. "It is through interviews that participants' perspectives are gathered most directly" (Williams, 2011). As Williams (2011) infers, the interim hypothesis that could be inferred from the findings of the survey groups enabled the interviews to be regarded as moving towards a phase of the research that could be regarded as less inductive and more deductive as the hypothesis matures. The numbers attending each workshop survey group are tabulated below together with the duration and features of each workshop as prescribed by the conference of which the workshop was a constituent elective.

3.5.3 Interviews research material

This deductive research stage comprised semi-structured or open-ended interviews with interviewees currently practising in higher education. Open ended interviews are advocated by Becker (1998) who prompts that researchers must learn to question what people think and believe. Rather than use the term interviews, the description 'in-depth discussions' was coined in order to reassure the participants of a relaxed informal approach which generated an atmosphere in which participants would be more relaxed and therefore rather more forthcoming in their contributions to the discussion. The discussions were designed to follow the style of responsive interviews advocated by Rubin and Rubin (2012). However, the terms interviews and interviewees will be maintained in this text for the sake of continuity.

Rubin and Rubin (2012) describe responsive interviewing as emphasising the importance of working with interviewees as partners rather than treating them as objects of research (xv). Rather than sit down in front of an interviewee with a prepared set of questions, not unlike a questionnaire, the core of responsive interviewing involves formulating and asking three kinds of questions: main questions, probing questions and follow-up questions. The latter are important and influence the progress of the interview; they create the interaction with the interviewee by responding in an opportunistic way to

what the interviewee has previously said. The initial main question was by way of an ice-breaker and asked the interviewee to describe their route into higher education. Every interviewee had a different story to tell in this respect. The response to this question demonstrated that it was certainly more than an ice-breaker as it led to a comprehensive exposition of their previous experience; experience on which their storytelling could find numerous examples of sources of stories. This was found to be a very useful way to lead to the main question which, in various different wording depending on the interviewee's emphasis, introduced the idea of teaching approaches. This questioning technique enabled the interviewee to describe their attitude towards teaching and their own preferred teaching approaches in their own words. Without prompting, most interviewees introduced storytelling, or a synonym thereof, into their response within the context of their teaching preferences. Probing questions varied as each interviewee introduced interesting variations on the subject into their discussion. From the point of view of grounded theory,

“... the researcher's developing ideas about the project should guide and change the form of later data collection, for instance, by suggesting new questions that respondents can be asked, or by guiding the sampling strategy” (Gibbs, 2002, 2).

Phase 3 of the research also needed to consider whether and how the knowledge gap had changed as a result of phases 1 and 2 of the primary research, and consider how it would be filled, what data would be needed, how the data would be acquired and how the data would be analysed. The basic process by which the data was analysed was generally as described by Braun and Clarke (2013). The five main stages are transcription, discourse analysis, familiarisation and data coding, identifying patterns and interpreting patterns across the data. Appendix 7 aligns the research analysis with five stages of data analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2013, 159-274).

The main process commenced with a visual inspection of transcribed data for nascent themes. In the case of the interviews this coincided with listening to the original recording to correct anomalies or ambiguities in the transcript.

Coding based on key words and phrases took into account synonyms of key words in order to avoid overlooking associated data. The Find facility in both Microsoft Excel for the survey group data spreadsheet and in Microsoft Word for the interview transcripts enabled the data to be collated by code. Codes with common elements were amalgamated into findings which, where possible, were aligned with the research questions. Data or findings which were not readily aligned with the research questions were grouped for inclusion in discussion and recommendations for further consideration. Themes became apparent early in the discourse analysis and coding stages. A useful definition of theme is provided by Saldaña (2016): "... a theme is an outcome of coding, categorisation and analytic reflection ... and is an extended phrase or sentence that identifies what a unit of data is about and/or what it means" (199). The three phrases at the heading of Appendix 8 summarise the current research themes of student-centred approach, teacher-centred approach and inter-related approach. A pertinent theme throughout Saldaña's (2016) work is that "The conventions of storyline are used in analysis" (112) aligning with the storyline that threads through Braun and Clark's (2013) stages of analysis as summarised above.

For the individual interviews, a digital recorder was used to ensure an accurate record of each interview. The records were copied to the home PC and saved into a password protected folder. They were then sent as attachments to emails to a transcription service who offered quick, accurate and confidential return of transcripts as word files. These transcripts as Word files were saved into the same password protected folder in which the recordings had already been saved. Back-ups were saved to USB sticks and an external drive as well as in folders in the personal 'H' drive of the university Blackboard. The quick turnaround of recordings and transcripts in a matter of days, enabled transcripts to be reviewed promptly while the interview was still fresh in the interviewer's mind. The prompt review also enabled two objectives to be achieved.

Firstly, the efficacy of the interview was checked with a view to identifying what went well in the interview and what could have been improved. After the first interview, what was identified as having gone well was the idea of asking

the interviewee to describe how they came into higher education. This provided a wealth of background in terms of previous careers, career changes, qualifications, as well as roles and responsibilities in current roles. This one initial question also elicited attitudes to education including experiences as a student and approaches to teaching, including storytelling, or synonyms thereof. After the first interview, what was identified as an area of improvement was a resolution by the interviewer to keep quiet at times thus allowing the interviewee time to think of the next contribution. Atkinson (1998) introduces a journey metaphor in suggesting that, in the context of research including life story interviews that sometimes, a story, a personal narrative, may be so unusual, interesting, confirming or powerful that it may take us someplace new in our understanding that we could not have imagined (20). Boje (2001) provides a detailed method of analysis which provided useful pointers such as looking for dichotomies such as gender dominance in the story; a hierarchical viewpoint within the story; and, asking whether there is one voice or whether there are many voices in the story (21). Many of these guidelines were developed during the interview by implementing Rubin and Rubin's (2012) concept of probing questions.

Secondly, the efficacy of the interview was checked to identify initial indications of findings relevant to the research questions. Subsequent interviews were then inspected to see if support for such findings was expressed by interviewees. Each interviewee provided a different response to the interviewer's first invitation to describe how they came to higher education. Each interviewee described their range of previous experience from which they could draw on for sources of stories and led to a description of their current roles and responsibilities. Discussions moved on seamlessly to consider their teaching approaches, including views on storytelling in higher education.

Carrying out interim reviews of the data from each research event enhanced the basic analytical process for qualitative data as described by Braun and Clarke (2013). This research study enhanced that basic analytical process by introducing and applying the previously described technique of continuous improvement. Rather than wait until all the data had been acquired before

starting the analytical process, data was initially assessed after each research event, whether pilot study, survey group or interview. This enabled the quality of the research study process to be enhanced, and also led to a higher quality of end result in terms of relevance and value of findings. Research material in all forms from all phases of the research study will be destroyed or permanently deleted within twelve months of completion of the project. This period will allow time for a decision to be made regarding any follow up research, articles or books that might require access to and use of such data. The ethical rules regarding confidentiality and anonymity will continue to be applied.

CHAPTER 4 – FINDINGS and THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

4.1 Analysis process leading to findings and research questions

The nub of this chapter is to establish the relationship between the three research questions and the seven findings, and how that relationship emanated from the research study analysis process. The transition made from the research material to that relationship moved through four steps. Firstly, the research material from each event within the three phases of the research was visually inspected to identify data. The differing nature of the research methods meant that variations occurred in the format and nature of the research material for each method. This visual inspection also provided an opportunity to identify both short term and longer-term progression of the research process. In the short term, the inspection identified ways in which the effectiveness of the ongoing research methodology could be improved in terms of practical implementation of the research process. This was in line with the policy of continuous improvement which formed part of the methodology development. In the longer-term, the inspection provided early identification of themes and trends that helped to identify findings later in the data analysis process. The second step grouped the data by inspection and from the groupings categorised the data with the assistance of the NVivo11 software. The third step affirmed in more detail the initial findings identified in step one. The fourth step in the analysis process was to align the findings with the research questions as shown in Appendix 7.

The three-phase primary research methodology comprised exploratory research as the first phase based on two complementary activities; a case study exercise and tentative discussions. This exploratory research was sufficiently useful to become regarded as a form of pilot study. Dennison (2012) found such an early pilot study useful as a preliminary to later research into Kolb's experiential learning. The crucial parts of the second phase research workshop-based survey groups were the individual feedback forms which were the means by which delegates were able to contribute to the workshop outcomes and thence to the stock of research material. The structure of the feedback form changed slightly between each of the

successive survey groups in order to implement improvements and enhance the quality and relevance of the research interim findings. The third and final phases of the primary research comprised eleven responsive individual interviews. The data from all three phases of the primary research provided evidence to support answers to the three research questions. The three phases of the research implement three different mutually supportive versions of qualitative research methodology and as such provide mutually complementary data. This aligns with the definition of triangulation which is described by Flick in Jupp (2006) as “the observation of the research issue from (at least) two different points ... in qualitative as well as quantitative research and in the context of combining both” (2006, 305).

The nature of this research study’s qualitative research being based on survey groups and interviews is that the resulting primary research material comprised the views of research participants derived from a combination of their own research and professional and general life experiences. The latter empathises with the researcher’s view that this thesis emanates from the researcher’s own life experience as a student and teacher in higher education. The analysis of such material was interpretive in that it also brought to bear on the results the views of the researcher as analyst. In order to establish a level of reliability to this study’s analysis two third parties were asked to provide inter-rated reliability. They were asked to inspect the anonymised research material from the study groups which was transcribed and amalgamated into a single multi-page spreadsheet, a print of which was provided to each of the third parties. The third parties were also provided with prints of two interview transcripts selected by the researcher from the eleven transcribed interviews. The feedback from the third parties aligned with the majority of the findings previously identified by the researcher. However, it was most useful to have a contribution which in effect provided further ideas on the subject of storytelling as a teaching approach in higher education. These further ideas have been incorporated into the findings.

Appendix 1 summarises the discussions at the exploratory stage (ES – research interviewees were coded ES1 to ES8) of the research study which produced four preliminary findings. Firstly, teachers who had made a

memorable impact by making a subject interesting were mentioned by all eight interviewees. Secondly, five interviewees used such key words as charismatic, sponsor and rapport when they recalled teachers who had provided encouragement by empathising with students. Support for this exploratory finding was given by the view expressed by one interviewee (ES2) that such teachers were sufficiently self-confident that they could communicate closely with students by telling stories relevant to the subject matter, not just stories for their own sake. Thirdly, humour or synonyms thereof, were mentioned five times. This exploratory finding suggested that memorable teachers were sufficiently relaxed with their teaching that they could risk introducing humorous elements into their teaching. Fourthly, links between teaching and learning were illustrated by such key words as context, relevant, effective, practised, and debate as well as the relevant antonym – boring. These four issues put the researcher on to a useful research trail at this crucial early stage and formed the basis of what became the first finding. The subsequent phases of the research study identified whether storytelling encouraged immediate short-term results in such affective ways as generating interest and also whether storytelling helped to establish longer term effective results by establishing a mentoring relationship. The subsequent research also looked out for storytelling being associated with self-confidence, a relaxed approach incorporating some humour in the teaching and fostering firm links between teachers and students.

Appendix 3 contains a summary of the transcribed feedback from the students of the second pilot study based on the case study described in Appendix 2. That the outcome is somewhat different from the material in Appendix 1 reflects the fact that this research was carried out more formally with a class of eleven engineering degree first year students and focused on their views on a case study as a form of storytelling. The first theme that emerged reflected positive supportive views on the case study teaching approach. Key words used by the eleven respondents were “benefits, helps, show progression and problems, importance of re-evaluating, see action, downfalls, and manage”. The second theme of this Appendix 3 triangulated with the fourth theme listed in Appendix 1 concerning the teaching and learning interface. The students used such terms as motivating,

experimentation, discovery, comprehend, experience (mentioned three times), ideas, realistic, and beneficial. Interviewee reference FE11 described in-class case studies as part of a good learning curve. This student had recognised that all elements of education form a holistic curriculum. A new theme was introduced by the phrase "comfort zone for students" (FE7) which developed later in the research study into the finding that suggested that not all students were comfortable with storytelling, either at all, or in certain circumstances. This proved to be the first of a number of cautionary findings.

The second phase of the primary research for this research study comprised five workshop-based survey groups (SG). These groups produced research material as written feedback from participants who were guided by the brief description in the conference material, by the Power Point slides (See Appendix 4) used during workshop, and the feedback form (Appendix 5). A handout describing the workshop format and purposes proved particularly useful for those participants who turned up without previous registration. I had hoped to set up a blog for participants to access after the workshop but the technology at the time proved incapable of satisfying the ethical requirements for limiting access to the blog and maintaining confidentiality. A contribution to the then anticipated blog was prepared as shown in Appendix 6 but not used for that purpose; but the summarised data did prove useful for the NVivo11 analysis. Written research material provided by participants in the workshop-based survey groups was transcribed into a substantial spreadsheet. In parallel with visual inspection of the material during the transcribing process, the spreadsheet was subjected to analysis of key words, data, categories and themes which defined the findings. An early challenge was to separate out the meaningful key words from the colloquialisms. The list was further limited to manageable proportions by using the NVivo11 applied weighted percentage facility as a suggested indication of the relative importance for each word. Also incorporated in the spreadsheet was an initial identification of themes which helped to categorise the findings.

The third phase of the primary research for this research study comprised eleven interviews. The willingness of potential interviewees to participate in

and contribute to the research study was affirmed during earlier personal discussion with individuals. Rather than rely solely on verbal, and thus unrecorded invitations to potential interviewees, any preliminary discussions on the subject were confirmed by a personalised email. This provided an opportunity to attach to the email documents shown as Appendix 8 – Summary information for research interviewees and Appendix 9 – Consent form for research interviewees. These two latter documents ensured that interviewees were fully aware of the background to and context of the interview. NVivo11 helped to tabulate the key words identified from within the transcripts of the eleven interviews which are referenced chronologically as 'A' to 'K'. Repetition of key words acted as confirmation that the eleven interviews produced some consistency to provide an element of reliability, validity, credibility, and triangulation. Other key words also provided sufficient variety to provide an element of generalisability. In summary the key words from the exploratory research phase of the study very much matched the key words that emanated from the workshop-based survey groups. As an overall exercise, the NVivo11 word frequency query was applied to a combination of the specific transcripts from the five survey groups of 56 participants together with those of the eleven interviews. The top key words that emerged after discounting colloquialisms were grouped by category and theme. The discounting of colloquialisms was not a straightforward exercise as a check was carried out by looking at the context in which certain ostensibly common expressions were being used. As a result, a number of such expressions were included in the key word lists. To exemplify this, the word *think* was number 1 in the overall list and was also number 1 in many of the specific lists, but the context was mainly along the lines of "I think that you know where I'm coming from." (Interviewee 'D') which does not relate to storytelling. However, that same interviewee said that as a result of storytelling, "students are going to go and think 'This guy has got something interesting to say.'" and later, "You can make them think". These two quotations demonstrate two of the impacts of storytelling. The first is that storytelling has an affective value by adding to the credibility attribute of the teacher as being recognisably knowledgeable in the eyes of the learner. The second is that encouraging student thinking is a longer-term effect of storytelling. The limitations of the strictly pseudo-statistical analysis within

NVivo11 required human intervention to identify additional key words from all the transcripts which were significant not just in terms of the number of times they occurred but in terms of the meaningfulness to storytelling as a teaching approach in higher education. This required taking into account the context of the key words, as illustrated to some extent with the word 'think' above, as well as the overall view of the subject assimilated from the review of literature. Examples of additional key words were those which supported the cross-disciplinary theme inherent in research question number 2; Chinese, management, London, finance, education, business, research, military, operations, psychologist, legislation, and engineering. Add to this list the similar range of key words from the transcripts of the workshop-based survey groups and there was available a substantial quantity of quality material available to support finding number 5 related to research question 2.

4.2 The Relationship between the three research questions

The relationship between the three themes, three research questions and seven findings that emanated from this research study is represented in matrix form in Appendix 7. Note that of the seven findings, five were found to be more closely related to theme number 2, the teacher-centred approach; one was closely related to theme number 1, the student-centred approach, and one finding was related to theme number 3, the inter-related approach. These relationships align with the fact that theme number 2 turned out to be the dominant theme of the research study. The distribution of the seven findings with regards to the research questions reflects a balanced approach throughout the research study in that no one single research question dominates. Three findings related most closely to research question 1, two findings to research question 2 and two findings to research question 3.

The three research questions emerged at the end of the Literature Review as a result of gaps in the research area having been identified during the literature review. Research question 1, the primary, and very much overall research question, asked whether a storytelling approach might support teaching and learning in higher education. Research question 2, the subsidiary second research question, considered whether a storytelling

approach might be more appropriate to certain discipline subjects than others. Research question 3, the subsidiary third research question, required to establish whether, in parallel with the previously described consideration of different discipline subjects, the personal life experiences of the teacher influenced their understanding of and attitude towards the use of storytelling as a teaching approach. Personal experience of the taught subject gained both within and outside academe, as well as broader life-experience, could all be used as sources of stories.

The primary research design that followed the establishment of these questions was formulated by the research study methodology and methods. The resultant research material was inspected in order to identify useful and relevant data taking cognisance of suggestions on technique by Grbich (2013), Scott and Usher (1999) and Saldaña ((2016) on qualitative data analysis. Subsequent analysis of the data via coding and then categorisation using NVivo11 further supported the findings that related to the three research questions. The categorisation was enhanced by inter-rater reliability provided by two colleagues, one recently retired from the School of Business and one recently retired from the School of Education. The categorisation process had to deal with participants' use of synonyms for various terms, a feature of qualitative research that NVivo11 had great difficulty coping with. Find or Search features within MS Word and MS Excel, together with the ability within the two MS programs to suggest synonyms, proved much more useful in this respect. Some of the evidence quoted below therefore includes indications of some of the synonyms used by participants in their responses to survey group exercises and interview discussion topics.

The findings align with the three research questions with a view to identifying the extent to which support for answers have been found. Bringing together the findings for all three questions unified the contribution which this study brought to this hitherto somewhat under-researched area of teaching and learning in higher education. This broadening helped to identify areas which were included as recommendations for further research. Findings have been consolidated by taking evidence from all three phases of the primary research. This consolidating approach was preferred to the alternative of

chronologically considering each of the three primary research phases in turn. This alternative would have resulted in a rather disjointed presentation which would not readily connect the findings with the research questions without entailing a certain amount of repetition of both the research questions and the findings. However, a certain amount of repetition has occurred as some evidence is repeated where it legitimately supports more than one finding.

