Rethinking the Connective Typology of Work Experience: the challenge of learning through internship

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Abstract

The chapter explains why although internship is different from work experience, it is nonetheless possible to use the concept of *work activity* to reformulate the Connective Typology of Work Experience as the Typology of Learning through Work Activity: Work Experience and Internship. In doing so, the chapter explains why internship is a *constitutive* mode of work activity from which people can develop occupational knowledge and skill, whereas work experience is a *preparatory* mode of work activity from which people can develop occupationally-relevant knowledge and skill. The chapter illustrates why this difference by drawing on case study evidence from the Creative and Finance sectors in the UK.

Introduction

The Connective Typology of Work Experience (Griffiths and Guile, 2001; 2004), was formulated against a backdrop of interest among policymakers across Europe in the 1990s to strengthen work experience in vocational programmes or to introduce work experience in general education, to assist learners between the age of 16-19 to enter the labour market especially socially excluded youth. School to work transition had become more problematic in the late 1980s and early 1990s because the deployment of Information Technology in workplaces had, simultaneously, created new skill sets and resulted in the elimination of many starting positions for young people. Policymakers were therefore interested in the extent to which work experience could alert young people to the new occupational landscape they would be facing in future and, in the

process, assist them to dovetail their qualifications more closely to entry positions in the labour market (Stern and Wagner, 1999). Policymakers' concerns therefore predisposed them to emphasise that the most important aspect of work experience was offering young people an *experience* of work, rather than seeing work experience as a vehicle to support a joint education-work goal: assisting young people to develop an understanding of the relationship between theory and practice in academic or vocational programme and thereby enhancing their prospects of making the transition to employment (Griffiths *et al*. 1999). Over the intervening years, the concept of connectivity and the connective typology have been seen by a number of well-regarded researchers in the fields of Adult, Professional and Vocational Learning (see *inter alia*. Aprea *et* al., 2020; Bank, 2020; Choi *et at*. 2017; Stensom and Tynjälä, 2008; and, Tynjälä, 2008) as a very helpful way to continue to explore different facets of the theory-practice relationship in work experience in the contexts of school, apprenticeship and higher education

The Connective Typology of Work Experience (CTWE) was in some respects, inevitably, a product of its time. The typology was underpinned by a number of normative assumptions about school to work transitions, namely that young people would be making a transition: (i) to permanent employment in occupational or firm-specific labour markets; and, (ii) models of work experience were co-designed by educational institutions and employers or employer representatives to support mutually agreed goal. Both assumptions were however more contingent than the CTWE acknowledged. Since the early 2000s there has been a growth of, on the one hand, freelance work; and, on the other hand, young people securing *internships* as a vehicle to facilitate their transition to employment, albeit all too often contract-based employment. Broadly speaking, internship is defined in this chapter as an opportunity for young people to develop occupation-specific knowledge and skill without any reference to or connection with an educational programme of study. The aim of chapter is therefore to consider how internship can be incorporated into a more broad based *Typology of Learning through Work Activity*. To do so, the chapter

starts by explaining the concept of internship and why and how it differs from work experience and work placements. Next, the chapter explains the contribution of Cultural-historical Activity Theory (CHAT) and Socio-cultural Theories of Learning to the formulation of the CTWE and why these theoretical sources of influence are still valid for understanding learning through internship, before explaining why the incorporation of internship into the CTWE necessitated some modifications of its criteria. The chapter then illustrates how interns' learn through internship with examples from research undertaken in the Creative and Finance sectors in the UK, (Guile and Lahiff, 2014). It concludes by clarifying why internship is a *constitutive* mode of work activity from which interns develop of occupational knowledge and skill, whereas work experience is a *preparatory*, mode of work activity from which learners develop occupationally-relevant knowledge and skill.

Internship and transitions to employment

Internship can be viewed as an "umbrella concept" (Hirsch and Levin, 1999), in other words, a diversity of definitions and practices can be classified as constituting an internship. Negatively, the term internship is often associated with young people offering their services for free or companies offering opportunities for young people to work for free to gain advanced standing compared to other people when they apply for permanent employment (Perlin, 2011). In both cases, this 'free' work amounts to little more than having the type of experience of work, expressed colloquially, as 'just doing stuff' associated with The Traditional Model in the CTWE. Positively, internship can consist of opportunities fo r young people to develop occupational-specific knowledge and skill. Expressed in the language of CHAT and Socio-cultural Theory, this mode of internship in the UK is associated with young people a) exercising "relational agency" (Lundsteen and Edwards, 2013) and negotiating a paid or choosing to accept an unpaid opportunity to work for a firm for a period of time or applying for an employer-advertised internship, and b) then pursuing their "object of activity" (Guile and Lahiff, 2014; Popov, 2020) by "learning-on-the-fly" (Beach, 1993) to develop occupationally-specific knowledge and skill. Both definitions of

internship differing significantly from the way in which the term 'internships' is sometimes used in higher education in the UK and Europe (Calvo, 2011).

