Learning ‘theory’ at university and ‘practice’ in the workplace
A problematisation of the theory-practice terminology that the dualistic design of Work-integrated Learning institutionalises

Ville Björck
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Writing this thesis has been a challenging and rewarding experience, and there are many people who have supported me throughout my work on it. Firstly, I would like to extend my warmest thanks to my supervisor team. Kristina Johansson, your encouragement and constructive ideas have been invaluable. Tomasz Szkudlarek, your ideas and interest in my work have been greatly appreciated. Göran Lassbo, your support and constructive suggestions have helped me a lot. I would also like to thank the various sparring partners who I have had the opportunity to discuss ideas with during the planning, middle and final stages. You have all given me great advice.

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To my dear friends Hjalmar, Christian, Viktor, Joakim, Jonas and Gustav – thank you for your support and I am looking forward to spending more time with you.

Last but not least, I want to thank my family for all their great support – I love you all very much.

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October 2020
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Ville Björck

October 2020
Populärvetenskaplig sammanfattning

Titel: Att lära sig 'teori' på universitetet och 'praktik' på arbetsplatsen – En problematisering av den teori-praktik terminologin som den dualistiska designen av Arbetsintegrerat Lärande institutionaliserar.

Nyckelord: Arbetsintegrerat Lärande; teori-praktik terminologin; dualistiskt tänkande; diskursanalys; tredjeplats.

Introduktion, ansats och empiriskt material

Denna avhandling studerar en form av högre utbildning vid namn Arbetsintegrerat Lärande (AIL). En standarddesign av AIL är att studenters utbildning delas upp i campus- och arbetsplatsförlagda delar som oftast kallas för 'teori' respektive 'praktik'.

Avhandlingenens fokus är en global terminologi som gestaltas i standarddesignen och ger budskapet att 'teori' är en abstrakt forskningsbaserad kunskap som studeras på campus och 'praktik' är det konkreta arbetet som utförs på en arbetsplats. Via talat och skrivet språk, samt via hur den manifesteras i nämnda design, sprider denne teori-praktik terminologi ett dualistiskt tänkande (motsatstänkande) som fastslår att 'teori' och 'praktik' är varandras motsatser.

Avhandlingen argumenterar för att detta tänkande primärt polariserar de campus- och de arbetsplatsförlagda delarna för studenter, och bidrar primärt till att skapa ett mellan dessa delarna som standarddesignen av AIL är tänkt att överbrygga, det så kallade teori-praktik gapet.

Utifrån detta argument har avhandlingen två övergripande syften. Det första är att problematisera hur teori-praktik terminologins dualistiska natur manifesteras i tal och skrift och i standarddesignen av AIL. Det andra syftet är att problematisera möjligheten att etablera fysiska och/eller virtuella platser som kan ge en icke-dualistisk motbild till det dualistiska tänkande som standarddesignen av AIL sprider. Med detta menas platser som istället för att förmedla ett dualistiskt budskap att 'teori' är en abstrakt forskningsbaserad kunskap som tas med från campus till 'praktiken' kan visa studenter att teori är en kunskapsform som i olika former och skepnader redan finns in och skapas genom yrkesarbete. Tanken med dessa tänkbara platser är undvika att skapa det så kallade teori-praktik gapet för studenter.

För att uppnå det första syftet studeras hur fyra idéer inom teori-praktik terminologin sprider dualistiska budskap. Dessa är idén om teori kontra praktik som utgångspunkt en för lärande, idén om teori och praktik som harmoniserande utgångspunkter för lärande, idén om akademin och den verkliga världen samt idén om att avgångsstudenter skall vara anställningsbara. De två förstnämnda idéerna undersöks i studie I och användes av studenter som intervjuades om standarddesignen av AIL i deras respektive utbildningsprogram. Akademi-verklighetsidén undersöks i studie II och anställningsbarhetsidén i studie III.

Den
Populärvetenskaplig sammanfattning


Nyckelord: Arbetsintegrerat Lärande; teori-praktik terminologin; dualistiskt tänkande; diskursanalys; tredjeplats.

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sistnämnda idén innehåller inte explicit begreppspar såsom teori-praktik eller akademi-verklighet men i teori-praktik terminologi används dessa eller liknande begreppspar för att förklara vad anställningsbara avgångsstudenter innebär. Studie II och III analyserar hur den idé de fokuserar på uttrycks i *mutida* och *dåtida* dokument som marknadsför Cooperative Education (Co-op). Co-op är en modell av standarddesignen av AIL som går ut på att studenter varvar campusundervisning med *betalt* arbete. Basen av de dokument som analyseras är producerade av Cincinnati universitet i USA, Waterloo universitet i Kanada och Högskolan Väst, i Sverige för att rekrytera studenter till deras Co-op-utbildningar. I de tre studierna används *diskursanalyser* med utgångspunkt i Michel Foucaults tankar om att idéer som förmedlas via tal, skrift och olika gestaltningar påverkar hur vi människor tänker och beter oss i vardagen. Med diskursanalys menas att de tre studierna analyserar a) hur den eller de idéer de studerar förmedlar dualistiska budskap och b) vilken påverkan budskapen kan ha.

**Resultat, slutsatser och avhandlingens diskussion**


Diskussionen fokuserar att skapandet av *tredjeplatser för professionellt lärande* skulle kunna vara ett sätt att ge studenter den *icke-dualistiska* upplevelsen av att teori är en kunskapsform som i både forskningsbaserat och informellt format existerar i och skapas genom yrkessarbete. Med tredjeplatser menas *fysiska* och/eller *virtuella* mötesplatser som a) utgör *hybrider* av de lärandemiljöer som studenter möter på campus och på arbetsplatser och b) erbjuder studenter att delta i *lärandeaktiviteter* som visar hur teorier i olika former används i och utvecklas genom yrkessarbete. Diskussionen fokuserar också på sådana tredjeplatser är svåra att skapa därför att en förutsättning för att de verkligen ska kunna ge den nämnda icke-dualistiska upplevelsen är att den dualistiska *teori-praktik terminologin* inte används på dessa platser. Detta är svårt att realisera för denna terminologi är så etablerad att den av vana lätt används vid eventuella försök att skapa tredjeplatser för professionellt lärande och då riskerar att etableras på de platser där den skall undvikas.
Abstract

Title: Learning ‘theory’ at university and ‘practice’ in the workplace – A problematisation of the theory-practice terminology that the dualistic design of Work-integrated Learning institutionalises

Keywords: Work-integrated Learning; theory-practice terminology; dualism; discourse analysis; genealogy; third place.

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Work-integrated Learning (WIL) is a label for a form of higher education whose usual design in many degree programmes involves splitting students’ education into on-campus training and work placements. This thesis focuses on a theory-practice terminology that is reflected in this WIL design and spreads a dualistic thinking with a basic message. The message is that on-campus and placement-based training teach you opposite bases for learning a profession, namely an abstract research-based knowledge called ‘theory’ and a concrete work called ‘practice’. This thesis argues that when this dualistic thinking is spread to students, it primarily contributes to the creation, but also to the bridging of the gap between these forms of training that the said WIL design seeks to bridge for them, the so-called theory-practice gap. Based on this argument, the thesis has two overall aims: to problematise (1) the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and of the usual WIL design, and (2) the possibility of establishing physical and/or virtual countersites to the usual WIL design. Such sites are not established institutional arrangements at present. The idea is that they should be set up not to embody the dualistic notion that theory is the abstract research-based knowledge brought from campus to ‘practice’, but to offer a non-dualistic experience that would provide a key opportunity to avoid creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. I refer to an experience of how theory is a form of knowledge that already exists in – and is created through – the daily work practices of a profession in various shapes and forms.

To achieve the first aim, this thesis conducts Foucault-inspired discourse analyses of how four ideas of the theory-practice terminology spread dualistic messages. The ideas are explored together in three studies. Study I explores two ideas that interviewed students voiced when asked about the usual WIL design. These are the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning and the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning. Using a genealogical discourse analysis, study II traces the idea of academia and the real world
while study III examines the dualistic meaning that the theory-practice terminology ascribes to the graduate employability idea, backwards in time from the present. The empirical basis for this consists of present and past documents that three higher education institutions have used to promote the Cooperative Education (Co-op) model of the usual WIL design to their prospective and existing Co-op students. Together, the three studies show how the four ideas include accounts that spread antagonistic and/or harmonious messages. The former messages imply that on-campus and placement-based training do not combine well because ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are not a good match, while the latter imply that these forms of training combine perfectly because ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are a perfect match. The thesis concludes that antagonistic messages only contribute to creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students, whereas harmonious messages contribute to both creating and bridging the gap. To achieve the second aim, the three studies introduce a discussion on a) what countersites to the usual WIL design could look like and b) how they could possibly avoid creating this gap. This discussion is developed in the discussion chapter of this thesis, where these countersites are referred to as *third places for learning professions*. A focus of this discussion is to problematise the fact that sites of this nature are difficult to establish because the theory-practice terminology they must avoid incorporating to offer a non-dualistic experience is so established that it is easily used out of habit when trying to establish such sites.
Appended Studies


Author’s contribution: In this co-authored publication, both authors were involved in the production and analysis of the empirical material. Björck has taken the main responsibility for writing the theoretical framework and for the whole writing process.


**Study III.** Björck, V. Taking issue with how the Work-integrated Learning discourse ascribes a dualistic meaning to graduate employability. Accepted for publication in Higher Education.
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Study I. Problematising the theory-practice terminology: a discourse analysis of students’ statements on Work-integrated Learning

Study II. The idea of academia and the real world and its ironic role in the discourse on Work-integrated Learning

Study III. Taking issue with how the Work-integrated Learning discourse ascribes a dualistic meaning to graduate employability
Introduction

The concepts of theory and practice have a long history and how people currently understand them are linked to, for instance, the ancient Greek distinction between theoria (i.e. to contemplate and look at things) and praxis (i.e. to carry out things) (Nightingale, 2004). However, the nineteenth century establishment of the global formal education system (Soysal & Strang, 1989) that people are so familiar with today has arguably also influenced how these concepts are currently spoken of and understood. This is exemplified by the contemporary distinction whereby theory and practice are, rather vaguely, spoken of as what you ‘study’ in school and ‘do’ at work (Goodyear, 2019). This distinction uses theory and practice as opposite terms to imply that they are separate elements of an opposite nature. Using concepts as opposite terms is founded in dualism, a way of making sense of the world whereby the world is thought to consist of and categorised into a number of dyads, i.e. pairs of separate elements of an opposite nature (see e.g. Lévi-Strauss, 1963; Webb, 2013). One example of dualism is the idea that there is good and evil in the world. From an antagonistic dualistic perspective, the elements of a dyad are rivals that do not combine well, and from a harmonious dualistic perspective, they are opposites that complement each other and that should ideally be integrated to form the harmonious whole of which they represent distinct elements (Webb, 2013). The sayings that a) theory is often out of touch with practice, and b) theory and practice are a perfect match, represent antagonistic and harmonious dualistic perspectives respectively. These sayings are not explicit about what theory and practice means in this connection. Rather, they tacitly allude to established meanings of theory and practice that operate through a globally used terminology that this thesis focuses on and that has a dualistic order of discourse. This means a terminology with an order for how conceptual pairings such as theory-practice, academia-real world, and study-work et cetera are used, and the order is that such pairings are used as opposite terms. I label this the theory-practice terminology. This thesis focuses on how said terminology operates through an established design of...
1 Introduction

The concepts of theory and practice have a long history and how people currently understand them are linked to, for instance, the ancient Greek distinction between *theoria* (i.e. to contemplate and look at things) and *praxis* (i.e. to carry out things) (Nightingale, 2004). However, the nineteenth century establishment of the global formal education system (Soysal & Strang, 1989) that people are so familiar with today has arguably also influenced how these concepts are currently spoken of and understood. This is exemplified by the contemporary distinction whereby theory and practice are, rather vaguely, spoken of as what you ‘study’ in school and ‘do’ at work (Goodyear, 2019). This distinction uses theory and practice as opposite terms to imply that they are separate elements of an opposite nature. Using concepts as opposite terms is founded in dualism, a way of making sense of the world whereby the world is thought to consist of and categorised into a number of dyads, i.e. pairs of separate elements of an opposite nature (see e.g. Lévi-Strauss, 1963; Webb, 2013). One example of dualism is the idea that there is good and evil in the world.

From an *antagonistic* dualistic perspective, the elements of a dyad are rivals that do not combine well, and from a *harmonious* dualistic perspective, they are opposites that complement each other and that should ideally be *integrated* to form the harmonious whole of which they represent distinct elements (Webb, 2013). The sayings that a) theory is often out of touch with practice, and b) theory and practice are a perfect match, represent antagonistic and harmonious dualistic perspectives respectively. These sayings are not explicit about what theory and practice means in this connection. Rather, they tacitly allude to established meanings of theory and practice that operate through a globally used1 terminology that this thesis focuses on and that has a *dualistic order of discourse*2. This means a terminology with an *order* for how conceptual pairings such as theory-practice, academia-real world, and study-work et cetera are used, and the order is that such pairings are used as opposite terms. I label this the *theory-practice terminology*. This thesis focuses on how said terminology operates through an established design of

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1 See the ‘Revisiting the research process’ section of the discussion chapter for a description of how I concluded that this terminology is globally used.
2 Here, I use a Foucault-inspired working definition of the concept order of discourse. This definition is further described in the ‘Theoretical perspective’ chapter.
the form of higher education that is often called Work-integrated Learning (WIL) but also Work-based Learning (WBL), Experiential Education or Dual Education. The design is the standard setup of placement WIL (Jackson, 2018) that splits students’ education into on-campus training and off-campus placements at workplaces. In its modern emergence in the early twentieth century, WIL appeared in this format (Sovilla & Varty, 2011). This format remains the most popular approach to WIL in many degree programmes (Zegwaard & Rowe, 2019), although non-placement WIL activities on campus whereby students prepare for a profession by engaging in physical or virtual simulations of so-called ‘real-life’ work situations are also used (Jackson, 2018). To emphasise that it, in many cases, remains the standard format of WIL, I label this on-campus/off-campus setup the usual WIL design, a design that represents an institutional embodiment of the theory-practice terminology that this thesis focuses on. The structure of this terminology and how it is institutionalised in this WIL design, and why it is relevant to examine the terminology and its embodied version will now be explained. Spoken and written instances of this terminology are seldom explicit about what they mean by theory and practice, but rather tacitly refer to meanings of these concepts that people are familiar with and use routinely (see e.g. Carr, 1986, 2006; Fealy, 1997, 1999; Collin & Tynjälä, 2003, Mullen et al., 2005, who stated that the meanings of theory and practice that I outline below are established).

Two tacit meanings of theory are routinely used in the theory-practice terminology. One is to tacitly speak of theory as the abstract research-based knowledge in the form of principles, explanations and models et cetera that you study on campus and the other is to use theory as a tacit term for on-campus training in general. By implying that on-campus training is theory as such, the latter way of using theory implies, like the former, that on-campus training is all about studying the research-based knowledge labelled theory in this terminology. Furthermore, the general rule is that the terminology only speaks of this form of theory and does so in such a way that it implies that there is only one form of theory. This means that the theory-practice terminology does generally not speak about, and therefore does generally not recognise, that informal theory also exists.

In this terminology, practice is tacitly spoken of as a) the working-life domain outside of university, also referred to as the real world, and b) the concrete work activities that students carry out on placements in this domain, or c) work placement-based training outside of university. The common denominator for these ways of speaking about practice is that they all imply that there is one practice, i.e. the working-life domain that exists outside both the university domain known as ‘academia’ and all formal school settings. Moreover, the usual WIL design embodies the theory-practice terminology because, in a key way, this design institutionalises on-campus and work placement-based training as students’ training in ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ respectively, and these forms of training are often
labelled ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training. This institutionalisation is based on the dualistic thinking that the research-based knowledge labelled theory and the work activities labelled practice by this terminology are very different bases for learning a profession that are best taught on and off campus, respectively. What I mean by the above statement is not that students only study ‘theory’ on campus and carry out ‘practice’ (concrete work) exclusively on placements. I mean that a key focus of on-campus training is to teach students ‘theory’ and a key focus of work placement-based training is to teach them ‘practice’. When I use single quotation marks around the concepts of theory and practice, I use these concepts as the theory-practice terminology does. Furthermore, the usual WIL design seeks to bridge the gap between what students are taught about a profession on campus and on placements, i.e. the so-called theory-practice gap. Here, a profession means an occupation that you prepare for through formal training. The setup I label the usual WIL design is in research often claimed to be the solution that bridges this gap for students by giving them opportunities to integrate what they learn under the labels of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ on campus and on placements respectively (see e.g. McRae, 2015; Matsoso & Benedict, 2020, who emphasised this).

This thesis problematises this claim by arguing for a specific hypothesis concerning the dualistic nature that, as I have begun to explain, characterises both spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design. The hypothesis is that due to their dualistic nature, these instances and this WIL design have the ambivalent function of primarily contributing to the creation, but also to the bridging, of the so-called theory-practice gap for students. By primarily, I do not mean that these instances and this WIL design contribute more often to creating than to bridging this gap for students. Rather, I will argue that splitting students’ education into on-campus and off-campus components and labelling them training in ‘theory’ and ‘practice’, respectively, that students shall try to integrate, establishes a dualistic setting which ensures that so-called theory-practice gaps will continue to occur for students. To give further context to this hypothesis, I will make some clarifying remarks and explain in greater detail the dualistic nature that characterises both spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design. The argument put forward in this thesis is not that dualism is in every respect a bad way of making sense of the world, nor that the usual WIL design has no merit at all. Rather, I will argue that the dualistic thinking reflected in these instances and this WIL design spreads polarised understandings of what theory and practice mean, which contribute to the creation of the so-called theory-practice gap for students (see e.g. Dolphijn & Tuin, 2012, who argued that dualistic thinking creates polarisation). I will further argue that this does not only apply to antagonistic dualism but also to harmonious dualism, even though the latter form of dualism arguably has a unifying effect as well. Furthermore, to illustrate the hypothesis argued for in this thesis, I explore
how four globally used ideas of the theory-practice terminology operate in connection with the usual WIL design and spread a dualistic way of thinking about what theory and practice means to students. These are the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning, the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning, the idea of academia and the real world, and graduate employability. The label graduate employability is not explicitly based on conceptual pairings such as theory-practice, academia-real world and study-work that are used as opposite terms in this terminology and reflect its dualistic nature. However, the graduate employability idea is ascribed a dualistic meaning in the theory-practice terminology that reinforces the dualistic thinking operating through this terminology. This means that the terminology uses the type of conceptual pairings stated above as opposite terms to discuss graduate employability and what it means. One of the three studies that form the basis for this thesis, i.e. study III, exemplifies how graduate employability is ascribed a dualistic meaning. Furthermore, the four ideas comprise accounts that speak about work, integration and learning in ways that are both different and similar. Some of these accounts promote integration between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’, others do not, and some promote certain ways for how this integration should occur.

It is also vital to further clarify in what sense the usual WIL design exists. This design exists in the sense that a key part of on-campus training is to study the research-based knowledge labelled ‘theory’, and a key part of placement-based training is to carry out ‘practice’ (concrete work) and try to integrate ‘theory’ into this work. However, together with spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology, the usual WIL design also gives the impression that this WIL design exists to a greater degree than it actually does. By this, I mean that these instances and this WIL design imply to students that on-campus training is all about studying ‘theory’ and that ‘practice’ is atheoretical until they apply ‘theory’ to ‘practice’ (see Taguchi, 2007, for a similar argument). This is an illusion because the work students carry out on placements is embedded with both research-based and informal theory, and on-campus training, for instance, also includes simulation exercises where students get to practise certain daily work situations in a profession. Said illusion is spread to students because, together with several spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology, the usual WIL design implies that they study a form of a knowledge called ‘theory’ on campus that they should try to bring to ‘practice’. This WIL design and these instances imply this because together they provide students with what I have referred to as a dualistic setting. By this, I mean that this WIL design moves students between on-campus training and off-campus placements and, together with these instances, implies to students that they are taught ‘theory’ on campus and ‘practice’ on placements. Here, it is vital to note that this terminology is not only institutionalised in and reproduced by this WIL design. Rather, the universal
schooling system reflects and spreads the notion that school in general is the place where you study theories on specific subjects and something that exists outside the working-life domain where ‘practice’ takes place. I see the early twentieth century ‘birth’ of WIL in the format that I call the usual WIL design and the nineteenth century globalisation of this schooling system (Soysal & Strang, 1989) as modern institutionalisations that still contribute to the global spread of this terminology. This does not mean that this terminology is specific to modern times. At the very least, it dates back to the ancient Greek distinctions between theoria and praxis and episteme and technē. However, while there are, for instance, similarities between the ancient Greek distinction between episteme (scientific knowledge) and technē (craft knowledge) and how theory and practice are currently used in this terminology, there is a subtle but vital difference. The terminology currently implies that ‘practice’ is a form of concrete work that is atheoretical until ‘theory’ is applied to ‘practice’. In contrast, the ancient Greek interpretation that technē is a craft knowledge fostered through practise emphasises that theory in the form of informal principles for how to carry out professions are rooted in the practice of these professions (Parry, 2020).

This thesis focuses on the modern version of the theory-practice terminology, since this is the version that is now spread to students and encourages them to adopt a dualistic view of what theory and practice mean and of how they relate to each other. Thus, when I use the phrasing theory-practice terminology, I mean the modern version of this terminology described previously in this chapter and that has been used to speak of the usual WIL design since it emerged in the early twentieth century. This terminology has since then formed the basis for all statements about this WIL design, which together form what I label the WIL discourse. This means a group of statements that mainly discuss different WIL models that apply the usual WIL design, but also higher education and the working-life domain outside HEIs as well. I call these standard WIL models and some examples of them are described in chapter 2.

Moreover, the hypothesis argued for in this thesis is an attempt to problematise the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and of the usual WIL design through a Foucault-inspired approach. What I am aiming at here is the following. A key feature of Foucault’s work was to problematise how a current institutional arrangement institutionalises a discourse (a group of statements) that in certain ways is counterproductive to what this institution seeks to achieve (Foucault, 1984). The abovementioned hypothesis can be seen as a way of problematising that the usual WIL design institutionalises and embodies a theory-practice terminology that not exclusively but primarily contributes to creating the gap that this WIL design seeks to bridge. In connection with focusing on this hypothesis, this thesis has an equally vital focus that draws
on a different key feature of Foucault’s work. This feature is to problematise status quo by illustrating that it is not set in stone that current institutions must exist in their current format, but that they could take different shapes or be complemented by countersites to these institutions that represent ways of ‘living the present otherwise’ (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2013, p. 7). This thesis draws on said feature by focusing on the possibility of establishing physical and/or virtual countersites to the usual WIL design. This means sites where students, alongside faculty members and professionals working outside HEIs, could, through two key experiences really get the overall non-dualistic feeling that theory is a form of knowledge that in various shapes and forms is embedded in and produced through the daily work practices of a profession (see also Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986, for a general idea of what is meant by countersites here). I refer to the non-dualistic experiences of a) how both research-based and informal theories shape such work practices, and b) how these work practices develop theories in the form of principles and models for how to work. I focus on the possibility of establishing such countersites because they are currently not established arrangements in students’ education and could possibly achieve what the usual WIL design is arguably not really capable of achieving. More specifically, they could, in a decisive way, potentially avoid creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. The discussion chapter will explain what these countersites could look like and how they could possibly avoid creating this gap, and why this WIL design is bound to ensure that this gap continues to appear for students.

Furthermore, when I focus on the possibility of establishing such countersites, I am according to Foucault (1984) not giving ideal suggestions on how the present should be lived, but instead illustrating that it could in some ways be different. This means that I do not treat such sites as the new ideal way of designing professional education. Rather I problematise the idea that they could be established to counter the dualistic thinking spread to students through the usual WIL design. The possibility of establishing such sites is problematised because they could be very difficult to establish due to certain existing conditions that I explain in the discussion chapter. The two overall aims of this thesis that have evolved from the ways in which it draws on the two stated key features of Foucault’s work are now outlined. Thereafter, I first describe the four research questions used to operationalise these aims, and then how the aims shape studies I, II and III.

1.1 The two overall aims of the thesis

The first aim is to problematise the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and of the usual WIL design. The second aim is to problematise the possibility of establishing physical and/or virtual countersites to the usual WIL design.
1.1.1 Research questions

1. How can spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design, due to their dualistic nature, be said to primarily contribute to creating but also to bridging the so-called theory-practice gap for students?

2. In what ways can the four examined ideas be said to exemplify how this dualistic nature primarily contributes to creating but also to bridging this gap for students?

3. What could countersites to the usual WIL design look like and how could they in a key sense potentially avoid creating said gap for students?

4. What opportunities and problems could there be with regard to establishing such countersites?

1.1.2 How the two overall aims shape studies I, II and III

Study I examines the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning and the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning. This study is based on interviews with 20 students who often voiced these two ideas when they were asked about the relationship between ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training in their degree programmes. Using a Foucault-inspired discourse analysis, study I problematises the dualistic nature of the theory-practice terminology by exploring how these ideas reinforce this terminology and how said terminology is embodied in the usual WIL design. All three studies discuss the kind of countersites to the usual WIL design mentioned above. However, it is the discussion chapter that outlines a more in-depth a) discussion on what such sites could look like and b) problematisation of the possibility of establishing them. Studies II and III use a Foucault-inspired genealogical discourse analysis but focus on separate ideas to problematise the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and of the usual WIL design. Respectively, they problematise how the idea of academia and the real world and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability can be said to contribute primarily to creating but also to bridging the gap that WIL seeks to bridge for students. A genealogical discourse analysis means that studies II and III conduct this problematisation by tracing the former idea and the latter meaning from the present back to the past WIL discourse (see the theoretical perspective chapter for a description of what a genealogical discourse analysis means). To trace this idea and meaning back in time, I mainly explore paper- or web-based documents that three higher education institutions (HEIs) used in the twentieth and twenty-first century with the primary intention
of promoting the *Cooperative Education* (Co-op) standard WIL model to their prospective and existing Co-op students. These are the University of Cincinnati, USA, the University of Waterloo, Canada and University West, Sweden. Study II examines 75 such documents used between 1928 and 2018 while study III examines 83 used between 1928 and 2019. Most of the documents explored in study II are also examined in study III. Why this is the case and why I chose a) documents from these HEIs and b) not to study promotional statements about any standard WIL models other than Co-op are clarified in the method chapter. Co-op emerged in 1906 and the standard setup of Co-op is that students alternate between on-campus training and periods of *paid* work placement outside the HEIs (Sovilla & Varty, 2011). Chapter 2 presents more information on Co-op and declares how this thesis treats this emergence as a key instance of the *modern* birth of WIL in the format that I label the usual WIL design. Furthermore, besides studying said documents from the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo and University West, studies II and III examine four past official documents about Co-op that were published in 1914, ca. 1930, 1944 and ca. 1960. They promote Co-op as well but are either a) not documents produced by HEIs or b) documents whose content was originally not produced by HEIs with the intention of promoting Co-op to their prospective and existing Co-op students. The method chapter describes these documents and why they were selected.

### 1.2 Thesis design

This thesis consists of two parts. The first includes seven chapters that represent the *frame story* binding together the three studies on which this thesis is founded. The second part consists of the appended versions of these studies. Returning to the frame story, this introduction chapter is followed by chapter 2, which has two main sections. The first continues to introduce WIL as a form of higher education with a focus on the usual WIL design in general, and on the Co-op WIL model. The second section outlines an overview of WIL research. Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical perspective applied in this thesis that is primarily based on specific concepts from the Foucauldian toolbox, namely *discourse*, *order of discourse*, *power*, *knowledge*, and *genealogy*. Chapter 4 is the method chapter and describes the empirical sources that I examine and how the discourse analysis in study I and the genealogical discourse analyses in studies II and III were conducted with the use of the theoretical perspective. Chapter 5 summarises the results of studies I, II and III. Chapter 6 presents a discourse analysis of how different accounts of the

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3 Some of these documents have also been aimed at employers in order to retain and recruit new workplaces where prospective and existing Co-op students of these HEIs can complete their work placements.
four ideas that this thesis examines come together to shape two different networks in the theory-practice terminology. I use this analysis to further problematise how the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of this terminology and of the usual WIL design can be said to primarily contribute to creating but also to bridging the so-called theory-practice gap for students. Finally, chapter 7 is the discussion where I first revisit the research process to reflect on the choices made, and the challenges faced. Thereafter, I draw on the results of a) studies I, II and III, b) the discourse analysis outlined in chapter 6 to provide a more in-depth discussion that takes the two overall aims and the four research questions of this thesis as its points of departure. This chapter ends with concluding thoughts on this thesis’s contribution and a discussion on possible paths for future research.

1.3 Theorising about the theory-practice gap

As a label, the theory-practice gap implies that gaps between what students are taught about a profession on campus and on work placements are theory-practice gaps per se. I recognise that there are regularly gaps between what is taught on campus and on placements. However, I do not see these as theory-practice gaps, but rather as gaps between the theories and the approaches for practising these theories that are a) taught on campus and b) used explicitly or tacitly by professionals in their daily work (see Carr, 1995, for a similar standpoint). The so-called theory-practice gap is also often spoken of as a problem to be solved that exists because on-campus training lacks the proper ‘real world connection’ needed to adequately prepare students for the ‘world of work’. In other words, HEIs and faculties are often blamed for the existence of this gap (Laiho & Ruoholinna, 2013). However, the argument that professionals working outside HEIs contribute to creating this gap because they are prone to work as usual rather than to apply new ‘theories’ from research, is also made (Shulman, 1998). Furthermore, while the most common label for the gap between students’ on-campus and work placement-based training is the theory-practice gap, other labels such as theory-practice divide, the academic-real world gap are also used. Certain conditions that in this thesis are treated as key but not the sole reasons for why this gap exists are now outlined. The gap is seen to be linked to the fact that the usual WIL design splits students’ education into on-campus and off-campus components to locate their education to separate institutional domains, namely the university domain and the working-life domain outside university. For instance, the fact that these components are physically separated creates a situation whereby it is easy for the faculty to become rather unaware of what students are taught in workplaces, and for professionals from these workplaces to become rather unaware of what is taught on campus. This means that there can rather easily be gaps (differences) between what students are taught on campus and on placements. As the on-campus/off-campus setup embodies the theory-practice terminology’s message
that ‘theory’ is taught on campus and ‘practice’ on placements, I also adopt the standpoint that this setup generally sends students the message that the gaps that occur are theory-practice gaps as such (see Carr, 1995, who argued that this gap is generally thought of as a theory-practice gap per se). Furthermore, while I see the fact that students can encounter different learning environments on campus and on placements, and learn different things in these environments, as conditions that contribute to creating this gap, it is vital to reiterate something here. I will argue that, in connection with these conditions, a terminology exists that contributes primarily to creating but also to bridging the gap for students. Considering this, I will now end this chapter by making further clarifying remarks.

This thesis is influenced by the spatial turn in social theory (see e.g. Soja, 2000). Firstly, this means that I see the spatial organisation of society as key to how people understand, link, and distinguishes between the various institutional domains that society consists of. Secondly, this means that I take the perspective that it is changes in the spatial organisation of society rather than time itself that bring about changes to how people categorise and understand society. I also draw on Foucault’s (1973) view that the spatial organisation of society is central to how discourse (here meaning language) is distributed in society.

Furthermore, I want to clarify why I use the term design when discussing WIL. I do this to point out that while the usual WIL design is intended to ensure that WIL takes place, which here means that students integrate what they learn on campus and on placements, one could question how successful this WIL design is when it comes to ensuring that this integration occurs. It is also vital to clarify how I distinguish between concepts and terms. When I refer to theory and practice, academia and real world and study and work et cetera as concepts, I mean the conceptions that people attach to and associate with these pairings. When referring to theory and practice et cetera as terms, I mean how they are used as words for something and given certain meanings. Moreover, Work-integrated Learning is, in this thesis, treated as one of several umbrella terms that are used for the same form of higher education (see page 16, for other umbrella terms). However, it is concepts such as theory and practice and academia and real world and the meanings generally attached to these rather than these umbrella terms that I see as fundamental to how people speak about and understand this form of higher education, and the usual WIL design. Finally, it should be declared that the hypothesis argued for in this thesis, as well as the theoretical perspective and the conclusions presented in studies I, II and III and in the discussion chapter, are products of an interpretative and abductive research process where I went back and forth between reading research and analysing the empirical material. The revisiting the research process section outlined in the discussion chapter explains this research process in more detail.
2 Work-integrated Learning (WIL) and an overview of WIL research

The first section of this chapter further introduces the reader to WIL while the second section presents an overview of WIL research that is relevant to this thesis.