4.3 – Research Question 1

This question asked whether a storytelling approach might support teaching and learning in higher education. Three findings responded to this question. They developed from data categories that could be best described as contributing to firstly, the affective value of storytelling in higher education teaching and learning; secondly, the effectiveness of storytelling in teaching and learning and thirdly, the power of storytelling generally within the context of teaching and learning in higher education.

The search for definitions and means of measuring the affective value of contributions to teaching and learning has proved to be rather frustrating to a number of researchers. As recently as 2015, Kretchmar's research endeavoured to build on Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives, but concluded, with other researchers that, as well as the lack of a clear definition, the affective domain has also suffered from measurement issues. Similarly, De Courcey (2015) endeavoured to research teaching excellence in higher education. She concluded that her research indicates that while there is some overall agreement in the academy, no one definition or set of existing dimensions can characterize the complexity of the teaching practice and that a national study on teaching effectiveness in higher education in the 21st century would be of great interest. Stehle et al. (2012) unsuccessfully tried to measure teaching effectiveness. Stehle and colleagues considered that future research should include criteria of teaching effectiveness other than student learning as implied by examination results. They noted that while this may be the most widely accepted criterion for teaching effectiveness, it is certainly not the only one. When conducting research on

the validity of measures of teaching effectiveness further studies should investigate criteria such as enhancement of motivation and of generating longer term interest in the subject matter. Studies that include more than one criterion of teaching effectiveness might allow for conclusions about the degree to which each criterion actually reflects teaching effectiveness (2012, 900). It is this latter criterion that influenced this current research study. Researchers such as De Courcy (2015); Kretchmar (2015), and Stehle et al. (2012), may have needed to distinguish between affective value and effectiveness. Affective value and effectiveness can be considered as two separate but linked findings of storytelling. Further to the earlier exploratory research finding regarding memorable teachers, the focus thenceforth considered in further detail what it was that made teachers memorable in terms of their affective value and effectiveness. The overall theme of this PhD research project was to affirm whether teachers telling stories, based mainly on their own personal experiences, could enhance the affective value and effectiveness of teaching and learning in higher education.

4.3.1 Finding 1 Affective value of storytelling

Notwithstanding the lack of progress in the research reports described above, some attempt has been made from this research study to identify evidence from the current study's research material and data to support certain findings. The initial findings which were identified in this research study related to the attributes of teaching and learning that were associated with the affective domain. Kretchmar (2015), focusing on Bloom's taxonomy, identified values and attitudes as attributes of the affective domain. Values and attitudes were interpreted as overall collective terms to correspond with the terms 'trust' and 'credibility' which emerged from the current research study. Inspection of the attributes of affective values in teaching resulted in the appearance of a sub-category of pre-requisites for the teaching to have an affective value. These pre-requisites had been previously identified as the teacher's attributes of self-confidence, the ability to establish rapport, a relaxed concept of teaching and in particular of the storytelling approach. The second sub-category pertained to the affective value of the relationship between teacher and learner resulting from those pre-requisites. The third

category grouped those attributes that could be ascribed to students, but which were attributes that came about as a result of the teacher-student working relationship being established and growing.

Storytelling has an affective value in terms of attracting attention and enabling rapport across the student-teacher interface, generating interest as well as establishing credibility, authority and confidence. Establishing these pre-requisites enables longer term effective learning to happen; activating memory; igniting imagination; and enabling commitment from the student to study, learn and research the subject; as well as helping to relate theory and practice. This was first illustrated in the research provided by participants in the first survey group and subsequently corroborated by the subsequent four survey groups. Evidence from the survey groups suggested the importance of the relationship between the teacher and learner, or storyteller and listener. Storytelling as experienced by the participants was seen to enhance the involvement of both the teacher and learner with the subject and with each other. Most importantly, it seems that storytelling enhances the teacher's credibility in the eyes of the learners. The individual interviewees contributed towards a definition of affective value by identifying factors that contribute to affectiveness. These factors follow similar findings in the literature review such as those of Sturm (2000) and Schostak (2002). Interviewee 'A' considered that storytelling improved the relationship between teacher and student by "building rapport in the stories" and that expectations, interest, inspiration, memory issues, and imagination were opportunities whereby "stories led to increased understanding". 'B' also considered that whereas storytelling may help to establish rapport with students, rapport starts with remembering student names. It may be a simple technique but the rewards in terms of student commitment, positive feedback and enhanced focus on studies that ensue far outweigh the effort involved. 'B' found that a crib sheet of student names and nicknames has proved to be most useful. The notion of establishing rapport and telling stories based on personal experience is,

“... personalising the storytelling; you're in some ways giving something of yourself to them by telling them something about you

as well; what my passionate interests are; they can get a lot from that" (Interviewee 'A').

Interviewee 'G' described the experience gained from the team-teaching approach which suggests that teaching styles match different student learning styles. Recognising one's own teaching style is important in the context of team-teaching. Interviewee 'G' recommended works by Rogers (2002) for descriptions of the roles we adopt with our students, including an innate empathy. In this context storytelling has a role to play in establishing such empathy as well as trust which is a useful addition to the affectiveness vocabulary. Unfortunately, not all 'G's colleagues saw students as sensitive humans but as "receptacles to be filled with information"; such an attitude demonstrates a lack of appreciation of the need to establish rapport and the difference that can make to the affectiveness and effectiveness of the teaching – learning process. As an educational teacher, 'G' takes the opportunity to discuss storytelling as a subject per se with various classes. "We don't always call it storytelling; rather the use of examples from practice." The pros and cons of storytelling are not discussed in depth in the classes under the subject of teaching practice, although the circumstances when storytelling might be useful are debated. "Teaching approaches need to vary depending on the scenario."

Creating affective value does not always come easily as interviewee 'H' described. When visiting his home, he was asked by friends and relatives about his work at the University, but they seemed to quickly lose interest when 'H' described his role in higher education. This may have been due to the fact that 'H' was the only member of the group of family and friends to be working in higher education. This is an interesting variation on storytelling concerning a reaction to higher education as a real world but beyond the understanding or interest of a particular group. There may indeed be ways of arousing their interest though 'H' admits to having recently tried storytelling rather than merely describing the bland details of higher education and was glad to admit to getting some positive displays of interest from younger siblings rather than adult members of the family.

The three types of attribute that support Finding 1- Affective Value of Storytelling are shown in Figure 5 below.

Type 1-Attributes of the teacher-

Personality and Charisma (including mentoring)

Credibility based on Experience in and Enthusiasm for subject

Teaching style including storytelling, makes for a memorable teacher

Type 2-Attributes of the teacher-learner relationship

Rapport and trust

Teacher Identity from first impressions to being open and honest

Teacher centred and student-centred teaching

Type 3-Attributes of the learner

Attention paid to and interest in the immediate lesson

Taking age, maturity and experience of students into account

Registering taught material into memory

Figure 5- Attributes of Storytelling's Affective Value in Teaching

4.3.1.1 Attributes of the teacher

Storytelling may be a noteworthy attribute of the teaching style of memorable teachers, especially those who are still fondly remembered by their erstwhile students a lifetime later. This feature of storytelling first appeared during the very first exploratory research (ER) phase of the study. "It's the lecturers I recall rather than any particular lecture. They were the most charismatic individuals. They made the lectures interesting" (ER1). "I remember his humour" (ER2). "He was able to put the subject of economics into the context of economic history" (ER3). "I remember one lecturer for his jokes – very relevant to subject of economics – was it effective teaching? Not too sure about that – but certainly made that lecturer and those lessons memorable" (ER5).

The personality of the teacher has an influence on the affective value of teaching. ER5 was turned from being bored to being interested in law by a new teacher with a different personality who "made law really interesting by telling legal cases like stories". The key words as noted included charismatic, interesting, humour, context, stories, jokes, and memorable. No mention of charisma was made by any of the survey group candidates or the interviewees although close synonyms were mentioned. These include key words such as personality used by interviewees 'F' and 'I'. The latter links sources of stories with personality as in, "I think I prefer generally, yes, to use my own stories but I also -- and I think this is about personality, I'm more comfortable -- maybe that's the right word, more comfortable with professional stories". ER2 remembered one teacher as a mentor who encouraged ER2 to write and publish three papers based on that student's first-degree dissertation. As a measure of the long-term influence of this mentoring teacher's encouragement, that interviewee later gained a PhD based on previously published papers. ER4 was encouraged by a first-degree lecturer to proceed to an MA degree. Interviewee 'K' recounted how, "... one of the best things of advice I was given by an informal mentor and I think she was spot on. You have to give your students a bit of yourself, ...". As a pertinent example of such a rapport, Gearity and Mertz (2012) describe in a storytelling context a working relationship between a doctorate supervisor and student which tended more towards mentoring.

Within this finding, which explores charismatic teachers, one research participant working as a lecturer stated categorically that as a lecturer he would never contemplate storytelling as it would mean letting his guard down. He was not prepared to discuss the matter. Without the opportunity to research matters further, it was not possible to identify whether particular experiences influenced this attitude, whether inside or outside the academic spheres. By contrast, in terms of teaching practice, interviewee 'D' always tries to kick off a lesson with a pre-set story to put the subject into a context and then throws stories in as the need arises. An up-front context is necessary in order to make a theory understandable to those undergraduates who have little or no experience or previous acquaintanceship with the subject being taught

Credibility could be one of the rewarding attributes of storytelling according to the research material provided by the study group (SG) participants SG1, SG5, SG77, SG85, SG86, and SG90. SG4 agreed, adding that students can be very critical. SG75 also added that students are able to relate to you later on. SG76 adds a more specific personal comment that storytelling "improves my credibility". Appropriate relevant supportive attributes or synonyms used by research participants include approachable (SG37), empathy (SG43), tangible (SG57), engaging (SG60), authenticity (SG67), shared values (SG68), and engagement (SG71). Putting but one attribute into its original context, study group delegate SG67 considers that "We all live through story all the time. It is how we make sense of our lives. Stories of our professional lives will always interest staff / students. It is what gives us authenticity as teachers." Of the interviewees, 'A' had an interesting perspective as, at a particular stage of career development 'A' was awarded additional responsibility "because I had got extensive practitioner experience and credibility in the profession."

Interviewee 'E' considered that, "having some life experience adds weight and credence to what you're talking about." Interviewee 'D' agreed that good teachers are effectively giving them (the students) "your story ... telling them your experience, giving them sufficient information to gain credibility". Interviewee 'C' was aware of the need to develop credibility when teaching night classes. "Because I've taught students who are older than myself I've needed something to draw on in terms of experience because of my age. ... You needed something to give you some credibility I guess more than anything." 'C' also affirmed that storytelling from a teacher's own experience not only improved the credibility of the teacher in the eyes of the students but also "gives some credibility to some of the theory being taught". Interviewee 'I' noticed that "slightly humorous examples of things that happened just made you real and gives credibility I think in the setting". 'I's view was that "... over time, say when I've put in these kinds of stories over time, just a sense that they listen more to what you say, that it's got, yeah, more credibility, ..." Interviewee 'K' combined these views with, "I think when you're older, not only do you have life experience to draw upon but you get a certain level of automatic respect as well". Interviewee 'I' developed the theme to

the postgraduate teaching level indicating that experience is important in the context of doctoral level teaching. "I can talk about my experience about being a doctoral student and my experience with other doctoral students. That's very current". Interviewee 'I' certainly shows enthusiasm for a subject, and the students are aware of that enthusiasm as 'I' reports, "... some students have said to me before 'Can you just talk a bit slower?' and that's because I'm getting excited about it". Interviewee 'D' regards the purpose of the teaching job is to enthuse the student body to maintain interest;

"... that's how I use stories. Stories have to be in the right place at the right time. What I tend to do is throw one in at the beginning; then bring the theory to bear and maybe relate back to the case of my story that I told them earlier; and then maybe round off with a different story at the end to demonstrate the where success was" ('D').

Interviewee 'D' also had a storytelling experience at the doctoral level as a PhD student. The PhD project was triggered by a visiting lecturer who was telling stories of disasters, albeit quite horrific stories with photographic evidence that he himself witnessed. "He enthused me to look into the subject and before I knew where I was I was becoming a PhD student." Research participants considered that experience-based storytelling helps to establish a feeling that students will have more confidence in their teachers' professionalism and credibility in their teaching practice.

The research design methodology enabled the exploratory research respondents to remember features of their education other than storytelling and thus put storytelling into a more general educational context. The results from this exploratory research phase are less extensive and less detailed than the subsequent two phases as the exploratory research informal discussions are more opportunistic in their nature. However, they do add a useful dimension to the research in terms of the maturity of the views of the participants many of whom were providing a view based on their remembrances of education many years previously. Such memories were that much more valuable as they had survived the passage of time, in some

cases a life time. Such views came from the eight participants of whom three were still teaching, two were in other employment and three were retired. Memory is considered an important contribution to the affective value of storytelling although certain influences have to be taken into account when long distance memory is being relied upon. Propp (1984) focused on the effect of the passage of time causing distortions and gaps in memory. Similarly, Baddeley et al. (2015) were concerned at memory loss by storytellers, in addition to loss of accuracy over time. Fiarman (2016) is concerned at the influence of bigotries, biases and prejudices on memory. These concerns over memory were borne in mind in the design and analysis of this and subsequent phases of the study. The concept that pertained to the effectiveness of the teaching or learning experience was in terms of the particular learning experience remembered. The researcher recognised that this detail was not pursued at this early exploratory phase of the research and therefore resolved to incorporate appropriate questions in the survey groups and individual interviews which followed.

4.3.1.2 Attributes of the teacher-learner relationship

Interviewee 'I' told a story based on an incident when the PC projector technology failed and instead of the planned lesson's Power Point presentation the projector defaulted to the teacher's screensaver depicting a couple of pet cats. This mishap not only lightened the somewhat strained and tense atmosphere in the lecture theatre but also established a rapport with the students, so much so that a discussion on cats made for a relaxed atmosphere in future seminars. Although this incident is a somewhat atypical and unintended way of establishing rapport with students, this little anecdote goes some way towards demonstrating the versatility of storytelling by way of indicating how serendipity provides opportunities to establish rapport and trust, if handled confidently. In this vein, interviewee 'J' makes a specific attempt at establishing rapport at the very beginning of the academic year with a short introductory session entitled, "Let's learn a little bit about each other". 'J's introduction usually includes one of a range of personal stories selected depending on the subject being taught and the nature of the class.

Interviewee 'H' was quite animated when talking of the teacher–student relationship and this research participant's view is worth quoting in full. This is based mainly on relatively recent experience as a student.

"I have a particular view here and I've talked about it in our work on inspirational teaching that I think we sometimes expect the teacher-student relationship to be somehow different from the general human-human relationship; and that we assume the students might automatically be endeared to, engaged with, and listen to and respect and kind of take something from a teacher; and the reality is that just doesn't happen. First impressions are really important. You have a new module and that person walks into, say, the lecture theatre for the first time, how they behaved formed your impression of whether you're to going to enjoy that module for the next 12 weeks."

Interviewee 'I' stressed the importance of illustrating personal involvement to demonstrate feelings and encourage trust.

"And I think what I would say is that those kinds of stories about the real world have to be made real again. It's not good enough to just give the tale if you like; you have to give something of yourself in it. How did I feel? How did I experience that? What difference did it make to me? " (Interviewee I).

Interviewee 'J' agrees that it is not just stories about your experience, but little personal stories that break down barriers with your students. 'J' gave an example how such a good teacher – student relationship can constructively contribute to the teaching – learning process itself.

"Over the years I've learned to watch the class very closely and if I feel something is not working or they're not enjoying it, they're not understanding, then I would change things around. For the last few years I've tended to do that by actually being very open and honest with the class and saying this isn't working is it, what shall

we do instead that will help you to get from A to B? and I think that generally goes down quite well".

Interviewee 'E' affirms that teaching based on own direct experience would come up in an unplanned fashion, on an ad hoc basis, using a scenario based on known real happenings, aka momentary perspectives, as per Rae, (2013), and are useful as long as the students remember the context of the story and not just the story itself. "A story can help to bridge that gulf between one paradigm and another; such as looking at a problem from someone else's point of view" (Interviewee E).

Interviewee 'J' considered that storytelling had always gone down really well with the students.

"I've got a lot of good feedback on the way I explain things and make complex things understandable. and that's something that I really do try and do. I like to try different ways of getting the information across. I never deliver the same session twice. I always change my materials from one year to the next. Storytelling is a good way to contextualise without needing additional resources" (Interviewee J).

Interviewee 'H' was able to elaborate on two particular developments that were being encouraged from senior levels in the University management. Firstly, there was a programme promoting inspirational teaching. Secondly, there was a programme researching student engagement. Student feedback on projects such as curriculum development indicates that students are more concerned about "individuals and their teaching styles, rather than seeing the programme as a whole." Both these programmes have produced similar findings. For example, first impressions count. Interviewee 'H' describes as an example a lecturer who, in his first of a series of lectures marched up to the podium, switched on the Power Point projector and started talking. At times the attitude was considered to be rather patronising. At the end the audience of 100 undergraduates were asking among themselves, "Who was that? What was that all about?" If teachers have the confidence to reveal a bit

about their life, their professional life, it can help both teachers and students by reducing the tension and any awkwardness that might exist when teachers and their students first meet. "Even online you can form impressions." Interviewee 'H' also described what was referred to the "tough-love" approach whereby the tutor keeps the pressure on the students. This is done by constantly challenging the students by, for example, asking every student in a seminar to comment on the seminar subject matter. The responses and interaction between students and with the tutor require the tutor to manage the group dynamics. It seemed to work in terms of student achievement and respect for the staff member both during and after the module has completed. "I do try to adopt this approach and, rather than make do with simple responses, I try and draw stories out of people based on their personal experience from their own perspective" (Interviewee 'H').

In the fourth survey group delegates discussed at great length the relative importance of student centred and teacher centred approaches. SG60 described how, as a student, storytelling was found to be an interesting way for lectures to be made more engaging. SG62 found it useful to get students to tell their stories. SG64 was also wondered how to demonstrate the usefulness of storytelling to students. On 'discovering' that storytelling did feature in teaching, interviewee B affirmed that "I've developed my teaching by making it more interactive now." B's pre-teaching professional experience was in the same field as many of the students being taught so 'B' was able to relate personal experiences to some of the students' own similar experiences. This is an indication of the circumstances which encourage an integration of the student-centred and teacher-centred approaches. This amalgamation of both approaches in a synergistic way further enhances the learning effectiveness of higher education, thus supporting a finding that storytelling aims to merge student-centred and teacher-centred approaches.