There are two main reasons why internships have flourished in the UK. One is that since the early 2000s there has been a significant growth in "external labour markets" (Ashton, 1993), in other words, freelance or contract-based employment in Europe rather than permanent employment in occupational or firms' internal labour markets (Campaign 2015). External labour markets have always existed notably, but not exclusively, in the Creative sector. Over the last twenty years, they have become more common as the Creative sector grew in size through the proliferation of Small and Medium Size Enterprises, who survive in the market by securing self-funded contracts from large-scale organizations in the private or public sector, and therefore tend to only offer employment only for the life of a contract (European Union, 2016). Recruitment into external labour markets is therefore opaque because freelance work is not necessarily advertised and is contingent on membership of social networks where members can "bridge" and "broker" access to employment opportunities (Wittel, 2000). In this context, internship has emerged as a vehicle that a) young people are prepared to undertake to develop occupationally-specific knowledge and skill to assist them to secure 'port-of-entry' positions (freelance or permanent), and b) firms working in sectors characterised by contract-based employment are prepared to offer for the duration of a contract they have secured. The other reason is that there has been a discernible tendency among some employers in the UK, for example the Finance sector, to supplement their repertoire of recruitment mechanisms and use internships as a "tournament contest" (Marsden, 2010). Firms provide students or graduates with an opportunity to undertake a short-term paid internship to test out their suitability for work in a particular sector, and use the internship to identify the extent to which a student or graduate is a 'good fit' for their company.

One of the common features of both self-generated and advertised internships is that an applicants' enthusiasm to work in a sector is an important as the

degree they are undertaking. This is because the UK is, unlike many European countries, characterized by a rather eclectic relationship between occupations, knowledge bases and degrees: some occupations stipulate which degrees are essential for entry and their professional institutes play a key role determining the content of university degrees, for example, Architecture, Engineering and Medicine; others indicate a preferred range of degrees for entry, for example, Finance and IT; but many occupations merely specify the desired level of degree, for example, Advertising, Film, Television. In the case of the latter two categories, the purpose of a degree is to serve as a proxy for the capability or social capital, in other words, evidence of that an intern can make relationships and join networks to enter a profession.

This means there is a *transgressive*, rather than a direct, relationship between the knowledge an intern may have gained from their education and the occupational knowledge and skill they were developing through their internship. As a consequence, the challenge for interns is to develop a context-sensitive understanding of the occupational knowledge and skill they were developing rather than adhering to the conventional wisdom about the theory-practice relationship that is dominant in much of the professional learning literature. That conventional wisdom assumes learners use work experience or work placements as a test-bench for the discipline-based knowledge and skill they had gained from their study (see Jensen *et al*. 2013; Winch, 2010).

From the CTWE to the Typology of Learning through Work Activity: Work Experience and Internship
The main premise that underpinned the construction of the CTWE was Lave and Wenger's (1991) argument that learning was a social process which involved a learner moving from the periphery to the centre of an occupational group, through facilitated participation in occupational practice via peripheral access to a learning curriculum and the technologies of practice (Griffiths and Guile, 2004). In making this argument, Lave and Wenger collapsed cognition into practice via their concept of participation. They choose to do so in response to

Lave's critique in *Cognition in Practice* (Lave, 1987) of cognitive psychology's unproblematic acceptance of the mind-body dualism and the ensuing privileging of certain forms of learning (theoretical) over other forms (everyday). Given that the CTWE was predicated on the role of work experience to enable learners to participate peripherally, but nevertheless fleetingly, in occupational practice to explore the relationship between theory and practice, it was necessary to remediate Lave and Wenger's assumption about both the linear trajectory of learning and their collapse of cognition into participation in practice. These issues were addressed through recourse to Beach's (1999) concept of "consequential transition", and his empirically explorations of that concept in relation to work experience (Beach 1993; Beach and Vyas, 1998).