2.1 WIL as a form of higher education

Research currently promotes WIL as a topical way to follow the employability agenda (see e.g. Crisp et al., 2019, who discuss this). Here, the employability agenda refers to a contemporary agenda amongst governments, employers as well as non- and intergovernmental organisations (NGOs and IGOs) to demand that HEIs must foster ‘employable’ graduates (Crisp et al., 2019). In this connection, the term employable is often assigned a work readiness meaning whereby an employable graduate means a graduate ready for the ways of working that are established in a profession and in working life in general (Lau et al., 2018). Furthermore, while WIL is promoted as a topical form of higher education, it is vital to note that WIL is not a new phenomenon. Because a basic idea behind WIL is that ‘practice’ is needed to master a profession, one can for instance trace WIL back to the so-called medieval guilds. These were associations of craftsmen and merchants who, in addition to running the ‘practice’ of an occupation, offered so-called apprentices ‘practice-based’ training known as apprenticeships (Park, 1943).

While discussing the history of WIL, it is vital to note that this thesis does not seek to identify the very origin of this form of higher education. Rather, it focuses on one emergence of WIL that is key to understanding WIL’s current role. The emergence I refer to is the contemporaneous institutionalisations of a) Sandwich Education (SE) at Sunderland Technical College in 1903 (Davie & Russell, 1974), and b) Co-op at the University of Cincinnati in 1906 (Sovilla & Varty, 2011). I see these as institutionalisations that together represent the modern ‘birth’ of WIL in the format that I label the usual WIL design. This is because SE and Co-op introduced the idea that students should be trained in both ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ at the start of the twentieth century when the global norm was that higher education only offered students a so-called training in ‘theory’ on campus (Sovilla & Varty, 2011). Furthermore, while the usual WIL design is more common today than when SE and Co-op first emerged this does not mean that this WIL design has completely replaced the traditional form of higher education whereby the norm is that students only have training in ‘theory’. Rather, this latter form of higher
education is still used. A key difference between the usual WIL design and the traditional form of higher education is that they embody different assumptions about what the basis for becoming a good professional is. Traditional higher education embodies the assumption that the basis for this is having knowledge in ‘theory’, which in connection with this assumption is seen as the objective and visionary research-based knowledge ensuring that the work of a professional becomes impartial and ideal. The usual WIL design embodies the assumption that so-called ‘theoretical’ and ‘practical’ knowledge, also referred to as knowledge-that and knowledge-how, are equally important for becoming a good professional. This WIL design also reflects the pragmatic belief that it is by moving between so-called ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training that students learn how to integrate ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ (see Dewey, 1904, who discussed this belief). Furthermore, there is currently a global trend amongst HEIs to apply the usual WIL design and promote that it bridges the so-called theory-practice gap for students and therefore fosters well-prepared graduates. This trend does not only apply to labour market-oriented university colleges but also to universities that are rather highly ranked in their countries, such as the University of Waterloo, Canada. Jackson (2015) and Kennedy et al. (2015) emphasised that the setup I label the usual WIL design represents a way for HEIs to meet the employability agenda and prepare students sufficiently for work. Jackson (2015) further emphasised that this setup is generally assumed to provide this sufficient preparation because it gives students opportunities to use ‘theory’ in a ‘real world’ setting, opportunities which are here seen to make graduates good at utilising ‘theory in practice’.

To further understand the context in which the usual WIL design currently operates, it is vital to note that Higher Vocational Education (HVE) institutions, which offer non-university based vocational education, also use a design whereby so-called ‘theoretical’ studies and ‘practical experience’ are combined. Thus, this WIL design is one key example of a current global trend towards making formal education more ‘practice-based’. This trend can be seen as a reaction to a scepticism that has globally long been directed towards scholastic institutions (Masschelein & Simons, 2013); namely that the things you learn at ‘school’ are often of limited use in the so-called ‘real world’ (see e.g. Candy & Crebert, 1991, who emphasised that one challenge for graduates is that the on-campus training they had as students is often not realistic enough). Furthermore, while there is currently much focus on HEIs having to follow the employability agenda, there has also been much focus in research on criticism of this agenda (Tomlinson, 2017). For instance, research has problematised the one-sided interpretation that this agenda means that HEIs must teach students what employers look for in graduates (Clarke, 2018). Moreover, since the emergence of SE and Co-op in the early twentieth century, HEIs have used different standard WIL models with the
intention of bridging the so-called theory-practice gap for students. Before I give examples of such models, I want to reiterate that the usual WIL design is not the most popular approach to WIL in all degree programmes, and that in addition to this WIL design, there is also so-called non-placement WIL (Burke et al., 2009; Jackson, 2017). This form of WIL generally covers all on-campus activities designed to give students a ‘real world environment’ on campus by using learning activities that simulate working situations from specific professions or fields of work. Different forms of clinical learning centres, laboratories, or test centres on campus where students get to practise specific elements of their future work practice are examples of non-placement WIL. It has also become increasingly popular for such learning centres to use not only physical but also virtual reality (VR) simulations to prepare students for specific working conditions of a given profession. Regarding different standard WIL models, it is important to note that some of these have specific names but many do not. For instance, in many cases, the standard WIL models used in teaching, medicine and nursing degree programmes are not given a specific label. However, in medicine and nursing degree programmes, the so-called ‘practice-based’ training is often referred to as clinical training or clinical internships, and in teaching degree programmes, it is often labelled teaching practice. Co-op and Service Learning (SL) are two examples of standard WIL models that have specific names. SL is a model whereby students use their on-campus training in community-based projects, and one of the aims of SL is to develop students’ civic engagement and social awareness (Huda et al., 2018). Both Co-op and SL are typically used in various degree programmes.

Furthermore, not all standard WIL models look alike but use different designs for the relationship between on-campus training and work placements. Some models, such as Co-op, typically offer students paid work placements while others use unpaid placements. Standard WIL models can also differ in terms of the amount of time they allow students to spend on work placements, and in terms of whether or not they give students assignments from campus to be carried out in ‘practice’. However, while they can be different, all standard WIL models share one key feature ensuring that they are more alike than different. This is that they all apply the usual WIL design that splits students’ education into on-campus and work placement-based components. Building on what has been stated about this WIL design, a more detailed description of the emergence and contemporary role of Co-op will now be outlined.

2.1.1 The Co-op WIL model in the past and the present

To understand the past and present role of Co-op, it is important to consider the historical context in which Co-op first emerged at the University of Cincinnati in 1906. At that time, the education of many professions had globally to an
increasing extent shifted away from the *old apprenticeship system*⁴ that had long been used for professional preparation (Billett, 2016) to HEIs, which then usually only offered students ‘theory-based’ training. It is vital to note two aspects of this shift. In many professions, it mainly took place from the mid nineteenth to early twentieth century, a time when there was, in the western world, a particularly strong belief that ‘theory’ was the form of knowledge needed to become a good professional (Carr, 2006). In this regard, this shift can be seen to reflect the belief that what students needed to become good professionals was the ‘theory’ that was, in this connection, assumed to be best learnt at HEIs. The other aspect is that the second industrial revolution, which is generally dated between 1870 and 1914, provided scope for the shift mentioned above. This industrial revolution primarily took place in Britain, Germany, and the US, but also in other countries such as France and Japan. The second industrial revolution did not only expand the manufacturing industry in these countries but changed the associated working conditions. This created an increased demand for people with an engineering education geared towards this industry (Sovilla & Varty, 2011), and one reason for why engineering education was moved to HEIs is that they could mass-produce the engineering graduates needed to meet this increased demand.

Here, it is vital to note that while the second industrial revolution provided scope for what can be described as a general ‘academisation’ of professional education, this revolution also facilitated the emergence of Co-op. Against the background of changed working conditions in the manufacturing industry in the early twentieth century, some voices in the US questioned why the engineering education offered by HEIs typically only included ‘theory-based’ training. These voices argued that to ensure sufficient preparation for these working conditions, engineering students needed training in ‘practice’ as well so that a *bridge* between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ could be created. One of these voices was a former Dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati (UC) named Herman Schneider who emphasised that the engineering education at UC should use what he labelled *Cooperative Education* or *Co-op*. The Co-op WIL model was also introduced in UC’s engineering education in 1906. However, many academics were very sceptical of this introduction because Co-op involved working life in students’ education (Sovilla & Varty, 2011). This scepticism is reflected in the following statement that UC’s Board of Trustees directed to Herman Schneider in 1906:

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⁴ The basic idea behind this model is that a so-called apprentice shall learn a profession by working alongside an expert.
We hereby grant the right to Dean Schneider to try, for one year, this cooperative idea of education... for the failure of which, we will not assume responsibility (University of Cincinnati’s Board of Trustees, 1906, as cited in Reilly 2006, p. 16).

Furthermore, while Co-op emerged as way to provide a bridge between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ for engineering students, it also emerged to fulfil other purposes. For instance, a model of Co-op, whereby half of a student cohort were on campus while the other were on work placements, was used when Co-op was first introduced at the University of Cincinnati. This model ensured that industry could be fully manned while university courses were ongoing. It also made it possible for industry to educate their employees without losing any manpower, while at the same time ensuring that HEIs could increase the enrolment of students without having to provide more space on campus (Park, 1943). Moreover, as Co-op offered students paid work placements from the start, this meant that it ensured that less privileged young men could afford to attend higher education and become the engineers that were needed in the manufacturing industry (Park, 1943). At the University of Cincinnati, Co-op was first introduced in degree programmes in mechanical, chemical, and electrical engineering. By 1909, the University of Cincinnati also applied Co-op in their civil engineering degree programme. In 1909, North Eastern University began to use Co-op in their engineering education and by 1920 seven institutions offering bachelor’s degrees and one technical institution in the US were using Co-op in engineering degree programmes. In 1919, the University of Cincinnati began to use Co-op in their business degree programmes and by 1921, Co-op became even more broadly used as Antioch College, a liberal arts college, began to apply the Cooperative Plan of Education (Sovilla & Varty, 2011).

However, since its emergence, Co-op has not grown steadily but has had its ups and downs in popularity both in the US and on a global level. Currently, Co-op is common in certain countries and/or at certain HEIs in different countries rather than being a standard WIL model which is common worldwide. For instance, Co-op is common in Canada, Australia, and Thailand and rather common in the US. Some HEIs that are currently famous for using Co-op in many of their degree programmes are the University of Cincinnati, USA, the University of Waterloo, Canada, North Eastern University, USA, Drexel University, USA, Georgia Institute of Technology, USA, and Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand. Some HEIs only use Co-op in a few degree programmes, for instance University West, Sweden which currently uses Co-op in degree programmes in engineering, information science and economics (University West, 2020a). Furthermore, the emergence of Co-op at the University of Cincinnati in 1906 shared a common denominator with the emergences of Co-op at a) the University of Waterloo in 1957 and b) University West in 1989. By this, I mean that the emergence of Co-op at the latter two HEIs was also connected to a demand for engineers who were
educated to work in industry (see Bramwell et al., 2008, for a description of the emergence of Co-op at the University of Waterloo, and Blomqvist 2004, for a description of Co-op’s emergence at University West). One final aspect that I want to emphasise before an overview of WIL research is outlined is that the Co-op WIL model, and the usual WIL design in general, have been and are still used to meet both local, national, and global labour market needs. For instance, in Sweden there has been a demand for educated teachers in recent years. To meet this demand and ensure that more people apply to teaching degree programmes, some HEIs have introduced a work-integrated teacher training where students combine on-campus training with paid work in schools. Two examples are University West and Dalarnas University (University West, 2020b; Dalarnas University, 2020).

2.2 Research overview

This overview is not intended to cover all topics in contemporary WIL research but outlines research that is of interest to this thesis and explains the field of research into WIL. Furthermore, it is key to note that contemporary WIL research has been said to be more focused on promoting the possible benefits of the setup I label the usual WIL design than on problematising the disadvantages that this design can have (Rowe, 2015; Zegwaard, 2015). Rowe (2015) stated that this could be because the mix of ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training that this WIL design offers is easily seen as purely beneficial and therefore more often taken for granted than criticised. The literature searches conducted throughout my thesis work support the claim of Rowe (2015) and Zegwaard (2015) that WIL research tends to primarily promote the possible benefits of the usual WIL design. For instance, these searches indicate that much WIL research takes for granted that this WIL design bridges the so-called theory-practice gap for students because it provides the mix of these forms of training that is typically not offered through the traditional form of higher education. However, these searches also show that there is a fair amount of research that problematises how this WIL design is organised and understood, even though this body of research is smaller than that promoting the design. This research overview first introduces topics in research that seek to promote the usual WIL design. I call this WIL promoting research. Thereafter, I outline topics in research problematising a) how this WIL design is used and understood and/or b) that discuss other possible ways of designing WIL. I call this critical WIL research. While the studies outlined in the WIL promoting research section support the usual WIL design, this does not mean that these studies emphasise that there are no problems at all with this design. What this means is that these studies are in overall support of this WIL design. Similarly, the studies outlined in the critical WIL research section do not emphasise that everything about the usual WIL design is bad but criticise specific
features of how this design is understood and used. Furthermore, before topics in WIL promoting research are outlined, certain clarifying remarks needs to be made. Research into the form of higher education that I call WIL is carried out under different labels. Thus, to also find research which does not use the WIL label, I did not use WIL only as a search term. Some other search terms I used are Work-integrated Education, Work-based Learning/Education, Sandwich Education, Practice-based Education/Learning, Experiential Learning/Education, Dual Education, Work-Study Programmes. Finally, it is vital to note that while the research that will now be outlined focuses on what I call the usual WIL design, this research does not use the term usual WIL design per se, but for instance placement WIL (Jackson, 2017).

2.2.1 WIL promoting research

A contemporary trend in this research is to reject the traditional debate about whether ‘theory-based’ or ‘practice-based’ training should form the basis for the education of professionals and focus on two key research topics that use slightly different phrasings to promote the same overall message. The topics are a) how ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ can be integrated (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Allen & Wright, 2014; Oonk et al., 2015) and b) how the theory-practice gap can be bridged (Spouse 2001; Marshall et al., 2005; Anderson & Freebody, 2012; Hatlevik, 2012; Álvarez, 2015). The message of these research topics is that the ‘theory’ and the ‘practice’ which are here said to be learnt on campus and on work placements respectively shall be united in a reciprocal way whereby they give back to each other. HEIs and the employers providing students with placements are, in connection with the two stated research topics, often presented as partners that shall collaborate to give students a bridge between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ (see e.g. Gellerstedt et al., 2015, who discussed this partnership perspective). Furthermore, in WIL promoting research, this partnership is currently often emphasised as not only good for students’ learning but also for HEIs and the employers with which they collaborate. For instance, it is presented as giving HEIs access to the latest development in ‘practice’ and providing employers operating outside HEIs with the latest developments in ‘theory’. WIL promoting research also continues to typically describe the theory-practice gap as a problem that the usual WIL design solves, although some research argues that this gap is not a problem but rather something that students learn from (see e.g. Moss et al., 2010; Allan & Evans, 2019).

To further understand WIL promoting research, it is vital to note that this research criticises a dualistic view that traditionally has had a strong hold in ‘academia’ and that continues to be established but also questioned inside and outside of ‘academia’. This view is that it is the research-based knowledge referred to as ‘theory’, or sometimes formal theory, and not ‘practice’, that shall form the
basis for the education of professionals. WIL promoting research criticises this ‘theory-favouring’ view because a basis for this research is that training in ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are equally important for learning a profession. One example of research criticising the aforementioned view are the studies problematising a curriculum design which has been said to form the basis for the modern university (Schön, 1987) and which clearly favours ‘theory’. This curriculum design has been called a) technical rationality (Schön, 1983) b) the application-of-theory model (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999) and c) the applied science approach (Carr, 1986). The curriculum is designed to ensure that students shall learn ‘theory’ and techniques for applying it on campus before they go into work placements and apply ‘theory’ (Zeichner, 2010). In other words, this curriculum design favours ‘theory’ because it seeks to ensure that ‘theory’ shall steer how students practise a profession on placements.

Furthermore, while WIL promoting research generally emphasises that ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ learning are equally important, there is also a trend in this research to idealise ‘practice-based’ learning, also referred to as ‘experiential’, workplace and ‘real-world’ learning. Boud (2012) argued that this research tends to romanticise how ‘practice-based’ learning gives students a ‘real world context’ that in a straightforward way makes it easy for them to translate ‘theory’ into ‘practice’. Sometimes the idealisation of ‘practice-based’ learning in WIL promoting research also comes at the expense of ‘theory-based’ learning, which is also referred to as classroom, scholastic or on-campus learning. For instance, Raelin (2016) argued that ‘real world’ learning rather than classroom learning provides the best preparation for management work. Herrington and Herrington (2007) emphasised that ‘scholastic’ learning typically lacks a clear ‘real world connection’. This way of idealising ‘practice-based’ learning at the expense of ‘theory-based’ training reproduces the traditional scepticism that HEIs, or schools in general, do not offer a form of learning that is ‘realistic’ enough (Masschelein & Simons, 2013). Here, it is important to note that the tendency in WIL promoting research to idealise ‘practice-based’ learning at the expense of ‘theory-based’ learning is not as prevalent as the trend in this research to emphasise that these forms of learning are equally important. One reason for why this research idealises the former way of learning, sometimes at the expense of the latter, could be that WIL researchers seek to distance themselves from the traditional academic view that ‘theory-based’ learning is superior to ‘practice-based’ learning.

Another contemporary topic in WIL promoting research is graduate employability, an idea that continues to be debated in research into higher education in general. WIL promoting research generally emphasises that WIL fosters employable graduates (see e.g. Jackson, 2017, 2018; Zegwaard & Rowe, 2019) because WIL gives students a bridge between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ (Jackson, 2015). As stated, the term employable graduate is here often ascribed a work readiness meaning
and thereby understood to mean a graduate prepared for the daily work of a profession and for working life in general (Lau et al., 2018). Furthermore, both WIL promoting research and other higher education research emphasising the value of fostering graduate employability tend to highlight that students shall acquire so-called employability skills, such as teamworking, communication and learning how to learn. These skills are also referred to as work readiness (Abdullah-Al-Mamun, 2012) or job readiness skills (Shafie & Nayan, 2010). It is also currently common for governments and employers worldwide (as well as NGOs and IGOs) to call for HEIs to foster graduates with such skills (Crisp et al., 2019). Furthermore, while WIL promoting research continues to emphasise that the usual WIL design fosters employable graduates because it bridges the so-called theory-practice gap for students, there is no conclusive research showing that the main effect of this WIL design is that it bridges this gap. It is, amongst other things, because this research continues to uncritically spread the conclusion that this WIL design primarily has this effect that it is, arguably, vital to bring this conclusion into question. Considering this, I will proceed to the next section of the research overview.

### 2.2.2 Critical WIL research

A contemporary topic in this research is to problematise dualistic interpretations of what theory and practice mean and how these concepts relate to each other. For instance, Taguchi (2007) questioned that theory is a form of knowledge that exists outside of ‘practice’ until students apply it there and emphasised that the work practices students encounter on placements are not ‘atheoretical’ but embedded with various theories in the form of ideas and principles et cetera. Furthermore, Taguchi (2007) stated that theories are always produced through some form of institutional practice, for instance through research practices but also through the daily practices that people engage in when performing non-research work. Carr (2006) similarly emphasised that both formal (research-based) and informal ideas, principles, and models et cetera are produced in and through institutional practices. Hill and Morf (2000) questioned the Cartesian dualistic view that there are two isolated forms of knowledge, one that is called theory and that derives from thinking, and one that is called practice and that derives from bodily action. In connection with research problematising dualistic interpretations of what theory and practice mean, there is also some research criticising the distinction made whereby ‘academia’ means the university domain and the ‘real world’ means the working-life domain that exists outside university. For instance, Andrew et al. (2010) examined teachers in a nursing degree programme whose role on campus was to help students bridge the so-called theory-practice gap. They argued that because these teachers often use this academic-real world distinction to emphasise that on-campus training is not the ‘real world of nursing’,
they may well widen rather than bridge this gap for the students (Andrew et al., 2010). Orr (2002) problematised that by implying that there is an academia and a real world, said distinction creates a polarised discourse that encourages people to polarise and create gaps between university and other spheres of society. Research, such as that by Coll et al. (2011) and Jackson (2015) also illustrated that it is not uncommon for students to engage in this polarisation by emphasising that on-campus training is not ‘real world-like’. In this thesis, I point to the problem that the idea of academia and the real world continues to shape the WIL discourse. This problem is, as stated, to a certain extent touched upon in critical WIL research. However, neither this problem nor the fact that the usual WIL design embodies and reproduces a discourse about this idea are given much attention in this critical research or in WIL research in general. Furthermore, neither critical WIL research nor WIL research in general pay much attention to how the very terminology that this idea represents a key element of, and that I examine in this thesis, is institutionalised in the usual WIL design. Thus, this thesis arguably contributes to WIL research by focusing on a general topic that is often ignored in this research.

Returning to contemporary topics in critical WIL research, there is a body of research problematising the usual WIL design. Focusing on teacher education, Korthagen and Kessels (1999) problematised that it is not unusual that students study theories on campus that are not used by teachers at the school where they have their work placements, and that they thereby experience the so-called theory-practice gap. In the context of nursing education, Miller et al. (2017) argued similarly that the gap is a product of the fact that it is not uncommon for there to be a mismatch between what is taught on campus about nursing and how nursing is practised. Discussing teacher education, Gustafsson (2004) emphasised that there is always a risk that on-campus and work placement-based training become so isolated that the so-called theory-practice gap is widened rather than bridged. Herrington and Herrington (2007) argued that on-campus training has traditionally typically been carried out in such ways that students are taught research-based theories through decontextualised lectures and seminars that often have a limited connection to their work placement-based training. They also declared that this limited connection makes it hard for students to translate these ‘theories into practice’ while they are on work placements (Herrington & Herrington, 2007). Kessels and Korthagen (1996) and Korthagen (2010) argued that the problem of transferring research-based theory into ‘practice’ also has to do with the fact that some of these theories are abstract rather than situation-specific and thereby difficult to relate to a specific context.

Some research, such as that by Allen and Wright (2014) and Nguyen (2019) discussed that the usual WIL design has the ambivalent function of both creating
connections and disconnections between what students learn on campus and on work placements. While there is a fair amount of critical research that touches upon this ambivalent function and/or problematises how this WIL design can contribute to creating the so-called theory-practice gap, there is much more WIL research emphasising that this WIL design bridges this gap. This means that this critical research occupies a rather marginalised position in WIL research, and this thesis can thereby be seen to focus on a section of WIL research in need of greater attention. Furthermore, there is a difference between existing research concerning how the usual WIL design can contribute to creating the gap and this thesis. This research touches upon the link that I argue exists between the dualistic nature of the usual WIL design and the so-called theory-practice gap. However, it does not conduct a more in-depth analysis of this link and its modern history, nor does it describe how the usual WIL design institutionalises the theory-practice terminology. Thus, I argue that this thesis adds to contemporary WIL research by going deeper into an overall issue that is touched upon but often continues to be rather marginalised in WIL research.

Research problematising that the usual WIL design can make it difficult for students to find a connection between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ has also discussed complementary alternatives to this WIL design, and alternatives are currently also in use. Many of these differ from the usual WIL design in the sense that they do not locate students’ education to two different physical locations but to one place. For instance, many HEIs worldwide often have so-called learning centres or laboratories on campus. A key focus of these centres or laboratories is to provide physical and/or virtual simulations of so-called ‘real world-like’ learning activities that students shall engage in to become prepared for the daily practices of a profession (Chernikova et al., 2020). In this preparation, these centres et cetera also give students the possibility to practise the research-based theories they have studied in so-called ‘real world-like’ learning environments. It is also vital to note that learning centres on campus are not only a contemporary phenomenon. In 1896, Dewey introduced what he referred to as a laboratory school (Dewey, 1904) at the University of Chicago’s Department of Education. This laboratory school was a form of research and demonstration centre where student teachers, through hands-on activities, could try out how research-based educational principles could be used to teach pupils about specific subject matter knowledge (Dewey, 1904).

Another complementary alternative to the usual WIL design that is emphasised in some WIL research and in use are Professional Development Schools (PDSs) (Martin & Mulvihill, 2020). These are primary/secondary schools collaborating with one or more HEIs, mainly to reach two aims (see e.g. Abdal-Haqq, 1997). One is to ensure that the ways of teaching used at a school are founded on a combination of new research and the ideas, thoughts, and methods of schoolteachers. The
other aim is to give student teachers a place where they can practise the research-based theories they study in daily teaching work (Korthagen, 2010). PDSs have been identified as places where students can really bridge the so-called theory-practice gap (see e.g. Furlong, 1996). However, research shows that PDSs have not been that successful because there have still often been gaps between what students are taught on campus and at these PDSs (see e.g. Zeichner, 2007, 2010). Zeichner (2010) argued that a key reason for this is that PDSs have failed to create a partnership whereby faculty members are really aware of how schoolteachers work, and the schoolteachers are really aware of what research-based theories students are taught. Gorodetsky and Barak (2008) presented a similar explanation for why PDSs often fail to bridge the gap. They argued that PDSs often reproduce the traditional culture whereby ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training are treated as separate endeavours and faculty members and schoolteachers are involved with the former and the latter way of training respectively but not really aware of each other’s work. Furthermore, the key idea behind PDSs, namely that HEIs should collaborate with employers outside HEIs where specific professions usually work, has not only been applied to teacher training. For instance, Rystedt and Gustafsson (2013) studied a nursing degree programme that was based on such a collaboration and in which not only the ‘practice-based’ but also most of the ‘theory-based’ training took place in health care settings. They showed that while these forms of training took place in the same health care settings, they were often treated as separate endeavours, which made it difficult for students to integrate them (Rystedt & Gustafsson, 2013).

Moreover, a current theme in critical WIL research, as well as in WIL promoting research, is to use the concept of third space, also referred to as hybrid space, to discuss how WIL can be designed to bridge the so-called theory-practice gap for students. The concepts of third space and hybrid space are sometimes used synonymously and sometimes differently. I do not distinguish between these concepts, but in order to apply a more consistent use of language, I will hereinafter typically only use the concept of third space. Research has provided more than one definition of what a third space means in a WIL context (Forgasz et al., 2018) and this thesis draws on one established definition that emphasises the following. A third space is not an environment that mirrors the institutional environments established at HEIs or the institutional environments established at the workplaces outside HEIs where the professions students’ study for usually

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5 Here, institutional environments mean environments that are specific to a certain type of institution and founded on the specific practices of this type of institution, and the ideas, norms, values, customs, and ways of talking and thinking et cetera that these practices are shaped by, enact, and reproduce.
work. Rather, it is a hybrid of the institutional environments established at HEIs and in these workplaces that a) operates at a distance from these environments to represent something different from them and b) is co-created and equally shared by faculty members and professionals from these workplaces (Gorodetsky & Barak, 2008; Youens et al., 2014; Forgasz et al., 2018). There are two ideas as to why such a hybrid could avoid creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. One is that it would be an environment through which students meet with faculty members and these professionals to discuss how theories in various shapes and forms are vital elements of daily work practices. The other is that, by keeping a distance from the institutional environments established at HEIs and in workplaces outside HEIs, this hybrid would be able to avoid reproducing them and a tradition that, as stated, has been said to contribute to the creation of the aforementioned gap. I here refer to the tradition whereby faculty members and professionals from these workplaces are responsible for on-campus and work placement-based training respectively, without being truly aware of what goes on within the form of training that they are not themselves responsible for (Gorodetsky & Barak, 2008; Zeichner, 2010).

Furthermore, research has provided examples of what third spaces could look like. For instance, Gorodetsky and Barak (2008) discussed an edge community in teacher education, meaning a learning environment that is shared between faculty members, schoolteachers and pre-service teachers and operates at the edges of, but is different from, the learning environments pre-service teachers encounter on campus and in schools (see also Forgasz et al., 2018, for more examples of what third spaces could mean). This edge community was a workshop on campus where pre-service teachers, schoolteachers and faculty members discussed various ideas and principles et cetera about how teaching could be practised (Gorodetsky & Barak, 2008). However, while the design of third spaces has been discussed, there is still some ambiguity in terms of what they could look like and how they could be realised.

Moreover, third spaces of the nature stated above have not become established institutional arrangements in students’ education, and one possible key reason for this has received limited attention in WIL research. What I refer to is that it may be the case that spaces of this nature can only become established arrangements if they are given a dedicated place (here meaning a physical and/or virtual habitat) where their institutional practices can take hold and grow at a distance from the institutional environments established at HEIs and workplaces outside HEIs (see e.g. Foucault, 1973, who argued that new environments have often emerged and become established due to the fact that they have had domains where they could take hold). This thesis adds to WIL research by discussing this reason, by problematising the possibility of establishing such physical and/or virtual habitats.
as countersites to the usual WIL design, and by discussing what they could look like. In this thesis, I label such potential countersites third places for learning professions.

Considering this, I proceed to discuss a final topic in critical WIL research that is of interest to this thesis. The topic is to problematise how the employability agenda directed at HEIs spreads the work readiness interpretation of graduate employability whereby employable graduates means graduates ready to operate in the daily practices of a profession and in working life in general. Clarke (2018) emphasised that there is need for both WIL research and HEIs to go beyond the strong focus on WIL fostering graduates who are ready for the daily work practices of a profession upon graduation. Trede and McEwen (2012) problematised the dominant position that said work readiness interpretation holds in a WIL context by emphasising that graduate employability is not only about being work-ready but also about being critical and creative and thereby able to criticise and transform the established work practices of a profession. Crisp et al. (2019) stated, similarly, that to be employable you do not only need to be a work-ready but also a work-changing graduate, i.e. a graduate that is not only able to work effectively in but also able to transform the established work practices of a profession.

It is also vital to note here the current position of the critical WIL research that problematises the work readiness interpretation of graduate employability. While a fair amount of such research exists, the literature searches I conducted indicate that the body of WIL research that promotes WIL for fostering work-ready graduates is much greater than that of which problematises this interpretation. This is not strange considering that, since the early twentieth century emergence of the usual WIL design under the labels of Sandwich Education or Co-op, WIL has generally been said to foster work readiness (Sovilla & Varty, 2011). Here, it is important to note two things. Outside of WIL research, there is a great deal of higher education research problematising this interpretation and/or the employability agenda in general (see Tomlinson, 2012, 2017; Ek et al., 2013; Tran, 2015).

Furthermore, the employability idea is not only featured in higher education policies or the marketing discourse of HEIs where it is often labelled graduate employability. Rather, since this idea emerged as a policy notion in the early twentieth century, it has featured in other contexts as well (Gazier, 1998). For instance, it has often featured as a labour market policy notion, and the idea has a tendency to be used in a vague way in the contexts where it is used (Gazier 1998; McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005; Sin & Neave, 2016). Much contemporary research has focused on how employers and governments have globally since the mid-1990s urged people to accept and follow a neoliberal interpretation of employability (see
e.g. Garsten & Jacobsson, 2004; McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005; Letts 2019). This interpretation states that contemporary working life changes rapidly and cannot offer secure employment conditions and that it is largely up to people themselves to deal with this instability by becoming and staying employable. Here, employable means always being ready and able to adapt to changes in working life (Garsten & Jacobsson, 2004).