The affective value of the teaching-learning scenario can be influenced by the mode of teaching, whether seminar or lecture, and the relative gender and ages of the teacher and student; factors that were considered at some length by the two research participants code named 'C' and 'K'. 'C' found storytelling more successful in the more informal circumstances of a seminar

rather than in a lecture where a more formal scenario exists. In a lecture, 'C' preferred to stick to a fact-based or case-based presentation linked to follow-up discussions in a subsequent seminar. In a seminar, the story can be "perhaps spontaneous and unrehearsed" and "it gave the students the opportunity to share their stories as well and I think the learning happened as much within the group of students as from me – they learned from each other." Sometimes it is not until a lesson is completed that the students realise in discussion that they have effectively received a lesson in story form, almost by subterfuge or by the subtleties of the teacher. A suggestion that the time of day can affect student concentration. whether early morning, post lunch, or Friday afternoons might inhibit any attempts to use storytelling in those conditions.

Active rapport between teacher and student was described in the following extract from study group participant SG68.

"Preparing tomorrow's presentation to 3 students-I wanted to both support them to do some of the work but didn't want to burden them and risk not preparing. In the end, we shared Power Points and articles late at night over all of our posh phones, getting to where we all wanted or needed to be. I learned that I can both contribute and let go, but as for my learning on the technological side, I found that I can learn from them and risk much more than I usually feel OK about (I hope!)" (SG68).

A most pertinent anecdote by Crawford et al. (2015) describes a variation on the theme of mutual teacher-student interaction through storytelling in the context of health professional–patient interaction through another humanity, music. A mental patient's music making had a powerful recovering effect on Crawford who realised "It was not me recovering the needy patient. It was the needy patient recovering me" (138). The teacher-learner links operate in two directions, benefiting both participants.

4.3.1.3

Attributes of the learner

Survey Group delegate SG76 stated that "Storytelling and relating anecdotes does attract students' attention." Interviewee 'I' had also noticed this common reaction. "... that's why I've used storytelling in that way because I know that you see people waking up a little bit or paying a bit more attention. They also want the outcome of the end of the story." Interviewee 'I' had noticed that when students are focusing on the story, listening to what you're saying, they became interested in the story and hopefully also in the subject which you were trying to use the story to teach. Interviewee 'E' commented that one of the things that stories seem to do, once an audience realises that you're in storytelling mode, is that they pay a lot more attention and their expectations are raised and that they think to themselves, now this is a bit more interesting than listening to theory; this is going to be worth listening to. SG60 responded to the Word Association exercise of the fourth study group by suggesting the word *engagement* and elaborated by adding, "listening-it encourages students to pay attention and therefore engages them more". In an analysis of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF2), Moore et al. (2017) recount how the first of a range of assessment criteria included under the heading Teaching Quality (TQ) was specified as (TQ1) Student Engagement (109). The criteria were described as teaching that provides effective stimulation, challenge and contact time that encourages students to engage and actively commit to their studies (109).

Interviewee 'J' found that certain phraseology appropriate to the teaching subject grabbed the students' attention.

"I think there are two things that I say to them that make them kind of stand up and listen and one is not 'I remember when ...', but 'I had a situation where ...' or 'I had a student that ...'. At the moment this is very, very important to me because I'm actually teaching other academic members of staff and I'm drawing on my own teaching experience now more and more. Or they'll say something to me and I'll say 'I remember being in that situation

myself. and those are the things that they find really powerful"
(Interviewee 'J').

Interviewee 'J' is also of the opinion that analogies are an important variation on the storytelling approach. For example, one analogy of a bathtub is used to describe epidemiology. Another analogy on cake-baking is used to describe a literature research project. 'J' thinks that such analogies make teaching memorable and inspirational. Interviewee 'G' identified a particular situation when it might be inappropriate to try to focus students' attention on storytelling. Getting students' attention might be an issue when they're having to concentrate on practical work such as when working through an experimental process in a laboratory. However, stories can be shared in a lecture where attention is not distracted, in one to one or small group seminars, and anywhere where there is an opportunity to speak and there's an opportunity for people to listen and respond. In terms of contributing to affective value, interviewee 'F' preferred to tell stories because "the hook is that people will remember the story if they don't remember the lesson. They may remember the story and then that brings them back to what the lesson was actually about".

'K' offered evidence from practical experience of teaching different subjects to classes of various different mixes of genders. An ICT class comprised "... a nice group to start with, because actually they were all 18-year-old lads. Two ladies joined the class at a late stage in the course. This change affected the dynamics of the group and changed the stories as well. The stories you tell are very different depending your own gender and the gender mix of your class. Interpretation of the storytelling differs with gender". 'K' gained the impression that female students occasionally missed the point of the story and distracted themselves by focussing on the contextualisation rather than concentrating on the message. Male computing students, for example, tended to get the message even from within a humorous story. 'K' realised a greater level of formality needed to be maintained with female students because they were more likely to miss the point of the storytelling by focusing on the story rather than the message that the story was trying to convey. This is a view that needs substantiation from some focused research

ensuring of course that ethical concerns on gender issues are considered, although there is probably little doubt that gender issues do need to be taken into account when adopting a storytelling teaching approach.

Similarly, the storytelling mode needs to also take into account the age, maturity and experience of students. Young undergraduates need to be fed stories whereas post graduate Masters degree and PhD students who are usually older tend to have their own fund of stories. The latter do benefit at times from allegories which assist understanding of complex issues. 'K' quotes an example of cake baking when trying to explain systems analysis. Another difference on the theme of finding sources for storytelling with older students is that the teachers who are parents can establish rapport by discussing stories based on their children's behaviour with those of the students who are themselves parents. Students may be in difficulties other than as parents or carers and the pastoral or therapeutic use of stories might have benefits in addition to the educational ones considered here. Crawford et al (2004) suggest that "therapists can use stories to change client's self-image" (96) which may well have a beneficial effect on the client's attitude to learning; though it must be acknowledged that the stories are those that the therapist encourages the client to tell to the therapist as a cathartic exercise in most instances; rather than the therapist telling stories based on their own experience to the client. Crawford et al (2004) do acknowledge that "A further issue worth exploring is how therapists can become story collectors and story authors in their own right." (122)

'K' also experienced a difference in approach was required when teaching at a remote institution where students are parents at 18 years of age and who may also be carers of elderly or very ill relatives. The demand on their study time may be excessive and many give up studying because of the pressure they are under. Those students who do persevere have to be treated with an approach that differs from those described above and takes into account their circumstances. 'K' found that there is a role for storytelling that does take into account their circumstances and provides them with encouragement to persevere. An area where such students needed assistance was in terms of building professional and social skills. 'K' has also identified students that can

be categorised as practical biased students and theory biased. "If a student can do both then they are going to win."

One situation that interviewee 'K' identified as making storytelling difficult are the "serial complainers". They want no deviation from the core text book and don't see the point of stories even before they are told. This results in the teacher not deviating from the lesson plan. Lessons need an alternative approach if they are to be informative, interesting and effective. 'K' has found that students' attitude towards studying changes from first year through to final year, and this includes their reaction to storytelling.

"You almost have to baby them through the first semester where storytelling has to be encouraging. In semester two I give them a dose of reality and the storytelling here can indeed be from the real world. 18 to 21s find it hard to apply theory to reality, whereas more mature students can apply ideas" (Interviewee K).

One appropriate description of the maturing student is to suggest that when they come to university, they are unemployable; when they have completed their degrees, they are more likely to be employable, subject to having acquired transferable skills to complement their academic achievements.

4.3.2 Finding 2 - Storytelling has an effectiveness

Notwithstanding the lack of evidence from the literature review of research described above, the current study identified data, evidence and findings which suggested that certain attributes of the teaching and learning process contribute to the effectiveness of storytelling as a teaching approach. The research analysis had to acknowledge Kretchmar (2015) who suggests that taxonomies and categories do misrepresent reality. In terms of Bloom's (1956) taxonomy, the cognitive domain contributes attributes such as longer-term memory and understanding which are taken in this study to be the equivalents of effective storytelling as a teaching approach. Motivation and interest as suggested by Stehle et al. (2012) are also categorised for the purposes of this study as attributes of teaching effectiveness and are

supported by the findings of this study. Detailed commentary reflects the three main attributes of effectiveness that were identified by this research study and are listed in Figure 6.

Attributes of effectiveness of storytelling

Memory of story and lesson

Understanding the lesson

Understanding the role of storytelling

Figure 6 - Attributes of effectiveness of storytelling

4.3.2.1 Memory of story and lesson

One attribute that contributed to the effective value of storytelling was that the teacher was remembered both in the short term from one lesson to another, but also long after the lessons had completed. It is now worth making a three-way distinction between a learner's memories of the teacher as an individual and the learner's different memories of the story and the taught material. The latter, including storytelling, has a limited shelf life as far as memory is concerned. That goes for us all, not just the students indirectly referred to in the evidence generated by this research study. Interviewee 'I' considered that,

"... we've got memories going in and memories are individual. They can be attached to a story that's being told and that then results in the story being modified when they themselves retransmit it. Stories are living things – they move all the time ..."
(Interviewee I).

This corresponds with the view of Genette (1972) that Proust's many-times revised *A la recherche du temps perdu* is a living organism. It is as if stories

have lives of their own and change and move with the times and demands of a particular situation; particularly a teaching situation.

Survey group research participants considered memory an important attribute of storytelling as a teaching and learning approach in higher education. In terms of data analysis this exercise demonstrated the importance of using appropriate search criteria in terms of variations on associated nouns and verbs. In this example, the search root 'mem' produced a result that combined memory with various tenses of the verb remember, as well as the noun memorable. The results of searching for memory might have given the impression that research participants underrated memory as an attribute of storytelling's affective value, whereas the search results for 'mem' produced much more supportive evidence. Of the 93 participants who contributed to the five survey groups, only four mentioned memory in response to the various questions asked, but a search based on the root "mem" produced 16 results being variations on the verb to remember as well as "memorable". Similarly, of the 11 interviewees only four interviewees mentioned memory and did so 11 times. However, all eleven used variations on the verb to remember, in total 99 times; which needed some inspection to filter out use in colloquialisms.

These results also give an indication of the different results that can emanate from different research methodologies and subsequent analytical techniques. The survey groups focused more on assessing teachers' attitudes to storytelling generally and produced a certain tenor of research material. The interviews allowed the interviewees much more freedom to express their views on storytelling; as a result, all 11 interviewees attached sufficient importance to storytelling's influence on memory's contribution to assisting recall of a lesson's subject matter.

Certain of the survey group delegates used key phrases such as needing time to explore (SG40), thinking time (SG41), time after trial and error (SG44). Time features as an important consideration in these examples suggesting that the light bulb moment or moment of the learning enlightenment can be deferred. This corroborates the springboards idea of

Denning (2001) which suggests that, on some occasions, the moment of enlightenment can come after a time interval following the inspiring event. Timing is thus a sub-category that has an impact on storytelling's effectiveness. Further analysis identified that 27 of the 93 survey group delegates were concerned about the time scales involved in various aspects of storytelling. These include finding time to research stories and contextualise them into teaching as well as time to assess their impact in terms of student learning and student feedback. Interviewee 'G' was concerned that storytelling needs to take place in the right place and at the right time. This supports interviewee 'F's concern that storytelling should be used sparingly with a good time interval between stories. Interviewee 'I' considers that timing for storytelling in the teaching and learning process is indeed important. "So, when I've worked with a student over time and put in stories over time, I gain a sense that they listen more to what is taught; that it's got more credibility, ..."

4.3.2.2 Understanding the Lesson

The attribute of understanding is demonstrated in the first of the areas of evidence provided by the exploratory phase of the research wherein a case study was regarded as effectively as a synonym of storytelling by research participants who were first year engineering students. The reaction of the students to this work was quite enthusiastic despite the fact that it was an assignment. This enthusiasm was symptomatic with motivation, supporting Finding No. 3. To identify the reasons for the enthusiasm a simple questionnaire was incorporated into the individual feedback. The responses from these students were analysed by visual inspection for the frequency of evidence of common findings. For example, "Learn" occurred eight times in various forms including "learner" and "learning" and featured in the feedback from 4 of the eleven students. Other potential key words include "observation, imitation, pitfalls, progression, re-evaluation, action, downfalls, personal experience, past-experience, mistakes, more applicable, same foundations, manage a small project". This data could be taken together to suggest that students were trying to explain how the project case study would add to their understanding of real life project management. The use of case

studies may thus be regarded as being an effective teaching approach in these circumstances and in this type of subject discipline. Other student data that could be regarded as demonstrating a wider appreciation of education generally were "experimentation and discovery" and "comfort zone". These issues may not have been directly supportive of case studies as such but were constructive in that they suggested alternative considerations from the teaching and learning point of view; for example, one student observed that a case study "may not be as motivating to learners who prefer experimentation & discovery". This student is suggesting that real life practical experience may be more valuable. It has to be admitted that case studies, and storytelling, are no substitute for real life experience. Ayas and Mirvis (2005) express some concerns that some studies have found that management training that may rely on classroom experiences, even with case studies, small group exercises, and computer simulations, falls short of developing the wide range of skills and learning capabilities managers need to master real-life situations (94). Hawley (Moore, 1993) expresses a similar view regarding the value of MBA's vis a vis practical management experience (95). However, one student recognised that classroom experiences are but a forerunner to the real-life experience; case studies are "part of the learning curve" (FE11).

The use of the phrase "a personal experience" by one student (FE5) recognised that a case study provided an opportunity for understanding from the personal involvement point of view. He used his imagination to ask, "If I were the project manager here, what would I decide?" Corroboration of one of the previously identified findings in the literature review emerged from the recognition of the links with reality. Variations of the term 'real' were used by two of the FE students as in the phrases "real problems" and "realistic subject". Other feedback indicating a link with reality was given by a student who suggested that the case study "gives ideas for own project" and that a case study can be "beneficial if you are looking at conducting a similar task/project." This case study has not only contributed to students' understanding of project management but also of the real world, further supporting Finding No. 3. Helyer (2011) affirms a holistic view of aligning higher education with the world of work as quoted above. Three students did

have doubts about the efficacy of case studies, suggesting that case studies might suit certain types of learner, whereas other learners might better appreciate "experimentation and discovery". This student is suggesting that real life practical experience may be more valuable. Further comments state that "Experience is better"; and "I think that the best way to learn about a project management is to actually manage a small project. A case study project is sometimes out of the comfort zone for students, this makes learning more difficult"; a concern reflected in the section 4.6 – Cautionary Findings.

Overall, one could suggest that the responses were indicating that as an emerging overall theme, case studies as a variation on the storytelling theme were appreciated by learners as it provided them with "examples of new and real learning experience".

Interviewee 'J' provided specific examples of storytelling; it is worth reproducing one set of stories as an example from the interview transcripts.

"I used to teach a subject called epidemiology, which is the study of patterns of health and disease in society. I used to draw a picture of a bathtub on the board and then draw the water in the bathtub and say to them the water in the bath at any one time is the prevalence. If you turn the tap on these are the incident cases, these are new additions and it makes the prevalence rise. and if you pull the plug out and the water level drops, the prevalence ceases as it's gone down. I used to get this metaphor back in every single assignment that I read.

The other one I used to use, quite commonly when I was teaching research methods, was thinking of your method for doing a literature-based project; thinking of your search strategy as a recipe for making a cake. So, telling me what you're putting in, tell me what order in which you're combining things together, tell me what order in which you're doing things and if I followed it we should both get the same cake in the end basically. So, I use a lot

of things like that when I'm teaching, and I find that students remember them because there're a little bit different, but they always intend to be related to very normal everyday things" (Interviewee 'J').

4.3.2.3 Understanding the role of storytelling

Interviewee 'J's use of metaphors as storytelling provides good examples of effective teaching as measured by the use by students of the metaphors in their examination questions. Interviewee 'K' also used a similar metaphor for tackling input and process as part of a lesson on systems analysis. However, 'K' did have doubts about the effectiveness of the learning when five assignments out of a pack of twenty or so assignments focused unduly on the baking metaphor and not on the underlying subject matter which the metaphor was supposed to illustrate. "Maybe I should have taught them a bit more strictly. Maybe they didn't quite get it" (interviewee 'K'). Interviewee 'A' has had similar experiences.

"I've just marked somebody's essay and she's actually done really well, but she's quoted my lectures, she's quoted some of the other things I've said. She's put in everything that I've been talking about regarding a learning organisation. (Laughs) That's an extreme example, but I thought -- when I was reading it, I thought, this sounds familiar and then I realised that she'd obviously -- I'm sure she must have recorded some of the lectures" (Interviewee A).

Survey Group 1 participant SG3 asks, "With regard to the effectiveness of experiential accounts on student learning and development, how might this be best assessed?" Additionally, the same participant asks in response to a request for any ideas for further research to complement this research study, "Speaking to other students? How far across different learning abilities /styles would it be useful teaching tool?" Survey Group 2 participant SG28 reports that during a course teaching English, and teaching a lesson related to storytelling on the subject of vocabulary related to consciousness, and with

the use of effective teaching aids – “the class as a whole seemed to get it all together – it was great to see” (SG28). Interviewee ‘C’ includes – “... then you give a real-life business example; then you've got that credibility again and you've got that element of interest“. A typical comment from among the survey group participant contributions is that storytelling gets people more involved – more interested – it transcends the subject (SG2).

4.3.3 Finding 3 - Storytelling can be powerful

Storytelling in itself is powerful in very general terms but can be particularly so when used to maximum effect in teaching and learning in higher education. Interviewee ‘J’ draws on teaching experience for his stories and remarked that “those are the things that they, the students, find really powerful”. Interviewee ‘G’ considers that “stories are very powerful for explaining things, not just enlivening a session”, and as one workshop study group delegate put it, “Storytelling is a powerful teaching tool. Some of the memorable learning that I have experienced were due to the teacher giving personal and real-life accounts of theories or concepts” (SG66). This was a useful piece of evidence provided by a current teacher thinking back to their own days as a student, a theme that became an important issue during phase 2 of the primary research, the five survey groups. The power is reinforced by the previous allusions to this in the Literature Review. The word association exercise in each survey group demonstrated how “One word says so much! The power let loose is astonishing” (Fairfax and Moat, 1981, 9).