The main idea behind Beach's concept was that it stressed movement in relation to purpose, context and practice, for example, the extent to which learners were engaging with "canonical" (i.e. well established) or "non-canonical" (contingent and innovative) modes of work (Seely Brown and Duguid, 1991). The concept of consequential transition was therefore a very subtle interweaving of the tenets of Situated Learning and Activity Theory. It firstly softened and delimited Lave and Wenger's strong teleological impulse by conceiving of movement as a back and forth process (between theory and practice and school and work) rather than a linear process. Secondly, made the issue of purpose in work experience explicit through reference to Leont'ev's (1987) concept of the "object of activity". That concept, for Leont'ev, referred to the normative purpose of socially organised activity generated human motivation, for example, the role of education to, simultaneously, transmit humankind's cultural and scientific inheritance and motivate students to acquire that inheritance. Beach, however, put more emphasis on individuals' agentic activity and the way it influenced or motivated their engagement with socially organised activities. This enabled Beach to inflect the concept of the object of activity to take account of both the individual and social purpose of an activity. He revealed how participation in different types of transitions, for example, transition into stable forms of work, such as craft and work undergoing considerable change through the

implementation of new technology, would result in learners' identity and expertise developing in different ways. The idea that transitions are consequential on both work context and learners' own interests and aspirations is therefore applicable to all modes of learning through *work activity*. The link between transition and work activity provides therefore a way to conceptualise the provisional nature of changes to learners' knowledge, skill and identity in relation to both the forms of work activity addressed in the CTWE as well as new forms, for example, internship: changes occur however learners realise them in slightly different ways.

By distinguishing between the type of learning that occurred in education compared with workplaces, Beach (1999) also offered a way to restore cognition to participation in practice. He defined the type of learning that occurred in firstly, education as "vertical development" (Beach, 1999), in other words, learners in schools are involved with the hierarchical acquisition of knowledge and skill through the apprehension of sets of concepts of ever greater abstraction or mastering higher levels of technical skill. Secondly, in work as "horizontal" development' (Beach, 1999), in other words, learners acquire forms of knowledge through participating in workplace practice. This process could result in learners developing knowledge about how to a) participate in a community of practice, b) change and vary work practices in that community, or c) connect aspects of codified knowledge as a resource to address work problems. Unfortunately, the relationship between these two modes of development was left rather under-developed in Beach's work because he concentrated more on the issue of identity than on expertise.

Reflecting the ongoing influence of Lave and Wenger, this oversight was addressed in the CTWE by introducing the concept of "resituation" (Griffiths and Guile, 2004) to denote the challenge learners faced relating theory and practice (i.e. vertical and horizontal development) to one another, and making the case that workplaces and schools had a pedagogic role to support this process. This role involved the former encouraging learners to identify the ways in which

different forms of theoretical knowledge informed aspects of practice, and the latter explaining to learners the way in which theory was embedded in practice. The process of relating theory to practice was therefore treated in the CTWE rather mechanistically: work became a test-bench where learners applied or matched concepts they had acquired in education to practice and conversely employers supported that process. This was not only an inadequate way of understanding the theory-practice relationship in work experience, but also in internship (Guile, 2017). In the case of the former, it overlooked that knowledge is 'promiscuous', in other words, it is inordinately difficult to pin down the way in which concepts are embedded in the organisation of work and embodied in work practice since one generation of knowledge is over-layered on a previous generation (Guile, 2011(a)(b)). In the case of the latter, the transgressive relationship between an interns' theoretical knowledge and the extent to which it is a resource in the work activities they are undertaking negated the idea that work was a test-bench for prior forms of knowledge.

Following conceptual and empirical exploration of the theory-practice relationship in different contexts (Guile, 2010; 2011(b); Guile and Ahmed, 2009), a more sophisticated conceptualisation of that relationship was developed via the concept of *recontextualization* (Guile, 2019). Despite the superficial similarity between the resituation and reconceptualisation, the latter is a more encompassing concept. Certainly, both concepts assume that all forms of knowledge and learning are situated, but not situation-bounded, that is, presented and learnt in different ways but capable of becoming a resource in another context. The nub of the difference is that the latter concept firstly, treats theoretical and practical activity symmetrical rather than hierarchical to reflect the way in which theoretical concepts are embedded in occupational practice (Guile, 2010). Hence, the concept of recontextualization dispenses with the distinction between hierarchical and horizontal development because the latter concept fails to acknowledge that it has a conceptual basis. Secondly, the concept of recontextualization explicitly intertwines the concept of the object of activity with an "inferential" (Brandom, 2000) account of human learning, to

explain the way in which a professional or vocational form of knowing is formed (Guile, 2019). It replaces therefore the matching or test-bench approach to the theory-practice relationship with multi-stranded iterative approach.