Furthermore, research has problematised how the concept of lifelong learning is used in connection with the neoliberal interpretation of employability to promote the message that peoples’ ability to engage in lifelong learning is the key to staying employable (see e.g. Garsten & Jacobsson, 2004; Fejes, 2010; Volles, 2016). This thesis recognises the dominant position that this neoliberal interpretation of employability has in today’s discourse (see e.g. Sin & Neave, 2016) and adds to contemporary research by focusing on a topic concerning graduate employability that is typically neither recognised in WIL research nor in graduate employability research. The topic is that the WIL discourse has long ascribed a dualistic meaning to graduate employability that arguably, in decisive ways, primarily contributes to creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. This topic, which study III focuses on, constitutes an important part of a thesis that problematises the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and of the usual WIL design. Problematising this dualistic nature is important, partly because WIL research has a strong tendency to promote this WIL design as a solution to this gap, and partly because a more in-depth problematisation of the link between the aforementioned dualistic nature and the gap is missing from WIL research. Having said this, I will proceed to the next chapter and describe the Foucault-inspired theoretical perspective applied in this thesis.
Theoretical perspective

This chapter has four main sections. The first introduces the concept of discourse and discourse analysis as an analytical approach. To help clarify how this thesis draws on the work of Foucault, the second section provides a brief introduction to his work. The third section outlines why this thesis is grounded in said work while the fourth outlines the analytical concepts on which the theoretical perspective is founded. Most of these concepts are from the Foucauldian toolbox, i.e. concepts used by Foucault. However, some are not from his toolbox but rather concepts compatible with the Foucauldian concepts that I apply.

3.1 The concept of discourse and discourse analysis

Two things are vital to note in the beginning of this section. One is that a key premise behind the concept of discourse is that peoples' language use follows various patterns as they interact in different contexts, and a discourse analysis can thus be said to be an analysis of such patterns (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). The other is that there is neither a universally accepted definition of discourse nor a universally agreed upon recipe for how to conduct discourse analysis. Rather, there are many different definitions of discourse, and many different approaches to discourse analysis. Many of these definitions and approaches are interdisciplinary, i.e. founded on a mix of perspectives from different academic disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, and psychology. However, there are also several definitions of discourse and several approaches to discourse analysis that are primarily founded on perspectives from a specific discipline (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

For instance, researchers inspired by linguistics often use a narrower definition of discourse whereby discourse refers to spoken language (talk), written language (text), visual language (i.e. images) and/or to non-verbal language (such as gestures). Embedded in this definition is the standpoint that discourse (here meaning language in general) does not permeate all spheres of the 'social world' but is only manifested in the form of 'text', 'talk', or other semiotic (meaning-making) systems such as 'images' or 'gestures'. In connection with this view, there are said to exist concrete material and social aspects of society, such as the economy, that operate according to its own logics rather than being...
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6 This is a discourse analytical term for the world that people live in, also referred to as ‘our’ world (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).
primarily governed by spoken, written, visual or non-verbal language use (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Some approaches to discourse analysis which are founded on the aforementioned linguistic-oriented and narrow definition of discourse focus merely on how language is structured on a grammatical level, while others apply this narrow definition of discourse with a view to illustrating the social function of language use. Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a prime example of the latter approach (Fairclough, 1993). There are also more inclusive definitions of discourse emphasising that the discursive domain, which here means the domain where language exists and operates, goes beyond spoken, written, visual and non-verbal language. These definitions are for instance often applied in social science research and highlight that discourse (language) is, in various forms, embedded in all our institutions and practices (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). For instance, Ernesto Laclau and Chantel Mouffe’s Discourse Theory emphasises that language in the form of ideas, norms, and values et cetera permeates all spheres of the ‘social world’ (see e.g. Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). In his work, Foucault used different interpretations of the scope of the discursive domain. Sometimes he emphasised that there are non-discursive domains, such as economic practices (Foucault, 1972). However, he also argued that institutions are part of the discursive domain because their practices are embedded with discourse in the form of ideas et cetera (Foucault, 1990).

Furthermore, while Laclau and Mouffe’s, and some of Foucault’s, interpretations of the scope of the discursive domain are in this sense more inclusive than Fairclough’s, all these interpretations are based on a shared social constructionist standpoint. This is that language is a medium through which people come to understand and ascribe meaning to the world rather than a medium through which people can passively and neutrally depict an external world (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

In the sense that Laclau and Mouffe’s, Foucault’s and Fairclough’s interpretations of discourse are based on this standpoint, they can be seen as social constructionist approaches to discourse analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). A shared feature of such discourse analysis approaches is to problematise established ways of talking about one or more topics and how these exclude other possible ways of ascribing meaning to these topics. In this problematisation, the focus is often both on illustrating a) what is problematic about certain established ways of talking about a topic and b) that these ways of talking could be complemented by other ways of talking that offer different perspectives on the topic (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Some researchers using a social constructionist approach to discourse analysis examine discourse with a ‘big’ “D” whereas others examine discourse with a ‘small’ “d” (Gee, 2015). Here, a big “D” discourse does not only refer to a set of related ways of talking and thinking about one or more topics that are
broadly used, but also to the institutional arrangement(s) spreading these related ways of talking and thinking. A discourse with a small “d” is a term for the ‘language-in-use’ that people apply in daily interactions (Gee, 2015), and researchers who examine how people make use of language in their day-to-day interaction, can be seen to conduct discourse analysis with a small “d”. Furthermore, many discourse analysts examine both the widely used ways of talking that belong to a big “D” discourse and peoples’ daily language use (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Take Foucault as an example. He examined how established institutional arrangements ensured that specific ways of speaking about one or more topics became widely used in society and infiltrated people’s day-to-day interactions to have concrete bearings on their daily lives (Foucault, 1990).

3.2 Foucault’s work

The work of Foucault cannot be pinned down as a scholarship with one coherent direction. A key reason for this is that he did not only use several different analytical concepts, and different interpretations of these, throughout his work, but also different analytical approaches to study various topics (see e.g. Börjesson, 2003). This does not mean that there is no consistency at all to Foucault’s work, but rather that there is a great deal of variation to it. This section points out some overall features of Foucault’s work to help the reader understand both this thesis’s orientation towards problematisation and the theoretical perspective that I apply. One of these features was Foucault’s interest in problematising established institutional arrangements and practices by examining the differentiating categorisations that a) they make use of, and b) have become so natural to us (people in general) that we take them for granted (Foucault, 1972).

Another key element to Foucault’ work was that he wanted to problematisate and show that statements that established institutions promote as true and neutral by labelling them ‘knowledge’ are not free from power. In fact, they are embedded with power and exercise power. To emphasise that power operates through and is involved in both the production and distribution of the statements that these institutions label knowledge, Foucault used the concept power/knowledge. He also highlighted that it is in the discursive domain, i.e. the domain where language operates, that this coupling of power and knowledge come to life (Foucault, 1980). According to one of his broader interpretations of the scope of this domain, i.e. that institutions and their practices do not lie outside but belong to the domain, Foucault (1990) emphasised that power is a force that runs through the entire social body. In this section of the theoretical perspective chapter, I will neither elaborate further on Foucault’s interpretation of the intrinsic link between power and knowledge, nor will I further explain what he meant by power and knowledge.
in this connection. Explanations of this are outlined further on in this chapter. To further understand Foucault’s work it is important to note that his work is often divided into an early phase, where he applied his archaeological approach to discourse analysis, and a later phase, where he applied his genealogical approach to discourse analysis. There are different interpretations of what these two approaches mean, and different understandings of how they relate and differ from one another. Both are approaches through which Foucault conducted historical discourse analysis. His archaeological approach can be said to be about examining the archive at various historical times to compare how a group of statements that form a discourse have at different times followed different ‘orders of discourse’ for how to speak of the topics that this discourse speaks of (Olssen, 2014). These orders do not only regulate what can and cannot be said about specific topics in a specific context and at a certain time, but also who has the right to speak of a topic, and when and where it can be spoken of (Foucault, 1971).

Foucault’s genealogical approach can be said to be about exploring one or more descents (historical backgrounds) of a current figure, e.g. an idea or an institutional arrangement, with a view to problematise the role that this figure has today. This problematisation seeks to bring into question those ideas and institutional arrangements et cetera that are established at present and often taken for granted. As the last section of this chapter focuses on Foucault’s genealogical approach, I will not elaborate more on this approach here. However, there is a need to clarify that I do not, in a general sense, apply an archaeological approach where I look through entire archives of specific historical times. Rather, in studies II and III, where I conduct a historical analysis, I use Foucault’s genealogical approach together with a) his archaeological interpretation of the concepts discourse and order of discourse and b) Foucault’s (1990) interpretation of power. These interpretations of discourse, order of discourse and power are applied in study I as well but not a genealogical discourse analysis because this study only focuses on the present. The interpretations of these concepts that I apply are explained later in this chapter. Because Foucault did not provide any fixed template for how to conduct an archaeological or a genealogical discourse analysis it is up to each researcher to explain to what degree and how they apply one or both these approaches when conducting a discourse analysis.

Furthermore, while Foucault was generally interested in the how question, for instance how a discourse is ordered, he was also interested in the why question, for instance why a topic that had not been talked about before suddenly emerged

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7 This is a Foucauldian term for all the documentation that has been left behind by a specific historical period or by a specific society within this period (Foucault, 1972).
as a much-debated topic at a certain point in history. One aspect I have touched upon but want to clarify further is that there are different readings of Foucault’s work. For instance, a critical discourse analysis (CDA) reading that is associated with Fairclough and emphasises that Foucault made a distinction between discursive and non-discursive practices. There is also a reading of Foucault linked to Laclau and Mouffe’s Discourse Theory, which I apply in this thesis. This reading does not make a distinction between the discursive and the non-discursive but emphasises that all institutions belong to the discursive domain because all their practices are shaped by and (re)produce language use in various shapes and forms.

3.3 Why this thesis is grounded in Foucault’s work

This thesis is generally grounded in Foucault’s work because his orientation towards problematisation forms an apt basis for achieving the two problematisation-oriented aims of this thesis (for a description of these aims see page 20). While Foucault’s work is thus an apt source of inspiration for thesis, there are also other discourse analytical approaches that I could have used. For instance, the work of Laclau and Mouffe, Fairclough or Derrida could have been used to problematise the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and of the usual WIL design. However, I argue that the Foucauldian toolbox offers a set of analytical tools that are specifically suited to this thesis. For instance, Foucault’s archaeological and genealogical approaches both offer tools for how to conduct historical discourse analyses. This suits this thesis because the dualistic thinking rooted in the aforementioned instances and WIL design has a long history.

Furthermore, I argue that Foucault’s archaeological interpretation of discourse and order of discourse offers a suitable analytical lens for problematising the dualistic order of discourse of the theory-practice terminology. Derrida’s work on the deconstruction of (western) binary oppositions could have been used to problematise how this terminology uses concepts such as theory and practice and academia and real world as binary oppositions, i.e. as opposite terms (see e.g. Derrida & Caputo, 1997). However, as the focus of Derrida’s work was on relationships within or between texts rather than the link between texts and the context which they form part of and contribute to producing, I argue that his work is in that sense not an apt basis for this thesis. This is because this thesis focuses on how the theory-practice terminology operates both through spoken and written instances and their institutional embodiment, i.e. the usual WIL design. Foucault’s (1990) interpretation of how discourse is rooted in and (re)produced by institutions and their practices represents an apt analytical lens for this research focus. There is another reason why this thesis draws on the work of Foucault. His
relational view of power, which will soon be explained, is arguably suitable for exploring how power operates through the dualistic way of thinking about what theory and practice means, and about how they are related, that is spread through the theory-practice terminology

3.4 The analytical concepts applied

This section begins by outlining two key concepts from the Foucauldian toolbox, namely discourse and order of discourse. In this connection, I also explain the concept of figure of thought. This concept is not from the Foucauldian toolbox, but I use it to explain the four ideas that I examine (see page 18, for a reminder of which ideas I refer to here). Three other concepts from this toolbox that I use as analytical tools are also explained in this section, i.e. power and power/knowledge and will to knowledge. While I explain the concept of figure of thought and the aforementioned concepts from the Foucauldian toolbox, I also use this explanation to describe the theory-practice terminology, its institutional embodiment in the usual WIL design and the four ideas that I examine. In connection with these descriptions, I also explain other concepts that I use as analytical tools, namely the concepts of dualism (dualistic), space, place, and third place. I conclude this chapter by explaining Foucault’s genealogical approach to discourse analysis. It should be noted that when I use the phrasing theory-practice terminology in forthcoming headings of this chapter, I do not only refer to spoken and written instances of this terminology but also to its institutional embodiment, i.e. the usual WIL design.

3.4.1 Understanding the theory-practice terminology and the four ideas from a Foucault-inspired notion of discourse and order of discourse

Foucault used the concept of discourse in various ways throughout his work. I draw on two of them. One is that a discourse is a ‘group of statements’ that not only share the common denominator that they speak of the same objects (topics), but also specific patterns for how to speak of these topics (Foucault, 1972). For instance, a group of statements can use the same concepts and follow the same patterns for how to use these concepts when they address the topics they speak of. When referring to discourse as a group of statements, I apply the working definition that a discourse is a group of statements which has a main topic, but which also speak about other related topics. Take the WIL discourse as an example. Statements that belong to this discourse does not only speak about different standard WIL models that all apply the usual WIL design. Rather, when speaking of these models, these statements also discuss higher education and working life in general, and the traditional form of higher education whereby
students typically do not have work placements but only on-campus training. Here, it is important to clarify what a statement means in this connection. In the analysis of the empirical material, I am guided by the Foucault-inspired working definition that a statement is a spoken, written or gestural utterance, or an utterance spread through physical objects that ‘form the topic(s) of which it speaks’ (Foucault, 1972). This means that I did not see all utterances as statements. Take the two following utterances, ‘William sleeps’, and ‘William likes to sleep’, as an example. I classify the latter but not the former utterance as a statement because the former is not like the latter assigning William the identity of a person who likes to sleep and thus not contributing to the formation of who William is. Rather, the former utterance merely states that William sleeps. There is a specific reason for why I focus on statements, i.e. utterances that contribute to the formation of the topic(s) they speak of. This is because I problematise how the theory-practice terminology shapes how students and people in general talk about and understand what theory and practice mean and how they are related.

Considering this, I proceed to explain a Foucauldian interpretation of the concept order of discourse. In his archaeological work, Foucault (1971; 2002) argued that a group of statements that forms a discourse is structured according to different orders which he called orders of discourse, also referred to as discursive orders. Foucault (1971; 2002) also emphasised that there are different types of orders of discourse. For instance, he spoke about orders that regulate how the topics of a discourse are, and can be, spoken of, and about orders that regulate which topics you may speak of at a certain time and in a certain context. He also emphasised that there are orders which decide a) who can speak about specific topics at a certain time and in a certain context, and b) with what authority a person is able to do so (Foucault 1971; 2002).

Furthermore, discursive orders that regulate how the topics of a discourse can be addressed decide which statements are included in and excluded from a discourse respectively, and some orders of a discourse apply to all statements that belong to this discourse. However, a discourse can also have orders that only apply for some of the statements that belong to this discourse (Foucault 1971; 2002). When I in this thesis refer to a discourse as a group of statements that has a main topic but which also speaks about other topics, I see an order that regulates how all statements of a discourse address its main topic as a main discursive order. The theory-practice terminology which forms the basis for the WIL discourse has a main order of discourse which is dualistic. To clarify what this means, I first need to explain how the concept of dualism is understood in this thesis. I see dualism as a way of making sense of the world whereby the world is thought to consist of, and categorised into, a number of dyads, i.e. pairs of separate elements (e.g. good and evil) that are opposite in nature (see e.g. Lévi-Strauss, 1963; Webb, 2013). In
line with (Webb, 2013), I also take the theoretical standpoint that there is both antagonistic and harmonious dualism. The former is the idea that two elements are rivals that are completely incompatible or at least do not get along. The latter form of dualism, often labelled complementary dualism, is the idea that two elements are separate but complementary opposites that form a ‘harmonious whole’ when they are integrated. Webb (2013) stated that while both forms of dualism exist worldwide, antagonistic dualism has historically been more emphasised in the western world whereas the harmonious dualism is more associated with indigenous Andean thought. It is also according to a dualistic worldview that people typically categorise and talk about the world and different features of it by using concepts such as ‘mind and body’ and ‘thinking and doing’ as opposite terms, thereby portraying two things as opposites. This way of using concepts as opposite terms has notably been referred to as using binary oppositions (Lévi-Strauss, 1963; Dolphijn & Van der Tuin, 2012), or dualisms (see e.g. Garland-Levett, 2018).

There are also two basic ways in which people use binary oppositions, one that is based on an antagonistic dualism, and another which is founded on a harmonious dualism. The antagonistic way is to categorise two elements as rival opposites that are completely incompatible or at least do not match very well. The harmonious way is to categorise two elements as opposites that go together perfectly and give back to each other (Webb, 2013). Regardless of whether the former or the latter way of using binary oppositions is applied, the elements that are categorised as opposites are formed as something ‘other’ than each other, and in this way they are polarised. Furthermore, by being formed as something other than each other, one side of a binary opposition is given its meaning based on what it is not (Dolphijn & Van der Tuin, 2012). For instance, it is not uncommon for people to talk about ‘theory’ as something other than ‘practice’, and ‘practice’ as something other than ‘theory’.

Moreover, a standpoint I take in this thesis is that using concepts as opposite terms does, crucially, not only create polarising but also simplistic distinctions (see Dolphijn & Van der Tuin, 2012, for a similar standpoint). Drawing on what has been stated about dualism, I will now a) explain how the concept of order of discourse is applied in this thesis and b) add to the description of the dualistic order of discourse of the theory-practice terminology found in the introduction chapter. When I use the concept of order of discourse, I refer to an order for how language is used. By a dualistic order of discourse, I mean a way of using language whereby two concepts are used as opposite terms to indicate that two things are opposites or at least very different in nature. The dualistic order of discourse of this terminology uses concepts such as theory and practice, academia and real world, study and work et cetera as opposite terms. Furthermore, a key organising
feature of this discursive order is that it assembles concepts such as theory, theoretical, academia and education in one group and concepts such as practice, practical, real world, and work in another group (for a detailed description of the meanings ascribed to theory and practice in the stated terminology see page 16). The aforementioned discursive order also uses the concepts that belong to the first group as terms for entities that are associated with the university domain and the concepts that belong to the second group as terms for things that are linked to the working-life domain that exists outside university. In this manner, the concepts that belong to the same group are used in a synonymous way and placed in opposition to the concepts that belong to the other group. For instance, the concepts of ‘theory-based’ and ‘academic’ training are both used as terms for on-campus training and paired as opposites to the concepts of ‘practice-based’ and ‘real world’ training, which are both used as terms for work-placement-based training. The concept of academia is in the theory-practice terminology used as a term for the university domain, here tacitly understood as the place where researchers work to produce ‘theory’ and where students go to study ‘theory’. The real-world concept is in this terminology typically used as a term for the working-life domain that exists outside ‘academia’. In the theory-practice terminology, the real-world concept is sometimes used even more broadly as a tacit term for all spheres of society that exist outside a) formal school settings in general and b) the university domain in particular.

Another key feature of the dualistic order of discourse of this terminology is that it ensures that concepts such as theory and practice and academia and real world are sometimes spoken of from an antagonistic dualistic perspective and sometimes from a harmonious dualistic perspective. For instance, when spoken of from the former perspective, ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are described as rivals that are completely incompatible or do not get along very well. When spoken of from the latter perspective, ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are emphasised as elements that go together perfectly and that should be integrated. In line with said feature of the dualistic order of discourse of the theory-practice terminology, some ideas of this terminology are antagonistic, others are harmonious, and some have both antagonistic and harmonious features. To further describe the dualistic order of discourse on which this terminology is founded, a table including some of the conceptual pairings that in this order of discourse are used as opposite terms, is outlined on the following page.
I will now explain the second Foucault-inspired way I use the concept of discourse in this thesis. According to Foucault (1990), I see discourse, for instance in the form of a specific terminology and the set of ideas it consists of, as being rooted in, spread and (re)produced by institutions and their practices. More specifically, I see spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and its ideas as being institutionalised in and through, and therefore (re)produced by, the usual WIL design. For instance, by splitting students’ education into on-campus and off-campus components with a key intention of these components representing students’ training in ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ respectively, this WIL design reproduces the basic message of this terminology. The message is that you are taught ‘theory’ on campus and ‘practice’ on placements, a message spreading the false notion that on-campus training is all about studying ‘theory’ and placement-based training is about ‘practice’ only (here ‘practice’ means carrying out concrete work). Moreover, I see the four ideas that I examine as figures of thought (key ideas) of the theory-practice terminology that reinforce the dualistic order of discourse of this terminology which people use to talk about and shape how they understand the usual WIL design (see Asplund, 1979; Fejes, 2006, for a description of the concept of figure of thought).

Having said this, I will now clarify how and why the concepts of space, place and third place are used in this thesis. I use the concepts of ‘space’ and ‘place’ to help clarify how the very spatial organisation of the usual WIL design forms a dualistic setting that institutionalises the theory-practice terminology. I use the concept of ‘third place’ to problematise the possibility of establishing physical and/or virtual countersites to this WIL design that have a non-dualistic spatial organisation intended to give students non-dualistic experiences of what theory and practice

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Table 1: Examples of opposite terms in the theory-practice terminology
mean and of how they relate to each other. What I mean by a non-dualistic spatial organisation and non-dualistic experiences is not clarified here but in the discussion chapter. Instead, I will explain how I have used the concepts of space, place and third place. What I mean by space from a general perspective is the environment, physical and/or virtual, that we (people) live and act in and which is thereby embedded with meaning. When I discuss the usual WIL design and the countersites to this WIL design, I also use space as a term for a ‘scope’ or ‘opportunity’ for something to occur (Malpas, 1997), for instance, space for a particular way of talking or thinking to emerge. When I use the concept of place, I refer to a physical and/or virtual space (environment) that is established and that people in general associate with specific meanings and with specific activities. Inspired by Tuan (1979), I also apply the theoretical standpoint that places, which here means recognised physical and/or virtual environments, establish certain types of activities and the meanings that these activities are associated with. Some places, I call usual places. By this, I mean places that have a particularly established role in society. One such place is the scholastic domain; another is the working-life domain that exists outside of the scholastic domain. However, there are also examples of usual places that are virtual, such as Facebook, Instagram, and one could also argue the internet in general is a usual place in contemporary society.

To explain how I use the concept third place, I draw on specific elements of a) Foucault’s concept ‘heterotopia’, b) Edward Soja’s (1996) notion of ‘thirding’, and c) Homi Bhabha’s (1990) notion of ‘hybridity’. Foucault and Miskowiec (1986) emphasised that a heterotopia is a place that exists in relation to but outside our usual places and that has a relationship with, but represent something different than, the usual places it is connected to. They also emphasised that a heterotopia is a place where institutional practices from usual places that follow different or even differing ideals, customs and logics can be merged into new and different forms of practices (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986).

Drawing on these specific elements of Foucault’s concept heterotopia, I will begin to outline what third places means in this thesis. A basic feature of third places is that they are single physical and/or virtual places that exist in relation to yet outside two usual places that are often contrasted, such as the university domain and the working-life domain that exists outside university. Another basic feature of third places is that they can unite practices from two usual places that operate according to different or even differing ideals, customs, and logics. What I mean by unite here is not that third places are single physical and/or virtual sites where practices from different usual places can be combined but enacted separately. Rather, I see third places as physical and/or virtual sites where practices from different usual places can be merged into one or more practices that bear traces of yet represent something different than the practices that were originally merged.
together. In other words, I do not see third places as sites that represent a copy of two institutional environments that are established at two different usual places, but rather as hybrids of these environments that represent something new and different (see page 36 for a reminder of what institutional environments means in this connection). This also means that the standpoint taken in this thesis is that any place that is a copy of one or two institutional environments it is intended to merge into a new third environment is not a third place. Furthermore, one can say that what I mean by third places are physical and/or virtual sites that embody a way of talking and thinking that Edward Soja (1996) labelled thirding and Homi Bhabha (1990) labelled hybridity. This is a way of talking and thinking whereby you avoid categorising and seeing two things as separate opposites, and instead imagine the third perspective, namely that two things coexist in one or more hybrid shapes. Thus, what I mean by third places are sites that through their practices and through a specific language use can illustrate the non-dualistic perspective that two things which are often thought of as separate opposites are in fact coexisting in one or more shapes and forms.

3.4.2 Understanding the theory-practice terminology and the four ideas from a Foucault-inspired notion of power

Based on the standpoints a) that all institutions in society and their practices are embedded with discourse (here meaning language in various forms and shapes) and b) that power operates through discourse, Foucault (1990) argued that power exists ‘everywhere’. He also rejected two commonly held notions about the nature of power. One is that power is a ‘commodity’ which an institution or a person can seize and have complete control over. The other is the notion that power is primarily a repressive force, the main function of which is to prohibit people from doing things. Instead, Foucault (1990) argued that power should primarily be considered as a relational and productive force. Here, relational means that power is a force that exists in and operates through the different networks of relationships on which existing institutions and their practices are founded. To emphasise that power is a relational force, Foucault often used the terms power relation or force relation, and Foucault (1980) explains the relational nature of power in this manner:

Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something that only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody’s hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application (p. 98).
This quote also emphasises another key element of Foucault’s interpretation of power, namely that while people cannot control how power circulates, they constantly exercise power to contribute to its circulation in society. What Foucault (1990) meant when he emphasised that power is a *productive* force is that power in fact produces and organises the different networks of relationships that our institutions and their practices are built upon. This quotation from Foucault (1980) emphasises the notion that power is more of a productive than a repressive force:

> If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression (p. 119).

Furthermore, Foucault (1990) argued a) that there are different kinds of relational and productive forces, and b) that there are many examples of each kind. He also emphasises that an analysis of power should focus on *how* one or more of these forces are expressed and operate (Foucault, 1990). I see spoken and written instances of theory-practice terminology and its ideas as well as the usual WIL design as forces spreading a dualistic understanding of what theory and practice mean and of how they relate. Foucault (1975) also viewed power as a force that stretches into the practices that people engage with on a day-to-day basis, and that thereby has an actual impact on peoples’ daily endeavours. I draw on this view because I want to illustrate how the theory-practice terminology and the four ideas that I examine are forces that operate through the usual WIL design to be very much a part of WIL students’ everyday life rather than a terminology and ideas that exist merely in documents.

### 3.4.3 Understanding the theory-practice terminology and the four ideas from Foucault’s notion of power/knowledge

According to Foucault (1980) the discursive domain where language operates is the domain where power and knowledge are coupled in a close and complex relationship. Foucault uses the concept *power/knowledge* to emphasise that power is always involved in the production of knowledge. He also argued that power is a force that is based on, forming, and distributed through the knowledge that our institutional practices spreads (Foucault, 1980). By *knowledge*, Foucault (1980) meant statements that have been awarded the status of and are thus being accepted as ‘true’; not statements that are true per se. Foucault did not believe in ‘absolute truths’ but rather that what is true and false differs at various points in
history and in different social contexts, nor did he try to distinguish which statements are true and which are false. Instead, Foucault (1971) wanted to discern the orders of a discourse that decide which statements about the topics that this discourse speaks of are true and which are false. Here, Foucault (1971) emphasised that statements do not become ‘true’ within a discourse because they are ‘true’ as such, but because they meet the criteria for what can be true according to the orders of this discourse. Thus, by the term ‘true’ statements, Foucault did not mean actual truths but statements that are generally accepted as true (Foucault 1980). He also argued that while (western) society has long been characterised by a will to knowledge, i.e. a will to a) speak the ‘truth’ and b) find and distribute ‘truths’, this will has become more institutionalised since the nineteenth century (Foucault, 1971). By this, he meant that this century was characterised by a rise and global spread of institutions in society that sought to distribute statements that speak the ‘truth’ and define what is ‘true’. Foucault (1990) also argued that some of the statements distributed by these institutions voice the same ‘truth(s)’ while others voice conflicting ‘truths’ which amongst themselves strive to be the ‘truth’.

Moreover, to explain his notion of the close relationship between power and knowledge, Foucault (1980) emphasised that power and knowledge cannot function without each other. He specifically declared a) that power is a force that must be grounded in knowledge (generally accepted statements) to have an impact and b) that it is by exercising power that statements achieve and maintain knowledge status, i.e. become and remain generally accepted (Foucault, 1980). To exemplify the former declaration within the context of this thesis, one can say that the theory-practice terminology is an influential force because it is based on statements that are widely accepted. An example of the latter declaration is that by continuing to promote a dualistic rather than a non-dualistic understanding of what theory and practice mean and of how they relate, spoken and written instances of this terminology and the usual WIL design engage in an act of power ensuring that the former understanding remains the accepted one.

3.4.4 Genealogy: A discourse analytical approach in which history is used to problematise the present

‘Genealogy’\(^8\) is a concept that forms the basis for a discourse analytical approach whereby you look into a currently established figure’s past with the aim of problematising the role that this figure currently has in society (Foucault 1984). A figure can be an idea that is currently established in a discourse (group of

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\(^8\) While Foucault is often associated with the genealogical concept, his approach to genealogical discourse analysis is based on Nietzsche’s notion of genealogy (Foucault, 1984).
statements) about specific topics. It can also be an established institutional arrangement currently spreading a discourse that promotes certain ways of talking about and understanding the topics it speaks of. The genealogy concept rests on certain propositions about history and its relationship to the present, as well as on some general principles for how to conduct a genealogical discourse analysis. One proposition is that traces from the past live on in the present, and a key principle is that you explore the history of the present not the history of the past when you conduct a genealogical discourse analysis. This means that such an analysis is not about providing a complete description of how past events transpired (Nicholls & Cheek, 2006), but about examining how traces of the past are active at present (Beronius, 1991).

Another proposition that the genealogy concept rests on is that a current figure does not have one historical background with one definite origin but rather several descents, which here means several historical backgrounds with different beginnings. A family-tree, whose different branches can symbolise these various descents, has been used as a metaphor for this proposition (Beronius, 1991). It is also one or more descents of a present figure that are explored through a genealogical discourse analysis. Such an analysis is based on the principle that you first examine how a figure (e.g. an idea) is represented in the present discourse and what functions these representations have as they spread certain messages. A more demarcated approach to examining how this figure is represented and functions in the present discourse is to examine one contemporary discourse (a group of statements that speak of specific topics), and one or a few types of contemporary documents the belong to this discourse. In a vintage Foucauldian manner, you can also choose to examine different contemporary discourses and do so by investigating a vast collection of different types of documents (Foucault, 1984). Once you have examined today’s discourse, the principle you follow is to trace this figure (e.g. an idea) from the present back to the past discourse. What past discourse(s) you investigate and how far back in time you trace this idea is dependent on which descent(s) you explore. For instance, this thesis traces a decent of the theory-practice terminology that begins with this terminology's institutionalisation through the early twentieth century emergence of the usual WIL design.

Furthermore, when tracing a figure (e.g. an idea) from the present back in time, the genealogist shall compare if this idea is represented and functions in the same way or in different ways in the present and past discourse. The idea behind this is to use past representations of the idea you examine to problematise how currently established representations of this idea function, especially in terms of how power is exercised through them (Foucault, 1984). For instance, one can illustrate how a currently established representation of an idea exercises power in the sense that
it excludes other representations of this idea. Foucault (1983) underlined another genealogical principle that you must consider when problematising a currently established figure, like an idea or an institutional arrangement. This is that the purpose of this problematisation is not to present a definite and ready-made alternative to how an idea is currently represented or how an institutional arrangement is currently organised. This genealogical principle is reflected in this quotation where Foucault (1983) emphasised that no alternatives are harmless because there is a danger in all alternative solutions:

I am not looking for an alternative; you can’t find the solution of a problem in the solution of another problem raised at another moment by other people. You see, what I want to do is not the history of solutions, and that’s the reason why I don’t accept the word “alternative”. I would like to do genealogy of problems, of problématiques. My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper-and pessimistic activism (p. 231-232).