Attributes of the Power of Storytelling

Real Life and Reality

Coping with Diversity

Motivation to learn

Figure 7-Attributes of the Power of Storytelling

4.3.3.1

Real life and reality

The evidence for this finding was first identified at the very beginning of the primary research and continued through the remainder of the primary research. This link was the very first piece of evidence that contributed to the identification of what became Finding No. 7. The FE students demonstrated that they very much appreciated 'real problems' and 'realistic subject'. Subsequent evidence from the survey groups provided examples such as: live practice, films based on true stories, and case studies. One participant among others in survey group No. 2, provided further evidence in the form of telling "short true stories, anecdotes, that had happened to me, friends, family, others" (SG18). This finding linking to the real world was supported also by evidence from the interviews indicating that storytelling needs to be based preferably on personal real-world experiences rather than artificial case studies. Interviewee 'B', on reflection, did admit that he used storytelling, but without recognising it as such. 'B' made extensive use of examples from previous experience; "I try to make it a bit more real to people as well."

Interviewee D had the opinion that relevancy came through stories about the real world; "Let's not encourage learning for its own sake. I hope they remember the message not just the story." Adams and Buetow (2014) acknowledge that students have difficulty relating theory to practice as applied in the real world. Interviewee I referred to a body of literature on the translation of theory into practice; practice being a useful cue for reality; from basic texts such as Newton (1992) to Schneider (2015). It is also possible to consider the reverse, in that practice can inform theory. Speaking of the development of nursing research over the last 20 years, Rolfe (2016) has the opinion that "Nursing knowledge, such as it was, was based largely on anecdote rather than evidence" (517) and that more specific research to provide evidence would enable "a return to scholarship". This PhD research, based on Grounded Theory methodology, is following the track of practice into theory rather than theory into practice. Yet storytelling is an opportunity to provide students with examples of theory being used in practice. This is quite an important finding with substantial literature interest such as Bryan

(2015) and Schneider (2015) on the subject of moving research into dimensions of practice.

Terms such as real and reality were considered important by a number of research participants. Interviewee 'J' presented an inspirational teaching workshop to senior management team and the concept of storytelling featured as part of the discussion; "... inspirational teachers can make things real for students". Interviewee K had noticed that some students are very easily discouraged and demotivated, especially with the unsupportive background that they came from. "So, I aim for confidence building stories in semester 1 and then hit them with a dose of reality in semester 2." Storytelling brings real life into the higher education classroom. In this context real life euphemistically refers to the world outside academe, the world in which students will have to make their way the after graduation. Although this research study deliberately focused on the teaching practitioners, some evidence incidentally provided an indication of the students' point of view of storytelling. The student-based evidence in this research study was provided from two sources. Firstly, while all the research participants were currently teachers, their own past experiences as students came to their minds in association with storytelling. A typical comment was, "As a student, storytelling enabled things to be put into context and enabled me to see relevant links and to develop my understanding of the possibilities and practical spin offs "(SG3). Secondly, as observant teachers, the research participants were aware of their students' behaviour and reactions to teaching approaches such as storytelling.

Interviewee 'I' thinks that "one of the ways that you can translate theory into practice which is what I've been doing a lot in my teaching is through the notion of stories. It's through telling the reality of it and how the theoretical fits with the abstract and fits and supports the reality". 'I' further comments, "And students actually value somebody who has done it and we used to talk about somebody who had been knocking on doors, so that notion of actually you've been a real nurse, you've been a real social worker, so you know what you're talking about, you're not just in an ivory tower of higher education". 'K' considers that some students consider that they live in reality and they will

not like theory. They just think, "What's the point if it doesn't apply in reality?" 'K' thinks that some theories are so abstract that if you don't give people a context of it, then they will not connect with it at all. At the other extreme, "the reason our work-based distance learning students do so well is because they have the application. "

4.3.3.2 Coping with diversity

As a strong supporter of storytelling, both by teacher and student, Interviewee A provides positive evidence in the transcript for supporting storytelling as a teaching approach coping with diversity. "There is a strong value in diversity thread in my teaching" supports the finding that under appropriate circumstances, storytelling can bridge divides between diverse groups within a class. 'A' teaches mature Masters' level classes comprising a mix of mainland and Hong Kong Chinese, Vietnamese, Egyptian, Polish, American, and Malaysian students, all with different approaches to education and all with a multiplicity of different stories to tell.

Interviewee D's first comments were on the diversity experienced between two teaching scenarios, the armed forces and higher education. The main differences were in terms of discipline, long term focus of students, self-motivation and timekeeping. In the more recent role, 'D' realised that a priority in the latter role is to "win over the clientele" as their self-discipline, long term focus, self-motivation and timekeeping were seriously in default in sharp contrast to the commitment displayed by armed forces students and trainees whom 'D' taught before transferring to higher education. The phrase "win over clientele" is practised in terms of building a relationship of trust and credibility, making yourself as well as the course relevant to them and making the students interested in what you are delivering. It's all about getting them to want to learn so that they will go and read for themselves. The theme of diversity here is not in term of race, nationality, or religion but in terms of an employment culture. This diversity of culture emanated not only from the armed forces but also, and as exemplified by other interviewees, the prison service and NHS which contrasted with the world of higher education, certainly in term of the students' motivation, and with a link to Finding 7.

4.3.3.3 Student storytelling

Interviewee C had much to say on the subject of the effectiveness of storytelling expressing the opinion that it helps to “do a selling job” in persuading students to “buy into” a lesson, or subject. In a similar vein, D realised that a priority in the latter higher education role was to “win over the clientele”. C introduced a concern that the relative ages between the teacher and students had an impact on the storytelling scenario; “Storytelling provides validity to the teaching, especially where the teacher may be younger than class members as in part-time night classes for mature students. The teacher’s qualifications and experience help to establish rapport, earn respect and credibility and a sense of identity, as well as generate memories and interest.” All these attributes provide a basis for student motivation.

Interviewee K’s teaching experience included off-campus teaching, and this has highlighted a different attitude to teaching and learning and particularly to storytelling. This detailed and very animated section of the interview transcript described how a particular catchment of students from off-campus came with pre-conceived notions. Generations of their families had only known unemployment. Members of their families who did work were employed at the operator level. When K talked to them about motivation, they found the thinking different and so storytelling has to be oriented to connect with what happened in their day-to-day lives. A lot of such students were often also full-time carers of their parents or may have been parents themselves. Storytelling can be usefully directed towards helping such students develop their coping, inter-personal, social and professional skills. This would be a challenge in itself for the teacher who is also trying to help the students understand the taught subject matter.

In the fourth workshop survey group a new topic did dominate discussion in that student storytelling has a role to play in enabling students to put their own learning, albeit relatively limited, into a real-life context of their own experience. Interviewee J considered that “... you can almost always guarantee that somebody else will then have a story that's very similar that

they will then want to share with the group. One of the things that the group said they like about the sessions most is that they learn from each other. They motivate each other by sharing their experiences and by sharing their practices." Interviewee K found that mature students, master's level students or student apprentices who "have that life experience" are keen to share their own stories. In K's case these students come from disciplines such as computing, engineering, systems analysis and design, or beauty and hairdressing; most of whom are already in employment as apprentices in early stages of a career.

4.4 - Research Question 2

The second research question was to consider whether a storytelling approach might be more appropriate to certain discipline subjects than others. Findings numbered 4 and 5 provided insightful responses to this question.

4.4.1 Finding 4 – As storytellers, research participants' draw on their own experiences.

The teachers who participated in this research came from a wide range of disciplines and indicated that they had a wide range of whole life and professional experiences which enabled the teachers' storytelling approach to be appropriate whatever the taught discipline. The research study deliberately drew research participants from a range of teaching disciplines in an effort to acquire research material and thence data which intended to answer this research question. Finding No. 4 provides an underlying response to this question in that the discipline in which the teaching takes place is of secondary importance when it comes to the teachers' ability to use a storytelling approach. The analytical outcome of the research study indicates that the storytelling approach depends more on the attitude and capabilities of the teacher than the subject discipline being taught. Two pre-requisites that presage this ability were identified in Finding 1 and are corroborated here in Finding 4 in a different context. The first pre-requisite is the teacher's confidence to establish rapport with students together with a

professional approach to use storytelling affectively and effectively. The second pre-requisite is a breadth of experience not only in the practice of the taught subject but also in other subjects and just as importantly in life generally. This reflects maturity which is not necessarily age-related. This latter pre-requisite also contributes towards the attainment of the former pre-requisite. Evidence thus far in this section comprises a mix of contributions from the 93 participants in the phase two workshop survey groups who described experience of storytelling in 75 different teaching disciplines. 12 delegates taught education as a subject discipline in one form or another. Including the 37 duplicate mentions of disciplines, the number of disciplines totals 112 subjects altogether. 17 of the 95 delegates taught more than one subject discipline. Such teachers therefore also possessed that much more by way of resources for their storytelling. In order to provide a more focused view of this Finding, this purview will concentrate on evidence provided by the eleven interviewees.

The participants in the interviews that comprised phase 3 of the primary research were all practitioners with a variety of previous experiences, some of which came as a bit of a surprise to the researcher. The following brief pen portraits of each interviewee give an indication of the range of backgrounds available as sources of stories which the participants could use to enhance their teaching. Note again that in order to maintain confidentiality, interviewees are allocated identities corresponding with the NATO phonetic alphabet, 'A'-Alpha, 'B'-Bravo, 'C'-Charlie, 'D'-Delta, etc. The phonetic alphabet was applied to interviewees in chronological order of sequence of interviews and allocations are not gender specific. Links back to the interviewees' original names are incorporated in password protected files which register the transition between recording and transcript. To keep the thesis text readable, interviewees will be referred to only by the initial letter in inverted commas as 'A', 'B', 'C', etc.

The theme behind this finding requires an appreciation of the range of experiences of the interviewees to understand such experiences as a driver for storytelling and in respect of interviewees' ability to use experiences as sources of storytelling. Interviewee A was an HR specialist with previous

experience with youth support services, education and cultural services, corporate learning and development, as well as leadership and management development. Interviewee B has experience of project management in a UK publicly funded service organisation and a variety of teaching experience in higher education. Interviewee C has experience in business, data management, software development, and teaching in various institutional environments. Interviewee D served for several years in the armed forces before moving into higher education and has recently completed a PhD. Interviewee E's background is in psychology later gaining a PGCE and a doctorate. Interviewee F had 28 years in the armed forces before moving into Higher Education in a role that is mainly training HE staff rather than teaching undergraduate or postgraduate students. Interviewee G's route into Higher Education was via Further Education which provided an early introduction to a variety of student types including prison educators, community workers and armed forces instructors. Interviewee H has an ambition to get students more involved in the development of the University. Interviewee I's route into Higher Education came via a career in nursing and social work. Interviewee J's route into higher education came via midwifery, psychology, and public health in both a dental school and a general medical school where teaching research methods became part of the PhD role. At the time of the interview, J was teaching on the PGCE and supporting postgraduate supervisors and postgraduate student teachers. Interviewee K came into higher education via a computing degree, a business degree and part time qualifications such as NEBOSH, as well as with some experience in quality control. mental health counselling in teaching health and social care, teaching beauty and hairdressing. At the time of the interview K taught a range of subjects mainly study skills including project management and ICT.

All of these research participants have a substantial range of experiences, training and qualifications. As such they also have some experience of what it is like to be a student and bring to their teaching an ambition to learn from both the best of their former teachers and resolve to do better than those whom they could remember could have been more effective. Jupp (2006) asserts that,

"Some disciplines are only concerned with finding out whether there is a relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable (s) and the nature of that relationship" (84).

In this research the independent variable is the act of storytelling by the teacher, and the dependent variable is the effect on the quality of teaching that results from the storytelling. The nature of that relationship is expressed, as far as this research project is concerned, in terms of the relationship between the primary and secondary research findings and the research questions.

Interviewee C considered that by the nature of the subject, business had to be related to real-life business knowledge and business cases. This comment related to two related findings. The first finding is that storytelling helps teaching and learning to relate to what is perceived as the real world outside academe. The second finding suggests that storytelling is particularly useful to the teaching of business management. C has experience of teaching finance which is not necessarily solely about numbers as one story is told of bad cash flow management and the repercussions on both employer and employees and their families. Storytelling's usefulness in two such teaching disciplines demonstrates the inter-disciplinarity of storytelling as a teaching and learning approach. Cross fertilisation of findings by particular pieces of evidence could be considered to be a typical characteristic of this type of grounded theory research. On this subject, the literature review suggested that science as a teaching discipline does not lend itself to storytelling to the same extent as some subjects, a view which relates to the concern over inter-disciplinarity of storytelling. C's experience with storytelling supporting the teaching of finance extended to C's previous experience of teaching science. Storytelling linked to experiments in science focused on the social impact of the outcome of the experiment, or the usefulness of the experiment in terms of the practical applications of the experimental method. This could be regarded as an example of how a finding from one source of evidence provides support to another source. Interviewee I is worth quoting; "Students actually value somebody who has done it; you've been a real nurse, you've been a real social worker, so you know

what you are talking about." Students are often fascinated by those sorts of stories from the real world. It is noteworthy that this concept of the 'real world' crops up in this transcript providing further support for the appropriate theme. Storytelling featured in the discussions when J presented a recent 'Inspirational Teaching' workshop to a senior management team. The discussion focused generally on how teachers can make things real for students. Reality is a concern among those students who are thinking about their future after graduation. J considered that students "like to hear about teachers' own experiences because it helps them to contextualise what they are learning and think about how it might apply in the future for them in a working environment." J drew on healthcare placement experience a lot of times when talking to students. Clinical experience is invaluable because that is the real world, being in a situation with a patient, together with work in a complex team in life and death situations.

'I' changed professions and recognised that it was possible to become too distanced from the previous professional practice and that personal stories were becoming too dated. Practice in any professional area moves very quickly and 'I' felt that the teaching was suffering because of the lack of more the recent context.

"I can read as much as I like, and I can be up to date with research and all of that, but that sense of the reality of knocking on the doors, of actually doing it, you can't get that without doing it". 'I' moves on with, "but now I can do doctoral supervision, and I can talk about my experience about being a doctoral student and my experience with other doctoral students that's very current. So that feels very real and current, you know, relevant. That's another word, isn't it? and also, any teaching that I do, for example, in the PGCE or we're going to be having a master's programme on that master's program is current and relevant" (Interviewee 'I').

Interviewee J supported the idea that a teacher's approach to teaching changed over time from a focus on the course content to a focus on what you want the students to learn

4.4.2 Finding 5 - Storytelling exists in different disciplines

Rather than list all the disciplines where examples of storytelling that appeared in the research material, certain overall inter-disciplinarity themes are worth highlighting. In response to a simple survey question, the FE HNC/HND students used the word 'Learn' most frequently at eight times in various forms including 'learner', and 'learning'. One FE student suggested that case studies are a good learning curve. As a result of the amalgamation of issues in the third survey group, an important finding emerged as best entitled by one of the delegates; the "inter-disciplinarity of storytelling as a teaching and learning practice" (SG22). This item of evidence contributed towards this most profound of the findings to emanate from both the secondary (literature review) and primary research. The inter-disciplinarity of storytelling is demonstrated first of all by the range of disciplines and experiences displayed by the eleven research participants in the phase 3 of the primary research.

Interviewee C expressed concern over two teaching situations. Firstly, some classes included students who are following different courses but who came together for a common core subject. Some courses required different subject disciplines to cooperate in the production of cross curricula degrees such as Education with Art, English, Mathematics or Music (University of Reading, 2018). Choosing appropriate examples for a storytelling-based teaching approach could be a challenge if the storytelling tried to cover the full gamut of subjects. The most appropriate tactic was to make the storytelling specific to the taught subject and to ensure the story was based on the teacher's own personal experience to provide authenticity and credibility. Secondly, C spoke of the "international classroom" which comprised "an array of students from different countries who may not culturally relate to your storytelling". In this circumstance, it was necessary to pre-plan storytelling and not just rely on spontaneity. In terms of practice, Storytelling could bridge divides between

diverse groups within a class as long as care was taken beforehand to ensure the story was worthwhile and pertained to the taught subject matter. Interviewee J reported that "listening skills were one of the big things that we worked on with medical students because they didn't listen, they didn't listen to their patients". This relates to the report by Johns (2006) who commented on the relative merits of research material based on narratives rather than restrictive questionnaires.

A different perspective of this subject was introduced by Interviewee G, in that teaching as a member of an inter-disciplinary team introduced complications in that certain teaching styles had to be balanced with the teaching approaches and different disciplines of fellow team members. G certainly had a concern in that where a course was being shared, there was less control. This is a new sub-finding which, according to student feedback to G, was working effectively most of the time in that there were no obvious conflicts in approaches such as storytelling and there was some obvious teaching consensus within the teaching team. A useful phrase was used to describe the scenario whereby teaching team members learned from one another and not just from the students; "collegial learning" seemed an appropriate title for such an arrangement. The advantage expressed by some students to K is that students get different things from different teachers. K' had used storytelling while teaching a range of disciplines such as ICT, Hairdressing and Engineering. With regard to the ICT Computing students, K considered that you could tell them quite humorous stories and yet still get the message across. The hairdressing students would be business-based students and the engineering students would be already in employment and this workplace background meant that both groups of students were able to maintain focus on the subject being taught and keep the storytelling in perspective.

4.5 - Research Question 3

Research question 3, the subsidiary third research question, required to establish whether, in parallel with the previously described consideration of different discipline subjects, the personal life experiences of the teacher

influenced their understanding of and attitude towards the use of storytelling as a teaching approach, as well as acting as a source of stories.

4.5.1 Finding 6 - Practitioners perceive storytelling in different ways

Not all teaching practitioners readily perceive a role for storytelling in teaching and learning in higher education. 36 Research participants in Survey groups 3 and 4 were invited to write down on the feedback form the first word that came to mind on hearing the word "storytelling". Six participants from across the two survey groups (SG) provided answers suggesting that memories from childhood, which became a data sub-category, played a major part in their initial perception of storytelling. Other relevant answers were: - fairy tales (SG37, SG66), Jackanory (SG39 and SG41), Blyton (SG43), children (SG54). SG41 also noted "childhood" and SG54 also noted 'My son's bedtime'. SG57's first noted associated word was 'kids' but then added "Interaction, Listening, Because I told stories to my kids from books, but because I also reminisce and tell them stories about me, and me now, and I listen to their stories about themselves". This was an indication how storytelling develops with the maturity of the storyteller and the listeners. As well as noting "fairy tale", SG66 also noted, "I associate storytelling with being young and young children enjoy fairy tales". Memories of storytelling are shown to extend back to childhood which suggests that long term memory is a significant factor, or one of several significant factors influencing the recall ability of research participants. Other responses to the word association exercises are reported with a different focus other than memory under Finding 1.3-the Power of Storytelling. The other 30 participants responded with word associations in two main categories. The first category comprised synonyms for storytelling such as narrative, tale, anecdote, account, paper, essay and metaphor. The second category comprised formats of stories such as book, written, case study, bank for information, film, recording, verbalised, document, play, photographic, lecture (which turned out to be a story), and demonstration. These latter are all formats in which stories can be told and provide a few examples of the relevance of storytelling as a means of enhancing the teaching and learning

process, which is a specific form of communication in which storytelling features as an important mode.