From this perspective, the purpose of an activity, for example, the design of a curriculum or the problem a work team are addressing, influences the way in which they understand the issue they are addressing and the way they chose to deploy resources to address that issue. The process of understanding and deploying resources involves participants determining whether they should accept, discount, revise or reserve for a future occasion concepts, ideas, heuristics etc. because they are either appropriate or not appropriate for the task-in-hand. The concept of recontextualization therefore views thinking and acting as being developed dialogically and practically as we in collaboration with others agree what follows or might be the case. Moreover, this might be either a retrospectively process where we reconstruct why something has been accepted or remains contested and explain that state of affairs to others, or on other occasions a prospective process where we explain to others why and how something could exist or should be the case (Guile, 2019). The same processes are therefore applicable to facilitating learning through different forms of work activity, for example, participants in work experience or internship are positioned to infer the relationship between theory and practice rather than apply the former to the latter: participants will, though, develop different forms of occupational knowledge and skill.

A second premise that underpinned the formulation of the CTWE typology was derived from Engeström's (Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström, 2003) discussion of "boundary crossing" in vocational and professional education. In a nutshell, Engeström and colleagues used his concepts of "network of activity systems", "co-creation" and "shared object of activity" to explore the way in which educational institutions and workplace could overcome the boundary between their respective roles and activities. They drew attention to the importance of agreeing joint responsibilities for determining the purpose, design and

assessment for programes of work experience. This focus on agreeing, their terms, a shared object of activity offered conceptual reinforcement for the rather weak notion of education-business partnership or collaboration that tended to be cited as the rationale for work experience (Griffiths and Guile, 2004). The concept of shared object providing a way to symbolise the mutual benefit that would accrue to both educational institutions and workplaces work if they saw work experience as strategy to develop capability for the future. Clearly, this argument holds less sway in case for internship.

TYPOLOGY HERE

The criteria underpinning The Typology of Learning through Work Activity: Work Experience and Internship are derived from the above summary of the work of Beach, Engeström, Guile and Lave and Wenger. The first is an extension of Beach's argument about the relationship between movement and purpose (i.e. object of activity) and the development of expertise and identity, and highlights the purpose and outcome of different types of learning through any type of work activity. The second recasts Lave and Wenger's argument that learning in workplaces entails participation in occupational practice, supported by access to learning curricula, and also highlights common process that underpin learning through any type of work activity. The third criterion combines insights from Beach and Lave and Wenger to draw attention to temporal and provisional nature of learning in work contexts or between the contexts of education and work as a result of its relatively short duration and back and forth process. The fourth reflects the replacement of the concept of resituation by recontextualization to denote the inferential basis of the commingling of theory and practice in work contexts, practices and artefacts. The fifth reflects Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström's argument about the value of educational institutions and workplaces developing a shared object of activity to define the mutual benefits of supporting programmes of work experience (his criterion does not apply to internship). The final criterion clarifies the relationship between purpose, process and outcome and, in doing so, highlights the different

outcomes for learners that accrued from the different forms of learning through any type of work activity.

All the models contained in the Typology of Learning through Work Activity: Work Experience and Internship are therefore analytical rather than descriptive, as such, no specific exemplar of learning through work activity necessarily fits neatly into any of the models and some programmes may contain elements of more than one model. The criteria in the reformulated typology are, however, generative. They could firstly, be converted into principles to facilitate fresh thinking about the future design and delivery of extant as well as future models of learning through work activity. Secondly, be used by researchers as well as practitioners to compare and contrast the processes, outcomes etc. associated with different models of learning through work activity to fine tune or further develop those models.

Researching internship: access and method

Gaining access to interns is not a straightforward matter. This is partly because there is no formal record of self-generated internships: employers are under no obligation in the UK to keep such a record and even if this was the case the records would be firm-specific and therefore difficult to obtain. It is also partly because interns are only temporary employees and timing the research to coincide with their internship would be devilishly tricky. For these reasons, a number of organisations were identified who might be gate keepers to employers who offered internships. Exploratory conversations were held with Creative Skillset (at the time the organisation with oversight of the entire Creative sector), London Chamber of Commerce who had very close links with the Finance sector and National Union of Students. These conversations established that firstly, negotiated or advertised internships were a feature of the Creative and Finance sectors. Secondly, the National Union of Students had an active database of current students and ex-students who had now moved into employment, many of whom might have undertaken an internship. All three organisations offered to support the research and the opportunity to

participate in the research was advertised by each organisation on an 'opt-in' basis. This resulted in ten in-depth interviews with young people who had undertaken internships and one all afternoon focus group with eleven young people who had undertaken internships in the Creative sector in a mix of roles, financial, technical and creative.