In connection with this quotation it is important to note one thing. While Foucault (1983) argued that a ‘genealogist’ shall not present ready-made alternatives, he also stated that a key task of a genealogist is to illustrate that current ways of living are not ‘set in stone’ and could be different (Foucault, 1984). In other words, a key task of a genealogist is to illustrate that it is possible to ‘live the present otherwise’ without presenting definite solutions as to how the present should be lived (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2013, p. 7; Fejes, 2016). Furthermore, since a genealogical discourse analysis aims to problematise a currently established figure, a genealogist must trace one or more descents (historical backgrounds) of this figure that achieve this aim. Foucault (1984) emphasised that this means that you must avoid tracing what can be labelled celebrated descents. This means descents that celebrate the evolution of a current figure by explaining how this figure and/or our interpretations of it has gradually become more advanced over time due to the reasoning and rational choices of people. Instead, a genealogist must trace one or more descents that can reveal in what ways a figure’s role at present is problematic and questionable. In this quotation, Foucault (1984) gave examples of what a genealogist could do instead of tracing celebrated descents:

Genealogy does not resemble the evolution of a species and does not map the destiny of a people. On the contrary, to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us; it is to discover that truth or being does not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents (p. 81).
Here, Foucault (1984) emphasised that one approach to a genealogical discourse analysis is to trace descents of currently established figures that illustrate how these figures were born out of mistaken beliefs or false appraisals. As stated, this thesis questions one of the basic beliefs behind the early twentieth century ‘birth’ of the usual WIL design, namely that this WIL design is the solution that bridges the so-called theory-practice gap for students. The quotation outlined above also emphasises that you can conduct a genealogical discourse analysis by tracing one or more descents of a current figure (e.g. an idea) that is full of discontinuities. This means descents illustrating that there has been tiny or large shifts over time in terms of how our institutions have been arranged and in terms of how the discourse (group of statements) they spread has spoken out about certain topics and represented certain ideas. This way of conducting a genealogical approach is established (see e.g. Fejes, 2006; Andersson, 2013; Dahlstedt & Fejes, 2017).

When illustrating these shifts, the genealogist should neither treat past ways of organising an institution, nor the past discourse of this institution as superior or inferior to how the same institution and discourse is currently organised. Rather, past examples of what an institution and its discourse looked like shall be used to illustrate that it is not a given that this institution and its discourse must take the form they currently do (Foucault, 1984). The intention behind illustrating historical shifts in how our institutions are arranged and in how their discourse is organised is to show that society and our ways of thinking has not gradually changed in the same direction throughout history. The emergence of the usual WIL design in the early twentieth century can be seen as both a tiny and large shift from the traditional way of designing higher education that was the global norm at the time of this emergence and whose default setup is to offer students on-campus training only. By tiny shift, I mean that when the usual WIL design emerged under the labels of Sandwich Education (SE) and Co-op, it was not the case that this WIL design became the new global norm for how higher education should be designed but that it emerged in a rather small-scale format (Sovilla & Varty, 2011). However, as the usual WIL design is quite different from the traditional higher education approach because it offers work placement-based training, the emergence of this WIL design represented a large shift in terms of thinking about how higher education should be designed.

Foucault (1984) also emphasised another way of conducting a genealogical discourse analysis to problematise a current figure like an institutional arrangement. This is the way whereby you trace an ironic descent which can clarify how an institutional arrangement has since one of its ‘births’ been designed and spread a discourse that in key ways is counterproductive to what this institutional arrangement seeks to achieve. What Foucault (1984) meant by an ironic descent
is clarified in this quotation which states that currently celebrated institutions or ideas have seldom had the perfect ‘births’ that people often think:

We tend to think that this is the moment of their greatest perfection, when they emerged dazzling from the hands of a creator or in the shadowless light of a first morning… But historical beginnings are lowly: not in the sense of modest or discreet like the steps of a dove, but derisive and ironic, capable of undoing every infatuation (p. 79).

After explaining different ways of conducting a genealogical discourse analysis that all seek to problematise a currently established figure, it is vital to note that they can be combined and reflect a Foucauldian scepticism of how history is typically thought of. I refer here to Foucault’s scepticism of the notion that history has gone along as an evolutionary process where society and peoples’ ways of thinking and living have gradually become more advanced and enlightened over time due to human reasoning (Foucault, 1984). This scepticism is not a way of saying that there has been no progress at all. Rather, it is about moving away from the notion that human history is about gradual improvement and looking into whether institutions that have existed over time have, in a significant way, contributed to, or are still contributing to, the creation of the problems they have been intending to solve all along (Foucault, 1984). In this thesis, I argue that the usual WIL design has ironically, since its emergence and along with the spoken and written instances of the terminology that it continues to embody, primarily contributed to creating the so-called theory-practice gap that this design is intended to bridge for students.

To conclude this chapter, I will elaborate further on a key element of a genealogical discourse analysis that has merely been touched upon. While such a discourse analysis shall not provide a complete description of past events, it must clarify the conditions which made it possible for a current figure to emerge and which ensure that this figure can still exist today (Foucault, 1984). To clarify what this means, I will describe a key event which is connected to the early twentieth century emergence of the Co-op WIL model. Co-op emerged during the second industrial revolution, which is generally dated between 1870 and 1914. Because that industrial revolution expanded and radically changed the working conditions in the US manufacturing industry, it created an increased demand for people with an engineering education oriented towards this industry. That revolution can be seen to have provided scope for the emergence of Co-op because it made it ‘rational’ to argue that while training in ‘theory’ is an important basis for becoming an engineer, you also need ‘practical experience’ of these changed working conditions to be work-ready.
4 Method

This chapter has three main sections. The first focuses on the empirical sources used in this thesis, and the second emphasises how studies I, II and III are Foucault-inspired. The third and final section focuses on how the analyses in these three studies were conducted and shaped by the theoretical perspective I apply. This section concludes with a brief explanation of what I focused on in the discourse analysis that is outlined in chapter 6 to illustrate how the four ideas that I examine form two networks in the theory-practice terminology (see page 18, for a reminder of which ideas I refer to here).

4.1 Empirical material

The interview material produced and examined in study I is described before the present and past official documents about Co-op that are examined in studies II and III. Thereafter, I relate the different empirical sources used in this thesis to each other and explain why they together form an apt body of empirical material.

4.1.1 Student interviews

Study I is based on verbatim transcriptions of recorded interviews with 20 WIL students. This means students who at the time of the interview were enrolled in degree programmes that apply the usual WIL design. The students were interviewed about how the relationship between ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training in their respective degree programmes influences learning. To ensure that both I and my co-author in this study were well acquainted with the interview material, we conducted 10 one-on-one interviews each. The interviewees attended different degree programmes at University West, in Trollhättan, Sweden, and had completed at least one work placement period before being interviewed. More specifically, they either attended teaching degrees geared towards work in pre-schools, primary schools and school centres or bachelors’ degrees in health promotion, mechanical engineering, industrial economics, or economics. The latter three bachelor’s degree programmes used the Co-op WIL model which typically offers students paid work placements while the remaining degree programmes used unpaid work placements. Furthermore, the choice to interview students from different degree programmes was based on a purposive sampling technique called heterogeneous sampling whereby you select participants that either to a maximum or to some extent have different characteristics. This sampling technique is intended to give the researcher(s)
access to a wider range of ideas about an interview topic and the possibility to identify ideas about this topic that are shared amongst a heterogeneous sample, and which can thereby be seen as more widely used ideas (Palinkas et al., 2015). Students that as a group attended different degree programmes were interviewed because my co-author and I wanted to study ideas about learning of the theory-practice terminology that were often voiced amongst a heterogenous sample of students. The thinking behind this was that ideas voiced amongst a heterogenous sample of students are more likely to be the sort of ideas that this thesis focuses on, i.e. globally used ideas of the theory-practice terminology, than those voiced amongst a homogenous sample of students. However, the intention behind interviewing 20 students from different degree programmes was not that this sample would be large and varied enough to empirically determine whether or not the ideas about learning that the interviewed students voiced were globally used ideas of this terminology. Rather, my co-author and I intended to determine this by analysing whether or not the ideas about learning that these students voiced reflected conceptualisations of ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training that research has identified as being used globally in contemporary society. The analyses conducted section of this chapter explains how this analysis was made, and I will now proceed to discuss the interview guide used in study I.

4.1.1.1 The interview guide
A semi-structured interview guide was used, and the interviews were conducted in Swedish (see appendix 1 for a complete version of the interview guide). As my co-author and I knew that the theory-practice terminology is established globally, the idea behind the interview guide was not to examine if the interviewed students used this terminology (the ‘Revisiting the research process’ section of the ‘Discussion’ chapter explains how the insight that the theory-practice terminology is globally established was acquired). Rather, the interview guide was designed to explore which ideas about learning of this terminology that the students often used when they discussed how the relationship between ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training in their respective degree programmes influences learning. To explore this, my co-author and I created an interview guide that was designed to encourage the students to use this terminology when discussing ideas about how the relationship between these forms of training influences learning. This means that the interview questions include phrases that reflect how theory and practice are used in this terminology. More specifically, the questions use theory as a tacit term for on-campus training in general, or for the abstract research-based knowledge studied on campus, and practice as a tacit term for work placement-based training in general, or for the concrete activities carried out there. For instance, to imply that some questions use theory as a term for on-campus training as a whole, the interview guide contains questions that alternate between asking about how the relationship between a) theory and practice, and b) on-campus
training and practice influences learning. The interview guide also includes several statements about how this relationship influences learning that the students were asked to agree or disagree with. An example is the statement “practical experience helps me understand theory”. Some statements or questions in the interview guide use the abbreviation WIL as a label for the educational design whereby students attend both ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training. An example is the statement “WIL increases understanding of theory”. Furthermore, in order to not assume that the students would answer that the relationship between these forms of training has a specific influence on what you learn, many of the interview questions were first asked as yes/no questions. However, it was not a simple yes/no answer that my co-author and I were interested in when we conducted 10 interviews each. Rather, we wanted each student to explain his or her answers and had prepared specific follow-up questions to ensure that they did so. The follow-up questions focused on in what ways, when, why, or why not the relationship between so-called ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training influences learning and encouraged the students to explain their answers by providing concrete examples. Generally, these follow-up questions are not written down in the interview guide but in some cases they are to clarify the focus of a specific question and how it was asked. A final remark about the interview guide is that many of its questions are rather similar. The idea was that this would encourage each student to elaborate more on how the relationship between ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training influences learning.

4.1.1.2 Ethical issues when conducting the interviews
Before the interviewees signed up to participate on a voluntary basis they were informed about the study, their rights to withdraw from it at any time, that the study would only be used for research purposes and that the interview recordings would be treated confidentially. Furthermore, while the interview topic is not sensitive as such, this does not mean that my co-author and I did not have to consider any ethical issues. One ethical issue we faced was that we interviewed students who were enrolled at the university where we work. Some interviewees where students that my co-author and I have had some contact with as teachers although most of them were students attending degree programmes where we had no teaching responsibilities. As faculty members, we thereby recruited students from a position of power. Despite the fact that we emphasised that participation is voluntary, one or more of the students that chose to participate may have felt that they did not want to disappoint faculty members, and that they were thus not ‘free’ to decline participation (see e.g. Ferguson et al., 2004, who discussed this ethical issue). This may apply more to those interviewees that my co-author and I have had prior contact with as teachers, but not necessarily only to them. To deal with this ethical issue we tried to be particularly aware of students showing signs of reluctance to being interviewed. When contacting the students,
we looked for signs of hesitation to participate, and no attempt was made to persuade any student who showed such signs to participate. Just before and during the interviews, we also looked for signs of discomfort amongst the interviewees. While we saw no such signs, this does not mean that my co-author and I can guarantee that this was the case. Rather, by looking for signs of hesitation to being interviewed, we wanted to reduce the risk of interviewing students who did not want to be interviewed but felt obliged to participate. This chapter now goes on to describe the empirical sources examined in studies II and III.

4.1.2 Present and past official documents about Co-op

Studies II and III together examine 92 official present and past documents that promote Co-op. Of these, 88 represent a type of promotional document that in a paper- or web-based format has been used by the University of Cincinnati, USA, the University of Waterloo, Canada, and University West, Sweden in the twentieth and twenty-first century. This is a type of document where the entire content or certain sections have been written primarily to promote Co-op to prospective and existing Co-op students of these HEIs. Other HEIs have also used this type of document and I will shortly explain why I selected documents from these HEIs. Study II examines 75 such documents used between 1928 and 2018 while study III examines 83 used between 1928 and 2019. To be clear, 70 of the 75 documents examined in study II are also explored in study III, and why this is the case is explained later.

Furthermore, studies II and III both examine four other official documents about Co-op that were published in 1914, ca. 1930, 1944 and ca. 1960. These documents also promote Co-op but are either a) not university-based, or b) documents whose content was originally not produced by HEIs with the intention of promoting Co-op to their prospective and existing Co-op students. Before these four documents are described, I will clarify how I divided the empirical sources in studies II and III into present and past documents and describe some features of the 88 promotional documents described above. As studies II and III trace the idea of academia and real world and dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability, respectively, back more than 100 years, I have treated the present as a time period that is longer than just a few years. More specifically, I have treated all documents studied that were used between 2000 and 2019 as present documents and documents used or published earlier than that as past documents. When I in this chapter use the phrases present and past years, I refer to these time periods. Some of the 88 promotional documents used by the three aforementioned HEIs have not only been directed to their prospective and existing Co-op students, but also used to maintain and recruit new employers where prospective or existing Co-op students of these HEIs can complete their
work placements. Many of these documents promote Co-op by explaining how Co-op is used in degree programmes that the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo, and University West have used in the twentieth and/or the twenty-first century. Some of them promote Co-op without focusing on degree programmes. A large number of these documents have been distributed generally through past and present years. Some of them are admissions material, i.e. documents that in past and present years have primarily been distributed during college application periods to prospective Co-op students and their parents. Others are documents that in past and present years have primarily been given to students attending degree programmes at the three aforementioned HEIs with the intention of giving them more information about how Co-op works. Furthermore, besides promoting Co-op, many of the 88 promotional documents used by the three aforementioned HEIs include sections that focus on other things such as how you apply to degree programmes and how you get involved in student life at these HEIs. I have not examined such sections.

Having said this, I will describe the four other documents examined in studies II and III which all emphasise that Co-op offers a mix of ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training that prepares students for working life. One document is a transcript of Herman Schneider’s 1914 hearing on Cooperative and Vocational Education before the US House of Representatives’ Committee on Education, which I acquired from a research contact. Schneider was the Dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati that promoted the introduction of Co-op before Co-op was first introduced there in 1906. The second document is a newspaper article about the role of Co-op at the University of Cincinnati that is called A university based on a new idea and that was published ca. 1930. The third document is a 1944 University of Cincinnati pamphlet called Is Higher Education obsolete? This pamphlet comprises six newspaper articles originally published by various US newspapers. The fourth document from ca. 1960 is called Excerpts from writings and speeches on Co-operative Education and was assembled by H.C. Messinger, a former director of what was, at that time, called the Department of Co-ordination and Placement at the University of Cincinnati. This document contains a collection of past quotes that promote Co-op. Some of these quotes were voiced by Schneider between ca. 1900 and 1935. These last three documents that I have described were acquired at the University of Cincinnati.

Having described the official documents examined in studies II and III, it is vital to clarify why I selected documents published between different present and past dates since Co-op emerged in 1906. I did this to conduct a genealogical discourse analysis where the idea of academia and the real world in study II and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability in study III could be traced from the current back to the early discourse on Co-op. It was also to get access to both the
current and the early discourse on Co-op that I selected documents from the University of Cincinnati (UC), the University of Waterloo and University West. These are HEIs that currently use Co-op and were first to introduce it in the country where they are located. These HEIs introduced Co-op in 1906, in 1957 and in 1989 respectively. In other words, I selected documents from this group of HEIs because this would, in principle, give me access to both very early and very recent examples of documents that HEIs have used to primarily promote Co-op to their prospective and existing Co-op students. I could have selected such documents from the University of Cincinnati and two other HEIs that, just like the University of Waterloo and University West, are currently using Co-op and have a history of doing so. Two such HEIs are North Eastern University, USA, which introduced Co-op in 1909 and Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand, which introduced Co-op in 1994. This does not mean that there was a “better” choice to be made when it comes to which HEIs to select documents from, but rather that another choice could have been made. For me, it was also a pragmatic decision to select documents from the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo and University West. I have contacts at the two former HEIs and work at the latter, and this meant that I could rather easily get in contact with people who could give me access to the documents I was looking for.

It is also vital to clarify how I became interested in and selected these documents. From reading some recent examples of this type of document from University West, I began to notice two features that I saw as problematic and wanted to investigate further. The features were that these documents used a) the idea of academia and the real world and b) the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability, to promote Co-op. I thought that this was problematic because it seemed to me that the former idea and the latter meaning spread a polarised view of what theory and practice means, that contributes to creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. As I had only read some recent versions of this type of document from University West when I began to notice these features, I started to think about two questions. One was whether these features could generally be found in such documents used by University West in both the twenty-first and the late twentieth century. The other was whether such documents from other HEIs, in other countries, that have used Co-op in the twentieth and/or the twenty-first century promote Co-op through the idea of academia and the real world and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability. Based on these questions, I began to select more twenty-first and twentieth century versions of the type of document I was interested in from University West. To get access to earlier versions of such documents than University West could offer, I went to the University of Cincinnati and the University of Waterloo. Both at University West and at the latter two HEIs, I collaborated with archivists to find such documents. As a result of these
collaborations, I found about 200 documents distributed from 2019 and dating back to 1928. After reading them carefully, I concluded that they all use the theory-practice terminology in general, as well as the idea of *academia* and *the real world* and the dualistic meaning ascribed to the graduate employability idea, to promote Co-op. From these readings, I also concluded that all these documents are very similar in terms of how they use the former idea and the latter meaning to promote Co-op. In study II, I selected 75 such documents used at different dates between 1928 and 2018, and in study III, I selected 83 documents used at different dates between 1928 and 2019. The documents selected in each study together include explicit and implicit instances of the idea and the meaning that I focus on in studies II and III, respectively. As stated, 70 of the documents that were selected in study II were also selected in study III. There is a specific reason for this. Of the roughly 200 documents I found, these 70 documents were deemed to include many of the most illustrative examples of how both the idea of *academia* and *the real world* and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability are expressed on a more explicit and on a more implicit level.

Furthermore, as I selected documents from the three HEIs mentioned, I looked at how the websites of some other HEIs currently promote Co-op and found and read paper-based catalogues and documents illustrating how other HEIs promoted Co-op during the twenty-first and twentieth centuries. For instance, I looked at North Eastern University’s and Suranaree University of Technology’s websites. I also found and read paper-based catalogues published by US universities and colleges in the twenty-first century where you, as a college applicant, could read about different HEIs in the US that offer students Co-op, and twentieth century documents from North Eastern University and Antioch College. These websites and catalogues et cetera, and the documents that I selected from the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo and University West, promoted Co-op in a very similar way through the theory-practice terminology, the idea of *academia* and *the real world* and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability. From this, I concluded that using this terminology, idea, and meaning to promote Co-op is a global trend amongst HEIs that have used Co-op in the twenty-first and/or the twentieth century. As several other HEIs were promoting Co-op in a very similar way to the three HEIs I selected documents from, I decided to not include documents from other HEIs in studies II and III. This was because this similarity indicated that this would not have made any real difference to the results of the genealogical discourse analyses that I intended to conduct in studies II and III and would have made the selection process much more time consuming.

Based on what has been stated about the empirical sources used in studies I, II and III, I will now clarify why they together form an apt body of empirical material
for this thesis and explain more clearly how they relate to each other. The student interviews, the 88 documents from the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo and University West, as well as the four other documents about Co-op, share a specific feature which make them suited to this thesis. This is that all these empirical sources have a content that is based on the theory-practice terminology. There is also a similarity between these 88 documents and the other four documents about Co-op. The latter four documents are, just like the former 88 documents, shaped by the idea of academia and the real world and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability. However, these four documents were not only selected because they are shaped by this idea and meaning. The transcript of Schneider’s 1914 hearing and the document called Excerpts from writings and speeches on Co-operative Education were also selected because they include statements about Co-op from the early twentieth century. This allowed me to trace the idea and meaning further back in time than was possible with the bulk of the empirical material used in studies II and III, which dates back to 1928.

All four of these documents were also selected because they give past examples of the fact that the idea of academia and the real world and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability are not only used in the promotional materials of HEIs, but also more broadly in society. Furthermore, there is a difference between the interview material examined in study I and the empirical material examined in studies II and III. The interview material is not, as the documents examined in studies II and III, intended to promote the two key ideas behind Co-op or other standard WIL models, i.e. that students shall have both ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training and integrate them. This does not mean that the interview material does not include statements promoting these ideas, but rather that the interview material does not have a promotional intent. The relationship between the interview material and the 88 documents is also of interest to note. Whereas the former material exemplifies how students use the theory-practice terminology, the latter documents exemplify how this terminology is spread to students.

Furthermore, I want to explain why studies II and III merely examine documents or sections of documents that exclusively discuss Co-op and no other standard WIL models. I did this because the selected documents include the kind of accounts of the idea of academia and the real world and of the dualistic meaning of graduate employability that I wanted to problematise. These are accounts of this idea and meaning that are not only often used to speak about Co-op, but also often used to speak about all standard WIL models, making them typical for the WIL discourse in general. In other words, I did not need to select documents or sections of documents about other standard WIL models to problematise how this idea and meaning continue to be spread by the WIL discourse in general.
How I identified accounts of this idea and meaning that are general to this discourse is described in the analyses conducted section of this chapter. To conclude the description of the empirical sources examined in this thesis, it should be stated that several documents examined in studies II and III include pictures, often of students on the campuses of the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo, and University West. I have generally not analysed these pictures because they are typically about illustrating that student life on campus is good rather than about Co-op. However, when analysing the documents that include pictures, I examined whether these pictures reflect and/or provide a counter-message to what was written about Co-op in the documents.

4.2 How studies I, II and III are Foucault-inspired

These studies share three general features that make them Foucault-inspired. Firstly, they all problematise the theory-practice terminology, albeit by exploring different ideas of this terminology. Study I focuses on the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning and the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning. Study II focuses on the idea of academia and the real world and study III focuses on the dualistic meaning that this terminology ascribes to the graduate employability idea. Secondly, studies I, II and III are Foucault-inspired because they focus on how discourse, in the form of the theory-practice terminology and the idea(s) they examine, is institutionalised in and through the usual WIL design. Thirdly, these studies are Foucault-inspired because they focus on how certain assumptions that underlie the idea(s) they examine operate as a form of power as they form specific ranking orders between so-called ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training. It is also vital to note that the genealogical discourse analyses conducted in studies II and III are not in vintage Foucauldian manner exploring different discourses (groups of statements that speak about specific topics) and several different types of documents (Foucault 1984). Rather, they are more demarcated as they problematise the roles that the idea of academia and the real world, and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability continue to have in the WIL discourse by mainly exploring promotional material about Co-op from HEIs.

4.3 The analyses conducted

The analytical processes conducted in studies I, II and III are now outlined. In studies II and III, where I was the sole author, and in study I where I had a co-author, the researcher(s) went back and forth between these analytical processes. Some analytical processes also include more than one phase. The analytical processes conducted in study I are outlined first. Thereafter, the analytical processes conducted in studies II and III are presented in relation to each other.
4.3.1 The analytical processes in study I

1. Reading of the interview material with a focus on identifying accounts of the theory-practice terminology frequently expressed by students
At the outset of this analytical process, the two researchers repeatedly conducted detailed individual readings of the verbatim transcribed interviews. To ensure that these readings were thorough and systematic, the researchers made individual notes about a) what the students said b) how they said it and c) where in the transcribed interviews these things were said. In this connection, the researchers also made individual notes about the accounts of theory-practice terminology that recurred when the students discussed how the relationship between the ‘theory-based’ and the ‘practice-based’ training in their respective degree programmes influences learning. To further ensure that the individual readings conducted were thorough, careful, and systematic, the two researchers then compared their own notes and decided, through negotiation, which accounts were often voiced by the students. Negotiated consensus is an established technique for ensuring that the analytical processes in qualitative research are thorough, careful, and systematic (Wahlström et al., 1997). The two researchers conducted the forthcoming analytical processes together.

2. Discerning ideas about learning and how they are expressed
Based on the acquired knowledge of the accounts of the theory-practice terminology that the interviewed students often voiced, the two researchers collaborated to discern which of these accounts represent ideas about learning. This was important because when the students discussed how the how relationship between ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training influences learning, they did not only voice ideas of this terminology that represent ideas about learning per se. Rather, they also voiced ideas of said terminology that are used to speak of learning in a WIL context but are not ideas about learning as such, for instance the idea of academia and the real world. However, as the two researchers were only interested in ideas about ‘learning’, other ideas voiced by the students were not examined. By looking carefully at the accounts that were often voiced by the interviewed students, the researchers together concluded that two of these are ideas about learning. These are the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning and the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning. While these ideas were often voiced by the students, the sample choice was neither large nor varied enough to determine that they represent the sort of ideas that this thesis focuses on, i.e. globally used ideas of the theory-practice terminology. To determine this, the two ideas were compared to ways of speaking about ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training that research has identified as globally used in contemporary society. This showed that the two ideas reflect such ways of speaking and could
therefore be seen as globally used ideas of said terminology. Using research to validate the generalisability of qualitative studies is an established research technique called *representational generalisation* (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). Furthermore, by carefully comparing the two ideas about learning, the researchers together identified the similarities and the differences in terms of how they are expressed. Quotations that clarify how the ideas are expressed were selected in this connection. Through said comparison, the researchers also acquired a preliminary insight into the fact that these ideas are based on different ranking orders between ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training. These ranking orders were examined in detail in the next analytical process.

3. Exploring how different ranking orders between ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training underlie the two ideas

This analytical process had two focuses. The first was to discern the different ranking orders that form the basis for the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of the departure for learning and the idea of theory *and* practice as harmonious points of departure for learning. This was achieved through an analysis which discerned how the ways of talking that these ideas consist of rank ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training against each other when it comes to how vital they are to students learning a profession. Secondly, the analytical process was to compare the ranking orders underlying the two ideas and examine how the ideas on the basis of these ranking orders work separately and together to reinforce the dualistic order of discourse of the theory-practice terminology.

4. Exploring how the ideas and the ranking orders behind them are linked to different social positions of HEIs and working life outside HEIs

Here, the ideas and these ranking orders were related to three different social positions. The first is the traditional social position that HEIs are the cornerstones of the university domain where ‘theory’ is studied and that working-life outside HEIs is the domain where ‘practice’ is carried out. The second is the traditional social position that the former and the latter are rivalling domains, and the third is a social position that has become more emphasised at present, i.e. that HEIs and working life outside HEIs are partner domains.

4.3.2 The analytical processes in studies II and III

1. Discerning accounts common in both the present documents on Co-op and in contemporary WIL research

When examining the present documents in studies II and III, I looked for accounts of the idea of *academia* and *the real world* and of the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability that meet two criteria. They should be used frequently in these documents and established in contemporary WIL research in general. I looked for such accounts to ensure that I discerned accounts that were
not merely common in statements about Co-op, but also common ways of speaking about WIL in general. The first step in discerning the accounts that I looked for in studies II and III was to read the present documents from the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo and University West that were selected in each study repeatedly. In connection with reading these documents, I took notes. For instance, in study II, I took notes about accounts of the idea of *academia* and *the real world* that occurred in these documents, where they occurred, and notes about which of these accounts recurred and where they recurred in the documents. In relation to this, I also noted if any recurring accounts of this idea can be said to be recognisable from and thereby established in WIL research in general. I used the same approach in study III but focused instead on accounts of the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability. Two accounts of the idea of *academia* and *the real world* that meet the criteria of being common in the present documents on Co-op and recognisable from contemporary WIL research were discerned in study II. Similarly, two accounts of the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability that meet these criteria were identified in study III. When identifying the former two accounts in study II and the latter two in study III, I acquired an insight into how they are expressed which was analysed in detail in next analytical process.

2. Discerning the features of the currently common accounts
In study II, I examined what the features the two currently common accounts of idea of *academia* and *the real world* are and how they are expressed on a more explicit and a more implicit level. I conducted the same analytical process in study III but focused here on the two currently common accounts of the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability. In both studies, quotations that show these features and how they are expressed were selected during this analytical process. When investigating said features, I drew on an insight that I had acquired through reading research about dualism. The insight was that two forms of dualism can be said to exist; an *antagonistic* dualism whereby two elements are seen as opposite rivals that do not combine well, and a *harmonious* dualism whereby two elements are seen as opposites that go together perfectly (Webb, 2013). In relation to this insight, I investigated whether the features of the accounts that I identified in studies II and III respectively reflect a) an antagonistic or a harmonious dualism or b) both forms of dualism. In study II, it was concluded that one of the two identified accounts of the idea of *academia* and *the real world* is antagonistic whereas the other is harmonious. When I made the same investigation in study III, I asked myself this question: are the two identified accounts of the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability, just like the two accounts of the academic-real world idea identified in study II, antagonistic and harmonious respectively, or do they have different characteristics? I concluded that one account of said meaning is antagonistic and that the other is harmonious. The previously described
conclusions drawn in studies II and III formed a basis for the next analytical process in these studies.

3. Discerning how the currently common accounts operate

I begin by describing this analytical process in study II because this study was conducted first and gave me an insight which I then used in study III. To investigate how the identified antagonistic and harmonious accounts of the idea of academia and the real world operate, I drew on insights that I had acquired from reading about dualism. One insight was that a dualistic language use whereby two elements are spoken of as opposites tends to polarise these elements for people (Dolphijn & Tuin, 2012). Another insight was that both antagonistic and a harmonious dualistic language use identify two elements as opposites but speak of opposites that do not combine well and that combine perfectly, respectively (Webb, 2013). Based on these insights, I asked myself two questions. The first was, ‘do the two identified accounts of the idea of academia and the real world have different functions because one is antagonistic and the other harmonious?’ The second question was ‘do the two accounts share specific functions because they are both dualistic?’ Based on these questions, I explored whether there are elements of the messages spread by the antagonistic and the harmonious accounts of the idea of academia and the real world that have only the polarising effect of contributing to the creation of the gap that WIL seeks to bridge for students? In this connection, I also examined whether there are elements of the messages spread by these accounts that can be said to not have this polarising effect, but a bridging effect that helps students bridge this gap. Based on this, I concluded that the antagonistic account of this idea merely contributes to creating the gap whereas the harmonious account contributes both to creating and to bridging the gap.

When I conducted this analytical process in study III, knowing that one of the accounts of the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability is antagonistic and the other harmonious, I asked myself two questions. The first was, ‘does this antagonistic account and this harmonious account have the same effect as the antagonistic and harmonious accounts of the idea of academia and the real world identified in study II, and ‘can they be seen to have other effects?’ I used these questions when analysing the effects of the antagonistic and harmonious accounts of the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability to ensure that I did not prematurely arrive at the same conclusions as I did in study II, and to see if I would arrive at different conclusions. From this analysis, I arrived at two conclusions. Firstly, the antagonistic account of this meaning is, just like the antagonistic account of the idea of academia and the real world, merely contributing to creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. Secondly, the harmonious account of said meaning is, just like the harmonious account of the
idea, contributing both to the creation and to the bridging of this gap for students. Furthermore, in both study II and III, the analysis of how the accounts that I identified in each study operate had another focus before the genealogical discourse analyses in studies II and III turned to examining the past documents. This focus was to explore whether there are assumptions underlying these accounts that form specific rankings between ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training when it comes to how vital they are to students learning a profession.

4. Tracing the idea of academia and the real world and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability back in time

The first phase of this analytical process was to explore if the accounts of this idea and this meaning that had been identified as currently common in studies II and III respectively were also common in the past documents, or if other accounts of this idea and meaning were more common there. In both studies, it was concluded that the former was the case. I then examined whether these accounts were expressed and operated in the same way as in present documents. This was the case in both studies, and I selected past quotations illustrating this. A final aspect of the analysis of the past documents that is vital to note is that while the aforementioned conclusions were made in both studies II and III, I was careful to not let the conclusions from study II prematurely steer me towards drawing the same conclusions in study III. Instead, I analysed whether different conclusions could be drawn from study III.