It is a significant observation that no survey group delegates initially associated storytelling with any aspect of teaching and learning, whether in higher education or otherwise. The finding from this exercise would suggest that more enlightenment would be an early requirement if storytelling was to be appreciated as a recognisable teaching and learning approach in education generally, as well as in higher education. However, the enlightenment seemed to have been appreciated quite quickly as the workshops' discussions and exercises progressed. Rather more positive perceptions were expressed as responses by the time the fourth and last of the workshop exercises were implemented. Positive perceptions noted later in the workshop included, "Storytelling can help students visualise ideas and concepts; can put a different spin on things; can make things seem more approachable for students; should be fun!!!" (SG37); "Storytelling is a powerful teaching tool. Some of the memorable learning that I have experienced were due to the teacher giving personal and real-life accounts of theories or concepts." (SG66); "Storytelling allows us to illustrate fact through fiction, as all fiction contains elements of the unique and particular which can be worked up into the general and universal." (SG39); "As a tutor in social policy, I find myself using storytelling when covering historical development of government policies, ... I also find that my lecture on the historical development of UK state schools involves taking on a similar story-teller role". (SG41); "I try to use examples and images which students will understand. Visual storytelling is a powerful tool-people remember images, humour and empathy are vital." (SG43); "Storytelling is in my teaching-to make a point based on historical events ..." (SG54). Many of these themes impact on other findings to follow. Some teaching practitioners do use storytelling but do not recognise it as such. Interviewee 'B' instinctively uses storytelling without being consciously aware of storytelling as a teaching approach. Indeed, 'B' did comment, "I think I'd struggle if I had to make up a story, although I now realise, I do tell them without really planning to do so".

A particular feature of storytelling that impacts on the effectiveness of storytelling was a subject initiated during the discussion with interviewee 'B'; viz. the finding that it was possible to embed teaching within storytelling which could be considered as a corollary to embedding storytelling in teaching; the approach followed generally as described above. In discussion, it was agreed with interviewee 'B' that the approach was in effect that of embedding teaching within storytelling. The interviewee's response was, "Yes, but I've never thought of it as that". As an example, 'B', being a somewhat accomplished amateur athlete, described how, at the start of a lesson, a class was introduced to experiences in the process of training and running a marathon. The elements of the process were then developed as a metaphor for writing an essay; how to start, how to persevere, and how to finish. This resulted in very positive feedback especially from those students who could empathise as they themselves indulged in some form of athletic or keep fit activity. "Sometimes it is not until a lesson is completed that the students realise in discussion that they have effectively received a lesson in story form." 'B' also noted an event which is also reported elsewhere in this thesis; "they had recalled some of those stories within their essays, which was lovely." Such an approach pointed up the suspected observation that this was indeed an area that needed some further research and publicity; both of which could make a contribution to the quality and effectiveness of this particular approach to higher education.

Interviewee 'C' discussed storytelling in terms of students or listeners getting involved in the story, so they could change the ending of the story, and thus discuss various alternative outcomes. This approach enabled the students to appreciate that there is often no one definitive answer to a question. 'C' admitted that the idea came from a televised sports quiz programme entitled "What happened next?", in which films were stopped or paused at critical moments in an event to enable viewers to discuss alternative sequences. This could be regarded as a different way of storytelling. Interviewee 'A' expressed a similar opinion with, "... you tell half a story and then you say well, if you were in that situation, what would you do?"

Interviewee 'D' admitted that storytelling featured strongly in teaching style but was not aware of it as such until it was introduced to him during our discussion. Interviewee 'F' described in some detail a typical armed force training scenario which started with the trainees being told a story about a training scenario that went seriously wrong. During exercises some months later, it took some trainees a while to recognise that they were enacting the same scenario as described in the introductory story. This ability to recognise it was another relevant piece of evidence. "We are not just telling them a story; we are making them experience it." This was a teaching approach that deeply embedded the story into the teaching, learning, or training activity. This finding is supported by interviewee 'H' who considered that, "an effective story would be one that involves the students somehow, whether that's implicitly in their own minds and they're thinking it through for themselves, or more explicitly as part of some sort of structured activity, so that the students cannot just know that story but understand it and learn from it and use it."

'J's storytelling was incorporated into teaching in a very structured way having learnt from previous experience as a student which led to wondering at times about the relevance of particular lectures to the course. 'J's introductory remarks and conclusions always related the lecture topic to the course, and often incorporated a story in order to provide continuity or a link to the outside real world and help to contextualise the subject matter. A certain amount of teaching is pre-planned.

"I've got a lot good feedback on the way I explain things and make complex things understandable. I'm very careful about planning and ensuring that I go into a session with a well-structured framework for what I'm going to deliver. I've always been very conscious of needing to make the aims of the session and the structure of that session very clear to students, so they know where they're going throughout the session. and endings as well, I've always been quite careful with the way you wrap a session up. I've always been a little bit of an experimenter in the classroom and I do that more now than I ever have. But I like to try different

ways of doing things and I always try and make sure that I explain things really clearly" ('J').

Time as a sub-category of memory was further developed here in the context of how storytelling was used in different ways by teachers. Time as a sub-category is often inextricably linked with story as in the phrase story-time, a phrase that cropped up in the interview transcripts. 'A' stated that, "I don't like to waste time -- I do read a lot of fiction as well as non-fiction", and "I always make a story out of whatever I'm teaching". 'B' introduced the idea of a time interval to give students time for an idea in a story to sink in. What they don't realise at the time is that the story will be linked later in the lesson to the theory, and in fact some of them may already cotton on to this connection. 'B' remembered at a seminar that a moment of understanding came towards the end when it wasn't so much a light bulb moment as phased realisation. 'B' also included reference to time in phasing in a story over a series of lessons to whet the students' interest and then wait a suitable opportunity such as when one of the students might provide an appropriate opening through which the story could be unfolded. Rohrer (2015) also refers. Interviewee 'I' emphasised the point that with regards to storytelling, it's got to be measured and right. It's got to be at the right time, and adds, that it is important to be able to have the emotional intelligence, the sense, the ability to read the class to know when a particular moment in a lesson has become in fact the right time.

'I' used a mix of storytelling approaches. Sometimes the storytelling is off-the-cuff or ad hoc if the situation demands it. At other times the storytelling is planned ahead as a more effective way of devising a lesson.

"I would say most of the time for me it's been more ad hoc. and it's possibly been when I've been searching in my head for a way - - another way of explaining a difficult concept to use it as a kind of example. Look, this is how it happens in practice, this is what happens in reality. I'm less likely to have actually planned it into a formal structure; when the students' eyes glazed over I needed a way of being able to give something that said, you know, this is

relevant, this is real and this is why ... and ... well, you made me start thinking. Certainly, the stories that I had from my own research I know I have actually planned in, so thinking that through -- because I can think of the slides that I used to give an example. This was a session on research methods where I definitely used examples from my own research to try and explain the difference between qualitative and quantitative work and how this looked in a particular study and how someone else had done a similar study in a different way " (Interviewee 'I').

In summary, experienced teaching practitioners perceive storytelling in a variety of ways depending on a number of factors. These factors include not only the subject being taught but also the teaching circumstances, the constitution of the class, and most significantly the timing and mood of the class.

4.5.2 Finding 7- Storytellers use a range of sources

In an effort to identify the characteristics of memorable learning experiences, delegates were provided with opportunities in both the survey groups and interviews to describe their learning experiences both in general terms and also in terms of what circumstances might have contributed to that learning attainment. A sub-category of data that became apparent as the circumstances were analysed was that communication in one form or another was a dominant factor. Synonyms for communication and forms of communication predominated, and of the 93 delegates at the survey groups, all described the circumstances of learning experiences, including light bulb moments, as supporting communication as a meaningful overall theme for teaching and storytelling. The communication theme was continued in terms of teachers making that experience relevant to the subject being taught. This was implicitly linked to conveying to the students the teacher's interest in and enthusiasm for the subject. The choice of sources for storytelling relate to a need to enhance the communication between teacher and students. ER5 was turned from being bored to being interested in law by a new teacher who

was able to communicate the subject in a way that “made law really interesting by telling legal cases like stories”.

Interviewee ‘G’ has a view in that, if you’re taking the experiential approach to learning, it’s about very much opening it up for everybody to have their say while ensuring that you’ve always got a story in every single session. It’s a very human thing telling stories. ‘G’ observed that visiting speakers providing one-off talks based on their often life-time experiences can be seen to be effectively recounting narratives of those experiences and lessons learned; all usually applied appropriately and directly to the subject matter. The storytelling takes place almost subconsciously in many cases. Speakers are sometimes surprised at the end of the event to be congratulated on their use of previous experiences and skill with using storytelling to communicate their message across to the audience. Observation of other teachers was stated as a learning opportunity by interviewee ‘G’ having seen storytelling in all the best lectures and all the best seminars.

‘H’'s previous research found that “Students are very focused, very engaged and indeed very passionate that teaching should have a research and experience-based approach to teaching.” This statement supported the recommendation that research from the students’ viewpoint could support further investigation of the storytelling approach. Interviewee ‘H’ quoted two examples of lecturers who drew on extensive career experience.

“I had a lecturer who spent 25 years in the civil service, quite a senior level, dealing with different politicians; and his stories gave a) a fascinating interest into how government works but b), more importantly, how to deal with things being kind of thrown at you, how to deal with different people. I had another senior lecturer who was a director of communications for government and then part of the NHS. He was teaching us crisis communications, which in those two organisations included local government authorities that have schools in it, public health, crisis was a regular thing.”

'I' taught a module entitled Knowledge Informed Practice. Students found the course incredibly difficult on their own without any experiential experience to draw on. They did make progress when 'I' enhanced the communication process by feeding them examples from 'I's own portfolio of stories. Each story was developed along the lines of feelings, and the differences it made to the teacher who experienced the event that formed the basis of the story. The students remarked that 'I' was clearly passionate about it. 'I's students have on other occasions asked 'I' to speak more slowly and not to get so excited, although the displayed enthusiasm certainly enlivened the class. Stories have to be measured and right. That is where emotional intelligence comes into its own; the ability to read a class and to know when that's the right time (Rohrer, 2015) to do it, i.e. to introduce storytelling in one form or another.

Interviewee 'H' strikes a good compromise in saying that one would hope that the story being told is always a genuine version of events; and whilst it may not be entirely made up, it is probably usually a hybrid of the two with some element of real life experience and some element of making it more interesting and engaging. Feedback from this study's survey groups (SG) is similar. "Storytelling is a powerful teaching tool. Some of the memorable learning that I have experienced were due to the teacher giving personal and real-life accounts of theories or concepts." (SG66). 'J' considers that inspirational teachers tend to draw on their own personal stories of either their journey through higher education or their experience in industry or in the workplace. Students like to hear such personal stories because it helps them to contextualise what they're learning and apply it or think about how it might apply in the future for them in a working environment. 'J' thinks that you can use both fact and fiction, depending on what you're using it for.

"I think the fact ones, the ones that are based on your experience are the ones that just come out of your mouth when you're explaining things to students or a student says something, and you go, oh I remember when that happened to me. Or the very instinctive, I think the fiction-based storytelling tends to be a little bit more planned because you have to think about how does that

story actually links to what we're doing here and how can I use it to illustrate what I want to do? (Interviewee 'J').

Interviewee 'A' described a process for gaining student feedback.

"I do evaluation forms at the end of the first term even if I'm teaching that subject for term two because it enables me to adapt if I'm not doing things in a way that the students find effective. The feedback that I've always had in writing as well as being reported that is about being a really good lecturer who makes it come alive with lots of experience in the HR field and the management field and brought into the lectures. I just leave it to the students, really to say what they think. and I don't take any pleasure from colleagues not getting the same feedback. I'd like them all to be the same standard" (Interviewee 'A').

'A' spoke slowly and thoughtfully, according to the transcript notes when commenting on feedback from both part-time and full-time students expressing concerns about some of the other lecturers and their lecturing styles. The tenor of the feedback suggests that they don't have the experience, or they don't tell about their own experience, their stories. It's really boring, they just read from the slide.

In summary, teachers in further and higher education use different sources depending on the subject being taught and the teaching mode, whether seminar or lecture. While personal experience provides the most authentic sources, both factual and fictional stories can be justified if the circumstances warrant.

4.6 - Some cautionary findings.

During the primary research, a number of findings of a cautionary nature emerged suggesting that storytelling as a teaching approach requires some thought and planning before implementation. Such concerns became apparent early in the research study (Appendix 3) in that one of the FE

students suggested that the use of a case study as a form of storytelling might be outside the "comfort zone for students" (FE7). Delegates at the study groups were sufficiently aware to indicate that there were 10 types of dangers and pitfalls where storytelling was concerned as a teaching approach.

Getting too personal was the view expressed by SG5;

Self-indulgence – 'Here we go again' by SG1, SG4 and SG5;

Story not being relevant to taught subject by SG3;

Not engaging with students by SG3;

Students not understanding by SG3;

Struggle to put story into context by SG3;

Humour causing offence by SG1 and SG4;

Fitting stories into framework by SG4;

Judgemental – experience (or the telling of) incorporates our inbuilt prejudices, unbeknown to us, by SG5.

Survey Group delegate SG65 expressed concern that the international demographic of students highlighted cultural variations in the definitions of terms, for example, when defining leisure.

Interviewees also provided some cautionary advice. Storytellers need to ensure that the storytelling is appropriate to the teaching and learning objectives of the curriculum. As interviewee 'C' advises, the appropriateness of storytelling depends on people's attitude and perceptions and even their mood on the day. There could also be a danger that too much time might be spent on the storytelling itself and not enough on interpretive and supportive discussion. 'G' believes that, with regard to getting students' attention, sometimes it's difficult for example, in a lab or a workshop where people are engaging in tasks which are set down and they're following a protocol; getting their attention might be an issue. Interviewee 'B' realises as well how short people's attention span can be. After more than 10 or 15 minutes of being told something, boredom and distractions can take effect. Where differing international cultures are concerned, stories might prove effective in an internationally mixed class. 'D' pointed out some of the difficulties that might be experienced in that respect. A class of Chinese students would not relate

to a story about Yodel, the delivery company, or James Dyson, the inventor. A story from Chinese history might be considered to be of interest to a class formed predominately of Chinese students, but the reality is that mainland Chinese come to UK higher education with a completely different mindset to Hong Kong Chinese. Interviewee 'A' pointed out that a further issue with Chinese students in that their previous education basically comprised giving the students answers to questions. According to interviewee 'A', we are teaching mainland Chinese students to be independent thinkers and lifelong learners whereas they come from a culture in which individualism and thinking for yourself is actually discouraged. Chinese students do not see the point of stories and do not readily participate in class discussions. Asking questions in front of fellow students is regarded as an embarrassment by Chinese students.

In certain circumstances, humour seems to work well, as appreciated by an attendee at the PhD in Five Minutes (FM) event who commented that the subject became interesting and relevant when outlining the subject and good use of humour. (Research participant reference FM2). However, some research participants expressed concern that humour can be misplaced and can distort the storytelling message. Delegates in the survey groups noted their concerns that use of humour could be a danger or pitfall within storytelling, adding that humour could cause offence. Interviewee 'D' considered that humour helps students remember although 'D' did also acknowledge that some people's humour can be another person's puzzle or even insult. Interviewee 'F' suggests that storytelling can provide entertainment to alleviate a boring subject or awkward situation, but the teacher must be careful to get back on track as soon as possible.

Among the delegates who contributed to the survey groups, delegate (SG52) entered 'mumbo jumbo' in a Word Association Exercise and had a rather unappreciative view of the positive attributes of storytelling. An entry against a later exercise stated a view that storytelling should be kept to a minimum as it acts as a digression from learning" (SG52). Similarly, the context of a story may well be lost on those students not familiar with the subject matter. Not many students from outside UK will have heard of James Dyson, but

Chernobyl and Fukushima are two global examples of storytelling subjects that are more likely to have meaning to a class of international students (SG52). Considering these two examples further, stories need not always have a successful ending; failures help the understanding of theories as much as the understanding of successful outcomes.

A number of interviewees expressed concern that teaching as part of a team can introduce challenges of its own in terms of ensuring that the teaching approaches of the team members are consistent. One advantage of such an arrangement is that the teachers have an opportunity to learn from each other's approaches as well as to acquire ideas for storytelling with which to broaden their own scope of sources of stories. Interviewee 'E' experienced lack of interest in his higher education work among family and friends probably because he is the only members of those groups to have gone to university. He would like to encourage younger members of those groups to consider university, but such moves seem to be not in their culture. Interviewee 'G' also suggested "that there are ethical issues that you have to be careful to consider, more so than in the general teaching and learning scenario of straightforward lecture or seminar".

In summary, storytelling has many attributes that encourage its use as an approach which can enhance various aspects of the teaching learning process. However, as pointed out by research participants in all three phases of the research study, storytelling has to be applied with imagination and discretion.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS and REFLECTIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

This research study affirms that the quality of teaching and learning in higher education is enhanced when teachers draw on their own professional experience to augment their teaching; in other words, who have lived the story. While there are some limitations to the scope of this research and the resultant findings, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that this affirmation is worthy of promotion as a teaching approach.

“The aim of formative evaluation is to provide descriptive and judgmental information, leading to refinement, improvement, alterations, and/or modification in the evaluand, while the aim of summative evaluation is to determine its impacts, outcomes, or results” (Lincoln and Guba, 1986, 550)

The conclusion as expressed above is the first of six conclusions and derives from a summative evaluation of the research study in itself. Regarding the research study as part of a wider research project describes the outcome as formative evaluation; hence the allusion to post-doctoral research arising from this initial foray into the world of teachers’ storytelling in higher education.

The second conclusion is that storytelling is practised by many teachers in higher education, but it is not recognised by those same teachers as a specific approach. It may be more regarded as a teaching style. The third conclusion is that storytelling has the potential to be both affective and effective. The fourth conclusion is that storytelling has a series of affects of attention, memory, interest, and understanding. The fifth conclusion is that storytelling, if implemented well, has a series of longer-term effects such as linking the theoretical teaching to learning about real life.