The four case studies of learning through internship presented below have each been constructed in accordance with the following principles. The first is Thomas's (2011, p. 513) observation that the description and analysis of any object of the inquiry – in this case internship – will be both an "instance of a class of phenomena that provides an analytical frame – an object – within which the study is conducted and which the case illuminates and explicates", and that "persons, events, decisions, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems", should be studied holistically by one or more method. To reflect the typicality and difference between internships, individual interviews and a focus group interview was held with interns who has self-generated their internship or applied for an advertised internships, with some interns working in freelance contexts and some working in firms with internal labour markets. The second principle was Kvale's (2007, p. 15-18) argument that: (i) the construction of interview questions should involve an interplay between issues emerging from the theoretical perspective which has guided the investigation and practical considerations emerging from the knowledge the interviewers had accrued about the context of internship; and, (ii) the interpretation of interviewees' responses will be based on an iterative thematic analysis of the issues emerging from the investigation. To capture the way in which an internship has assisted a young person to develop occupational-specific knowledge and skill and identity, several readings of interview transcripts were undertaken to provide an open coding of responses (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). The identification of what appeared to be exemplifications of the ways in which, and the forms of, expertise interns' developed were continuously revisited, with some being dropped or revised, in the light of emerging insights, in keeping with Miles and

Huberman's (1994) recommendations about the iterative stance vis-à-vis emerging insights.

Case studies of learning though internship

The four cases presented below represent different phases of transition and recontextualisation: university to internship; university to internship and permanent employment; and, university to internship and freelance employment. For reasons of space, it has not been possible to include data obtained from the focus group interviews. This is unfortunate because Markova *et al*.'s (2007, p. 49) argument that focus groups constitute "societies in the miniature" and, as such, provide a window into the collective, socio-cultural realm and the local, unique and individual realm ("individual in the sense of individual realisation of the generalised possibilities"), offers an extremely interesting way to interpret interns' collective experiences. This angle on internship is explored in Guile and Lahiff (forthcoming).

Errol - was a second-year student studying Economics at a highly regarded 1960s university who overheard third year students talking in a coffee bar about their summer internships with major banks in London. Following a visit to the university Careers Department, Errol was informed that most banks had internship programmes that students could apply for and was encouraged to "be active" and consult bank websites. After undergoing an on-line and face-to-face recruitment process, Errol secured an internship in the investment arm of a UK bank.

Errol was "shell-shocked on his first day by the pace, noise and egos on the trading floor". Errol, like other interns, had been allocated a mentor, but Errol soon realized that his mentor was incredibly busy. "I was given tasks like create a financial document or write a section for a report which were exciting but scary", so he managed as best he could and "asked questions when my mentor was having a quiet five minutes". One of his most difficult experiences early on was having to receive "critical feedback publicly" from colleagues Errol was

working with and sometimes having to "wait days for feedback" from his team leader. Errol nevertheless realized that this was "part of learning how to fit in". This style of working and learning was, according to Errol, starkly different compared to receiving feedback in seminars or tutorials where lecturers tended to find something positive in student's contributions, even if students had strayed away from addressing key issues.

Moreover, as his confidence grew Errol also realized that "he could learn a lot by eavesdropping on conversations at the desk" by looking busy and bonding or socializing with his team during lunchbreaks or afterwork. Initially, he found this hard because "I usually stick with my friends and what we like doing". At the end of his internship, Errol decided he wanted a career in investment banking rather than working for a company as an economist monitoring financial trends. He felt he must have conveyed this impression to his mentor because the bank offered him a permanent position and he started work after he had graduated.

Caitlin - After completing her BA in Graphic Design, Caitlin moved straight onto a two-year Masters degree in London. This academic progression meant that she had little direct industry experience to call upon post-graduation and led her to actively search for internships in the sector to help her build her portfolio of work. Caitlin describes it as "very unusual" to go straight into a job after a course of study and was therefore very pleased to secure a salaried internship opportunity offering 3 days a week experience for nine months in a London Arts University. This appealed to Caitlin, because it meant that she could combine paid work in the industry with time to develop her own portfolio of work.