Having described the analytical processes in studies I, II and III, I will briefly explain how I conducted the discourse analysis that in chapter 6 outlines how the four ideas examined in this thesis form networks in the theory-practice terminology. The theoretical perspective and the conclusions drawn from these studies were used in this analysis, which focused on how certain accounts of these four ideas come together in specific groupings to form two different networks in this terminology. The analysis also focused on the messages spread by these different networks, and on the assumptions that underlie these messages. When analysing these messages, I focused on identifying which of them can be said to contribute exclusively to creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students and which can be seen to contribute both to creating and to bridging this gap.
5 Summary of individual studies

This chapter summarises the main results and conclusions from studies I, II and III. For a description of a) the theorisation and analytical approaches behind these results and conclusions and b) the empirical material examined in each study, see the theoretical perspective chapter and the method chapter.

5.1 Problematising the theory-practice terminology: a discourse analysis of students’ statements on Work-integrated Learning

This study problematises that spoken and written instances of the *theory-practice terminology* operate through the usual WIL design, spreading a dualistic view of what theory and practice mean that, in a decisive way, polarises on-campus and work placement-based training for students. The purpose of this study is to problematise how the dualistic order of discourse of this terminology uses theory and practice as opposite terms and provide scope for a non-dualistic terminology that could avoid polarised definitions of theory and practice. To problematise how theory and practice are used in this terminology, this study examines two ideas about learning that 20 students voiced when interviewed about how the relationship between ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training in their respective degree programmes influences learning. These are the idea of theory *vs.* practice as the point of departure for learning and the idea of theory *and* practice as harmonious points of departure for learning. A Foucault-inspired discourse analysis with two focuses was used. One focus was to examine how these ideas reinforce the dualistic order of discourse whereby theory is a term for on-campus training in general or for the abstract research-based knowledge studied on campus, whereas practice is a term for work-placement-based training in general or for the concrete activities carried out on placements. The other focus was to examine how the ideas mobilise different ranking orders between so-called ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training.

The discourse analysis illustrates that the theory *vs.* practice idea comprises two mutually exclusive accounts that form two conflicting ranking orders. One claims that ‘theory-based’ training and the other that ‘practice-based’ training is the ideal starting for learning a profession. This analysis also clarifies that the idea of theory
and practice as harmonious point of departure for learning is expressed by accounts emphasising that ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training go together perfectly and enrich each other. It further explains that underlying this idea is the symmetrical ranking that identifies these forms of training as equally valid starting points for learning a profession. Furthermore, the discourse analysis clarifies that this harmonious idea rejects and is being rejected by the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning. This is because the harmonious idea rejects that ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training are rival starting points for learning a profession, and the theory vs. practice idea rejects that these forms of training are equally valid bases for learning a profession. However, the discourse analysis also shows that these ideas are not only mutually exclusive, they also collaborate to reinforce the theory-practice terminology’s dualistic order of discourse whereby theory and practice are used as opposite terms.

The discussion focuses on how to provide scope for a non-dualistic terminology that could encourage students to see that theory is a form of knowledge that coexists with daily work practices. It is emphasised that a terminology of this nature could for instance be based on the non-dualistic notion that both research-based and informal theories are learnt in and through different forms of work practices. The discussion also emphasises that, because the usual WIL design institutionalises (establishes) the theory-practice terminology, a non-dualistic terminology could possibly emerge if there was a place able to embody and institutionalise it. Three conclusions are put forward in this connection. One is that neither HEIs nor workplaces outside HEIs where the professions students’ study for usually work are suited to being this place. The argument for this being that HEIs and these workplaces are places appropriated by the theory-practice terminology and thus not places that would easily embrace a non-dualistic alternative to this terminology.

The second conclusion is that creating physical third places where students, faculty members and professionals working outside HEIs can engage in learning activities that illustrate how theories in various forms or shapes are used in, and learnt through, daily work practices of one or more professions, could perhaps provide scope for a non-dualistic terminology. Here, physical third places mean places located outside but in relation to HEIs and the usual workplaces of professionals working outside HEIs, and it is stated that such places could be co-funded by HEIs and private and/or public employers. Finally, it is concluded that if they are to embrace a non-dualistic terminology, physical third places cannot divide the learning activities carried out in these places into so-called ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ activities. This is because such a division would only embody the theory-practice terminology and encourage students to use this rather than a non-dualistic terminology.
5.2 The idea of academia and the real world and its ironic role in the discourse on Work-integrated Learning

This study problematises the ironic fact that the idea of *academia* and *the real world* continues to shape the WIL discourse because this idea in decisive ways arguably contributes to creating the gap that WIL seeks to bridge for students. A genealogical discourse analysis of how this idea operates in 79 present and past official documents promoting the Co-op WIL model is used to problematise said irony. Of these documents, 75 were used by the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo and University West between 1928 and 2018, primarily to promote Co-op to their prospective and existing Co-op students (for a description of these and the other four documents examined see pages 62 and 63). The idea of *academia* and *the real world* is traced from present back to past documents. Two accounts of this idea that are established in contemporary WIL research are common in these documents and spread specific messages that can be traced from present back to past documents. I label them the *deficit account* and the *collaborative account*. The former account is antagonistic because its message that on-campus training focuses too much on abstract ‘theories’ that have no proper use outside ‘academia’ accuses on-campus training for lacking a proper ‘real-world’ connection. The latter account is harmonious because it emphasises that students’ training in ‘academia’ combines perfectly with their training in the ‘real world’ to give them a mix of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ and a way of bridging the gap between the two.

Furthermore, I argue for the conclusion that the *deficit account* merely contributes to creating the gap that WIL seeks to bridge for students. This is because its message that on-campus training is too focused on abstract ‘theories’ with no proper use encourages students to believe that what is taught on campus is irrelevant in working life, and this message arguably discourages students from trying to integrate on-campus and work placement-based training. I further conclude that the *collaborative account* contributes both to bridging and to creating this gap. It contributes to bridging the gap because its message that students should move between ‘academia’ and ‘the real world’ to integrate ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ encourages students to connect on-campus and work placement-based training. However, this message also implies that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are different forms of knowledge learnt in different ‘worlds’. By implying that you move between different ‘worlds’, the *collaborative account* suggests that there are likely to be gaps between on-campus and work placement-based training, and this suggestion arguably contributes to creating the abovementioned gap because it encourages students to anticipate and notice gaps between the two forms of training.
The genealogical discourse analysis also illustrates how different assumptions underlie the deficit account and the collaborative account and rank on-campus and work placement-based training against each other. The assumption underlying the deficit account is that the former way of training cannot properly teach students a profession because it is too focused on abstract ‘theories’ with limited use, whereas the latter offers the ‘real-world experience’ that properly teaches students a profession. Thus, this assumption ranks work placement-based training higher than on-campus training. The assumption underlying the collaborative account is that the two forms of training contribute equally to students learning a profession, and thus ranks them equally.

The discussion problematises that the idea of academia and the real world continues to shape the WIL discourse because Co-op or other standard WIL models imply that students move between ‘academia’ and ‘the real world’ to reproduce a discourse shaped by this idea. I further argue that the on-campus/off-campus setup that implies that students move between two ‘worlds’ is counterproductive to WIL. To support this argument, I problematise that a key feature of the usual WIL design, i.e. that ‘academic’ studies should be physically separated from ‘the real world’ and take place in the scholastic domain, dates back to the ancient Greek school called scholē which had an aim opposite to that of this WIL design. This school was intended to be a secluded place where ‘free’ studies completely disconnected from the working life outside could take place (Masschelein & Simons, 2013), whereas the usual WIL design aims to connect ‘studies’ and ‘work’. I argue that this physical separation fits perfectly with a school intended to keep ‘studies’ and ‘work’ apart but not with the aim of this design. This is because this physical separation arguably disconnects rather than connects ‘studies’ and ‘work’.

I finally conclude that one possible way to a) introduce WIL students to a terminology that is not shaped by the idea of academia and the real world and b) avoid creating the gap that WIL seeks to bridge could be to establish physical third places. This means physical places existing outside but in relation to HEIs and the workplaces outside HEIs where the professions that students’ study for usually work and that has a specific pedagogical focus. The focus is to introduce students, along with faculty members and professionals from these workplaces, to a learning environment capable of illustrating how theories in various shapes and forms are embedded in the daily work of a profession. Places able to illustrate this could possibly avoid creating the gap that WIL seeks to bridge because they could show students how theory is a form of knowledge that is not impractical and detached from, but rather rooted in, daily work. Such places could possibly also avoid reproducing the idea of academia and the real world because they would not be founded on the physical separation that implies that students move between ‘academia’ and ‘the real world’.
5.3 Taking issue with how the Work-integrated Learning discourse ascribes a dualistic meaning to graduate employability

This study argues for a conclusion that is generally ignored in research, namely that the WIL discourse continues to ascribe a dualistic meaning to graduate employability that primarily contributes to creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. To argue for this conclusion, I use a genealogical discourse analysis of how the graduate employability idea operates in 87 present and past official documents promoting the Co-op WIL model. Of these documents, 83 were used by the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo and University West between 1928 and 2019, primarily to promote Co-op to their prospective and existing Co-op students (for a description of these and the other four documents examined see pages 62 and 63). The results show how two accounts of the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability that are recognisable from contemporary WIL research spread specific messages that I trace from present back to past documents. These are the antagonistic practice acclaiming account and the harmonious theory and practice account. They both tend to not state explicitly what the term employable graduates means, but to tacitly use the work readiness definition whereby this means graduates ready for the daily work of an occupation that requires training. The antagonistic practice acclaiming account expresses a message that often, tacitly rather than explicitly, praises ‘practical experience’ as a way of fostering employable graduates. While this praising suggests that this account is friendly, there is an antagonistic assumption underlying said account. The assumption is that ‘practical experience’ and craftsmanship rather than formal ‘schooling’ and knowledge in ‘theory’ foster employable graduates. In connection with this assumption, craftsmanship means the expertise that you can only learn from practising an occupation, and that professional work is founded upon.

This assumption can also be seen as an asymmetrical ranking of on-campus and work placement-based training. This is because in connection with the assumption, the latter way of training is seen to be able to foster employable graduates whereas the former is seen to be unable to do so. The antagonistic assumption underlying the practice acclaiming account is also founded on a scepticism of formal schooling that I trace from the present back to past documents that I have studied. The scepticism is that this schooling is too focused on abstract ‘theories’ with no concrete use in ‘practice’ and thereby insufficient when it comes to fostering employable graduates. I conclude that by spreading both this assumption and scepticism, albeit often tacitly, this account only contributes to creating the so-called theory-practice gap. This is because the message spread by the assumption and scepticism encourages student to believe that on-campus training cannot make them employable because it has no proper use in daily work,
a message that arguably discourages students from applying what they learn on campus on placements. The harmonious theory and practice account of graduate employability expresses, albeit often tacitly, that it is the mix of ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training that fosters employable graduates. Underlying this account are the assumptions that you must know both ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ and also how to integrate them to become employable. In connection with these assumptions, on-campus and work placement-based training are ranked equally because they are seen to teach students the ‘theory’ and the ‘practice’ that they need to become employable. I conclude that the theory and practice account both contributes to bridging and to creating the so-called theory-practice gap. One of the assumptions spread by this account contributes to bridging the gap because it arguably encourages students to integrate what they are taught on campus and on placements. The assumption I refer to is that on-campus and placement-based training teach different forms of knowledge that you must know how to integrate to become employable. However, by using the dualistic order of discourse implying that you study an abstract, research-based knowledge called theory on campus and carry out concrete activities called practice at placements, said account implies that students are taught very different things on campus and on placements respectively. This message arguably contributes to creating the gap because it encourages students to expect and notice gaps between on-campus and work placement-based training, and to see them as theory-practice gaps per se.

I discuss how a non-dualistic account of graduate employability could possibly avoid creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. Speaking of an employable graduate as a person who knows how research-based and informal theories shape the daily work of a profession is one example of such an account. In the sense that it could encourage students to see theory as a form of knowledge that, in a research-based and informal form, shapes this work, such an account could avoid creating the gap for students. I argue that the usual WIL design is not really suited to making students see theory in this way because it implies that there is only one form of theory, namely the research-based knowledge they study on campus that they need to bring to ‘practice’. This arguably spreads the message that theory is a form of knowledge absent from daily work until students apply it there. I conclude that establishing physical and/or virtual third places could provide countersites to the usual WIL design where a non-dualistic account of graduate employability could be spread to students. Here, third places mean sites that represent hybrids of the learning settings students encounter on campus and at workplaces, where students can, alongside faculty members and professionals from workplaces, study how research-based and informal theories are used and could be used in the daily work of a profession.
6 Two networks in the theory-practice terminology

Studies I, II and III have together examined four ideas of the theory-practice terminology. This chapter illustrates how the accounts of these ideas presented in these studies come together in specific groupings to shape two different networks in this terminology. One network is based on an antagonistic dualism and the other on a harmonious dualism. I call these the antagonistic and harmonious networks, and will describe the former network first. This network consists of those accounts of the ideas of this terminology that spread antagonistic messages about a) ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training, and b) the domains known as ‘academia’ and ‘the real world’. These messages pit these forms of training and/or domains against each other, for instance by valuing one form of training or domain over the other. Other examples of antagonistic messages are those stating or implying that these forms of training and/or domains are completely incompatible or not a good match because they are very different and/or because they are competing rivals. Key features of the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning are along with the deficit account of the idea of academia and the real world and the antagonistic practice acclaiming account of graduate employability belonging to – and helping to shape – the antagonistic network. The theory vs. practice idea promotes a rivalry between on-campus and work placement-based training through two accounts emphasising that either the ‘theory’, here seen to be taught on campus, or the ‘practice’, here seen to be taught at placements, is the best starting point for learning a profession.

The deficit account of the idea of academia and the real world and the antagonistic practice acclaiming account of graduate employability are interesting notions to discuss here. Underlying these accounts is an antagonistic assumption based on the long-established scepticism that formal schooling is too focused on teaching abstract ‘theory’ to be of concrete use in ‘practice’ (see e.g. Massechelein & Simons, 2013; Letts, 2019, who argue that this scepticism is not a thing of the past but established in contemporary society). The assumption is that ‘practice-based’ training rather than formal training in ‘theory’ teaches students how a profession

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9 Here, theory can for instance mean subject matter knowledge in specific school subjects such as mathematics or psychology, or research-based principles about a specific phenomenon, such as learning.
is ‘really’ carried out and prepares them for this profession. There is a difference between how the message of the deficit account of the idea of academia and the real world and the message of the antagonistic practice acclaiming account of graduate employability spread this assumption and the scepticism about formal schooling. The message of the former account alludes to and spreads this assumption and scepticism by accusing on-campus training of lacking a proper ‘real-world connection’ because it is too focused on abstract ‘theories’ with no concrete use in ‘practice’. The latter account does not spread the assumption that it is ‘practice-based’ training that really prepares the student for a profession and the stated scepticism concerning formal schooling through an accusive message. Rather, this account spreads this assumption and scepticism by alluding to them through its praising message that ‘practical experience’ fosters employable graduates, which here means graduates who are ready for the daily expert work of an occupation that an individual must train for to be ready for such work. The abovementioned assumption assigns great value to ‘practice-based’ training but little to no value to ‘theory-based’ training, and is compatible with only one of the assumptions that the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning promotes. More specifically, the stated assumption is compatible with the assumption that ‘practice-based’ training is the most ideal starting point for learning a profession, but not with the assumption that ‘theory-based’ training is the most ideal starting point for learning a profession.

Furthermore, the messages of the deficit account of the idea of academia and the real world and the antagonistic practice acclaiming account of graduate employability exemplifies how the abovementioned scepticism about formal schooling is spread through the theory-practice terminology’s antagonistic network. This scepticism implies that there is no real use in trying to integrate ‘theory’ into ‘practice’, because ‘theory’ is too abstract to be of concrete use and arguably only contributes to creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. This is because this scepticism suggests that students study an abstract form of knowledge called ‘theory’ on campus that is of no real use in ‘practice’, which arguably discourages students from connecting their on-campus and work placement-based training rather than encouraging them to do so.

While this scepticism about formal schooling is one of the key messages of the antagonistic network, it is not only through this scepticism that the network implies that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are not a good match. Rather, this implication is also spread through another antagonistic message that the network continues to spread, for instance through the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning. The message is that on-campus and work placement-based training compete because they respectively teach students one of the two forms of knowledge called ‘theory’ and ‘practice’, which represent rival sources for how
to become a good professional. This message suggests that the former and latter way of training focus on competing rather than compatible forms of knowledge, and this arguably discourages students from trying to integrate these forms of training. To further understand the theory-practice terminology’s antagonistic network, one can say that it speaks against the integration of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ because it is founded on the assumption that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ do not really match. Furthermore, one key aspect concerning the theory vs. practice idea is that while this idea is antagonistic because it emphasises that on-campus and work placement-based training are rival forms of training, it also has a feature that belongs to the theory-practice terminology’s harmonious network. What I am aiming at here is that while the theory vs. practice idea speaks about these forms of training as rivals, it expresses the harmonious wish that students will integrate them. By expressing this wish, the idea arguably contributes towards bridging the so-called theory-practice gap for students. This is because such a wish encourages students to integrate what they are taught on campus and at work placements under the respective labels of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. However, this harmonious feature of the theory vs. practice idea tends to not be noticed because the idea generally positions on-campus and work placement-based training as rival forms of training. Two opposite ideals of how ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ should be integrated underpin this idea. One is that ‘theory’ should be studied first in order to form a basis on which students can carry out ‘practice’, and the other is that ‘practice’ should form the basis for how students learn to understand ‘theory’ and its connection with the ‘practice’ of a profession.

Having illustrated that the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning also has a feature that belongs to the harmonious network of the theory-practice terminology, I will now describe this network. The idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning, the collaborate account of the idea of academia and the real world, and the harmonious theory and practice account of graduate employability represent key elements of this network. A specific feature of this network is that it spreads a specific harmonious message: that ‘academia’ and ‘the real world’ and ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training are two ‘worlds’ and two forms of training that complement each other perfectly. Take the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning, for example. By emphasising that studying ‘theory’ makes it easier to understand ‘practice’, and that having ‘practice’ makes it easier to understand ‘theory’, this idea spreads the harmonious message that these forms of training combine perfectly and benefit each other.

The message of the collaborative account of the idea of academia and the real world reflects the rhetoric of the theory-practice terminology’s harmonious network by emphasising that ‘academia’ and ‘the real world’ should collaborate to help
students integrate ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. The message of the harmonious theory and practice account of graduate employability – that students must know both ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ and how to integrate them in order to be ready for the daily work of a profession – also reflects this rhetoric because it focuses on the integration of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. Underpinning the latter two accounts and the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning are two harmonious assumptions that are spread through the theory-practice terminology’s harmonious network. One is that ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training are equally vital for learning a profession, and the other is that a reciprocal integration of these forms of training, whereby they benefit each other, is the key to learning a profession. In contrast to the antagonistic network, the harmonious network speaks for the integration of the ‘theory’ and the ‘practice’, which in this connection are said to be learnt on campus and on work placements, respectively. By promoting this integration, the harmonious network encourages students to and helps them bridge the so-called theory-practice gap. However, because all this network’s messages use concepts such as theory and practice and academia and real world as opposite terms, they arguably encourage students to think that what they study on campus is a form of knowledge called ‘theory’, which is very different from the ‘practice’ they encounter in ‘the real world’. This way of thinking arguably contribute towards creating the gap, because it encourages students to a) look for and notice gaps between their on-campus and work placement-based training, and b) see them as theory-practice gaps.

Furthermore, from a Foucauldian power/knowledge perspective, the antagonistic and harmonious networks are forces of the theory-practice terminology that seek to speak and reinforce both the same and competing ‘truths’ about what theory and practice mean and how they are related. Both these networks reinforce the dualistic ‘truth’ that theory is the abstract research-based knowledge studied on campus while practice is the concrete work carried out at workplaces located outside ‘academia’. The antagonistic network spreads the ‘truth’ that ‘academia’ and ‘the real world’ are competing and incompatible ‘worlds’, and that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are forms of knowledge that do not really match because they are very different and/or compete with each other to become the basis for professional (expert) work. The harmonious network spreads the opposite ‘truth’ that ‘academia’ and ‘the real world’ and ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are a perfect match, because the differences between these ‘worlds’ and these forms of knowledge make them compatible and ensure that they enrich each other.

To further understand these two networks, it is vital to note that while they continue to form the WIL discourse, there are sections of this discourse in which the harmonious network is often more established than the antagonistic network. For instance, both WIL-promoting research and university-based documents that
promote Co-op or other standard WIL models tend to emphasise that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are forms of knowledge that go together perfectly when they are integrated, rather than that they are incompatible or rival forms of knowledge. A key reason for this is that this research and these documents tend to promote a basic idea behind all standard WIL models, namely that the integration of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ brings added value to students’ learning. While the stated research and documents primarily promote the rhetoric of the harmonious network, they also tend – to a lesser extent – accuse ‘theory-based’ training of lacking a proper connection to ‘the real world’ and ridicule the classic ivory tower perspective. By this, I mean the perspective that ‘academia’ is the privileged and secluded place where students learn ‘theory’, which in connection with this perspective is considered the purest and most valuable form of knowledge. The tendency among WIL-promoting research and the abovementioned university-based documents to ridicule the ivory tower perspective can be seen as a way of marginalising a perspective that is at odds with the WIL-based idea that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are of equal value. To conclude this chapter, I would like to emphasise that the four ideas I examine are not the only ideas with key elements of the antagonistic and/or the harmonious network of the theory-practice terminology. This means that this thesis could have focused on other ideas, such as the notions of praxis, pragmatism, episteme, techne or phronesis. However, I argue that the examined ideas are not only enough in terms of quantity, but are also suited to problematising the dualistic nature of the spoken and written instances of this terminology and of the usual WIL design.
Discussion
To help achieve the two overall aims of this thesis, this chapter draws on studies I, II and III and the discourse analysis outlined in the previous chapter. The first aim is to problematise the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and of the usual WIL design. The rationale behind this aim is the hypothesis that I argue for in this thesis, namely that due to their dualistic nature, these instances and this WIL design primarily contribute to creating—but also bridging—the so-called theory-practice gap for students. The second aim is to problematise the possibility of establishing physical and/or virtual countersites to the usual WIL design. In this thesis, I label these countersites third places for learning professions and there are two rationales behind the second aim. Such countersites could potentially avoid creating this gap for students by giving them the overall non-dualistic experience that theory is a form of knowledge that—in various forms and shapes—produce through the daily work of a profession. Secondly, I problematise the possibility of establishing the stated countersites because there are conditions that could limit this possibility or prevent it from being realised. Which conditions I refer to, what I mean by such countersites and how they could offer such a non-dualistic experience are explained later in this chapter. First, I will elaborate on the research process.

7.1 Revisiting the research process
This section describes the interpretive and abductive research process used throughout this thesis.

7.1.1 General reflections on the interpretative and abductive research process
The research process was interpretative and abductive throughout. Thus, the hypothesis argued for in this thesis, and the results and conclusions outlined, derived from a research process whereby I went back and forth between reading relevant research and examining the empirical material. By 'relevant', I mean research that gave me a more profound understanding of how the analytical concepts outlined in the theoretical perspective chapter could be used in the context of the examined empirical material. Some of this research is Foucault's own research or Foucault-inspired studies. WIL research and studies on the concept of dualism are other examples of relevant research. Furthermore, the
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empirical material was produced and selected in close connection with the interpretations derived from reading such research. Examining this material also generated interpretations that directed me towards other research, helping me to better understand the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and of the usual WIL design. At the outset of my thesis work, I had limited knowledge of both the dualistic nature that characterises these instances and this WIL design and the hypothesis that I argue for in this thesis. For instance, when I studied to become a teacher, I felt that there were often gaps between what was taught on campus and at placements, which at that time I rather unreflectively saw as theory-practice gaps. However, the experience of participating in a degree programme that applied the usual WIL design did not make me think about how this gap could be linked to the dualistic nature that characterises this WIL design and spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology. What I mean here is not that I should have thought about that when I was a student teacher; rather, I want to clarify that it was only after embarking on the research process that this hypothesis was developed.

Without really reflecting on it, I had also used the theory-practice terminology long before I began my thesis work. However, I had to read a lot of research before I began to realise that using concepts such as theory and practice, academia and real world, and education and work as opposite terms is a dualistic terminology that has existed globally for a long time. When I realised this, and that theory and practice can be considered the two most basic concepts of the modern version of this terminology, I labelled this the theory-practice terminology. Research that helped me to see that this terminology has long been globally established includes research illustrating that these or related concepts were used as opposites when Co-op emerged in 1906 (see e.g. Sovilla & Varty, 2011). Other research that helped me realise this shows how the current use of theory and practice in this terminology is related to the ancient Greek distinction between *theoria* (contemplating and looking at things) and *praxis* (carrying out things) (see e.g. Kessels & Korthagen, 1996). Based on this general reflection on the research process, I will now provide more details about the process.

### 7.1.2 The choices made, the challenges faced and some limitations of the research process

An important challenge was to ensure quality in the different discourse analyses that were conducted. Different techniques for being rigorous (thorough), systematic, trustworthy and transparent in the analyses were used to ensure this. As discourse analysis is very much an interpretive endeavour, a key to ensuring a rigorous and systematic analysis is to have an analytical framework that helps the researcher to determine a) the focus of the analysis and b) how to interpret what
is analysed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Gee et al., 2005; Greckhamer & Cilesiz, 2014). The two overall aims and the research questions of this thesis, as well as the theoretical perspective applied, were all created throughout the research process and became a framework that guided me in the discourse analyses. As stated, to ensure the quality of discourse analysis, issues of trustworthiness must be dealt with. A key aspect of trustworthiness is transparency, and reflexivity in the research process is important to ensure transparency. Reflexivity is about critically reflecting on the challenges faced and the choices made during the research process, and the limitations and effects of the choices made (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Börjesson, 2003; Bredlöv, 2018). Regarding transparency, it should first be stated that I have tried to be as open as possible about how the theoretical perspective influenced the analysis of the empirical material. Furthermore, to provide transparent discourse analyses, I worked extensively with contextualising the empirical quotations that were used to exemplify specific results. This was done to give the reader a better understanding of these quotations and to make it easier for them to determine whether the interpretations of the quotations presented as results in studies I, II and III are reasonable. Providing this context was also a way to convince the reader that the interpretations are reasonable, and convincing the reader of this has been highlighted as a key to ensuring a trustworthy discourse analysis (Fejes, 2006).

Another way to ensure a trustworthy discourse analysis is to present a coherent discourse analysis. This means a discourse analysis that can show how key elements of a discourse, for instance specific ideas and certain accounts of them, are linked in this discourse (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The discourse analysis in chapter 6 presents the theory-practice terminology’s antagonistic and harmonious networks to give a more coherent picture of this terminology and of how the four ideas that I examine are linked (see page 18 for a reminder of the four ideas to which I refer). To give further validity to the discourse analyses outlined in the three studies, I also tried to present fruitful results, which means results that can offer ‘new’ or alternative ways of understanding the topic they explore. Larsson (2005) emphasised that the quality and credibility of discourse analysis, and of all qualitative analytical methods, is founded on the researcher’s ability to provide fruitful results. For instance, based on discourse analyses, studies I, II and III challenge the dualistic take that theory is a form of knowledge that is first studied outside and then brought to ‘practice’, by emphasising that theory is embedded in various shapes and forms in the daily work practices of a profession. If this makes the reader question the dualistic take, one can say that these discourse analyses have been fruitful. Furthermore, when examining the empirical material, I also faced the issue of which conclusions could actually be drawn from the discourse analyses conducted in studies I, II and III. I thought a lot about not over-analysing and drawing too great conclusions, and also about avoiding under-
analysing, i.e. drawing lesser conclusions than was possible (see Westberg, 2016, who discussed that it is easy to draw either too great or too minor conclusions when conducting a discourse analysis). For instance, while studies II and III merely examine how the Co-op model is promoted and not other standard WIL models, I was able to conclude how the idea of academia and the real world and the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability have continued to operate in the WIL discourse in general. This is because the documents examined include accounts of the former idea and the latter meaning that are not specific to Co-op but speak about all standard WIL models. If I had claimed that these accounts are Co-op specific, I would arguably have been guilty of under-analysing.

Another important challenge dealt with during the research process involves categorising the empirical material. While a theoretical perspective was used to ensure a systematic and thorough categorisation of the empirical material, it is vital to acknowledge that the categorisation was still based on the interpretations of the specific researcher(s) that conducted studies I, II and III. (In the first study, I have a co-author, and in studies II and III, I am the sole author.) This means that the categorisations made are not the only ones that could have been made. For instance, the documents examined in studies II and III often imply that ‘real-world experience’ fosters employable (here meaning work-ready) graduates. Statements implying this could have been categorised as instances of the idea of academia and the real world. However, I categorised them as instances of the dualistic meaning ascribed to graduate employability because while they use the real-world concept, they speak about graduate employability and how it is fostered through ‘real-world experience’.

Another challenge I faced was that I was both an insider and an outsider in the research process, and it was vital to reflect on this to ensure that the analysis of the empirical material did not become biased. I was an insider because I studied WIL as a form of higher education from a position within ‘academia’ and because some of the documents examined in studies II and III are from University West, where I work. However, I was also an outsider because I examined documents from the University of Cincinnati and the University of Waterloo. All this created certain ethical issues. For example, some of the examined documents are from a HEI where I work and that promotes itself as a specialist in WIL (University West, 2020c). This meant that I had to consider whether my position as an employee at a WIL-promoting HEI prevented me from problematising this form of higher education. I also had to consider whether, in my attempts to avoid being an uncritical insider, I would instead be too critical of WIL. The hypothesis that spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design primarily contribute to creating – but also bridging the so-called
theory-practice gap for students can be seen as an example of how I have tried to problematise WIL without being too pessimistic.

Another aspect I want to point out is that while I have not interviewed employers as such, I have still been able to explore employers’ perspectives on WIL. This is because the documents examined in studies II and III tend to speak from an employer perspective in the sense that they often emphasise a) which skills employers demand from graduates and b) that graduates must be prepared for working life. To conclude this section, I want to emphasise that while this thesis problematises the theory-practice terminology, it also uses this terminology to do so, and thereby reproduces it. A specific part of the research process is interesting to note here. What I refer to is that it was very challenging to come up with some basic features that a non-dualistic terminology could have because it was difficult to break with the dualistic order of discourse, whereby theory and practice are used as opposite terms. I argue that this order of discourse was difficult to avoid because we (i.e. people in general) are used to applying it habitually. As a basis for the upcoming sections, it is important to note that in those headings where I use the phrasing ‘theory-practice terminology’, I do not only mean spoken and written instances of this terminology but also their institutional embodiment, i.e. the usual WIL design.

### 7.2 Problematising the dualistic nature and the ambivalent function of the theory-practice terminology

I will begin this section by emphasising what basically makes spoken and written instances of this terminology and the WIL design dualistic. These instances speak as if – and imply that – there is only one form of theory, namely the research-based knowledge studied on campus. They also imply that there is one practice in terms of *place*, namely the working-life domain outside HEIs, and one practice in terms of *activity*, namely the concrete work that students carry out in this domain. Furthermore, these instances speak as if the ‘practice’ students go to and the ‘practice’ they carry out are atheoretical until students succeed in applying ‘theory’. All these implications spread the dualistic message that theory is a form of knowledge originally isolated from and learnt outside ‘practice’ until it is applied there. The usual WIL design institutionalises this message, because it embodies the notion that students should move between campus and workplaces and try to integrate ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. By implying that ‘theory’ is initially absent from ‘practice’, this message also fails to recognise two non-dualistic interpretations. One is that all theories, regardless of whether they are research-based or informal, are produced through some form of practice, and the other is that there is no such thing as atheoretical practices. Rather, all forms of practice, regardless of
whether they are used on campus or at workplaces outside HEIs, are explicitly and/or tacitly shaped by theory in the form of principles and ideas, et cetera (Taguchi, 2007). In view of the above, I will exemplify how spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design can be said to have the ambivalent function that they contribute to both creating and bridging the so-called theory-practice gap for students (see Allen & Wright, 2014, who argued that WIL creates both gaps and connections between what students are taught on campus and at work placements). I conclude that the said instances and WIL design have this function because they arguably combine to a) imply to students that they study ‘theory’ on campus and take part in ‘practice’ at placements, and b) give students conflicting impressions about whether ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are compatible. For instance, the usual WIL design gives students the possibility to move between on-campus and work placement-based training to integrate what they are being told are ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. Sometimes students succeed with this integration and sometimes they do not. When they succeed, or if they experience that they succeed more than they fail, I argue that this can give them the impression that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are compatible. However, when this integration fails or if students feel that it seldom succeeds, this can give them the impression that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are incompatible, or in other words that there is a theory-practice gap. Furthermore, spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology give students conflicting messages that can reinforce the experience that there is either a connection or a gap between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. For instance, antagonistic messages that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ do not match each other can reinforce the latter experience, whereas the harmonious message that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are a perfect match can reinforce the former experience. Considering this, I will proceed to present a more in-depth argument for the hypothesis that I put forward in this thesis.