The sixth conclusion is that although storytelling is used in varying degrees in higher education, it has not yet been recognised as an approach worthy of

research hitherto. Gaps in the literature review and enthusiastic interest by research participants suggest that this omission needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

A common theme in all these conclusions is that, after due consideration, storytelling does have positive features which will enable teachers to cope with a number of increasingly important issues arising in higher education. Students increasingly perceive themselves as paying customers and expect value for money in terms of a quality education. This means being equipped on graduation with the knowledge necessary to enable them to develop a career in the real world. Stories of the real world need to feature in the teacher's armoury, especially stories based on the teacher's own experience outside the classroom in the alternative 'real world'. As Fallows and Ahmet (1999) put it, "Learners are always inspired by examples of how (abstract) principles are applied in real life by real people in real situations" (173). As far as, for example, PGCE tutors are concerned, the classroom itself is an appropriate 'real world' in which to gain relevant experience from which to derive teaching stories. Students can tell from the teacher's involvement whether their stories come from genuine personal first-hand experience. The links between practice and theory can be further established by the students' part-time jobs, a year out, a period as an intern, or by meaningful stories told by practitioners who have been there, seen it, done it and lived the story.

5.1.1 Contribution to Knowledge

The contribution to knowledge is in the field of higher education, and more particularly in the specific andragogical teaching and learning interface between teacher and student. The originality for this research study stemmed from the initial observation of an "I remember when ..." momentary perspective. The research subject matter itself has an element of originality as suggested by Edwards, S. (2014) that story has originality in itself, over and above theory, assessment and reflection. Originality also stems from the teacher-centred focus of the research. While the teacher-centred focus and the student-centred focus are two complementary and equally important contributors to the overall teaching and learning dynamic within higher

education, yet the previous research and much of the current research focuses on student-centred learning. Even the previously cited Strayhorn (2016) focuses much of his more recent research on student experiences. This research study therefore endeavours to begin at least to close the gap between the teacher-centred focus and the student-centred focus by researching the teachers' viewpoint on one teaching approach that is under the specific control of the teachers, namely teachers drawing on their own professional experience to augment their teaching by including storytelling in their repertoire of teaching approaches. This proved to be something of a deficit in the theoretical knowledge behind higher education. The findings of the research study identified some uncertainty among research participants as they expressed a wide range of views from positive to negative on the subject of storytelling as a teaching approach.

Originality is displayed in the format of the research methodology comprising three research stages which complemented each other, facilitated triangulation of data and findings and implemented a deepening and narrowing of the research subject as the project progressed. Attention is drawn to the originality displayed in the initiative taken to carry out survey a version of survey group research utilising the serendipitous opportunities presented by the availability of elective workshops at a series of education symposia.

Knowledge of any subject comprises the ontology of that subject, and the means of knowing that ontology is the epistemological aspect of that subject. Storytelling's epistemological role in teaching and learning is essentially the route that enables many researchers to initially acquaint themselves with the ontology of a research subject, enable its existence to be better understood and thus in turn build knowledge of that subject. Ontology and epistemology feature at two levels in this research study, bearing in mind that "... an *ontology* is a theory of what exists and how it exists, and an *epistemology* is a related theory of how we can come to know those things ..." (Clough and Nutbrown, 2012, 37). At the overall higher research study level, the conclusions describe the extent to which the research study provided a clearer view of the ontology of teaching approaches. The methodology and

methods provide the epistemological means by which that view of the ontology was attained. At the research subject lower level, the ontology of teachers' storytelling as an educational approach does exist as affirmed by the research participants who, as teachers, affirmed that it is an approach that they practise, and know of and for the most part are keen to understand more. The epistemology by which we have come to know that such a teaching approach exists emanates from the analytical process by which the research material yielded data which in turn provided the findings which answered the research questions. This research study has enabled a better understanding of the relationship between teachers' professional experience and teaching styles in higher education, mainly from the teachers' point of view and, to a lesser extent, from the students' point of view. The latter point of view is recognised as a necessary limitation of the research due to a policy decision to focus on the teacher-centred approach, as well as constraints due to timescale and logistics. In recognition of this limitation, research into students' attitude and reactions to teachers' storytelling would be a logical adjunct to this thesis now that some progress has been made in this thesis towards a better understanding of teachers' perspectives of storytelling.

The answers to the three research questions have provided some enlightenment in three main areas of the research subject. In response to the first question the research has clarified that the storytelling approach supports teaching and learning in higher education from the perspective of both teachers and students. The teachers draw on their own experience to enhance their teaching and gain confidence that their teaching prowess is increased. The students also gain a form of confidence appreciating that their teachers know what they are talking about. This is what makes storytelling important in terms of relating theory and practice through teachers' storytelling. In response to the second research question, the research has clarified that a storytelling approach is appropriate to all of the disciplines represented by the research participants who contributed to all three phases of the research study. Storytelling was originally considered to make a useful contribution in the particular discipline where the research idea germinated, namely business management; but an early research finding was that storytelling was generalisable to other higher education disciplines. This

realisation prompted the re-focus of the research subject and promoted the transfer of the research study to the School of Education from the School of Business. Examples of the relevant range of disciplines come from the secondary literature research and the primary research; survey groups and interviews. References from literature include Economics (McCloskey, 1990), Law (Blissenden, 2007), Nursing and Social Care (Johns, 2006), modern languages, (Peiser and Jones, 2012) and accountancy (Miley, 2009). Examples from the Survey Groups include French (Study group delegate SG2), Metallurgy (SG6), Sociology (SG7), Maths (SG8), and Forensic Science (SG8). Interviewees included 'F' – Management, 'J' – Psychology and Public Health, as well as 'K' – Engineering. It is not unreasonable to conjecture that storytelling from teachers' experience will enhance teaching in all disciplines, subject to corroboration.

The third research question was answered by the general consensus from research participants that the personal life experience of the teachers does influence their understanding of and attitude towards the use of storytelling as a teaching approach. Interviewee 'A' described a wide-ranging career to date and concluded, "... all that different experience I think has stood me in good stead and given me almost like a crash course to teaching and learning in higher education." The same interviewee commented that the feedback from students was positive including comments such as, "... a really good lecturer that ... makes it come alive, ... lots of experience in the HR field and the management field and brings those into the lectures." This is typical of the interviewee commentary that provides a positive answer to the supplement to the third research question. Do practitioners as storytellers consider that students as story-listeners appreciate the genuineness of storytelling based on the teacher's own personal experience especially when that experience is within the area of the specific discipline subject being taught?

5.1.2 Relevance of the Research

While deficits in existing theoretical and practical knowledge of teachers' storytelling in higher education have been identified and used as the basis for

the research study, this research study does align in general terms with traditional higher educational theory, especially that which emphasises the importance of experience in teaching as promoted by Boud et al. (1985), Dewey (2004), James (1948), and Kolb (2015). This research also aligns with more recent current developments in higher educational theory such as the sense of belonging promoted by Strayhorn (2016) which was published within the timespan of the research study reported in this thesis. Strayhorn's support of storytelling itself is demonstrated in that the Introduction to his book (2016) incorporates a series of stories illustrating different aspects of the research approach behind his many previous papers.

As forecast by the Dearing Report (1997), much has been researched on the societal changes taking place in and around higher education, many of which have been impacted by widening participation and inclusivity. The Dearing report was written in 1997 with a 20-year view and here we are 20 years later in 2017. How many of Dearing's ideas and recommendations have been implemented? This research study reflects the ongoing concern concerning the preponderance of student-centred research over teacher-centred research which is reflected in Dearing's comment in Section 8.19 of his report.

"Although there is a substantial body of research about student learning, there has been little follow-up work into how some accepted principles might be translated into new teaching practices across disciplines and professional areas" (Dearing, 1997, 118).

Dearing was also concerned with, among other issues, the need for more imaginative teaching approaches, a concern expressed more recently by Wright (2014) who advocates that higher education should be "free to constantly critique, challenge, include and produce new ways of knowing that are parallel in excellence" (53). It is appropriate that that this storytelling teaching approach is given some prominence at this time as it is pertinent to the societal changes that are taking place in society generally and higher education in particular. Readily available international travel and the influence

of the Internet contribute to globalisation as one of the major influences on current societal changes.

“... universities are not—and perhaps cannot be—insulated from the processes of globalisation, structural economic change, and the pressures of an increasingly competitive economic environment.” (Stilwell, 2003, 52)

Such concerns apply as much to the teaching and learning scenario as the overall organisation and management of institutions of higher education.

A societal change within higher education is the move away from free higher education to what is commonly referred to as the marketisation (Palfreyman and Tapper, 2016) of higher education whereby students pay fees and thus can be regarded as customers of the educational institution. Students seek value for money in a number of ways but most importantly in terms of the quality of the teaching. One measure of this as identified by this research study concerns the ability of teachers to amplify their teaching with stories from their own personal experience.

5.1.3 The Impact of Storytelling

The research study findings both from the literature and from the primary research indicate that teachers' storytelling has an impact on the relationship between teachers and learners. Storytelling engenders a feeling of respect on the part of the students for their teachers. Students become confident that their teachers know what they are talking about. The realisation by students that teachers have relevant professional experience in the subject matter bolsters the teachers' authority to teach in the opinion of students.

Another finding at the level of immediate face-to-face student to teacher interaction is that storytelling adds interest to any teaching scenario. This is one reason why students perk up when they become aware of a hint that there is a story in the offing. Research participants at all three levels of the

research study corroborated the researcher's initial perceived reaction of a first-year engineering class to the teacher's words, "I remember when ..."

5.1.4 Caveats

The findings unearthed five major caveats when it comes to storytelling, the first of which concerns the receptivity of different cultures to storytelling. Students from certain far eastern cultures expect that the role of teachers is to dictate the answers to questions. These students do not have the cultural background to analyse stories and work out the answers for themselves. The educational repercussions of this cultural phenomenon are recognised in that one of the main aims of the Chinese Ministry of Education Basic Education Curriculum Reform guidelines issued in 2001 is to change the previous teaching method from 'imparting' knowledge to 'stimulating' students' interest to learn, according to Jinjin and Yingliang (2016). Storytelling, linking theory with practice, is one of those teaching approaches that may provide that stimulation.

The second caveat enjoins that a teacher's judgement has to strike the balance between too many stories and not enough. We do not want our students to switch off with the reaction, "Oh here he goes again" (SG40).

Thirdly, humour is always a risky area in all walks of life. A joke that is funny in one context is not necessarily funny in another context. Race, colour, gender, age, disability, mood as well as mental and physical condition, can all influence an individual's reaction to a joke whether it is a conventional tale with a punch line, or an off-hand quip. Internationalisation of higher education has had a number of consequences for the teaching and learning process. One of the consequences is that a typical class of higher education students can comprise a mix of nationalities, races, and cultures, many with a non-Western approach in their expectations of higher education. The net finding is to play safe and ensure that the story relates directly and unambiguously to the taught subject matter.

This latter relates to the fourth caveat: that the story must relate directly to the subject being taught.

Fifthly, ensure that the storytelling not only complements the subject being taught but supplements the teaching material with additional useful material for the students to digest and on which to reflect.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are made in three groups for teaching practice, future possible post-doctoral research in the area, and lessons learned from the current research project. The first group of four main recommendations focuses on teaching practice. Firstly, practitioners need to accumulate the story material to give their teaching credibility. This will be achieved by recognising momentary perspectives, or light bulb moments, those opportunities that will provide storytelling material. Secondly, practitioners also need to ensure their minds are alert to any reminiscences that come to mind while teaching; reminiscences that will enhance the quality of their teaching. Thirdly, the consensus from the individual research interviews is that the teacher's own experiences provide the best sources for storytelling. Fourthly, be aware that students can tell when a speaker is going into storytelling mode from the tone of voice which becomes more animated. Interviewee 'I' reported that on occasions students asked her to slow her speech as she was getting rather excited about the subject matter in the story. Another much more obvious clue is when the teacher says, "I remember when ..."

The second group of recommendations are in terms of a research need to look deeper into the effectiveness of stories, how they work best, whether they should be pre-planned or spontaneous or a mix of both. Is the ultimate to incorporate the teaching into a story rather than a story into the teaching? Such research could look at, for example, the affectiveness and effectiveness of storytelling under different teaching scenarios and teachers' individual styles.

5.2.1 Recommendations for practice

Three key recommendations resulting from this research study are made supporting the need to strengthen the sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2016) which not only enhances the overall holistic supportive culture of the educational institution but also enhances at the more immediate level the students' positive learning response to the various teaching approaches. The three key recommendations cover: 1) encouraging teachers' storytelling generally within the profession, 2) incorporate a greater emphasis on storytelling in teacher training, 3) recruit teachers with a good range of personal experience from which a range of supportive stories can be drawn.

Firstly, this research recommends that teacher-based storytelling needs to be encouraged as it has a positive effect on the relationship between teacher and learner. Hearing stories of their teachers' own personal experience within the taught subject matter generates a positive bond between teacher and student that makes the learning process more meaningful. The research study findings overall demonstrated that at the three stages of the research methodology, a majority of research respondents were aware of the impact of teachers' storytelling as a teaching approach. This view applied to a number of practitioners who did in fact practise storytelling but who did it under another guise, or instinctively without conscious intention.

In the first exploratory phase none of the interviewees considered storytelling important in their reminiscences of education until they were encouraged to consider what were the important influences on their remembered learning experiences. In the second stage of the methodology, the survey groups, the workshop descriptions ensured that attendees were aware of the subject matter. Their interest in storytelling in higher education was already affirmed. However, their attitudes towards storytelling varied from, "I actually find storytelling incredibly irritating "(SG56), to research participant SG14 who expressed enthusiasm for storytelling as a teaching approach in the following terms.

"I always told short true stories that had happened to me, friends and families which illustrated my teaching points. I thought that students may remember the latter as they recalled my stories" (SG14).

The third stage of the research interviewed higher education practitioners who, given the opportunity to consider their teaching approaches in greater depth, did consider the extent to which they practised storytelling. They also considered the extent to which storytelling was pre-planned into the lesson and the extent to which it was spontaneous. One interesting finding that emanated from interviews was that four out of the eleven interviewed practitioners were so committed to storytelling that they embedded their teaching within stories rather than embedded stories within their teaching.

The second recommendation suggests that a greater emphasis on teachers' storytelling could be incorporated into post graduate teacher training courses that focus on higher education. Flanagan (2015) recognises this need suggesting that her "study recommends that tutors are trained in understanding the value of storytelling" (165). Spreading the message is envisaged as using material from this research study to form the basis for conference presentations, seminars, workshops, journal articles including a literature review, blogs to encourage contributions, and radio programmes. Such activities will elicit feedback from which directions for further post-doctoral research will develop.

Thirdly, a recommendation to recruit teachers for higher education with a good range of practical experience means incorporating such an important theme into the institution's recruitment policy. This view was expressed very recently by McLaughlin (2017) who works within a business school and advises, "I get a lot of enquires from professional engineers who would like to develop an academic string to their professional bow" (20). These individuals have a lot of practical and professional experience to share, which is well received especially by postgraduate students. McLaughlin expresses a regret that, in his experience, universities don't really value practical experience. He

considers that the emphasis on the Research Excellence Framework does not help. His letter is well worth reading in full.

5.2.2 Recommendations for further post-doctoral research.

As the evidence from both the secondary and primary research indicated that this was probably the first research to be carried out in this particular area of storytelling in higher education, it was appropriate to consolidate the views of those practitioners who demonstrated a positive and supportive attitude towards the research study subject in order to provide a firm well-understood foundation on which further research could be based.

Seven research recommendations cover: 1) in-class case studies as a variation on the storytelling theme, 2) distance learning including both work-based distance learning and MOOCs, 3) students' reactions to teachers' storytelling, 4) joint teacher and student storytelling, 5) ethical issues of storytelling, 6) ethical issues in the research process itself, and 7) optimising research methodology. Implementation of these recommendations will identify views of a wider range of higher education practitioners who will be able to provide viewpoints other than that of those predisposed to storytelling. This can be attained by widening the area of research to cover more disciplines and more educational institutions. A concomitant outcome of this widening approach will put storytelling into a broader context, including other teaching approaches than has been possible in this somewhat limited research study. Readers of this thesis may well realise other opportunities for further research in this or associated areas. Two areas of higher education which afford opportunities for further research were briefly touched on early in the research study. In the exploratory research, key words did give early clues to help with identifying directions for future research issues: the in-class case studies and work-based distance learning.

Firstly, despite the research potential illustrated by the case study pilot study, the case study research method was not pursued as the educational practice of the researcher changed. No class teaching was available at the time the primary research study began as the author's teaching responsibilities

changed to become part of the team developing and implementing the work-based distance learning programme for the School of Business. The researcher is interested to see how such an in-class case study research project would have developed.

Secondly, while distance learning in itself had some potential for research (Ruth and Connors, 2012) I did not have the opportunity to repeat the case study research described above as all the distance learning teaching material was pre-written and made available on line. Although students had much scope for narrating their own stories based on their relatively extensive work experience, including much that could become case studies, any storytelling research that would be carried out further in this field would require a different approach other than being based on one case study made commonly available to a cohort of students. The work-based distance learning (Abeer and Miri, 2014; White, 2012) scenario is a markedly well-focused developing area in which to research the impact of storytelling. These first two examples may prove to be rather more demanding of resources and methodology in educational research terms. Potential future research will probably have to wait for the work-based distance programme to achieve some maturity.

The third research recommendation focuses on students' reactions to teachers' stories. Much of the research into storytelling in education generally and higher education in particular is student-centred, in other words very much focused on students telling their own stories. A fourth recommendation researches the affectiveness and effectiveness of stories produced jointly by teacher and students based on a mutual experience such as a field trip and perhaps expressed as joint role play (Adams and Mabusela, 2013).

A fifth research recommendation concerns certain ethical issues in the performance of storytelling itself. Caveats regarding this research have been discussed and future researchers may consider one or more of them worthy of further research. Such concerns as gender issues, and humour as well as the reactions of listeners to, and readers of stories.

A more general ethical issue concerns the retention of anonymity of research participant identities as well as confidential management of their contribution of research material. This issue is more recently compounded by an increasingly widespread use of the internet, especially of social networks. The importance of informed consent, as well as secondary research paradigms such as location, environment, timing, feedback and the detachment of the researcher could form a sixth more general research recommendation.