The internship allowed Caitlin to gain experience of working in small project teams which managed and responded to requests from clients. The time-bound, client-led nature of the work was a new experience for Caitlin and the internship introduced her to the ways of working on real projects with "its back and forth" or linking between the client and the team and again within the team. Seeing the projects through to completion was a key benefit from the working

arrangements because you are "being given the opportunity to respond to a real commercial brief", unlike the projects she undertook as part of her MA.

Caitlin left the university internship once she "had done all I felt I could do there", to take up another internship, where she worked in a very small studio which was, as she says "more specifically in line with the area of graphic design I wanted to work in". Although unpaid, the internship was very sharply focussed around one project which required her to extend existing as well as develop new skills, over a defined period of two months. Apart from learning to operate in a "very stressful" environment and the opportunity to see the project through from beginning to end and therefore understand the difference the contributions that other team members made to the final outcome, the internship also allowed her to develop valuable commercial knowledge because she saw first-hand what was involved in setting up a new studio.

For Caitlin, one of the outcomes from the internships was the development of a personal portfolio that presents the range of projects on which she had worked and therefore conveyed at a glance the aesthetic and technical knowledge and skill she has developed; that is, she says, the "trade-off' for taking on a range of experience. Her current job is full-time working for a successful design studio. She secured this post through a sector-specific agency shortly after completing the internship in the small design studio; currently, she has responsibility for an intern.

Bethan - Five years after completing her B.A degree in Fine Art, Bethan works as a freelance fashion stylist for fashion magazines and writes a regular fashion blog for an e-commerce company. The latter provides her with a steady income to enable her to select the freelance opportunities she takes up. As she says, she is still "Juggling doing work for free and work that's paid", but now is aware that it's important to continually from a bridge between options; "if a top magazine asks you to be involved in a project", it has a major impact on the development of a professional portfolio because "other people will see your work" and are

aware of the diversity of styles you are capable of producing when working with an art or film director.

Bethan feels strongly that Fashion Styling is not something you can teach anyone. She admits that most of her "cultural references and imagery" can be traced back to her Fine Art undergraduate study and that this probably explains the choices she now makes regarding the freelance work she takes on – describing it as at the more "arty" end of fashion magazine work. However, she learned about the job itself from a series of internships taken post-graduation. For Bethan, the experiences offered by the internships developed her knowledge of the industry and what it takes to secure freelance work and the role of the fashion stylist, and confirmed her own artistic direction.

Bethan adopted a proactive approach to search for work, post-graduation. As she had no firm contacts in the sector, she got used to: "Pitching for work by using social media .. or .. meeting people and following contacts". Her first experience on a shoot proved to be crucial – "Your role on set (advertisement, fashion magazine, film, TV) is not creative, but just watching what the stylist is doing was so inspiring. The kind of shoots he was involved in and the way he put things together". Bethan appreciated that although the stylist was working within canonical tradition, for example, period drama, the image he was creating reflected the director's aspirations, the actor's personality as well as his own original interpretation of both. By starting with someone "so creative, so inspiring I might have gone in another direction perhaps...but, having worked for him, my CV was more impressive". Bethan then secured a much sought after paid internship with a well-known fashion magazine. She continued with the internship whilst she felt she was learning but went onto replace it with one which only offered expenses "because the title was better Fashion Assistant" and it offered more diverse experiences. Subsequently, she has secured a flow of freelance paid employment.

Mark - After university Mark worked in broadcast journalism for several years before becoming a little disillusioned with his career options and deciding to enrol on an MBA. Overhearing other students comment that professional service firms (i.e. management consulting) have a "reputation for being prepared to take a risk on career switchers", Mark applied for, and was offered, a summer paid internship with a globally renowned professional service firm, which lasted six weeks, during his summer holiday. On completion he was offered and accepted a position after he had graduated with his MBA.

The MBA's "great strength" was, according to Mark, its formal teaching in subjects, such as, Economics and International Business Finance, because the lectures and seminars enabled Mark to "rapidly grasp key ideas in those subjects and their practical implications", and networking possibilities with students and employers.