### 7.2.1 Two wills illustrating why the theory-practice terminology primarily contributes to creating but also bridging the so-called theory-practice gap

In this section, I will argue that two wills underlie spoken and written instances of this terminology and the usual WIL design to ensure that the said instances and WIL design contribute primarily to creating but also bridging this gap for students. Here, I use a Foucault-inspired working definition of the concept of will. This means that I emphasise that there are wills (desires) in society that encourage people to talk and behave in specific ways. For instance, Foucault (1990) stated that while human history has been characterised by a will to knowledge, this will to seek, find and speak the ‘truth’ has been especially institutionalised in our society since the nineteenth century. An example is that since that time, society has been characterised by an increase in institutions that not only seek to produce ‘truths’
and speak the ‘truth’, but also encourage people to speak the ‘truth’ (Foucault, 1990). HEIs are interesting to discuss here because they can be seen as one of the usual places where researchers produce and students study what in many contexts is still regarded as the ‘truest’ form of knowledge, i.e. the research-based knowledge that is usually labelled ‘theory’ (Carr, 2006).

One will that underlies spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design is the will to separate theory from practice. In one way, this will seeks to separate ‘theory’ from ‘practice’ permanently, and in another, it seeks a temporary separation between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. By ‘permanently’, I mean that this will wants to consistently indicate that ‘theory’ is something ‘other’ than ‘practice’. This is reflected in the said instances and WIL design, which together imply that ‘theory’ is the abstract research-based knowledge studied on campus whereas ‘practice’ is the concrete work carried out at placements outside HEIs. I argue that the reason why the will to separate theory from practice consistently wants to distinguish between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ is that a specific positivist epistemology underlies this will. The epistemology is that ‘theory’ derives from research to be an objective and universal knowledge that is superior to knowledge in ‘practice’, which is here seen to be subjective because it is said to derive from so-called ‘everyday experience’ (see e.g. Schön, 1983, 1987 and Carr, 2006, for a description of this positivist epistemology). Because this epistemology operates through the will to separate theory from practice, one can say that this will desires a form of knowledge that – from a positivist perspective – is more reliable and accurate than knowledge in ‘practice’. In that sense, this will is closely related to what Foucault (1990) labelled the will to knowledge, i.e. the will to both produce ‘true’ knowledge and speak the ‘truth’.

Furthermore, when I emphasise that the will to separate theory from practice only wants a temporary separation of ‘theory’ from ‘practice’, I mean that it does not wish for ‘theory’ to be separated from students’ ‘practice’ in the long run. Rather, it desires that ‘theory’ should initially be studied outside ‘practice’ in a place called ‘academia’ and then applied to ‘practice’. Spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology which emphasise that ‘theory’ should be studied on campus and then applied to ‘practice’ reflect this desire. This desire is also reflected in the usual WIL design, which ensures that a key component of on-campus training is to study ‘theory’ and that a key component of placement-based training is to try to apply this ‘theory’ (see e.g. Schön, 1983, who called studying ‘theory’ first the technical rationality model). I argue that the reason why the will to separate theory from practice wants ‘theory’ to be studied outside ‘practice’ first is because a specific positivist principle forms a key feature of this will. The principle is that ‘academia’ – but not the working-life domain called ‘practice’ – is equipped to give students a training in ‘theory’ which ensures that they can apply ‘theory’ in
objective and systematic ways in ‘practice’. This principle is based on the positivist thinking that ‘academia’ is where experts in ‘theory’ and in systematic and objective techniques for applying ‘theory’ work, whereas ‘practice’ is too value-laden and messy to provide such objective and systematic training (see Schön, 1983; 1987, for a description of this positivist thinking). Furthermore, I argue that the way in which the will to separate theory from practice is manifested in spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and in the usual WIL design establishes basic conditions for why the so-called theory-practice gap is recreated for students. For instance, by implying that ‘theory’ is the abstract research-based knowledge studied on campus, whereas ‘practice’ is the concrete work carried out at placements, the said instances and WIL design follow this will’s desire to constantly indicate that ‘theory’ is something other than ‘practice’. The theory-practice distinction spread through this implication arguably contributes to spreading a way of thinking that very different forms of knowledge are learnt on campus and at placements. This is the thinking that I have claimed contributes to creating the gap, because it arguably makes students prone to a) expect and notice gaps between what they learn on campus and at placements and b) see them as theory-practice gaps per se.

Moreover, the will to separate theory from practice operates through the usual WIL design to set up a basic condition under which so-called theory-practice gaps occur for students. It is by following this will’s desire, i.e. that ‘theory’ should initially be studied outside ‘practice’, that the WIL design ensures on-campus training is institutionalised and labelled as the training in ‘theory’ that takes place outside and before ‘practice’. While students do not only study ‘theory’ on campus, it is under this condition that they are encouraged to a) think that what they study on campus is ‘theory’ and b) see all mismatches between on-campus and placement-based training as theory-practice gaps.

These examples of how such a will is manifested in spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and in the usual WIL design arguably indicate two things. As the will to separate theory from practice operates through these instances and this WIL design to indicate that ‘theory’ is something other than ‘practice’, this will achieves its wish to separate ‘theory’ from ‘practice’. However, as this will is manifested in the usual WIL design and these instances to set up a condition under which students are encouraged to see gaps between on-campus and placement-based training as theory-practice gaps, it arguably fails to achieve its other wish. By this, I mean that while the will to separate theory from practice only wishes for ‘theory’ to be initially studied outside and then applied to ‘practice’, this will have arguably set up a basic condition under which a more lasting gap than it wished for is easily recreated. How this will manifests itself in spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and in the usual WIL design
will therefore arguably have a separating function that is not compatible with this design’s overall aim of bridging the gap. However, there is another will operating through such instances and the usual WIL design. This is the will to integrate theory and practice, which expresses a desire that fits perfectly with this overall aim. This will desires an integration between students’ on-campus training and work placement-based training, which in this connection is labelled an integration between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. The will is also manifested through spoken and written utterances that emphasise that students should integrate ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ or bridge the theory-practice gap. I have argued that such instances contribute towards bridging this gap because they encourage students to integrate what they are taught on campus and at work placements under the labels of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ respectively. However, while such instances focus on integration, they are also marked by the will to separate theory from practice. This is because they speak about theory as the abstract research-based knowledge studied on campus and about practice as the concrete work carried out at placements to encourage students to think that ‘theory’ is very different from ‘practice’. As stated, this way of thinking arguably makes students prone to a) expect and notice gaps between on-campus and work placement-based training, and b) see these as theory-practice gaps.

Thus, as the will to integrate theory and practice operates through spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology, it contributes not only to creating the integration it desires but also to creating the so-called theory-practice gap. The same can be said about how this will operates through the usual WIL design to give students opportunities to move between on-campus and work placement-based training in order to integrate what they are told are ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ respectively. By operating through this WIL design to give students these opportunities, this will enables them to either succeed or fail with this integration, and thus to either bridge or experience the gap.

There can be said to be three principles underlying this will which ensure that it seeks an integration of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. Two of these principles are pragmatist principles and one is a positivist principle. One pragmatist principle is that students should become not only well-educated in ‘theory’ but also experts in applying ‘theory’ to ensure that it is useful in ‘practice’. The other is that practising ‘theory’ makes students understand ‘theory’ better and how it can be used (see e.g. Dewey, 1904, who discussed these pragmatist principles). The positivist principle is that ‘theory’ is the objective, universal and visionary knowledge that students must learn to apply because ‘practice’ needs ‘theory’ to become professional, which here means objective, systematic and ideal (see Schön, 1983, 1987; Carr, 2006, for a description of this principle). This positivist principle is linked to the positivist principle forming part of the will to separate theory from practice.
The positivist principle forming part of the latter will is that students should first learn ‘theory’ and research-based techniques for applying ‘theory’ in ‘academia’, because this is where the experts (academicians) who can teach students ‘theory’ and these techniques in an objective and systematic way work. According to both these positivist principles, the ideal professional is the one who knows ‘theory’ and research-based techniques for systematically applying ‘theory’ to ‘practice’ (Schön, 1983; 1987). These positivist principles are grounded in one of the basic ideas behind positivist philosophy. The idea is that ‘theory’ is the objective, universal and visionary knowledge that is not only key to improving the ‘practice’ of our professions but also key to societal progress in general (Carr, 2006).

Here, it is important to note a common denominator between the will to integrate theory and practice and the will to separate theory from practice. Because the latter will only wants the study of ‘theory’ to be temporarily separated from students’ ‘practice’, it desires the same integration as the former will. In that sense, these two wills are compatible. However, I argue that the combined effect of how these wills operate through spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design is that they primarily do not achieve this wish but instead mainly contribute to creating the so-called theory-practice gap. I make this argument based on the conclusion that the will to separate theory from practice has a stronger grip on both such instances and this WIL design than the will to integrate theory and practice. This conclusion can first be explained by looking into the nature of these instances. All such instances, even those that emphasise the will to integrate theory and practice, distinguish ‘theory’ from ‘practice’ by speaking about ‘theory’ as the abstract research-based knowledge studied on campus and about ‘practice’ as the concrete work carried out at placements. This arguably means that the most basic function of such instances is to separate ‘theory’ from ‘practice’ for students.

There is also a reason why the will to separate theory from practice has the strongest grip on the usual WIL design. It is based on this will that the WIL design not only ensures that students in a key sense actually study ‘theory’ on campus outside the working-life domain of ‘practice’ but also implies to students that on-campus training is all about studying ‘theory’, and placement-based training is all about carrying out ‘practice’. This sets a condition under which a) gaps between on-campus and placement-based training will always reoccur and be easily thought of as theory-practice gaps, and b) a situation whereby an integration of what is taught on campus and on placements can only be realised at times but can never be fully completed in the long run. In other words, the way in which the will to separate theory from practice operates through the usual WIL design to establish this condition ensures that the will to integrate theory and practice can never be fully realised in the long run. I will now discuss third places for learning professions. Such places are
not established arrangements at present, but could possibly be a decisive option for avoiding creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students.

7.3 How third places for learning professions could be designed, their potential use and possibility to become established

When imagining such places, I envision physical and/or virtual sites that are co-created and shared between HEIs and workplaces outside HEIs, where students can get two non-dualistic experiences alongside faculty members and professionals from these workplaces. One experience is that of how a profession’s daily work practices are shaped by theory, sometimes in the form of the research-based students’ study, and at other times in the shape of other research-based theory and/or informal theory. The other is an experience of how a profession’s daily work practices are and could be used to develop theories (principles and models, et cetera) for how to work. Spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design are arguably not really suited to providing these two experiences. This is because together they spread a message that directs students’ attention away from a) the research-based and informal theories that already shape daily work and b) the principles or models developed through this work. The message is that there is only one form of theory, namely the research-based knowledge that is studied on campus and that is absent from ‘practice’ until it is successfully applied there. This message arguably directs students’ attention towards bringing ‘theory’ to ‘practice’, rather than towards investigating how theory already shapes and is developed through daily work in various shapes and forms.

What I mean by third places for learning professions is now explained in more detail, and I will clarify why it is vital that these potential countersites to the usual WIL design are designed as places. By places, I mean physical or virtual spaces that are a) associated with specific institutional practices and the ways of talking and thinking that these practices (re)produce, and b) designed to reach and become known for having one or more objectives. To explain what I mean by third places for learning professions, I draw on an interpretation of third space that has been used in research to discuss third spaces in a WIL context. The interpretation is that a third space in this context is an environment that represents a hybrid of the institutional environments established at HEIs and at the workplaces outside HEIs where the profession’s students study for usually work. More specifically, it is a hybrid of the institutional environments found on campus and at those workplaces that are peripheral to and represent something other than these environments (Forgasz et al., 2018). Here, peripheral means two things. It means an environment that is sufficiently related to the stated institutional environments
to become a hybrid of them that can illustrate how daily work practices are shaped by research-based and informal theories, and can develop principles and models for how to work. Secondly, it means an environment that is distant enough from the institutional environments of HEIs and workplaces outside HEIs to operate freely from them, and not reproduce these environments and the roles that they traditionally play in students’ education. According to third space thinking, the ability to avoid reproducing these environments and roles is a prerequisite for being able to avoid creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. The reasoning behind this thinking is that the gap largely exists because the institutional environments that students encounter on campus and at these workplaces are not only different by tradition, but also often continue to have quite detached roles in students’ education (see e.g. Forgasz et al., 2018). For instance, it is still not uncommon for faculty members and professionals operating outside HEIs to be responsible for students’ on-campus and work placement-based training respectively without being really aware of what goes on in the form of training they are not responsible for (see e.g. Crisp et al., 2019, who emphasised that these forms of training can still often be quite disconnected). This creates a situation where there can easily be gaps between what faculty members and professionals teach students, which the terminology I problematise implies are theory-practice gaps per se.

There is research exemplifying what third spaces could look like in a WIL context (Gorodetsky & Barak, 2008; Forgasz et al., 2018; Goodyear, 2019). However, spaces of this nature have not become established institutional arrangements in students’ education, and this research pays limited attention to two vital questions. One is whether such spaces must be designed as places, which here means environments with their own physical and/or virtual habitat where their institutional practices can take hold and grow, to become established arrangements in students’ education. The other question is whether being established arrangements in students’ education is a prerequisite for being able to provide an effective counter-image to the dualistic thinking that spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design spread to students. I argue that if they are not designed as places, third environments will lack their own physical and/or virtual habitat allowing them to really take hold and grow into established arrangements in students’ education. I further argue that if environments that are intended to be third spaces do not play a legitimate role in students’ education, they would find it difficult to be influential enough to encourage students to think and talk in a non-dualistic rather than a dualistic way about what theory and practice mean and how they are related. It is also because I argue that the envisioned countersites to the usual WIL need to be designed as places to become established and influential that I use the label third places rather than third spaces for learning professions. Furthermore, by countersites
to this WIL design, I do not mean places that will replace this WIL design, but rather complementary alternatives that could provide such a counter-image. Thus, I see third places for learning professions as established spaces operating on the periphery of HEIs and workplaces outside HEIs to illustrate how daily work practices a) are shaped by research-based and informal theory, and b) develop principles and models for how to work. Such places could, as stated, be physical or virtual, and some could provide both physical and virtual illustrations of how theory shapes and is developed through this work. There could also be third places that are focused on more than one profession, offering students of different professions the possibility to engage in interprofessional learning.

7.3.1 Some possible features of third places for learning professions

To provide more details about what these third places might look like, I will compare them to contemporary and past institutional arrangements or practices that they could build on in some ways but must differ from in other ways. These are the apprenticeship model, Dewey’s Laboratory School, Professional Development Schools (PDSs) and Schön’s (1983) model for reflective practice. I will begin by relating third places for learning professions to the apprenticeship model, a model for learning a profession that has a long history (Billet, 2016). The basis for this model is that a so-called apprentice learns a profession by shadowing and mimicking the work that an expert professional does on a daily basis, using the working techniques and tools that are traditionally used in this profession (Dewey, 1904; Shulman, 1998). A key feature of the apprenticeship model that is not suitable for third places for learning professions is that the model physically locates the ‘apprentice’ at the usual workplace(s) of a profession that normally operates outside HEIs. While I am not arguing that there is a total lack of non-dualistic ways of talking and thinking about what theory and practice mean and how they are related to each other at such workplaces, they are arguably institutional environments where the theory-practice terminology and the dualistic thinking it promotes are generally rooted. This argument is supported by the fact that these workplaces are often labelled as the places where the ‘practice’ of a profession is conducted, and people who work there are known as ‘practitioners’.

I further argue that while it may not be impossible to turn such workplaces into the third places I envision, it is certainly not easy to do so. This is because places where the said dualistic terminology and way of thinking are arguably rooted would not easily accept non-dualistic ways of talking and thinking about what theory and practice mean. Furthermore, there is a focus of the apprenticeship model that third places for learning professions could incorporate, namely to focus on the daily work practices of a profession. In doing so, such third places
could provide learning activities showing how these daily practices are – and could be – shaped by the research-based theory students’ study, other research-based theory and informal theory. They could also provide learning activities illustrating how certain principles and models for how to work are developed through the daily work practices of a profession.

Dewey’s Laboratory School, which was introduced at the department of teacher education at the University of Chicago in 1894 (Dewey, 1904), is interesting to discuss here. This school can be considered a key modern ‘birth’ of the idea of having laboratories or learning centres on campus. Many HEIs worldwide currently supplement the usual WIL design with laboratories on campus that seek to prepare students for one or more professions. Dewey (1904) emphasised that the general idea behind the laboratory school is to give student teachers a classroom-like environment where they get to find out how research-based theories about teaching can be practised. Third places for learning a profession could provide opportunities to find out how research-based theory and informal could be used to shape the daily work practices of a profession. Take third places for learning the teaching profession as an example. Such places could provide access to physical and/or virtual classroom environments where student teachers, along with faculty members and schoolteachers, can try out different research-based and informal teaching principles, and see how these principles could shape teaching work. Physical third places for learning the teaching profession could also ensure that student teachers – in collaboration with faculty members and schoolteachers – have lessons with pupils that they have designed based on specific teaching principles.

Moreover, as is often currently the case with clinical learning centres on campus, third places for learning professions could use physical and/or virtual simulations of daily work practices. However, such third places must avoid a key pedagogical focus of these clinical learning centres. The focus is to simulate so-called ‘real-world’ situations that students will learn to deal with by acting according to how a profession is ‘actually’ carried out in ‘the real world’. This is an appropriate focus for clinical learning centres on campus. However, this pedagogical focus is founded on the dualistic idea that a ‘real world’ exists outside ‘academia’ that students must be prepared for, and since the third places I envision are intended to be places for non-dualistic thinking, they cannot apply this pedagogical focus. Instead, simulations – for instance through immersive media – could show a) what research-based and informal theory are like and how they could be used in the daily work practices of one or more related professions, and b) how such work practices can develop principles and models for how to work. As an example, third places oriented towards health care professionals could ensure that student nurses and medical students together take part in simulations where the focus is
to see and try out how health care and medical principles are – and could be – used in daily work. There is another key element of clinical learning centres that can be said to be inappropriate for third places for learning professions, namely that these centres are physically located at HEIs. Just like workplaces outside HEIs where specific professions usually work, HEIs are arguably institutional environments where the third places I envision cannot easily be created. I base this argument on the conclusion that the dualistic thinking behind the theory-practice terminology is generally rooted not only in these workplaces, but also in the established institutional environments found at HEIs. This conclusion is supported by the fact that HEIs are spoken of as places that are located outside the ‘practical world’, and where students are taught ‘theory’.

Considering this, I will now discuss the current institutional arrangement labelled Professional Development School (PDS), a school that collaborates with one or more HEIs to achieve two main aims. One is to ensure that the ways of teaching used at this school are founded on a mix of (new) research and the ideas, thoughts and methods of schoolteachers. The other is to encourage student teachers to bridge the so-called theory-practice gap by giving them a place where they can practise how the research-based theories they study can be used in daily teaching work (Korthagen, 2010). The same type of collaboration on which PDSs are founded has been used between HEIs and health care institutions to ensure that student nurses learn to bridge this gap (see e.g. Rystedt & Gustafsson, 2013). Third places for learning professions could, like PDSs, seek to show students how the research-based theory they study is – and could be – used to shape the daily work practices of the profession they are studying for. However, to really show students that theory is a form of knowledge that is embedded in these work practices in various shapes and forms, it is vital that such third places also show how these work practices are shaped by informal theory, and by research-based theories that students do not study. Showing this can be a way to give students concrete experience of how the gaps between the research-based theories they study and daily work practices are gaps between these theories and the research-based and/or informal theories that actually shape these work practices.

Furthermore, just like PDSs, third places for learning professions would seek to create a shared community between faculty members and professionals working outside HEIs. Research, such as that carried out by Zeichner (2007, 2010), has emphasised that this aim has generally not been achieved through PDSs, and that student teachers have therefore often experienced a gap between what they were taught about teaching on campus and at PDSs. Zeichner (2007, 2010) and Gorodetsky and Barak (2008) emphasised that the intended shared community was often not achieved through PDSs because faculty members and schoolteachers typically failed to break with their traditional roles in students’
education. This meant that faculty members typically continued to focus on on-campus training without being really aware of what goes on at PDSs, whereas schoolteachers typically continued to deal with the placement-based training without being really aware of what students were taught on campus. In other words, PDSs generally failed to become a third new shared environment because they typically kept introducing student teachers to their usual two learning environments, i.e. on campus and at schools.

Returning to the discussion on third places for learning professions, one of their key features could be to ensure that students – together with faculty members and professionals working outside HEIs – engage in reflective practice (Schön, 1983). This is a form of practice whereby one or more people reflect in and on the very actions taken during daily work (Schön, 1987). Reflective practice can be a way for students, faculty members and professionals to reflect together on – and become more aware of – a) the theories that tacitly shape usual ways of acting within a profession and b) how other theories could be used to form other ways of acting. At third places for learning a profession, students, faculty members and professionals could also use reflective practice to contemplate – and thus become more aware of – how new principles and models for working within a profession can be developed. Considering this, and as a basis for the forthcoming section, I will make two remarks. A specific aim of third places for learning professions could, as indicated, be to offer experiences of a) how the daily work practices of one or more professions are shaped by research-based and informal theory, and b) how such work practices are – and could be – used to develop principles and models for how to work. However, such places could also have the more overall aim of becoming loci where a non-dualistic way of talking and thinking about what theory and practice mean, and how they are related, become enacted to the degree that this way of talking and thinking spreads and becomes more established in society. If becoming more widely used, such a way of talking and thinking could perhaps in a more general sense counteract the theory-practice terminology whose primary function is arguably that it breeds a polarised way of thinking about what theory and practice mean, and how they are related.

7.3.2 Establishing third places for learning professions that fulfil two aims: A mission impossible?

While, according to third-space thinking, it is possible to design the kind of countersites to the usual WIL design that I envision, there are key conditions that make it difficult for them to be established and fulfil the specific aim and the overall aim stated above. This section focuses on two such conditions. The first concerns the question of which stakeholders could be interested in the potential benefits of such places. The other concerns a possible limitation in the third space
thinking behind the places I envision. Stakeholders such as HEIs, public and private employers operating outside HEIs, and governments could be interested in what third places for learning professions could potentially offer. For instance, such places could potentially give students, faculty members and professionals working outside HEIs an increased understanding of how research-based and informal theory are used in the daily work practices of one or more professions. They could also show students, faculty members and professionals how the daily work practices could be used to develop principles and models for how to work and therefore increase their understanding of this. All these increased understandings could result in students, faculty members and professionals becoming experts at using research-based and informal theory, seeing limitations on how theories are used, and creating new principles and models for how to work.

Both HEIs and employers operating outside HEIs could be interested in places that can make students experts at these things, as HEIs could then advertise that they foster graduates with this expertise and employers could be interested employing such graduates. However, an important question is whether HEIs and employers operating outside HEIs could be interested enough to co-fund the establishment of third places for learning professions, which could very well depend on the cost of establishing such places. I have concluded that the theory-practice terminology and the dualistic thinking it spreads are generally rooted in the institutional environments of HEIs and workplaces outside HEIs, and that it is therefore difficult to succeed in establishing physical third places on campuses and in these workplaces. Staying true to this conclusion, it can be said that in order to successfully establish physical third places for learning professions, they need to be located at sites outside HEIs and these workplaces. The cost of establishing such sites would arguably be greater than establishing virtual third places. Thus, if this conclusion is to be strictly followed in attempts to establish the places I envision, it would arguably – for cost reasons – be more likely that HEIs and employers will try to establish virtual rather than physical versions of these places together.

However, if this conclusion is not strictly followed, it is conceivable that physical sites that are distant and different enough from established institutional practices at HEIs could be established on campuses and become third places for learning professions. While HEIs have a tradition of reproducing their established teaching practices, there have traditionally also been some HEI colleges that ‘live a life of their own’ on campus, as their degree programmes do not use the typical teaching practices applied in mainstream degree programmes. Schön (1987, p. 18) took colleges of architecture as an example, and emphasised that rather than using traditional lectures and seminars, the main teaching practice of colleges of
architecture was *the studio tradition*, which focused on ‘the art of designing’. This supports the claim that it could be possible to physically establish third places for learning professions on campuses. There are currently also campus-based arrangements that are intended to be loci where faculty members, professionals working outside HEIs and students can meet to learn from each other and overcome traditional barriers between ‘academia’ and the ‘world of work’. An example is University West’s *Open Lab* (University West, 2020d).

Furthermore, many employers operating outside HEIs are arguably less likely than HEIs to be interested in paying for the cost of establishing and hosting physical third places for learning professions at their premises. While such places must be allowed to operate ‘freely’ from the established teaching practices at HEIs, it is in fact the case that HEIs can sell campus-based third places as part of their educational offerings. However, while employers outside ‘academia’ could benefit from the learning occurring at third places for learning professions, many of them could not sell this learning as a key element of the product or service that they usually sell to their clients. I argue that these different conditions make it more likely that HEIs – rather than these employers – will be interested in locating such physical places at their premises. Here, it is vital to note that many of these employers would also be unable to sell the learning generated through virtual third places for learning professions as part of the products or services that they usually sell. However, they could be more open to co-funding virtual rather than physical third places, since the former would arguably be less expensive to launch and maintain. Considering this, I will now further problematise the possibility of establishing third places for learning professions by looking into a limitation embedded in the third space thinking behind such potential places.

### 7.3.3 A weak link in third space thinking

Embedded in this thinking is a romanticisation of the possibility to create a third new environment by merging two institutional environments that in many respects use different and/or conflicting institutional practices (see e.g. Bhabha, 1990; Soja, 1996, who recognised the complexity of establishing such environments). In other words, there is an element to third space thinking that idealises the possibility of creating a *utopian* situation where two different institutional environments can co-create a third new environment that is shared equally between representatives of the two original environments. This idealistic element was touched upon by Foucault and Miskowiec (1986, p. 3) when they stated that sites which are able to merge different and/or differing environments into a new environment are *heterotopias* where a utopian situation could potentially be ‘effectively enacted’. This idealistic element is problematic in the sense that it conceals the difficulties involved in establishing third new environments to a certain extent.
A key difficulty in establishing third places for learning professions is breaking with the institutional practices established at HEIs and at workplaces outside HEIs, which arguably tend to promote the dualistic thinking operating through the theory-practice terminology. Breaking with institutional practices that are so firmly established is not easy, and many potential attempts to co-create such third places may fail precisely because the places created do not avoid these practices and instead end up incorporating them. For instance, the established roles whereby faculty members and professionals working outside HEIs focus on students’ training in ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ respectively, and are thereby labelled ‘theorists’ and ‘practitioners’, must be avoided. This is easier said than done, and not only because faculty members and professionals are used to occupying these roles, but also because HEIs and workplaces outside HEIs arguably have an interest in maintaining them. For instance, HEIs can be seen to have an interest in maintaining their role as educators in ‘theory’ because this role gives HEIs a legitimate purpose in society. Similarly, workplaces outside HEIs arguably have an interest in maintaining their role as the loci where the ‘practice’ of professions takes place and where the ‘real’ experts in ‘practice’ operate. Faculty members and professionals working outside HEIs can also be said to have an interest in maintaining their roles as experts in ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ respectively.

Furthermore, I want to focus on another aspect that makes it difficult for HEIs and employers operating outside HEIs to co-create an equally shared third environment. Any site created may in fact become more owned by either HEIs or these employers, and thereby not become the equally shared places they are intended to be. This risk applies not only to places physically located at HEIs or at the locations of these employers, but also to all physical or virtual places intended to become third places for learning professions. Moreover, any indications of either faculty members or professionals from these employers seeking to take ‘ownership’ of these places can create tensions and divides between the stakeholders rather than bringing them together. There are also certain conditions that make it more likely that places intended to be third places for learning professions will become owned by HEIs. I have touched upon one of these conditions previously, which needs further attention. This is that HEIs can sell the learning that such places are intended to generate as part of their educational offerings, while many employers operating outside HEIs cannot. This raises a number of important questions. For instance, can places that are to be co-owned by two stakeholders ever be equally shared between them, if they are bound to generate a product that typically only one of the stakeholders can sell as

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part of its usual product? Furthermore, is it not the case that places generating a product that benefits the basic business of HEIs but generally not the basic business of employers operating outside HEIs are likely to be unable to operate freely from HEIs, and can thereby easily become primarily owned by them? There is also a tradition in society whereby learning is something that formal education institutions are primarily responsible for, even though this tradition is currently being challenged and workplaces have been earmarked as places for learning (Goodyear, 2019). This arguably means that physical or virtual environments which are intended to become third places for learning professions could, due to their focus on learning, become primarily associated with – and grow into – institutional environments of HEIs. Environments which are meant to be such third places can also become primarily own by HEIs because the very idea of creating third new environments can be said to derive from ‘academia’ and to be an ‘academic’ suggestion. This could create a situation whereby professionals working outside HEIs may feel that the idea of establishing such places comes from ‘academia’ rather than being an idea co-invented between them and the faculty. If this happens, this could arguably create a difficult condition for creating environments that become equally shared between the faculty and professionals.

Furthermore, environments which are intended to be third places for learning professions may become primarily owned not only by HEIs but also by employers operating outside HEIs. For instance, if employers invest a lot of money in establishing third places for learning professions, they may feel that they should have the final say about how such places should be managed, and to avoid losing this investment HEIs could potentially give in to employers’ demands. Another key problem with establishing third places for learning professions is that these places must avoid incorporating the theory-practice terminology to become loci for non-dualistic talking and thinking about what theory and practice mean and how they are related. I argue that this terminology is easily brought to sites which are intended to become such third places, because we (people in general) use it habitually. The great spread of the theory-practice terminology is arguably not only due to the fact that the usual WIL design embodies and reproduces spoken and written instances of it. Rather, it can be argued that this terminology is also reproduced through the formal education system that became used globally in the nineteenth century and which means that people go to a place called school outside the ‘world of work’ from an early age, to study theories in the form of subject matter knowledge in various school subjects (Soysal & Strang, 1989). The fact that spoken and written instances of theory-practice terminology are so rooted in society can also make it difficult for third places for learning professions to achieve their possible overall aim: to become places where a non-dualistic way of talking and thinking about what theory and practice mean, and how they are related, can take hold to the extent that they spread beyond these places and

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become more widely used in society. What I am getting at here is this. Even if the third places I envision are successfully established to become loci where this alternative way of talking and thinking is used, this does not mean that such a way of talking and thinking will spread outside these places. This is because beyond these potential places is a society that embraces the theory-practice terminology and the dualistic thinking it promotes, and such a society could be said not to be particularly susceptible to a non-dualistic alternative to this terminology and way of thinking.