A seventh research recommendation concerns the lessons from the research process as experienced throughout the project. This covers optimising research effectiveness generally and survey group methodology in particular. For example, the four survey group workshops were designed and implemented as a progressive series whereby the interim findings of each survey were used as a research learning experience in order to improve subsequent surveys. This improvement was aimed at improving the quality of the research material emanating from each survey and the series as a whole. An additional improvement was aimed at increasing the degree of satisfaction of the individual participants and to better ensure that they felt that participation in the workshop had been a worthwhile experience. The changes applied to each of the successive survey formats were not fundamental but developmental aimed at rendering each successive survey more capable of generating meaningful material from which research data can be extracted.

Boud et al. (1985) whose comments throughout the referred work are based on several research reports, conclude with one of their contributing authors, Heron (1985), stating: "I think that none of our inquiries adequately exploited their potential" (137). This PhD research will have gone some way towards highlighting the potential to be exploited.

5.3 REFLECTIONS

The methodology developed overall as three mutually complementary successive research methods with increasing depth as the research study progressed. The methodology also incorporated on an ongoing basis the principle of continuous improvement or reflexivity whereby each survey group and each interview improved on the previous one. The research process itself, and in particular any limitations on the research study, may contain lessons for other academic researchers in similar fields. Some observations were made on the development as an individual research student over the seven years period occupied by the part-time research study.

5.3.1 Methodology

The choice of methodology for this research study comprised Mixed Methods within a Qualitative approach. The methodology decision making process discounted three other alternatives. These alternatives comprised firstly a single research method such as a questionnaire resulting in a strictly quantitative approach. The second alternative comprised a single research method such as interviews resulting in a strictly qualitative approach. The third alternative would be to mix methods from both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In comparing the advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative methods, consideration was given to the fact that this could be a longer-term research project of which this PhD research study is the first phase. As this research was taking place in a previously unexplored area, some groundwork needed to be established.

The research questions that emerged from the literature review required answers based on the experiences of teaching practitioners in higher education. During the initial exploratory phase of the research study discussions with a sample of teaching practitioners affirmed that they would not be conducive to completing a questionnaire or round robin survey due to constraints on their time and doubts about the efficacy of such research. As busy practitioners, they were much more disposed towards allocating their time to a much more focused activity such as a workshop or an interview.

Hence these two methods were chosen as the second and third phases of the research study. Preceding these two methods was the first exploratory research method which comprised informal discussions, pilot studies of a case study and a pilot workshop type study group all of which contributed to a format and content for the second and third stage methods.

Admittedly it could be argued that a quantitative approach incorporating questionnaires using a device such as the SurveyMonkey service might have identified the research themes that did in fact emerge. This technique might have worked but any themes that would have emerged would have been by chance and identified by statistical happenstance. Instead I adopted a focused approach which produced more specific credible plausible results. Interviewee 'B' discussed a case study in which a questionnaire failed because "... some of the questions weren't relevant and they didn't actually get to the answer" due to insufficient groundwork before the questionnaire was compiled. This supportive contribution to the debate was unbidden and spontaneous.

The methodology adopted thus comprised three methods within a qualitative approach and to some extent was an experimental approach as this particular mix of methods was not reported in the literature as surveyed. The existence of three methods enabled triangulation and some mutual corroboration between different types and sources of data and findings. Furthermore, as each of the three methods was applied in succession, each method contributed towards a more meaningful application for successive methods.

The choice of qualitative methods was seen as a way of identifying basic themes which were consolidated by the literature review and which were expressed in the form of the three research questions. One other important theme that emerged concerned the different attention being paid in the literature to teacher-centred and student-centred research. Mulligan (2016) addressed a similar gap that was identified as existing within the literature regarding the interplay between teacher classroom practices and student learning at compulsory level education. Having identified the important

themes in this qualitatively based research study, a further post-doctoral quantitative based research study can now be focused on these themes and therefore produce much more meaningful material, data and findings.

There are reasons for not, at least at this doctoral stage in the research project, pursuing a substantially quantitative approach. As one researcher who regrets putting quantitative before qualitative methods in a storytelling context McKillop (2009) asserts that,

“... discussions could have helped provide additional data in support of the research findings and the anonymous questionnaire-type surveys detracted from the attempt to take a constructivist approach to the research” (301) and “the quantitative approach to surveying learning is lacking in consideration of the individual and affective aspects of the learning experience” (306).

McKillop's (2009) doubts about questionnaires were discovered after the methodology for this research study had been decided, but it was gratifying to find such corroboration of the decision, albeit at a later stage in the project. Earlier corroboration was found in a website (University of Surrey, 2017) in which the authors considered that research methods incorporating questionnaires relate to quantity of data rather than quality, large numbers rather than a focused approach, speed rather than a considered approach, and a ready analysis process rather than an adapted method appropriate to the research subject and data as acquired. The decision to pursue the qualitative approach meant that a smaller number of research participants were involved but this meant that a greater depth of research could be applied. A related consideration concluded that quantitative research would have produced results that would not be significant and indeed be statistically dubious with the relatively small numbers of participants; 93 in the survey groups and eleven interviewees. This decision was further corroborated by the research survey experience of Bodily (1994) who found that, given the opportunity, questionnaire respondents had a lot to say when the survey provided a discursive space within which they could say it. It functioned as more than a mere tally sheet for the demographic data and attitudes that the

main part of the questionnaire produced (176). Paté-Cornell (2012) further demonstrates that at times statistics are not enough, especially in the process of risk analysis where instinct, common sense or experience might prevail.

5.3.2 Definitions

For the purposes of this research study, findings can be defined in terms of firstly their sources and secondly their applications with a view to gaining an understanding of where the findings came from and what they do. According to Wisker (2008) findings need to be derived from the analysis of the data by reducing the size and scope of the data mountain in order to “find the ‘slice of cake’ that fits your enquiries, so you can report on this usefully.” (314) The use of the metaphor ‘slice of cake’ suggests that Wisker herself struggles to provide a meaningful definition of findings. She suggests that the purpose of findings is to use them to support the arguments (314). Kelly et al. (2016), while reporting on nursing research, focused on research findings and how they could be effectively utilised in terms of the design of the study, pre-research activities, internal and external dissemination and translation of findings (351). Pring (2015) is concerned that clarifying or defining terms is a controversial matter, especially with regard to terms such as education. He suggests that a problem is surmounted by stipulating in precise and unambiguous terms what you mean when you use a particular word (17).

As the research and analytic methodology for this research study progressed, the relationship between findings, evidence, data and research material were observed as follows. Findings became defined as the information or knowledge that was discovered as the end result of the investigation of a particular phenomenon. That process comprised a number of critical stages. Firstly, the research material emerged as a product of the research methods. Secondly, that research material was inspected to identify data that appeared to be relevant to the research subject. Thirdly this data was coded and catalogued to enable commonalities from the various research sources to be correlated. Fourthly, those commonalities that could be matched to the research questions were regarded as findings as they

contributed to a better understanding of the thesis research questions. The specific data that supported these findings was regarded as supporting evidence and selections from the evidence presented with the findings. This specific data came from both the primary research and the secondary research, the literature review.

The overall theme or research question in this research study was defined in terms of whether teachers telling stories based mainly on their own personal experience enhanced the effectiveness of teaching and learning in higher education. Storytelling was considered by research contributions to have enhanced the affective value of teaching generally. In order to be affective, storytelling needed to be capable of stimulating the students' imagination (Sturm, 2000), memory (Yates, 1966), and interest (Blissenden, 2007), as well as enthusiasm (Fallows and Ahmet, 1999 and Lea, 2015), motivation (Guber, 2011), and learning (Giorgi, 1989).

Storytelling was also considered by Miley (2009) to enhance the effectiveness of teaching. By way of a definition, effectiveness is meant to be the quality of students' understanding as a result of the teacher's storytelling. An example of this was given by Miley (2009) who reported an increase in performance by accounting students. "Since storytelling was introduced, the mean for accounting has escalated steadily from 62.3 with a standard deviation of 8.4 to a mean of 71.9 with a standard deviation of 6.6." (365) Miley did not ascribe the storytelling project with all the credit for the improvement, but "... both marks and feedback have improved considerably since the introduction of stories." (365) The notion of effectiveness is exemplified as a tool to enhance communication skills. "Storytelling is not limited to entertainment but can also be used as an effective teaching tool in a language classroom" (Mokhtar et al, 2011, 163). Part of the definition of storytelling is in terms of its links to real life which provide some enlightenment to students who will find that life after graduation has a different 'reality' compared with life in University (Helyer, 2011; Storrs, 2009; Wankel and DeFillippe, 2005). For most students this is the ultimate stage in the education journey and connects with post-graduation life and it is thus imperative that students gain an appreciation of that post graduate life at this

ultimate stage of their education. According to Fallows and Ahmet (1999) learners are always inspired by examples of how abstract principles are applied in real life by real people in real situations (173). Graduates whose career will include managerial roles may benefit from storytelling on business management by such authors as Gabriel (1995, 2004 and 2008), Watson (2006) and Boyce (1996).

5.3.3 Credibility of Research

Clarity of definitions contributes to confidence in a research study's credibility, reliability and generalisability, the three criteria that were examined in some detail during the methodology dynamics.

The credibility of the conclusions depended firstly on the commonality of issues featuring in the research material provided by the three research methods and secondly on the common outcomes of the analysis of the three sets of research material acquired by the three complementary research methods. The credibility of the research material provided by the research participants was established by the correlation of the key words from the research material from the three research methods. Using NVivo11, a text analysis of the workshop survey group feedback notes indicated primary key words. In order of frequency, the most commonly used key words from the workshop survey groups were *student, story, teach, learn, experience, storytelling and real*. In order of frequency, the most commonly used key words as used by the interviewees were *student, story, teach, real, experience, learn and storytelling*. The credibility of the research is suggested, as far as such analysis goes, by the commonality of these most common key words in both sets of research material. The priority for both survey group research participants and the interviews indicate a concern that the storytelling enhances the teaching. This conjecture brings together the three most common key words student, story and teach.

The participants in the workshop survey groups came from a broad base of backgrounds, not just higher education but also further education and some sixth form colleges. Their research material was provided in feedback forms

annotated during the workshop debate and completed before handing in at the end of each workshop. It has to be admitted that the discussion during the workshop would have influenced and drawn together the views of the participants. Hence, after indicating subconsciously by frequency of choice the most important issues were student, story and teach, and that the next key words were learn, experience, storytelling and real. This suggests that the workshop discussions might have suggested a consensus towards learning comes from teachers' experience incorporated into storytelling based on real life. By contrast, the interviewees were not influenced by a discussion group and thus, after indicating subconsciously by frequency of choice that the most important issues were *student, story and teach*. The next key words were the same as previously but in a different order of priority; viz. *real, experience, learn and storytelling*. This suggests that teachers considered that their real experiences contributed to learning by being incorporated into storytelling.

Credibility as a criterion by which knowledge is judged to be acceptable as genuine as it occurs in the mode of teachers' own storytelling. Interviewee 'C' introduced the concept when discussing the relationship between teacher and learner in terms of the relative ages between the teacher and students.

"Storytelling provides credibility to the teaching, especially where the teacher may be younger than class members as in part-time night classes for mature students. The teacher's qualifications and experience help to establish rapport, earn respect and credibility and a sense of identity, as well as generate memories and interest" (Interviewee 'C').

The NVivo11 results are summarised and categorised above as measures of credibility. The categorisation was enhanced by inter-rater reliability (IRR) provided by two colleagues, one from the School of Business and one from the School of Education. The categorisation process had to deal with participants use of synonyms for various terms, a feature of qualitative research that NVivo11 had great difficulty coping with. Find or Search features within MS Word and MS Excel, with the ability within the software to

suggest synonyms, proved much more useful in this respect. Some of the evidence below therefore includes indications of some of the synonyms used by participants in their responses to survey group exercises and interview discussion topics.

Inter-rater reliability has some support and some detractors. The support is given to the selection of the inter-rater participants coming from higher education. As such they can bring an appropriate higher education viewpoint to the research. Detractors could argue that inter-rater participants from outside higher education might have identified different issues. The nature of qualitative research based on survey groups and interviews is that the resulting primary research material mainly comprises the views of research participants derived from their own research and experiences. The analysis of such material is interpretive in that it also brings to bear on the results the views of the researcher as analyst. In order to establish a level of reliability to this study's analysis IRR third parties were asked to inspect the anonymised research material from the study groups which was transcribed and amalgamated into a single multi-page spreadsheet. The IRR third parties were also offered a random selection from the eleven transcribed interviews. The feedback from the third parties aligned with the majority of the more obvious findings previously identified by the researcher. However, it was most useful to have a contribution which in effect provided further ideas on the subject of storytelling as a teaching approach in higher education. These further ideas have been incorporated into the findings as reported.

Feedback from the two inter-rater reliability tests (IRR1 and IRR2) were also subjected to the NVivo11 word frequency analysis and the results for the ten most common key words for each test were identified by NVivo 11 and found to align in a similar way to the previous results. The key words outcome for the combined IRR tests are: *-tutor, learning, credibility, message, storytelling, context, experience, ideas, keep, and nature*. Inspecting the context in which these key words appear in the feedback texts indicates that the inter-rater testers' main concern was that storytelling supports tutor credibility; a theme that recurs frequently in the research material and data. Three succinct words of wisdom from the IRR testers were "Keep on message"; in other

words, ensure that the storytelling relates to the context of the taught material (IRR1); and "Learning from storytelling can involve a sudden realisation ('light bulb moment') or a slower realisation as parts fall into place" (IRR2). Both IRR1 and IRR2 advised that storytelling facilitates learning by supporting longer-term memory.

The generalisability of the research outcomes began to make themselves evident early as research progressed when the possibility arose that some of the outcomes might well be applicable across the board to other HE subject disciplines. "Generalisation is concerned with the application of research results to cases or situations beyond those examined in the study" Collis and Hussey (2009, 65). Although the research was initially confined to the appropriate department, the Business School, part of the College of Social Science, research later included respondents from other schools who were keen to contribute to the research. This widening of the research base applied more so when the PhD was transferred from the School of Business to the School of Education. This wider research base provided a useful example of generalisability which could be widened in future to other colleges and other institutions of higher education.

5.3.4 The search for doctorateness.

The research study process was very much a personal learning experience and the most challenging aspect was that which led to the conclusion that writing to doctoral level does not equate to a particular writing style. Writing at doctoral level, or doctorateness, is more to do with originality, criticality, depth of research, presentation of evidence and thoroughness of analysis. The originality for this research study stemmed from the initial observation of an "I remember when ..." momentary perspective as well as the novel format of the research methodology. The criticality stemmed from the literature review which identified gaps in the accepted purview of knowledge of teachers' storytelling in higher education. The depth of research identified a skew in existing reported research in favour of student-centred as opposed to teacher-centred research. The presented evidence was derived from the research material produced by the three complementary qualitative research

methods. The thoroughness of the analysis extracted the data from the research material, categorised the data and identified themes and findings to enable the research questions to be answered.

This research process began from the germ of an idea such that at the very elementary level, the research objective was expressed in the need to answer the question, "What is going on here?" (Schostak, 2002, 20). This first question applied the principle of criticality at the outset of the research, a principle that applied as the research deepened through survey groups to individual interviews. The search for a definition of doctorateness included reading PhD theses in the University library and in the British Library (website), among others. Every thesis, without exaggeration, was different in subject matter (inevitably), structure, and the nature of research questions, the differences in writing styles varied from first person versus third person, past tense versus present tense and at times future tense. There were common issues with research methodology, what defines 'new knowledge', and referencing frequency including quotations versus paraphrases. There is also some debate about the need or usefulness of appendices. Where appropriate I have included in the text summaries of the content of the appendices so that readers do not need to interrupt the flow of their reading. The appendices do serve a purpose in that they provide some evidence of the research material, data, findings, and conclusions.

Murray (2017) advises postgraduate students that a variety of writing activities can help us to find the type of story that our thesis will tell (117). Rather more prosaically, Thody (2006) advises that telling a story is what writing research is all about. The story line must sing clearly throughout every chapter or section, with each part uncovering some of the solution but not revealing the whole, until the last chapter (59). There is some empathy with the view expressed by Thody (2006) that although there may be some expectation that a thesis on an application of storytelling would read like a story, there is an unavoidable element of chronology in the thesis, especially when describing how the methodology was developed initially and improved throughout the research study.

5.3.5 Limitations to Research

The limitations imposed by the time constraints and logistics were recognised in the course of the research study itself. The second stage research comprised survey groups as symposium elective workshops which were attended by teaching practitioners from many different educational establishments. While this range of nationwide educational establishments was established by a perusal of the symposia registrations, workshop attendees were required to not identify their associated teaching institution as part of the commitment given to contributors of research material that their anonymity would be assured. While the range of teaching backgrounds added to the veracity of the research contributions, it does mean that the contributions were not from the wider body of teaching practitioners who do not attend such events. Non-attendance could be due to lack of time, lack of commitment to the profession or lack of priorities being given to such activities. All this is admittedly conjecture and could be the basis of another research area, but nevertheless there is an admission that attendees at the workshops were not representative of the teaching profession as a whole, but they are considered sufficiently valid to support this research study as far as it goes.

The third stage of the research study, the individual interviews stage, was limited to one institution of higher education although a specific effort was made to draw interviewees from a range of teaching disciplines within that one institution. This limitation is recognised in the recommendation being made here that further post-doctoral research could take place at other institutions of higher education. Corroboration of the results of similar research in other institutions of higher education may clarify aspects of this research study such as whether size, age or culture of the institution has an influence on staff attitudes to teaching approaches such as storytelling.

Some comment is appropriate while reflecting on the practicalities of a research study in this Internet age. There is access to what is in effect an infinite amount of research material. The University library website, in common with others, have moved research from a very physically laborious

time-consuming task to another extreme where the challenge is not so much to find an appropriate journal article (Google Scholar) or thesis (British Library) but to narrow the search to focus on a specific subject across a range of all available electronic journals. It was the challenge at this early stage of the research study that helped to identify the paucity of journal articles reporting research into teacher-centred approaches to higher education, and the corresponding plethora of articles and books on student-centred research with an emphasis on students' storytelling. This gap in knowledge propelled the research in a particular direction and governed the methodology.