Mark discovered very quickly that group work in his team was far more intense and diversified compared with what happened when working on case studies for his MBA. First of all reports, which in one sense are canonical work artefacts, are produced by project teams and "go through constant iterations, someone goes through first drafts with a red pen, the team (IT, HR, Finance etc. specialists) then talk for hours about the narrative of the report and the evidence that should be included to support it, so by time the transformed report (i.e. non-canonical) goes to a client dozens of people have syndicated it back and forth". Then clients provide feedback that can require "further work" to be undertaken or "new angles" introduced into reports before projects are "signed off".

The biggest differences in the process of learning through internship in a project team compared with his MBA are, according to Mark, that the former always keep "client and financial accountability" at the forefront of all discussions to link team members to their overarching goal: meeting the client's brief. Also, it is impossible to provide the "hierarchy of seniority, and the varieties of

experience other members of the team bring to discussions" in student and staff groups. Reflecting on his experience as an intern, Mark felt it provided him with an "invaluable opportunity to identify that he was suited to a career in consulting" that no amount of careers advice, irrespective of the source, could replicate.

Case Studies: Emerging Issues

The discussion of the case studies below has been organised to reflect the following criteria from the Typology of Learning through Work Activity. The criteria are: Purpose of the Activity (develop occupational knowledge and skill); Assumptions about Learning and Development (learn-on-the fly); Practices of Work Activity (recontextualise canonical and non-canonical practices); Management of Work Activity (Exercise agency to identify or negotiate opportunities to co-participate or co-observe); and Outcome (development of occupational expertise, identity and social capital). The section identifies three cross cutting issues: the canonical and non-canonical challenges work contexts set for interns; the emotional and creative challenges associated with learning on the fly; and, the personal and collective challenges of recontextualization.

The first issue that emerges from the above four accounts of internship is that each work context was characterised by a mix of canonical and non-canonical, in other words, hybrid work practices: outcomes have a texture of similarity, for example, report, designs, images etc., but they are non-standardised accomplishments. The cross-cutting reason for this mix of canonical and non-canonical work practice in each context was that the teams were, on the one hand, attempting for professional reasons to produce a novel or exceptional outcome within an established work practice; and, on the other hand, working for a client whose preferences and expectations was exercising an influence on the way in which team members achieved a hybrid outcome. For example, the hurdy gurdy of the trading desk meant that Errol had to contend with being offered what appeared to be a canonical task such as report writing, yet, receiving criticism for producing an overly-canonical report; the creative

challenge associated with design teams or on fashion shoots meant that Caitlin and Bethan experienced were continually required to think in non-canonical ways to ensure the design or style they co-created with others was not deemed to be a copy of another team's design or style (overly canonical outcome), and Mark had to work concurrently with people who had different consulting specialisms (finance, IT, HR etc.) and blend or co-construct the insights accruing from those specialisms into a final report that the team would submit to their client.

The second issue is that although all four interns acknowledged the emotional and creative challenge associated with learning-on-the-fly during their internships was incredibly daunting, they nonetheless affirmed the value of having to call forth the personal tenacity and social capital to respond to those challenges. Caitlin and Bethan had however slightly different transition experiences through their internship compared to Errol and Mark. The worlds of design and fashion are predominantly characterised by freelance employment, so Caitlin and Bethan were positioned to work with a continually changing group of people since the teams they joined were only established for the life of a project. In contrast, Errol and Mark joined fairly stable teams, even though they were working at an intense level to deliver contracted outcomes for their clients. There was therefore a subtle, but significant, difference to the respective pairs of internships. One purpose of the internship, for Caitlin and Bethan, was to assist them to develop an identity and reputation as a designer or fashion stylist as well as 'networked' social capital to identify opportunities to promote themselves to secure further contracts for their services, for example, Bethan's blog writing. Errol and Mark faced slightly different versions of the same challenges: to develop an identity and reputation as a trader and management consultant who could bond, bridge and link the culture and practice of the work teams they would join by, as Errol for example noted, socialising with other team members.