One of my objectives in applying the particular methodology incorporating continuous improvement was to ensure that maximum use was made of the extant research methodology despite the time and logistics constraints. In the Survey group Stage 2 of the methodology, by making incremental rather than fundamental changes from one survey to the next in terms of how early storytelling was introduced during the workshop, the surveys as a whole remained mutually complementary and thus were all able to contribute to the overall objective of this research work. This intermediate objective was to specifically identify what additional research might contribute to the thesis findings within the time and resource limitations of the research project. Issues such as the dangers of using humorous stories became prominent in the survey groups and were incorporated into check lists for the Phase 3 – Individual Interviews in order to identify any concerns that may be identified.

As a result of my changing work responsibilities early in the research study it became impossible to pursue the ideas originally developed to research more case studies to complement the pilot case study. Serious consideration was given at times during the research study to include students in the research. Some students were indeed included in the exploratory discussion on the pilot case study which comprised one of the three pilot studies. It was soon realised that to pursue this line of research would require resources that were considerably in excess of that which were available; resources were fully required for the current research focusing on the teacher-centred approach. It is important to appreciate that student research would require an

approach that would appeal to students' lifestyle, particularly including modern technology, social media, and blogs. These were considered and tried but discounted for reasons described in the study. McKillop (2009) researched into students' stories on the subject of assessment using similar methods but with a similar lack of success.

"The lack of sustained interaction on the web site could indicate there are problems with this approach. We have demonstrated the effectiveness of the storytelling model in a research setting but have yet to demonstrate its effectiveness in real world use (301)."

5.3.6 Personal Observations

This research study has been a mentally stimulating and rewarding project. It is something completely different from anything I have done in the preceding seventy years of my life but could not have been tackled earlier as I needed to appreciate the accumulation of personal experiential stories with which I was able to enliven and illuminate the teaching that formed my penultimate career. My ultimate career as a writer, and storyteller, is about to commence as I do have as yet a few untold stories to tell.

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APPENDIX 1-SUMMARY OF RESPONSES FROM EXPLORATORY RESEARCH INTERVIEWEES.

Verbal assent was obtained from each of the thirteen interviewees, five of whom were fellow PGDE students. One of the following two sets of questions were asked. Note that storytelling was not specifically mentioned as the objective was to see if the interviewee spontaneously mentioned storytelling, and also to provide some context within which storytelling might be positioned.

First set: "Do you remember a particular tutor who made a particular positive or negative impact on your learning? If so, what was it about that tutor that caused that impact?"

Second set: "Do you remember a particular moment when a light bulb moment occurred in which you understood something that perhaps had puzzled you until that moment? What were the circumstances that brought about that momentary perspective, that understanding?"

Analysis indicates that four initial issues emerged from this exploratory research exercise; issues that developed later in the research study as themes.

1-Teachers who made a subject interesting was mentioned nine times. One initial finding was that teachers who are remembered make a subject interesting. How did they do that? More research would be needed to establish whether storytelling featured in generating interest.

2-Mentoring – teachers showed a specific concern or provided encouragement by establishing rapport with students. Five interviewees mentioned related issues including empathy, charismatic, sponsor, and rapport. This contributes to a second initial finding that such teachers are sufficiently self-confident that they could communicate closely with students. More research would be needed to establish whether such close

communication would include storytelling. One student described how a new teacher changed a subject from boring to interesting by telling legal cases like stories.

3-Humour – five interviewees mentioned related issues including jokes or laughed as they recalled such incidents. A third initial finding suggested that memorable teachers were sufficiently relaxed with their teaching that they could risk introducing humorous elements. Again, more research would be needed to establish whether humour is an important element in memorable storytelling.

4-Link with teaching and learning – key words included context, relevant, effective, interesting, practised, and debate. This fourth finding suggests there are three features in the research scenario that could be described as a) teacher-centred and b) student-centred as well as c) the interrelationship between the two.

APPENDIX 2 – CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENT.

This is a summarised version of the case study for FE HNC/HND BSc Year 1 students. This was used as a variation on the storytelling theme and as a basis for further preliminary research with a view to incorporating further cases in the research study.

This Power Generation Case Study Project enables you to apply the knowledge of project management that you will achieve as a group during this course. The main objective of the exercise is to respond to the following requirements. Marking will be on a combination of a 50% individual and a 50% group basis.

The scenario is based in a city in the East Midlands region of England. Current Population of the city is about 86000. England's newest University was established in the City centre in 1996 and plans to double in size over the next ten years. A major engineering manufacturer, also in the centre of the city, is planning to move to the outskirts in order to realise expansion plans which were restricted in the city centre. This will release land in the city centre for residential and retail development including a transport interchange with a new relocated bus station and the railway station. Other development plans include refurbishment of the central railway station with electrification of a local rail line to link directly to London via the east coast main line which is already electrified. All of these developments will result in a substantial increase in the demand for electric power in a relatively remote location. The existing grid cannot satisfy this increase in demand and one or more new independent source(s) of electric power generation to supply this city and satisfy its substantial expansion plans will be needed.

Typical matters you will need to address include:-

- How will your fuel choice affect the demand for skills in your Project Team?
- How will you ensure you have the right mix of skills in the team?
- Who will be the Project Team Leader and Why?
- What are the risks with your fuel and how will you mitigate them?

APPENDIX 3 – SUMMARY OF RESPONSES OF EXPLORATORY RESEARCH CASE STUDY STUDENTS.

On completion of the case study summarised in Appendix 2, first year engineering degree students in Further Education (FE 1 to 11) were asked, "How useful would you consider case study projects to be as a form of storytelling in learning about project management?"

An initial overall observation demonstrated that these FE students had a pleasantly surprising broad perception of the issues. This perception was an indication of their maturity and learning from real-life experiences as they were viewing this exercise from the viewpoint of sponsored apprentices in the world of work.

The first three key themes, interest, mentor and humour, that came out of the previous exploratory research exercise summarised in Appendix 1 were not mentioned specifically by any of the FE students when given the opportunity to consider the benefits or otherwise of case studies as a form of storytelling teaching approach. However, a theme that was directly related to a case study as an example of storytelling was identified in such terms as "benefits, helps, show progression and problems, importance of re-evaluating, see action, downfalls, and manage".

The fourth theme that emerged in Appendix 2 concerning the teaching and learning interface was supported by the FE students with such terms as motivating, experimentation, discovery, comprehend, experience (mentioned three times), ideas, realistic, beneficial, and the phrase "good learning curve".

A new fifth theme was suggested by the phrase 'comfort zone for students' which developed later in the research study into the theme that suggests that not all students will be comfortable with storytelling, either at all, or in certain circumstances.

APPENDIX 4 – SUMMARY HEADINGS OF 8 POWER POINT SLIDES FOR TYPICAL CONFERENCE ELECTIVE WORKSHOP STUDY GROUP.

RAISE Conference 15 – 16 September 2011, Nottingham.

Workshop-*The Learning Process – Structure or Serendipity?*

Leader-Tony Johns, Part-time lecturer and PhD student, Lincoln Business School.

The Learning Process – Structure or Serendipity?

1. Does learning come about as planned or by chance?
2. “As we attempt to analyse dialogue as a human phenomenon, we discover something which is the essence of dialogue itself: the word.” (Freire, 1972, 60) Do you agree?
3. Exercise 1-Word Association. (The word was revealed to be ‘storytelling’).
4. “There is a flow of words set in motion independently of any intention to speak” (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 175). – Discuss.
5. Exercise 2 – Describe your most recent learning Experience.
6. Exercise 3 – Describe your most memorable ‘Light Bulb Moment’.
7. Exercise 4 – What is your experience of storytelling as a teaching approach in the context of higher education?
8. Refs-Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Penguin Books, England.
Merleau-Ponty, M. (2002), *Phenomenology of perception*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London (translated by Colin Smith).

APPENDIX 5 – SUMMARY HEADINGS FOR PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM AT CONFERENCE ELECTIVE WORKSHOP STUDY GROUPS.

Exercise 1 – Word Association

1.1.....

1.2.....

1.3.....

Exercise 2 – Your most recent learning experience

Narrative: -

Exercise 3 – Light bulb moments

The course

.....

The subject

.....

The event

.....

The particular topic

.....

The cause(s)

.....

Exercise 4 – Thoughts on storytelling in higher education.

Narrative: -

APPENDIX 6 – TYPICAL WORKSHOP SURVEY GROUP DELEGATE CONTRIBUTION FOR BLOG.

EDEU Festival of Teaching & Learning, University of Lincoln, 20th June 2014.
Workshop-“Sharing more than Practice; Storytelling in Teaching and Learning”

Consolidation of Delegates’ Written Contributions to the Discussion.

Of the 31 delegates who joined the survey group (SG), 21 kindly left written contributions. These have been analysed in terms of three themes previously identified in the exploratory research and summarised below with some pertinent anonymised quotations. The three themes are a) teacher centred, b) student centred and c) the interrelationship between the two. The intention was to make this consolidation available as a blog to publicise, promote and extend the research study. However, as described in the text of the thesis, it proved technically impossible to limit access to the blog to the attendees of the EDEU Festival via a registration list. Not all attendees made e-mail addresses available at booking nor later in the interests of anonymity and access to those that were available was restricted by the terms of the festival attendance booking process. For information purposes, this document is included as an Appendix to the thesis as an indication of intention which will become more feasible as ITC technology develops, especially in terms of social media being adaptable to restrict access to a defined group.

a) Teacher centred

‘Credibility’ was mentioned six times which suggests it is significant. For example; “Storytelling of real life examples provides credibility to the lecturer” (SG77) and “It improves my credibility” (SG76). “Mature students relate real life experiences to learning experience” (SG74).

One teacher always uses personal experiences in teaching as it helps to illustrate a point and for students to understand. This provides empathy. “I never called it storytelling; to me it was just using real life examples” (SG78).

b) Student centred

Although this research study was limited to researching the teachers' approach to storytelling, some input was obtained from students in the pilot case study phase and indirectly from research participants who commented on their experience of student reactions to the teachers' storytelling. Extracts from teacher's research material are quoted below.

"From your own story new stories have been produced by the students-it's nice when they come and tell you their stories" (SG75)

"the students became confident themselves" (SG86)

"Peer storytelling- mature students relate real life experiences to learning experience." (SG74)

"Younger (students) relate to educational learning experiences." (SG4)

"Storytelling engages students" (SG75)

"Storytelling /relating anecdotes attracts students' attention" (SG76)

c) the interrelationship between teacher-centred and student-centred approaches.

The inter-relationship manifested itself mainly in terms of the teaching and learning subject disciplines such as Marketing, Creative Advertising, Journalism, Nursing, Science, Politics, Law, and Architecture. In Marketing, "I ask students to share some of their experiences as customers" (SG78); Nursing – "patient's life stories" (SG81); Creative Advertising – cultural context – "Students disagree about their degree of independence ..." (SG73) Journalism – "... students realise that tutor has real experience as a working journalist" (SG76).

Another recurring theme concerned repetition by students of teachers' stories in exam scripts. Until now I thought I was the only one to have experienced this effect as no participants in my previous research mentioned this phenomenon. Such 'discoveries' make this type of research event worthwhile. Science – "... students answering the question in the exam used this example" (SG77). Politics – "my stories were repeated verbatim in exam scripts!" (SG83).

APPENDIX 7 - MATRIX ALIGNING RESEARCH ANALYSIS STAGES WITH BRAUN and CLARK (2013, 159-274).

	Research Project Phases		
	1	2	3
	Exploratory	Survey Groups	Interviews
Braun and Clark stages			
1-Transcription	Researcher transcribes exploratory discussions and Pilot Case Study Student Contributions	Participants Written Contributions transcribed into Excel spreadsheet to facilitate analysis Sample shown as Appendix 6B.	Interviews Sound Recorded and converted into Word documents to facilitate analysis
2-Discourse Analysis	Identification of Key Words	Identification of Key Words and comparison with Phase 1	Identification of Key Words and comparison with Phases 1 and 2
3-Familiarisation and Data Coding	Key words from all three research phases coded and categorised together with complementary key words from literature review: the secondary research.		
4-Identify Patterns	Nvivo10 helped to sort the categories into patterns from which findings emerged.		
5-Interpret Patterns	Findings were related to the research questions and themes as tabulated in Appendix ?? enabling Conclusions to be reached.		

APPENDIX 8 - MATRIX LINKING THEMES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS and FINDINGS.

Matrix Linking 3 Themes, 3 Research Questions and 7 Findings					
Themes		1-Student-centred approach		2-Teacher-centred approach	3. Inter-related approach
Research Question 1					
Does a storytelling approach support teaching and learning in higher education?		Finding 1- Storytelling has an affective value		Finding 2- Storytelling has an effective value	Finding 3- Storytelling is powerful
Research Question 2					
Is a storytelling approach more appropriate to certain discipline subjects?				Finding 4-As storytellers, research participants' draw on their own experiences	
				Finding 5 – There is evidence of storytelling in different disciplines	
Research Question 3					
Does the personal life experiences of the teacher influence their understanding of and attitude towards the use of storytelling as a teaching approach?				Finding 6- Practitioners use storytelling in different ways	
				Finding 7- Practitioners use a range of storytelling sources.	

APPENDIX 9 – SUMMARY INFORMATION FOR INTERVIEWEES.

Storytelling has long been a feature of teaching and learning. A number of attributes make "storytelling a powerful learning tool." (McDrury and Altiero, 2003)

In a difficult or challenging teaching environment have you ever heard yourself say, "I remember when ..."? and having done so, do you then notice your class are paying rather more attention than usual? As Schostak (2002) put it, "What is going on here?" (20).

After brief introductions, interviewees will be encouraged to describe some of their storytelling experiences both as teachers and as learners, and offer their views on how storytelling works in practice. These in-depth interviews, or discussion as I prefer to call them, have been devised as part of a PhD research thesis in which the interim research findings to date suggest that the translation of stories from experience into teaching and learning opportunities includes elements of emotion, mimesis, imagination, memory, and insights. (Czarniawska, 2004, 15) Interviewees are invited to contribute to the next level of research by considering this 'translation' as a possible hypothesis underlying the use of stories in teaching and learning.

As part of the first phase research for the PhD thesis, some participants, who happened to be retired, recollected storytelling experiences from their student days half a century ago. Is there not significant value in such memorable "momentary perspectives" (Rae, 2013)?

I sincerely hope that this example of experiential research will provide a win-win situation in that I will gain useful insight into the research subject that will contribute to the research material from which data will be extracted, and you will also enjoy discussing an oft overlooked yet important aspect of your own teaching and your students' learning.

The usual research caveats regarding ethics will apply. Any data from your contribution will be anonymised and any recordings and transcripts will be destroyed when the research programme is completed.

References

Czarniawska, B. (2004) *Narratives in social science research: introducing qualitative methods*, London: Sage.

McDrury, J. and Alterio, M. (2003) *Learning through storytelling in higher education: using reflection and experience to improve learning*. London: Kogan Page

Rae, D. (2013) The contribution of momentary perspectives to entrepreneurial learning and creativity. *Industry and Higher Education*, 27 (6) 407-420 (14)

Schostak, J. F. (2002) *Understanding, designing and conducting research in education*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

APPENDIX 10 – CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWEES

CONSENT FORM

Full title of Project: Storytelling in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Name, position and contact email address of Researcher:

Anthony David (Tony) Johns – ajohns@lincoln.ac.uk

PhD Candidate (Part Time)-School of Education

Please initial box

As the research participant,

I confirm that I have read and understand the *Summary Information for Research Participants* for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

☐

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the interview at any time, without giving reason.

☐

I understand that I can withdraw any interview recordings and transcripts by giving written notice to the researcher within one calendar month of the interview date.

☐

I agree that my data gathered in this study may be stored (after it has been anonymised) in a specialist data centre and may be used for future research.

☐

I agree to take part in the above study.

☐

Please tick box

Yes No

I agree to the interview being audio recorded

☐☐

I agree to the use of anonymised quotations in future publications

☐☐

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

APPENDIX 11 – TRANSCRIBED PARTICIPANT NOTES FROM GROUP SURVEY NO. 1 FOR NVIVO

	Delegate SG1	Delegate SG2	Delegate SG3	Delegate SG4	Delegate SG5
Questions					
1 What experience have you of storytelling in HE, both as a teacher and a learner?	Helping get across a point. For example ...Drawing from experience can help develop your point and student can have a deeper understanding ..learn from students.	As a learner -Through a book which gave an account of events through the eyes of someone who was involved on the terrain. As a teacher – I teach French and use it to pass on a message that can help them.	As a teacher enabling students to have insight into what live practice can be like. As a student enable things to be put into context and see relevant links and to develop my understanding of the possibilities and practical spin offs.	Story telling in written form, engaging.	Clarifies issues /situations; Case study examples can give credibility for the learners and the teachers, and a shared experience for the learners and teachers, and a reminder for the teacher of the experience (story)and possibility what the learners might feel. Drawing on own experiences adds credibility in a sense of being trust worthy not to impress
2 What might be the anticipated delights and rewards from both points of view?	It can be a good icebreaker; Deep learning can encourage and help build skills; develop relationships – respect; transfer skill and not knowledge; humour; remembering remark Credibility of you and trust-conceptualise.	It gets people more involved –more interested –it transcends the subject	Affording deeper understanding (deep learning) affords students the ability to “bank” the information for future ref.	Crosses over different, human nature, - memory adults and younger learners’ benefit. Films “based on true story”; Encourages engagement and conversation (teaching); Gives teacher credibility (students very critical).	Extends the range for the students; Contextualises a specific area/ point; Makes it more relevant therefore good feedback; Ice breaker –can introduce human emotion in human connections.
3 What might be the dangers and the pitfalls?	Self- indulgence “here we go again” !; PC society; humour etc	Getting too personal	The story not being relevant –students’ group –not engaging /understanding students, struggling to put the “story” into context	Self- indulgence? - humour causing offence; Installing as way of teaching fits into “framework”-so how do you utilise? Storytelling good because it escapes that frame work of curriculum	Self-indulgence; Judgemental – sometimes experience incorporates our inbuilt prejudices – unbeknown to us.
4 What aspect might you consider worthy of further research?	No response	No Response	The effectiveness of experiential account on student learning and development. How might this be best assessed?	Speaking to other students? How far across different learning abilities /styles would it be useful teaching tool?	Are stories always best told verbally? e.g. case studies –written, filmed, recorded etc.
5 What comments do you have on this elective (constructive criticism always welcome) ?	I'm glad to know it is not just me telling stories; but we all do as part of human nature	Perceptive –very enriching and valorising	Need more time	Smaller group allows more elaboration-really enjoyed	Well structured - interesting; Well organised - engaging; Inclusive; Thought provoking.