The third is that the development of occupation-specific knowledge and skill was a process of recontextualising the work practices they observed or were invited to contribute to, in a creative vein. Bethan and Mark provide very vivid descriptions of their recontextualisation processes. Bethan noted how inspiring it was to watch how a stylist created an appropriate image or backdrop for a scene in a film or TV programme ("put things together"). She clarifies, however, that this was a co-creative rather than duplicative or mimetic process, in other words, observation assisted Bethan to develop her own "professional vision" (Goodwin, 199?) and infer how to style people or backdrops in relation to a client's (i.e. art director, firm director etc.) expectations; but, in ways that would be perceived as an aspect of her stylistic repertoire. While she acknowledges that her undergraduate degree exercised a significant influence on her cultural references and imagery which she continually recontextualises in relation to the type of shoot she is working on, Bethan was adamant that Fashion Styling has to be learnt-on-the-job and is not something you can teach anyone because each style emerges from the context-specific expectations and opportunities. Interestingly, Mark offers a similar comment about management consulting and, in doing so, challenges square-on the classic assumption that the theory learnt from a programme of study, in his case an MBA, can be transferred into management consulting work practices. Mark provides a very clear account of the inferential nature of drafting a report for a client. The first challenge is to agree the narrative that will assist the client to understand the conclusion that has been drawn and the recommendations that have been made. Having done so, team members then iteratively contribute insights from their specialist perspective, through a process of suggestion and counter-suggestion. In the course of this iterative process, other team members infer the implications of the suggestive process in relation to their understanding of the narrative and the contributions they have so far made. Collectively the team then syndicates, in other words, continually move the report back and forth between them to ensure they have exhausted all the angles and options that could be appropriately included, prior to being presented to their client. The reason that learning through internship in a project team is so demanding is, as Mark points

out, that client and financial accountability have to be kept at the forefront of all discussions. This highlights the complexity of the recontextualization process: team members may have previously encountered and analysed similar situations with other clients, yet, their new challenge is to co-construct a report to address the specificity of their current client's requirements.

Collectively, the opportunities the four interns had to work alongside others by co-participating in and co-observing their professional practices paved the way for them to not only develop their professional vision, but also the social capital that underpinned their identity in their chosen occupation.

The Typology of Learning through Work Activity – The Relationship between Work Experience and Internship

One of the recurring problems with the lexicon researchers use to describe the various activities to support young people to make the transition from education to work is that the terms internship, work experience, work placement, are frequently conflated with one another. As a consequence, all three terms are assumed to refer to the same type of activity. The argument presented in this chapter is, however, rather different – internship and work experience are modes of work activities which facilitate learning, but they facilitate very different types of learning. To understand why, it is helpful to return to the concept of the object of activity.

Viewed from this perspective of this concept, it is possible to understand the difference between internship and work experience. Internship positions an intern (i.e. someone who is not enrolled on an educational programme) to focus on a *commercial* object of activity and, in the process, to develop the requisite forms of occupation-specific knowledge and skill to contribute to the goal that the firm or project team they have joined, are contracted to achieve. Internship is therefore a form of situated participation in relation to a pre-given object of activity and culture as well as to an intern's own aspirations. In contrast, work experience or work placement are undertaken as part of a programme of study.

They therefore position learners to focus on an *educational object of activity*, for example, induction in occupational practice and completion of assignments for accreditation within a programme of study, or tasks which will be assessed by an employer or presented in an educational portfolio as evidence of, skill/competence acquisition (Billett, 2015; Little and Harvey, 2006). Work experience and by extension work placements therefore assist students to adapt themselves to the reality of the profession or the sector they may enter on completion of their programme of study, and to manage their contributions in order to receive accreditation for the acquisition of skill or competences.

The above discussion highlights the different, but potentially complementary, contributions work experience and or work placement and internship make to the formation of occupational identity and expertise. The former are a *preparatory* strategy: they assist students to develop occupational awareness, the capability to adapt to organizational culture and to receive accreditation or recognition for their contributions which may, at a later date, facilitate their future employment. The latter is a *constitutive* strategy: firms offer, or interns negotiate, opportunities for themselves to develop occupational-specific knowledge and skill to facilitate immediate entry into a profession.

Conclusion

The chapter has explained what is distinctive about internship as a form of learning through work activity – the development of occupation-specific knowledge and skill. In making this argument, the chapter has also explained why and how the original Connective Typology of Work Experience can be reformulated as the Typology of Learning through Work Activity: Work Experience and Internship. Stated simply, five of the six criteria of the original typology apply to internship although their exemplars differ from the Connective Model of Work Experience for the reasons explained in the chapter. The one criterion that does not apply is the role of the Education and Training Provider because internships are not part of educational programmes: hence,

internships offered by universities are, from the perspective advanced in this chapter, best understood as variants of work experience or work placements since they have an educational, rather than commercial, object of activity. Finally, the formulation of the Typology of Learning through Work Activity: Work Experience and Internship clarifies that work experience and work placements are preparatory, whereas internship is a constitutive, strategy to facilitate the formation of occupational identity and expertise.

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