Before I proceed to the final discussion section, I need to further clarify in what sense third places for learning professions could potentially avoid creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. Places of this nature could not – and nor would they be intended to – guarantee that the research-based and informal theories students try out at such places will be the exact same research-based and informal theories that are used at the workplaces where the profession’s students study for usually work. An inability to guarantee this perfect-match situation is not, however, something that is specific to the potential third places I discuss. No preparation sites where people are trained for a profession by participating in physical and/or virtual learning environments could guarantee this. I further argue that this perfect-match situation is not desirable. Rather, it is arguably good for students, and also for faculty members and professionals working outside HEIs, to see difference rather than sameness in terms of which research-based and informal theories exist and can be used in the daily work of one or more related professions. Third places for learning professions could avoid creating the so-called theory-practice gap by showing that there are no theory-practice gaps as such, but rather gaps between the theories tried out at these places and the ones shaping the daily practices of workplaces outside HEIs. Thus, such places could potentially show students not only that the dominant notion of an actual theory-practice gap is false (Gallagher, 2004; Carr, 2006), but also that theory is useful, since it is a form of knowledge that is embedded in daily work in both research-based and informal forms. Here, I also argue that it is not the gaps between on-campus and work placement-based training that are problematic for WIL, but rather the labelling of them as theory-practice gaps. This is because this label could be said to remind students of the notion that ‘theory’ is a form of knowledge that does not really fit with ‘practice’.

7.4 Concluding thoughts, the contribution of this thesis and possible paths for future research

A key contribution of this thesis is that it has provided illustrations and arguments supporting a hypothesis that brings into question what is often taken for granted in WIL research, namely that the usual WIL design is the solution that bridges the so-
called theory-practice gap for students. The hypothesis is that, due to their dualistic nature, spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and the usual WIL design primarily contribute to creating – but also bridging – this gap for students. By arguing for this hypothesis, I have sought to illustrate two key points that are not sufficiently highlighted in WIL research. One is that this WIL design is – together with such instances – creating a dualistic setting for students. By dualistic setting, I mean that the usual WIL design moves students between campus and off-campus placements, and – together with these instances – implies that students are taught ‘theory’ on campus and ‘practice’ at placements. The other point I have sought to illustrate is that that within this dualistic setting students are encouraged to see all the differences between what they are taught on campus and at placements as theory-practice gaps. Here, it is important to note that so-called theory-practice gaps are not only created in those situations where students encounter ‘actual’ gaps between on-campus and work placement-based training and see them as theory-practice gaps. Rather, they are also created by those messages of the ideas of the theory-practice terminology that discourage students from trying to integrate what they learn on campus at placements. A prime example is the message that what students study on campus is a form of knowledge called ‘theory’ that is not worth trying to apply at placements because it is too abstract to function properly in ‘practice’.

Furthermore, I have argued that spoken and written instances of theory-practice terminology are globally established and operate through the usual WIL design to encourage students to think in dualistic terms about what theory and practice mean and how they are related. However, this does not mean that this terminology is an all-conquering force that makes it completely impossible for students to think in non-dualistic terms about what theory and practice mean and how they are related. Rather, a concluding point I am making is that the dualistic setting provided to students through spoken and written instances of the said terminology and the usual WIL design makes it easy to think in dualistic terms and difficult to think in non-dualistic terms. This does not mean that students cannot reject the dualistic messages which spoken and written instances of theory-practice terminology and this WIL design spread to them, for instance through the four ideas that I have examined. What it actually means is that these instances and the usual WIL design establish a dualistic setting that arguably makes it easier for students to accept rather than reject such dualistic messages.

It is against this background that I have discussed third places for learning professions as potential countersites to this WIL design that could embody the non-dualistic perspective that theory is a form of knowledge that is embedded in and created through the daily work practices of professions in various shapes and forms. Places that are able to embody this could possibly encourage students to think in
non-dualistic terms about what theory and practice mean and how they are related, whereby they could avoid seeing the gap that the usual WIL design seeks to bridge as a theory-practice gap. Here, the key contribution has not only been to exemplify what such places could potentially look like and how they could possibly avoid creating the so-called theory-practice gap; illustrating the difficulty in establishing them is arguably an equally vital contribution. On the one hand, establishing places of this nature seems feasible because it is possible to imagine what they could look like and how they can become establish. On the other hand, they seem rather impossible to establish because the theory-practice terminology they must avoid using is used habitually by people in general, and is therefore very difficult not to incorporate when trying to establish such places.

Furthermore, I have not intended to present third places for learning professions as the new and ideal way of designing for professional education. Rather, I problematised whether they could possibly avoid creating the so-called theory-practice gap for students. This problematisation has also been a way to further clarify the problem which I argue exists with the dualistic nature of spoken and written instances of the theory-practice terminology and of the usual WIL design. Moreover, when tracing this terminology backwards in time, I have not taken the traditional approach when conducting historical studies of attempting to explain a current idea or way of talking by seeking its origin (see e.g. Foucault, 1984, who problematised this traditional approach). Rather, in accordance with Foucault’s (1984) perspective that current ideas and ways of talking and thinking have several historical backgrounds, I have recognised that the theory-practice terminology has more than one background.

Furthermore, I have argued that while this terminology can for instance be traced back to ancient Greek distinctions between theoria and praxis and episteme and techne, there is a more influential background to how theory and practice are currently used in this terminology. The background I refer to is how this terminology began to become institutionalised worldwide with the rise of the global formal schooling system in the nineteenth century (Soysal & Strang, 1989), which embodies a key notion behind the theory-practice terminology. The notion is that school is a place outside ‘practice’ where you study theories on different subjects. There is a key reason why the global establishment of this schooling system can be said to have greatly influenced how theory and practice are currently used in this terminology. The rise of this establishment meant that people globally started to become accustomed to a compulsory mass education system that institutionalised a physical separation of the place where theories on specific subjects are studied (i.e. school) and the place where work is practised (i.e. the working-life domain outside all formal education institutions) (Soysal & Strang, 1989). I argue that the way in which spoken and written instances of the
theory-practice terminology broadly associate theory with something which is read about in schools and practice with something which is carried out at work is very much linked to this establishment. There is arguably also an important reason for the current global spread of the more specific definition of theory that is typically tacitly used by this terminology, namely that theory is the abstract research-based knowledge studied on campus. The huge increase in HEIs worldwide during the twentieth century, which ensured that many more people attended higher education and that HEIs became a more commonplace institution, has arguably meant that people in general have become accustomed in a more concrete way to the traditional notion that what one does at HEIs is to study ‘theory’ (see e.g. Schofer & Meyer, 2005, for a description of the huge expansion of higher education in the twentieth century).

Returning to the topic of the so-called theory-practice gap, one could suggest another argument clarifying that the usual WIL design is not the solution to this gap. In the ways that I have argued that this gap continues to occur easily for students, one could argue that the gap is no less today than it was when this WIL design emerged under the labels Sandwich Education (SE) and Cooperative Education (Co-op) in the early twentieth century. I do not mean to suggest that this WIL design does not bridge the gap for students at all, but that it is problematic to promote this WIL design as a solution to the gap. There is also an aspect regarding the concept of integration that I want to discuss. This is not a concept that, in a WIL context, goes beyond the dualistic way of thinking that theory is a form of knowledge that initially exists outside and needs to be integrated into the working-life domain called ‘practice’, but rather reproduces it.

When discussing countersites to usual WIL design in the frame story of this thesis, I have called them third places for learning professions rather than third places for WIL, which they are called in studies I and II. There are two related reasons for this label change. Because such potential places are intended to be habitats for non-dualistic ways of thinking and talking about what theory and practice mean and how they are related, they cannot incorporate the integration concept that breeds dualistic thinking. Secondly, the learning taking place at these potential places is not intended to be WIL. What this means is that third places for learning professions are not intended to be about students learning how to integrate ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. Rather, they are intended to be about students learning how theory is a form of knowledge that is embedded in and developed through the daily work practices of one or more professions in various forms and shapes.

Furthermore, I want to emphasise something about harmonious dualism, a way of thinking whereby two elements are treated as opposites that combine well and should be integrated (see e.g. Webb, 2013, who argued that this form of dualism has long been used worldwide and is a key foundation for indigenous Andean
thought). Harmonious dualism is promoted in WIL research, which emphasises that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ should be integrated. What is often ignored in this research is that harmonious dualism is – just like its key concept in a WIL context, i.e. integration – not an escape from, but rather a way of, reproducing the very dualistic way of thinking about what theory and practice mean and how they are related, as problematised in this thesis.

Before discussing some possible paths for future research, I wish to make a final concluding remark. I have argued that the theory-practice terminology typically speaks of one form of theory (i.e. research-based theory) and does so in such a manner that it is implied that this is the only form of theory that exists. By this, I do not mean that no one uses the concept of informal theory, but that it is research-based theory that is generally spoken of in this terminology. The possible paths for future research that I now discuss are not intended to be presented as clear paths that research should take, but rather as possible paths that could be taken. As third environments has been discussed in WIL research (Forgasz et al., 2018) but not become established arrangements, one path for research could be to further discuss whether physical and/or virtual third places for learning professions or similar types of site could be established, and if so, in what shapes and formats they could exist and be realised.

Furthermore, regarding the usual WIL design, there is a topic that has been touched upon but is often not paid much attention in WIL research. This topic is that gaps (or differences) between what students learn on campus and what they learn at placements are good for students’ learning, and can be seen as learning opportunities rather than as problems that must be bridged (see e.g. Moss et al., 2010; Allan & Evans, 2019). Research could, for instance, focus more on how such differences could be used as learning opportunities for students and be presented to them as points of departure for learning rather than as problems. In other words, research could focus on how the form of higher education labelled WIL could be more about embracing than bridging gaps between on-campus and work placement-based training. Moreover, since the usual WIL design arguably ensures that students regularly see such gaps, one could ask whether the on-campus/off-campus setup provided through this WIL design is best suited to bridging these gaps, or whether a better use of this setup could be to ensure that these gaps are thought of and used as opportunities for learning. Finally, I would like to say that by emphasising this, I am not trying to suggest the best way of using this setup. Rather, I am emphasising that it must not be applied with a strong bridging focus.


8 References


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APPENDIX A. Interview guide Study I

AIL - designen och dess påverkan på lärande

1. Hur ser dina arbetslivserfarenheter ut? (Vad har du arbetat med?)

2. Hur ser dina praktikerfarenheter ut? (Beskriv en vanlig dag på praktikplatsen, vad gör du?)

3. Beskriv en vanlig dag i högskoleundervisningen? (Vad gör du/vad får ni göra?)

4. Hur ser du på upplägget mellan teori och praktik i din utbildning? (Finns det en tydlig koppling/fungerar upplägget/kan du ge ett exempel på hur upplägget mellan teori och praktik ser ut i din utbildning?)

5. Uppfattar du att det finns skillnader/likheter mellan lärandet i högskoleundervisningen och lärandet på praktikplatsen?

6. Påverkar kombinationen av högskoleundervisning och praktik a) ditt lärande b) din reflektion kring ditt lärande?

7. Använder du dig av erfarenheter från högskoleundervisningen på praktikplatsen? (Om inte, varför?)

8. När du använder dig av erfarenheter från högskoleundervisningen på praktikplatsen påverkar det a) lärandet på praktikplatsen? b) det praktiska lärandet (lärandet av det praktiska utförandet)? c) det teoretiska lärandet (lärandet av teorier)? d) yrkesrollen?

9. Använder du dig av erfarenheter från praktikplatsen i högskoleundervisningen? (Om inte, varför?)

10. När du använder dig av erfarenheter från praktikplatsen i högskoleundervisningen påverkar det a) lärandet i högskoleundervisningen?...
APPENDIX A. Interview guide Study I

AIL-designen och dess påverkan på lärande

1. Hur ser dina arbetslivserfarenheter ut? (Vad har du arbetat med?)

2. Hur ser dina praktikerfarenheter ut? (Beskriv en vanlig dag på praktikplatsen, vad gör du?)

3. Beskriv en vanlig dag i högskoleundervisningen? (Vad gör du/vad får ni göra?)

4. Hur ser du på upplägget mellan teori och praktik i din utbildning? (Finns det en tydlig koppling/fungerar upplägget/kan du ge ett exempel på hur upplägget mellan teori och praktik ser ut i din utbildning?)

5. Uppfattar du att det finns skillnader/likheter mellan lärandet i högskoleundervisningen och lärandet på praktikplatsen?

6. Påverkar kombinationen av högskoleundervisning och praktik a) ditt lärande b) din reflektion kring ditt lärande?

7. Använder du dig av erfarenheter från högskoleundervisningen på praktikplatsen? (Om inte, varför?)

8. När du använder dig av erfarenheter från högskoleundervisningen på praktikplatsen påverkar det a) lärandet på praktikplatsen? b) det praktiska lärandet (lärandet av det praktiska utförandet)? c) det teoretiska lärandet (lärandet av teorier)? d) yrkesrollen?

9. Använder du dig av erfarenheter från praktikplatsen i högskoleundervisningen? (Om inte, varför?)

10. När du använder dig av erfarenheter från praktikplatsen i högskoleundervisningen påverkar det a) lärandet i högskoleundervisningen?
b) det praktiska lärandet?
c) det teoretiska lärandet?
d) yrkesrollen?

11. Skulle du säga att kombinationen av högskoleundervisning och praktik skapar ett mervärde i lärandet?

12. Uppfattar du att växlandet mellan högskoleundervisning och praktik påverkar
   a) din förmåga till reflektion kring lärandet?
   b) reflektionen kring det teoretiska lärandet?
   c) reflektionen kring det praktiska lärandet?
   d) reflektionen kring yrkesrollen?

13. Har du någon idé om hur man kan förbättra kombinationen av högskoleundervisning och praktik i din utbildning?

14. Påverkar kombinationen av högskoleundervisning och praktik lärandet av
   a) teoretiska kunskaper?
   b) praktiska kunskaper?

   c) Kan du ge ett konkret exempel på en teoretisk/praktisk kunskap du lärt dig genom kombinationen av högskoleundervisning och praktik?

15 a) Lär du dig teoretiska kunskaper/praktiska kunskaper genom att använda erfarenheter från högskoleundervisningen på praktikplatsen?
15 b) Kan du ge ett konkret exempel på en teoretisk/praktisk kunskap du lärt dig genom att använda erfarenheter från högskoleundervisningen på praktikplatsen?

16 a) Lär du dig teoretiska kunskaper/praktiska kunskaper genom att använda dig av erfarenheter från praktikplatsen i högskoleundervisningen?
16 b) Kan du ge ett konkret exempel på en teoretisk/praktisk kunskap du lärt dig genom att använda erfarenheter från praktikplatsen i högskoleundervisningen?
Påståenden – Ta ställning och beskriv

Att varva högskoleundervisning med praktik berikar mitt lärande

AIL ökar förståelsen för yrkesrollen

AIL ökar förståelsen för teori

Det teoretiska lärandet hjälper mig att förstå praktiken

Praktiska erfarenheter hjälper mig att förstå teori

Det som jag lär mig på praktikplatsen tas inte till vara på i högskoleundervisningen

Det är svårt att relatera det jag lär mig i högskoleundervisningen till det jag lär mig på praktikplatsen

Studenternas ord om AIL

Beskriv AIL med hjälp av fem ord

Med hjälp av fem ord - redogör för hur du tror att andra studenter skulle beskriva AIL

Avslutande frågor

 Vilket program studerar du på?

 Vilken programinriktning har du?

 Hur länge har du studerat inom detta program/Vilken termin går du?

 Har du studerat andra kurser/program innan du började denna utbildning?

 Vad tycker du om intervjun? (Innehåll/Form)
Appendix B. The documents examined in study II


4. The birthplace of Cooperative Education. A 2010 information sheet directed at freshman students.

5. Celebrating 100 years of Co-op - Growth, Experience and Connections. A 2006 brochure celebrating the 100th anniversary of Co-op at the University of Cincinnati.

6. A 2004 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati.


8. A 1985 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati.


10. What is the Professional Practice Program? – A 1970s student guide to Cooperative Education at the University of Cincinnati.

11. For several years, the Cooperative Education Programme at the University of Cincinnati was called the Professional Practice Programme, and occasionally the Cooperative Professional Practice Programme.
APPENDIX B. The documents examined in study II

Student-oriented documents published by the University of Cincinnati


4. The birthplace of Cooperative Education. A 2010 information sheet directed at freshman students.

5. Celebrating 100 years of Co-op - Growth, Experience and Connections. A 2006 brochure celebrating the 100th anniversary of Co-op at the University of Cincinnati.

6. A 2004 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati.


8. A 1985 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati.


10. What is the Professional Practice Program? – A 1970s student guide to Cooperative Education at the University of Cincinnati.

11 For several years, the Cooperative Education Programme at the University of Cincinnati was called the Professional Practice Programme, and occasionally the Cooperative Professional Practice Programme.
11. A Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati used during the 1969/1970 calendar year.

12. A 1960s course information leaflet about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati.

13. A 1960s student information leaflet about Co-op at the University of Cincinnati.

14. A late 1950s/early 1960s brochure about Co-op in the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati.

15. A late 1950s/early 1960s Information leaflet for prospective students at the University of Cincinnati, including information about Co-op.

16. A 1951 brochure about how Co-op is applied in a two-year business degree programme for women.


18. College Training with Work Experience. A 1950s brochure about what Co-op is and how it works.

19. A 1948/1949 information brochure about Co-op and the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati.

20. A 1946/1947 brochure about Co-op opportunities for women at the University of Cincinnati.

21. A 1946/1947 brochure about Co-op and how it is used in degree programmes in the College of Engineering, the College of Business Administration and the College of Applied Arts.

22. A brochure about Co-op opportunities for women at the University of Cincinnati, dated around 1945.

23. A brochure about Cooperative Education for women wanting to obtain a business or technical career. From the mid- or late-1940s.

24. A 1941/1942 brochure about degree programmes in the College of Engineering and Commerce at the University of Cincinnati and how Co-op is used in these degree programmes.
25. A 1938/1939 brochure about degree programmes in the College of Engineering and Commerce at the University of Cincinnati and how Co-op is used in these degree programmes.

26. A 1928/1929 information brochure about a) the College of Engineering and Commerce and b) the School of Applied Arts at the University of Cincinnati, including information about what Co-op is and how Co-op works.

Student-oriented documents published by the University of Waterloo


2. A 2015 information brochure about degree programmes in Environmental Science and how Co-op is used there.

3. A 2015 information brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

4. A 2015 information brochure about degree programmes in Health Studies and how Co-op is used there.

5. A 2013 University of Waterloo Admission Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

6. A 2011 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

7. A 2011 University Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

8. Ideas start here. A 2011 brochure about the University of Waterloo and Co-op.

9. A 2006 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Honours Arts and Business and how Co-op is used there.

10. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.
11. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure promoting degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.


14. A 1990\textsuperscript{12} Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1991 spring semester.


17. A 1988 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and degree programmes in the Arts ahead of the 1989 spring semester.


19. A 1984 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1985 spring semester.

20. A 1977 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1978 spring semester.


22. A 1972 Admissions Information Brochure promoting Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1973 spring semester.

\textsuperscript{12}The Undergraduate Admissions Handbooks used at the University of Waterloo ahead of the 1991 spring semester had the label \textit{Gear UP} on their cover pages and this is the Gear UP document that is cited in study II.
23. A 1968 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and a Mathematics Programme.


26. A 1964/1965 University of Waterloo leaflet promoting how Co-op is used in a course in Honours mathematics.

27. A 1961/1962 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and degree programmes in engineering.


**Student-oriented documents published by University West**

1. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2015/2016 calendar year.

2. WIL - Work-integrated Learning (Brochure about WIL that includes statements about Co-op). From 2015.

3. CO-OP. A 2014 brochure promoting Co-op at University West.

4. A 2013 information sheet about how Co-op is used in the bachelor’s degree programme in IT and System Design.

5. A 2013 information sheet about how Co-op is used in the bachelor’s degree programme in Economics.

6. CO-OP Västervik. A 2013 brochure about Co-op and how the Swedish municipality of Västervik can offer paid placements for students at University West.

7. Ingenjören (English transl. The Engineer). A 2013 compendium about engineering degree programmes at University West and how Co-op is used in these degree programmes.
8. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2012/2013 calendar year.

9. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2009/2010 calendar year


11. A 2008 brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West.


13. A 2007 brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West.


15. A 1999 information leaflet about the bachelor’s degree programme in Electrical Engineering.


17. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 1995/1996 calendar year

18. Cooperative Education – Putting higher education to work. A 1990s brochure about Co-op.

19. Coop – Putting higher education to work. A 1990s brochure about Co-op.

20. COOP – Utbildningen som du tjänar mer än pengar på. (English transl. The education that will earn you more than just money). A 1990s brochure.

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13 This and the following document have similar titles but are different documents.
The other four documents examined in study II

1. *Excerpts from Writings and Speeches about Cooperative Education.* A 1960s document comprising a collection of past quotations about Co-op, several of which were voiced by Herman Schneider between ca. 1900 and 1935. The document was assembled by H.C. Messinger, a former director of the Department of Coordination and Placement at the University of Cincinnati.

2. *Is Higher Education obsolete?* A 1944 University of Cincinnati pamphlet comprising 6 articles about Co-op originally published in various US newspapers.

3. *A university based on a new idea.* A newspaper article about Co-op at the University of Cincinnati, dated around 1930 and written by Myron M. Stearns.

APPENDIX C. The documents examined in study II

4. The birthplace of Cooperative Education. A 2010 information sheet directed at freshman students.
5. Celebrating 100 years of Co-op - Growth, Experience and Connections. A 2006 brochure celebrating the 100th anniversary of Co-op at the University of Cincinnati.
6. A 2004 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati.
8. A 1995 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati.

14 For several years, the Cooperative Education Programme at the University of Cincinnati was called the Professional Practice Programme, or occasionally the Cooperative Professional Practice Programme.
APPENDIX C. The documents examined in study III

Student-oriented documents published by the University of Cincinnati


4. The birthplace of Cooperative Education. A 2010 information sheet directed at freshman students.

5. Celebrating 100 years of Co-op - Growth, Experience and Connections. A 2006 brochure celebrating the 100th anniversary of Co-op at the University of Cincinnati.

6. A 2004 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme\textsuperscript{14} at the University of Cincinnati.


8. A 1985 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati.


\textsuperscript{14} For several years, the Cooperative Education Programme at the University of Cincinnati was called the Professional Practice Programme, or occasionally the Cooperative Professional Practice Programme.
10. A 1970s brochure about how students who combine studies in business with studies in language can enrol in the Cooperative Education Programme at the University of Cincinnati.


12. A 1970s brochure about how Co-op works in the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati.

13. A Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati used during the 1969/1970 calendar year.

14. A 1960s course information leaflet about the Professional Practice Programme at the University of Cincinnati.

15. A 1960s student information leaflet about Co-op at the University of Cincinnati.

16. A late 1950s/early 1960s brochure about Co-op in the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati.

17. A late 1950s/early 1960s information leaflet for prospective students at the University of Cincinnati, including information about Co-op.

18. A 1951 brochure about how Co-op is applied in a two-year business degree programme for women.


20. College Training with Work experience. A 1950s brochure about what Co-op is and how it works.

21. A 1948/1949 information brochure about Co-op and the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati.

22. A 1946/1947 brochure about Co-op opportunities for women at the University of Cincinnati.

23. A 1946/1947 brochure about Co-op and how it is used in degree programmes in the College of Engineering, the College of Business Administration and the College of Applied Arts.
24. A brochure about Co-op opportunities for women at the University of Cincinnati, dated around 1945.

25. A brochure about Cooperative Education for women wanting to obtain a business or technical career. From the mid- or late-1940s.

26. A 1941/1942 brochure about degree programmes in the College of Engineering and Commerce at the University of Cincinnati and how Co-op is used in these degree programmes.

27. A 1938/1939 brochure about degree programmes in the College of Engineering and Commerce at the University of Cincinnati and how Co-op is used in these degree programmes.

28. A 1928/1929 information brochure about a) the College of Engineering and Commerce and b) the School of Applied Arts at the University of Cincinnati, including information about what Co-op is and how Co-op works.

Student-oriented documents published by the University of Waterloo


3. A 2015 information brochure about degree programmes in Environmental Science and how Co-op is used there.

4. A 2015 information brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

5. A 2015 information brochure about degree programmes in Health Studies and how Co-op is used there.

6. A 2013 University of Waterloo Admission Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

7. A 2011 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.
8. A 2011 University Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

9. Ideas start here. A 2011 brochure about the University of Waterloo and Co-op.

10. A 2006 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Honours Arts and Business and how Co-op is used there.

11. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

12. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.


15. A 1990 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1991 spring semester.


17. A 1989 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and degree programmes in the Arts ahead of the 1990 spring semester.


20. A 1984 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1985 spring semester.

22. A 1973/1974 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and several degree programmes.

23. A 1972 Admissions Information Brochure promoting Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1973 spring semester.


26. A 1964/1965 University of Waterloo leaflet promoting how Co-op is used in a course in Honours Mathematics.

27. A 1964/1965 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and degree programmes in engineering.


**Student-oriented documents published by University West**

1. A text about Co-op on University West’s website.  

2. A student interview published on University West’s website. The interview is about why the student chose to apply to a Co-op-based degree programme.  

3. CO-OOPBUDET LOCKADE MIG (English transl. The Co-op option attracted me). A student interview published on University West’s website.  

4. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2015/2016 calendar year.

5. CO-OP. A 2014 brochure promoting Co-op at University West.
6. CO-OP Västervik. A 2013 brochure about Co-op and how the Swedish municipality of Västervik can offer paid placements for students at University West.

7. A 2013 information sheet about how Co-op is used in the bachelor’s degree programme in IT and System Design.

8. A 2013 information sheet about how Co-op is used in the bachelor’s degree programme in Economics.

9. Ingenjören (English transl. The Engineer). A 2013 compendium about engineering degree programmes at University West and how Co-op is used in these degree programmes.

10. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2011/2012 calendar year.


13. A 2008 brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West.

14. A 2008 information sheet about the bachelor’s degree programme in IT and System Design with a focus on Co-op.

15. A 2007 brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West.


17. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2004/2005 calendar year.


20. A 1996 information sheet about the bachelor’s degree programme in System Design with a focus on Co-op.
21. A 1990s brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West and how the now defunct company Saab Automobile can offer students paid placements.

22. A 1990s brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West and how Volvo Aero can offer students paid placements.

23. Cooperative Education – Putting higher education to work. A 1990s brochure about Co-op.

24. Coop – Putting higher education to work. A 1990s brochure about Co-op.

25. COOP – Utbildningen som du tjänar mer än pengar på (English transl. The education that will earn you more than just money). A 1990s brochure.

The other four documents examined in study III

1. Excerpts from Writings and Speeches about Cooperative Education. A 1960s document comprising a collection of past quotations about Co-op, several of which were voiced by Herman Schneider between ca. 1900 and 1935. The document was assembled by H.C. Messinger, a former director of the Department of Coordination and Placement at the University of Cincinnati.


3. A university based on a new idea. A newspaper article about Co-op at the University of Cincinnati, dated around 1930 and written by Myron M. Stearns.

APPENDIX D.

The approx. 200 documents that I found at the three higher education institutions

7. The birthplace of Cooperative Education. A 2010 information sheet directed at freshman students.
8. Celebrating 100 years of Co-op - Growth, Experience and Connections. A 2006 brochure celebrating the 100th anniversary of Co-op at the University of Cincinnati.
10. A 2004 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme.
14. Co-op at UC (University of Cincinnati). A brochure from the 1990s.
APPENDIX D. The approx. 200 documents that I found at the three higher education institutions

Student-oriented documents published by the University of Cincinnati


7. The birthplace of Cooperative Education. A 2010 information sheet directed at freshman students.

8. Celebrating 100 years of Co-op - Growth, Experience and Connections. A 2006 brochure celebrating the 100th anniversary of Co-op at the University of Cincinnati.


10. A 2004 Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme.


14. Co-op at UC (University of Cincinnati). A brochure from the 1990s.


24. A 1970s brochure about how students who combine studies in business with studies in language can enrol in the Cooperative Education Programme at the University of Cincinnati.
25. What is the professional Practice Program? – A 1970s student guide to Cooperative Education at the University of Cincinnati.
26. A 1970s brochure about how Co-op works in the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati.
33. A 1960s Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme.
34. Another 1960s Student Handbook about the Professional Practice Programme.
35. A 1960s programme information leaflet about the Professional Practice Programme.

36. A 1960s student information leaflet about Co-op at the University of Cincinnati.

37. A 1960s Student Handbook about the Cooperative Professional Practice Programme.

38. Girls’ Cooperative Training at UC – Leading to Business Careers. A 1960s brochure about Co-op and how Co-op is used in business degree programmes for girls.

39. A late 1950s/early 1960s brochure about Co-op in the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati.

40. A late 1950s/early 1960s information leaflet for prospective students at the University of Cincinnati, including information about Co-op.

41. College Training with Work Experience. A 1950s brochure about what Co-op is and how it works.

42. Co-operative Training at U.C. – Leading to Business Careers. A 1950s brochure about Co-op and how Co-op is used in business degree programmes.

43. A 1951 brochure about how Co-op is applied in a two-year business degree programme for women.

44. 12. A brochure for the 1949/1950 calendar year with rules and information for students in the College of Engineering.

45. A 1948/1949 information brochure for students in the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati.

46. A 1946/1947 brochure about Co-op opportunities for women at the University of Cincinnati.

47. A 1946/1947 brochure about Co-op and how it is used in degree programmes in the College of Engineering, the College of Business Administration and the College of Applied Arts.

48. A late 1940s brochure about Girls’ Co-Operative Training for Careers as Professional Engineers or Engineering Aides.
49. A brochure about Cooperative Education for women wanting to obtain a business or technical career. From the mid- or late-1940s.

50. A brochure about Co-op opportunities for women at the University of Cincinnati, dated around 1945.

51. A 1941/1942 brochure about degree programmes in the College of Engineering and Commerce at the University of Cincinnati and how Co-op is used in these degree programmes.

52. A 1938/1939 brochure about degree programmes in the College of Engineering and Commerce at the University of Cincinnati and how Co-op is used in these degree programmes.

53. A 1928/1929 information brochure about a) the College of Engineering and Commerce and b) the School of Applied Arts at the University of Cincinnati, including information about what Co-op is and how Co-op works.

**Student-oriented documents published by the University of Waterloo**


3. A 2015 information brochure about degree programmes in Environmental Science and how Co-op is used there.

4. A 2015 information brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

5. A 2015 information brochure about degree programmes in Health Studies and how Co-op is used there.

6. A 2013 University of Waterloo Admission Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

7. A 2013 University of Waterloo Admission Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences and how Co-op is used there.
8. A 2013 University of Waterloo Admission Brochure about degree programmes in Arts and Business and how Co-op is used there.

9. A 2013 University of Waterloo Admissions brochure about several degree programmes and how Co-op is used there.

10. A 2011 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

11. A 2011 University Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

12. A 2011 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Science and how Co-op is used there.

13. A 2011 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about several degree programmes and how Co-op is used there.


15. A 2010 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Arts and how Co-op is used there.

16. A 2010 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Science and how Co-op is used there.

17. A 2010 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

18. A 2009 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Mathematics and how Co-op is used there?

19. A 2009 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Science and how Co-op is used there.

20. A 2009 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Arts and how Co-op is used there.

21. A 2009 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.
22. A 2008 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Environmental Studies and how Co-op is used there.

23. A 2008 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

24. A 2008 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Arts and Business and how Co-op is used there.

25. A 2007 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Arts and Business and how Co-op is used there.

26. A 2007 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the David R. Cheriton School of Computer Science and how Co-op is used there.

27. A 2007 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences and how Co-op is used there.

28. A 2007 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

29. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

30. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Arts and how Co-op is used there.

31. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Environmental Studies and how Co-op is used there.

32. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Mathematics and how Co-op is used there.

33. A 2004 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

34. A 2004 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about several degree programmes and how Co-op is used there.

35. A 2003 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

36. A 2003 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Mathematics and how Co-op is used there.

37. A 2002 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences and how Co-op is used there.
35. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

36. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

37. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences and how Co-op is used there.

38. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Arts and how Co-op is used there.

39. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

40. A 2005 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Mathematics and how Co-op is used there.

41. A 2004 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

42. A 2004 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Honours Arts and Business and how Co-op is used there.

43. A 2004 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about several degree programmes and how Co-op is used there.

44. A 2003 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Accounting and Financial Management and how Co-op is used there.

45. A 2003 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Mathematics and how Co-op is used there.

46. A 2003 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in Arts and how Co-op is used there.

47. A 2002 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences and how Co-op is used there.
48. A 2002 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure for degree programmes in the Faculty of Arts with a focus on Co-op and how Co-op is used there.

49. A 2002 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Engineering and how Co-op is used there.

50. A 2002 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure about degree programmes in the Faculty of Environmental Studies and how Co-op is used there.

51. A 2001 Admissions Brochure promoting Co-op and several degree programmes.

52. A 2001 University of Admissions Catalogue promoting Co-op and several degree programmes.

53. A 2000 University of Admissions Catalogue promoting Co-op and several degree programmes.

54. A 2000 University of Waterloo Admissions brochure promoting Co-op and degree programmes in the Arts as well as in Accounting, Mathematics and Science.

55. A 1999 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure promoting Co-op and several degree programmes in the Faculty of Arts.

56. A 1999 University of Admissions Catalogue promoting Co-op and several degree programmes.


60. A 1998 University of Waterloo Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes in Engineering.

61. A 1997 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure promoting Co-op and several degree programmes.
62. A 1990 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1991 spring semester.

63. Another 1990 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1991 spring semester.

64. A 1990 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and degree programmes in Environmental Studies ahead of the 1991 spring semester.


66. A 1989 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and degree programmes in the Arts ahead of the 1990 spring semester.


70. A 1981 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1982 spring semester.

71. A 1984 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1985 spring semester.

72. A 1979 University of Waterloo Admissions Brochure used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1980 spring semester.

73. A 1977 Undergraduate Admissions Handbook used to promote Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1978 spring semester.

74. Math 76. A 1976 brochure sent to high school students containing information about degree programmes in mathematics at the University of Waterloo.

75. A 1976 University of Waterloo Admissions Information Leaflet used ahead of the 1977 spring semester.
76. A 1974 University of Waterloo Admissions Information Leaflet used ahead of the 1975 spring semester.

77. A 1973/1974 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and several degree programmes.

78. A 1972 Admissions Information Brochure promoting Co-op and several degree programmes ahead of the 1973 spring semester.

79. A 1970/1971 brochure sent to high school students that included information about degree programmes in Mathematics at the University of Waterloo.

80. A 1968 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and a Mathematics Programme.

81. A 1967/1968 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and several degree programmes.


83. A 1964/1965 University of Waterloo leaflet promoting how Co-op is used in a course in Honours Mathematics.

84. 1964/1965 Admissions Bulletin promoting Co-op at the University of Waterloo.

85. A 1964/1965 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and degree programmes in engineering.

86. A 1961/1962 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and degree programmes in engineering.

87. A 1961 Admissions Bulletin promoting Co-op at the University of Waterloo.

88. A 1958/1959 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar informing about Co-op and degree programmes in Science and Engineering.

### Student-oriented documents published by University West

1. A text about Co-op on University West’s website. 
2. A student interview published on University West’s website. The interview is about why the student chose to apply to a Co-op-based degree programme. [https://www hv se/utbildning/intervjuer/grundniva/maskiningenjor/](https://www hv se/utbildning/intervjuer/grundniva/maskiningenjor/). Accessed 30 September 2019.


4. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2015/2016 calendar year.

5. WIL - Work-Integrated Learning. A 2015 brochure about WIL that includes statements about the Co-op WIL model.

6. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2014/2015 calendar year.

7. CO-OP. A 2014 brochure promoting Co-op at University West.

8. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2013/2014 calendar year.

9. CO-OP\(^\text{15}\). A brochure promoting Co-op at University West during the 2013/2014 calendar year.

10. CO-OP Västervik. A 2013 brochure about Co-op and how the Swedish municipality of Västervik can offer paid placements for students at University West.

11. A 2013 information sheet about how Co-op is used in the bachelor’s degree programme in IT and System Design.

12. A 2013 information sheet about how Co-op is used in the bachelor’s degree programme in Economics.

13. Ingenjören (English transl. The Engineer). A 2013 compendium about engineering degree programmes at University West and how Co-op is used in these degree programmes.

\(^\text{15}\) This is a different document than the document called CO-OP from 2014.
14. CO-OP – Våra studenter går till jobbet (English transl. Our students go to work) A brochure promoting Co-op at University West during the 2012/2013 calendar year.

15. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2012/2013 calendar year.

16. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2011/2012 calendar year.

17. A 2011 Information Leaflet about how Co-op is used in the bachelor’s degree programme in Mechanical Engineering.


19. An information brochure about University West’s degree programmes in the 2010/2011 calendar year.


22. An information brochure about University West’s degree programmes in the 2009/2010 calendar year.

23. A 2009 Information Leaflet about how Co-op is used in the bachelor’s degree program in IT and System Design.


26. A 2008 brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West.

27. A 2008 information sheet about the bachelor’s degree programme in IT and System Design with a focus on Co-op.

29. A 2007 brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West.


31. An information brochure about University West’s degree programmes in the 2006/2007 calendar year.


33. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2004/2005 calendar year.

34. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2003/2004 calendar year.

35. A student guide with information about Co-op used during the 2003/2004 calendar year.


37. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 2001/2002 calendar year.

38. A student guide with information about Co-op used during the 2001/2002 calendar year.


40. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 1999/2000 calendar year.

41. A 1999 information leaflet about the bachelor’s degree programme in Electrical Engineering.

42. A 1999 information leaflet about the bachelor’s degree programme in Mechanical Engineering.

43. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 1998/1999 calendar year.
44. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 1997/1998 calendar year.

45. A 1997 compendium about Co-op University West’s different bachelor’s degree programmes.

46. A 1997 information leaflet about University West’s bachelor’s degree programme in Engineering that is geared towards work in product development.

47. A 1997 information leaflet about University West’s bachelor’s degree programme in Engineering that is geared towards work in product development, with focus on production technique.

48. A 1997 information leaflet about specialisation within University West’s bachelor’s degree programme in Engineering that is geared towards work with electrical systems.

49. A 1997 information leaflet about University West’s bachelor’s degree programme in Engineering that is geared towards work in constructional engineering.

50. A 1997 information leaflet about University West’s bachelor’s degree programme in System Science.

51. A 1997 information leaflet about University West’s bachelor’s degree programme in Economics.

52. An Admissions Catalogue promoting degree programmes and Co-op at University West ahead of the 1996/1997 calendar year.

53. A 1996 information sheet about the bachelor’s degree programme in System Design with a focus on Co-op.


55. A 1995 information leaflet about University West’s bachelor’s degree programme in Engineering geared towards work with production technology.

56. A 1990s brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West and how the now defunct company Saab Automobile can offer students paid placements.

57. A 1990s brochure about Co-op-based degree programmes at University West and how Volvo Aero can offer students paid placements.
58. Cooperative Education – Putting higher education to work. A 1990s brochure about Co-op.

59. Coop – Putting higher education to work. A 1990s brochure about Co-op.

60. COOP – Utbildningen som du tjänar mer än pengar på (English transl. The education that will earn you more than just money). A 1990s brochure.
Appended Studies
Study 1

Problematising the theory–practice terminology: a discourse analysis of students' statements on Work-integrated Learning

Björck, V., & Johansson, K.

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Problematising the theory–practice terminology: a discourse analysis of students’ statements on Work-integrated Learning

Ville Björck and Kristina Johansson

ABSTRACT
This study uses a Foucault-inspired discourse analysis to examine two ideas about learning which reinforce the terminology whereby theory means campus-based training and practice means work placements. The purpose is to problematise this theory–practice terminology and provide scope for a non-dualistic alternative. The ideas examined are the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning and the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning. These ideas were voiced by interviewed students who discussed the usual design of Work-integrated Learning (WIL) whereby students go to university to learn ‘theory’ and into working life to learn ‘practice’. The analysis shows how the ideas are formed by different ranking orders between theory and practice which are mutually exclusive, while also working together to reinforce the theory–practice terminology. The discussion on how a non-dualistic terminology can emerge highlights how the usual WIL design forms a dualistic setting where the theory–practice terminology thrives and how designing WIL at a third place between university and working life can provide scope for the terminology we seek.

Introduction
The theory–practice relationship, a generic term for the relationship between the campus- and work placement-based components of higher education, continues to be debated in the research community. A recurrent debate is how to overcome the dualistic approach to this relationship whereby the stated components are viewed as isolated settings which deal with ‘theory’- and ‘practice’-based learning, respectively. This approach is considered problematic because it polarises ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ for students, e.g. by providing scope for the antagonistic ideas that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are rivals and of different value to professional education (Smagorinsky, Cook, and Johnson 2003).

Work-integrated Learning (WIL), the form of higher education whose usual design is that students go to campus to learn ‘theory’ and into work placements to learn ‘practice’, is identified in contemporary research as a way of overcoming the dualistic approach (see McRae 2015, who argues that WIL connects ‘theory’ and ‘practice’). Contemporary research also focuses on WIL-related key topics which are acknowledged as non-dualistic. One is how ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ can be integrated (Korthagen and Kessels 1999; Allen and Wright 2014; Oonk, Verloop, and Gravemeijer 2015), another how they can form a reciprocal relationship (Zeichner 2010; McRae 2015), and a final third key topic is how the theory–practice gap can be bridged (Anderson and Freebody 2012; Hatlevik 2012; Álvarez 2015).
However, it is generally overlooked (a) that these key topics only overcome the antagonistic version of the dualistic approach and (b) that they and the usual WIL design are dualistic. The listed key topics are dualistic because they belong to the same polarising terminology as the stated antagonistic ideas, and the usual WIL design is dualistic because it embodies this terminology. We call this the theory–practice terminology, and different accounts of it are often used in research (Carr 1986, 2006; Fealy 1997), by students and/or professionals (Fealy 1999; Collin and Tynjälä 2003; Mullen, Greenlee, and Bruner 2005). This terminology is based on a dualistic ‘order of discourse’ which uses the concepts of theory and practice as binary oppositions. According to this discursive order, theory is either a generic term for campus-based training or for the research-based knowledge found in textbooks, while practice is a generic term for work placements and what is done there (see Ousey and Gallagher 2007; Allen and Wright 2014, for a discussion of this theory–practice distinction; the term ‘order of discourse’ is explained in the ‘Theorisation and analytical approach’ section).

Falsely lauding the listed WIL-related key topics as non-dualistic is also problematic because this disguises how the theory–practice terminology operates and the absence of a non-dualistic alternative in today’s discourse. This makes it important to problematise how this widely used terminology operates. We also argue that a non-dualistic terminology could be useful because it can (a) avoid polarising theory and practice for students and (b) broaden their understanding of how theory and practice are intrinsically linked.

The purpose of this study is to problematise the theory–practice terminology and to provide scope for a non-dualistic alternative. A good basis for achieving this is to examine how this terminology and some of its key ideas operate. We do this by examining two ideas about learning often voiced by students on various WIL-based degree programmes when interviewed about the theory–practice relationship and how it influences learning. These degree programmes are based on the usual WIL design. A Foucault-inspired discourse analysis is used because the analysis focuses on power relationships between theory and practice. More specifically, it focuses on how different ranking orders between theory and practice form the ideas, and how they and their ranking orders relate to each other and reinforce the theory–practice terminology. This terminology, the ideas and their ranking orders are also linked to the institutional split between university and working life which forms the basis for the usual WIL design, and to certain traditional and contemporary social positions of these institutions.

We use the results of the discourse analysis as a basis for providing scope for a non-dualistic alternative to the theory–practice terminology. Some requirements and a possible basis for such a terminology are discussed, and we argue that creating a place where it can thrive is key to opening up a discursive space. Using the Foucauldian concept of heterotopia and a Bhabhian notion of third space, we discuss how such a place can be created by designing WIL at a third place between university and working life. What this means and how we apply the concept of heterotopia and a Bhabhian notion of third space are clarified in the discussion.

Following this introduction, we present key topics and dominant conceptualisations of the theory–practice relationship in contemporary research and also research that has problematised these conceptualisations and/or examined statements on this relationship.

Previous research

Two contemporary key topics are whether it is theory or practice, or a reciprocal relationship between them that forms the basis for professional education. In the theory or practice debate, it is common to (a) hail the value of practice (Kruger, Kruger, and Suzuki 2015; Raelin 2016) and (b) criticise the traditional dualistic view that theory is the basis for professional education. An example is the research which criticises a certain curriculum design said to favour theory over practice (Schön 1983; Raelin 2007) and form the basis for the modern university (Schön 1987). This curriculum design has been called technical rationality (Schön 1983), the application-of-theory model (Korthagen and
Kessels 1999) and the applied science approach (Carr 1986). Schön (1987) stated that it is based on the positivist epistemology whereby theory is the research-based knowledge which forms the basis for professional education, and practice is the application of theory in work placements. This curriculum design thus consists in students learning theory on campus before attending work placements to apply it (Zeichner 2010).

Schön (1983) declared that there is a need for a reverse ‘epistemology of practice’, stating that the basis for professional education should be the skills pervading professional work. In particular, he stated that ‘reflective practice’, i.e. reflecting in and on actions that are brought about by unpredictable problems in the day-to-day work of professionals, is the best way of acquiring professional knowledge (Schön 1983). Raelin (2016) also identified the working-life domain as the key site for professional learning and argued that work-based rather than classroom-based learning is the ideal training for management work.

However, a great deal of the research which criticises the traditional dualistic view for favouring theory argues that reversing the ranking order by identifying practice as the basis for professional education is not the solution. Instead, this research embraces the reciprocal approach to the theory–practice relationship. This approach argues that theory and practice are equally valid components of higher education which enrich each other (Usher and Bryant 1987; Zeichner 2010).

Much of the research which embraces the reciprocal approach aims to bridge the gap and thus promote harmony between theory and practice. There are, however, also advocates of this approach who emphasise that this gap should be embraced. Rafferty, Alcock, and Lathlean (1996) claimed that it is the inconsistencies brought about by the theory–practice gap that allow for change to take place in higher education and work. Moss, Grelish, and Lake (2010) underlined that it is the differences between theory and practice which add value to students’ learning.

There is also some research which problematises the bridging idea’s ability to overcome a dualistic framework. For instance, Lindberg (2002) argued that statements which articulate this idea are counterproductive because they assume that theory and practice are separate entities.

Other research problematises the positivist idea that theory is a form of knowledge which is produced outside but applied to practice. Carr (2006) emphasised that all theories, including research-based principles etc., are produced by (social) practices. He also argued that the endeavours which we call theoretical activities (e.g. campus-based training) are themselves practices with certain rules of conduct. Taguchi (2007) stated that theories (principles etc.) are part of and also formed by our practices, and that theory and practice are inseparable and ‘co-constitutive’.

To conclude this section, we present some research examining how students, educators and professionals discuss the theory–practice relationship. Fealy (1999) showed how nurses often use statements which distinguish between theory and practice and favour one or the other. Collin and Tynjälä (2003) outlined how design engineers and computer science students emphasised that theory and practice complement each other. They also demonstrated that while both engineers and students emphasised that practice is an important basis for work, the students placed greater emphasis on the value of theory in this connection (Collin and Tynjälä 2003). Eriksson (2009) illustrated that the theory–practice gap was a recurrent topic of conversation among student teachers. Laiho and Ruoholinna (2013) showed that nurses who were asked to describe nursing education often discussed the theory–practice gap.

**Empirical material**

The empirical material consists of verbatim transcriptions of recorded one-on-one interviews with 20 students. The researchers performed 10 interviews each, varying in duration between 38 and 120 minutes. The interviewees were or are still students at University West in Trollhättan, Sweden, where WIL is the educational model for how degree programmes are designed (https://www.hv.se/en/work-integrated-learning/). More specifically, they were or are still students on either teaching degrees geared towards work in preschools, primary schools and school centres, or bachelor’s...
degrees in mechanical engineering, industrial economics, economics or health promotion. Students from various WIL-based degree programmes were interviewed because we wanted to examine ideas about learning that represent widely used accounts of the theory–practice terminology. The interviewees signed up to participate on a voluntary basis and had all attended at least one work placement.

We used a semi-structured interview guide which invited the interviewees to use the theory–practice terminology. They were asked about WIL, an umbrella term for the theory–practice relationship in their degree programmes. In particular, they were asked about how the relationship between theory- and practice-based training influences learning. The interviewees were also asked to address specific claims about this relationship and how it influences learning. For instance, WIL increases understanding of theory, and practical experience helps me understand theory.

Informed consent

The interviewees were informed about the study and their rights to withdraw from it at any time. They were also informed about the fact that the study was only going to be used for research purposes, and that the data were treated in accordance with the confidentiality requirements of social science research.

The following section describes how we applied a Foucault-inspired reading of discourse and power in the discourse analysis.

Theorisation and analytical approach

We argue that a Foucault-inspired discourse analysis is suited to this study, as it is based on a theoretical framework for analysing how power forms and operates through discourse (see O’Leary 2013, for a similar standpoint). This section starts by explaining the views of discourse and power applied, and how they shaped the ways in which the empirical material, the theory–practice terminology and the two ideas about learning reviewed were understood. A more detailed description of the discourse analysis is then outlined.

According to a Foucauldian notion, a discourse was seen as ‘a group of statements’ which speak about the same ‘object of discourse’, i.e. the topic addressed by a discourse (Foucault 1972). The students we have interviewed discussed the theory–practice relationship and how it influences learning. A discourse was also understood to comprise certain orders which organise how its object is spoken of; these are called ‘orders of discourse’ (Foucault 2002). The ideas about learning reviewed were seen as figures of thought, i.e. ideas which form part of a discourse (Fejes 2006) and which are key to how the object of this discourse is discussed. Furthermore, the ideas were understood to be part of the discourse about WIL. This discourse was also assumed to be based on the theory–practice terminology and its dualistic order of discourse.

Another Foucault-inspired view we applied is that the discursive domain goes beyond spoken and written statements, i.e. discourse forms, and is also embedded in our institutions and their practices (Foucault 1990). Furthermore, we assumed that institutions (re)produce spoken and written statements that reflect how they and their practices are organised and linked to other institutions and their practices; Smith and Swift (2014) argue similarly that institutional practices reinforce specific terminologies. These views formed our understanding of how the theory–practice terminology is linked to the usual WIL design: an educational design which is founded on the institutional split between university and working life that is also reflected in this terminology. More specifically, as this WIL design ensures that students go to university to learn ‘theory’ and into working life to learn ‘practice’, we thereby assumed that it is both based on and (re)produces the terminology in question. Thus, this educational design and the theory–practice terminology were seen to form, while also being formed by, each other.
Furthermore, as the ideas about learning we examined are instances of this terminology, we thereby assumed that they are embedded in and (re)produced by the usual WIL design. The terminology and the ideas were also seen to reflect certain traditional and contemporary social positions of university and working life. The traditional social positions we refer to are (a) that university is the place for learning ‘theory’ and working life is the place for learning ‘practice’ and (b) that these institutions are rivals both striving to be the place where professionalism is established. The contemporary social position referred to is that they are partners who together form the key to professional education.

To further explain how we understood the theory–practice terminology, it is important to note that our assumption was not that this terminology is only (re)produced by the institutional split between university and working life. Rather, we assumed that it is also (re)produced by the fact that, at all levels, our formal education system is based on the principle that ‘theory-based’ training is done outside working life in a place called school. This separation of the scholastic domain from the working-life sphere has been established for a long time (Masschelein and Simons 2013) and can explain why the theory–practice terminology is widely used.

The discourse analysis was also based on specific Foucault-inspired views of power. Power was seen as a relational and productive force which operates not only through spoken and written statements but also through our institutions and practices (Foucault 1990). The terms relational and productive refer here to the Foucault-inspired views that power (a) exists in and (b) forms relationships between – amongst other things – people, institutions or concepts such as theory and practice (Foucault 1990). We further assumed that power forms such relationships as it operates through, produces and organises discourse.

It was also assumed that there are different kinds of relational and productive forces. This study reviews ranking orders between theory and practice which form specific relationships between them and organises the discourse in such a way that some ways of talking about theory and practice are included and others not. More specifically, we review ranking orders between theory and practice which are part of the theory–practice terminology and form the two ideas about learning we examined. The theory–practice terminology was seen as a relational and productive force forming the dualistic order of discourse by which these ideas and their ranking orders abide.

Drawing on the Foucault-inspired view that relational and productive forces can be mutually exclusive simultaneously as they collaborate (Foucault 1990), we also assumed two other things. One was that the ranking orders which form the ideas about learning we reviewed could be mutually exclusive and form these ideas in such a way that, by and/or among themselves, they comprise opposing accounts of the theory–practice terminology. The other was that these ranking orders always find support in one another because they and the ideas they form are forces of this terminology which combine to reinforce it. Furthermore, just as the ideas they form, these ranking orders were understood to be linked to (a) the institutional split between university and working life which forms the basis for the usual WIL design and (b) the stated social positions of these institutions.

A final Foucault-inspired view we applied is that power often masks its effects by hiding behind accounts that seem to be or are recognised as true, pleasant or innocent (Foucault 1990). Drawing on the outlined views of discourse and power, the discourse analysis included the following six interrelated analytical steps between which the researchers moved back and forth:

1. Detailed and repeated readings of the empirical material with a focus on identifying the accounts of the theory–practice terminology which the students used on a regular basis.

Notes that explained the accounts which recurred and that recorded where they occurred in the interview transcripts were taken during the readings. This analytical step was first performed individually before the researchers compared notes and readings. To facilitate careful choices
during the analysis, the remaining analytical steps were conducted by means of negotiation among the researchers (Wahlström et al. 1997).

(2) Identifying the ideas about learning which are recurrent accounts of the theory–practice terminology and discerning the accounts they comprise.

To identify these ideas, we moved back and forth between reading and analysing the recurrent accounts of theory–practice terminology identified previously. From a detailed examination of these accounts, we discerned two ideas about learning. We examined whether each of them consisted of one or more accounts, and if the latter was the case, whether these accounts were compatible and/or conflicting. Quotes that formed the ideas were selected during this analytical step.

(3) Comparing the two ideas about learning and their accounts.

We compared the two ideas about learning by analysing whether they comprised compatible and/or conflicting accounts, i.e. we determined whether they were compatible and/or rival ideas.

(4) Identifying and comparing the ranking orders which form these ideas and their accounts.

This analytical step was guided by our knowledge of whether the ideas about learning by or among themselves comprised compatible and/or conflicting accounts. We began to discern the ranking orders between theory and practice that formed each of the two ideas and their accounts, and how they did so. From this, we concluded whether each idea consisted of one or more ranking orders, and if the latter was the case, whether these were compatible or conflicting. The ranking orders that formed the two ideas were then compared. From this, we discerned whether they were compatible and/or rival ranking orders.

(5) Examining how the ideas and their ranking orders reinforce the theory–practice terminology.

Based on their ranking orders, we examined how the ideas worked separately and together to reinforce the theory–practice terminology.

(6) Examining how the ideas and their ranking orders were linked to traditional and contemporary social positions of university and working life.

Here the ideas and their ranking orders were linked to (a) the traditional social positions that university is the place for learning ‘theory’ and working life is the place for learning ‘practice’, (b) the traditional social position that these institutions are rivals and (c) the contemporary social position that they are partners.

Results

The results are based on a discourse analysis of selected quotes and divided into two sections. The first presents the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning and shows how two opposite ranking orders form the basis for (a) this idea and (b) two rival subject positions. The second section outlines the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning and the ranking order which forms this idea. Before we proceed to the first section, two things need to be clarified: one is that these ideas were voiced by all the interviewees, the other that the students used the theory–practice terminology. This means that theory and practice have specific meanings in the quotes. ‘Theory’ means campus-based training or the research-based
knowledge/course content studied on campus etc., whereas ‘practice’ means work placements or the training done there. Sometimes, ‘practice’ also implies work in general.

**The idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning**

**Theory as the point of departure for learning**

Illustrated by two quotes, the results begin to show how one of the two opposing ranking orders on which the theory vs. practice idea is founded forms a recurrent account of the theory–practice terminology. In the first quote, a student addresses the claim *WIL increases understanding of theory*:

R1: Yes I think so, but you need to have the theory first.
Q: Can you elaborate on that a bit?
R1: Well yes I think you do. WIL increases [understanding of theory – authors’ comment] a lot, but in order for there to be a Work-integrated Learning you need the theoretical knowledge first.
Q: Why?
R1: Well, it is easier to integrate if you have the theoretical knowledge first. But you get an integrated learning if you have practice first too, but I think it’s easier. I have a feeling that it’s easier to have knowledge of the theory first, before you go out there sort of. Then you can take a case study and apply the theory.

We see here how the ranking order which identifies ‘theory’ as a better starting point for learning than ‘practice’ forms a key component of this idea. In this quote, the asymmetrical ranking order is forming phrases such as ‘You need the theoretical knowledge first’ and ‘I have a feeling that it’s easier to have knowledge of the theory first, before you go out there sort of’. In the next quote, a student addresses the claim *theoretical learning helps me understand practice*:

R2: It’s like in school. You wouldn’t take a test before you’ve studied the theory ahead of the test. You wouldn’t pass. It’s the same there, when you get out. You need to learn basic theory that helps you understand how it works.

Here, the ranking order which favours theory as the starting point for learning is forming the claim that theory must be learnt before practice. One way to contextualise this ranking order is to say that it supports the university’s interest in being the place where professionalism is established. An indication of this is that it favours ‘theory’, which according to the terminology under review is the research-based knowledge that university rather than working life can offer students. This ranking order can also be said to form the basis for the curriculum design which has been called *technical rationality* (Schön 1983), *the application-of-theory model* (Korthagen and Kessels 1999) and *the applied science approach* (Carr 1986), and which identifies theory as the basis for professional education.

The quotes presented so far have outlined how the ranking order which argues that it is better to start with ‘theory’ (campus-based training) than with ‘practice’ (work placements) forms a recurrent account of the theory–practice terminology. A particular feature of this ranking order is that it rejects the opposite one.

**Practice as the point of departure for learning**

The next two quotes show how the reverse ranking order forms the opposite recurrent account of the theory–practice terminology. The first quote comes from a student’s discussion on how theory-and practice-based training influences her learning:

R3: I mean you can’t sit and read your way to learning how to build a house, you need to build it too. But for my learning I have seen that I need the practical more than the theoretical in a sense. Perhaps this sounds very odd. I need the practical before being able to ‘go in there’
sort of. My mentor has said the same. That really (inaudible) you would have needed to have worked six months before going to school in order to understand what you’re studying. I agree with that. My learning is probably practical and then theoretical in that case.

This quote shows how the ranking order which identifies ‘practice’ as a better starting point for learning than ‘theory’ is manifested. Here, the asymmetrical ranking order forms the claim that the student must have ‘practice before theory’ to understand what she is studying. The next quote addresses the claim *theoretical learning helps me understand practice*:

R4: I would probably say it’s the other way around, in general, from what I can think of now. That it is easier to go from practice to theory than from theory to practice. Because if you go from theory to practice then you’ve already learned the theory sort of and then you somehow prove it with the practice. So, I don’t think you learn much more. That’s how it feels anyway.

In this quote, the ranking order favouring ‘practice’ as the starting point for learning forms the statement that it is easier and more beneficial ‘to go from practice to theory’ than vice versa. This ranking order can be understood to support the interest of working life in being the place where professionalism is established. An indication of this is that it favours that which working life rather than university is known to be able to offer students, i.e. practice. This ranking order can also be related to Schön’s (1983) and Raelin’s (2016) argument that it is working life which is the ideal place for training professionals, not formal educational settings. A particular feature of this ranking order is thus that it forms the recurrent account of the theory–practice terminology which identifies ‘practice’ (work placements) and rejects ‘theory’ (campus-based training) as the ideal starting point for learning.

In summary, until now the results have highlighted how the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning comprises two reverse ranking orders that form opposite recurrent accounts of the theory–practice terminology. These rival ranking orders form the basis for the theory or practice debate which has been criticised in research (Korthagen and Kessels 1999; Zeichner 2010). However, these ranking orders are not only competitors; they also collaborate to reinforce the theory–practice terminology, as together they form a particular account of the theory vs. practice idea. This is the antagonistic account whereby ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are identified as rivals and unequally valid starting points for learning. This aspect is further touched upon in the next section, which is based on two quotes and outlines how the opposite ranking orders form rival subject positions.

**Theory before practice and practice before theory as rival subject positions**

In the first quote, a student discusses her preferred way of learning:

R5: Yes, it depends a little on what I’m learning, but I want some theory first and then being able to discuss it. If you are learning something practical I’d probably also want the theory first and then actually get to do it in practice. That’s what we have done in training.

We see here how the ranking order which favours ‘theory’ as the starting point for learning constitutes a subject position which is adopted by the interviewee and identifies her as a person who prefers ‘theory before practice’. A specific feature of this subject position is that it rejects the rival one; i.e. that of the person who prefers ‘practice before theory’. The next quote comes from a student’s discussion on why the combination of practice- and theory-based training offers added value:

R6: I can more easily integrate working life into the modules I study. I am more of a practitioner than a theorist. I really need to read my way to understanding. And if you have practical experience in the bag it makes me learn much more easily and remember it for longer.

This quote outlines how the ranking order which declares that ‘practice’ should come first constitutes a rival subject position. Here, it is adopted by the statements ‘I am more of a
practitioner than a theorist’ and ‘if you have practical experience in the bag it makes me learn much more easily’. The first statement identifies the interviewee as a practitioner rather than a theorist and, in this manner, the former subject position excludes the latter. However, just as with the opposite ranking orders on which they are founded, these rival subject positions are not only mutually exclusive but also collaborate to reinforce a certain antagonistic account of the theory–practice terminology. This is the account which is specific to the theory vs. practice idea and which identifies ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ as rivals and unequally valid starting points for learning.

One way to contextualise the ranking orders which form this idea is to say that they reflect the traditional social position that university and working life are rivals both striving to be the place where professionalism is established. As will be clarified in the next section, another social position is linked to the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning and its ranking order.

The idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning

This section uses two similar quotes to outline a recurrent account of the theory–practice terminology that typifies this harmony-based idea. They illustrate how a certain ranking order forms this idea. It is also clarified how this idea and its ranking order are related to the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning and its ranking orders. In the first quote, a student addresses the claim practical experience helps me understand theory:

R5: Yes that they go together. Practice helps me understand theory and vice-versa, theory helps me understand practice.

Here we see how the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning is expressed by the account which claims that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are a perfect match and enrich each other. This idea embraces harmony and is based on a symmetrical ranking order which assumes that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are equally valid starting points for learning. This ranking order can be seen to support the interests of both university and working life in being a place where professionalism is established. One sign of this is that it ranks the different things that university and working life are known to offer students, i.e. ‘theory’ and ‘practice’, respectively, as equally important to students’ education.

Another key feature of this ranking order is that it works in silence. An indication of this is that it is implied rather than made explicit by the harmony-based account, which typifies this idea and rejects the antagonistic account that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are rivals and of different rank. This clarifies that this idea and its ranking order contrast with the theory vs. practice idea and its ranking orders, embracing a reciprocal theory–practice relationship.

Another way of explaining the conflict between the two ideas and their ranking orders is to say that the harmony-based idea and its ranking order reflect the contemporary social position that university and working life are partners, rather than the traditional position that they are rivals. It is, however, important to note that while the two ideas and their ranking orders are in conflict, they also collaborate as forces of the same terminology. The final quote that follows is used to clarify further how the ideas and their ranking orders both are mutually exclusive and collaborate. Here, a student discusses why the combination of theory- and practice-based training influences learning:

R7: Yes, precisely because it was a combination. And because I gain an understanding of the theory from the practice, and of the practice from the theory, and that they marry somehow.

We see again how the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning is expressed by the account which claims that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are starting points for learning which work in harmony and enrich each other. This idea’s ranking order favours a harmony-based theory–practice relationship while the two ranking orders which form the theory vs. practice idea favour an antagonistic and asymmetrical relationship between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. This means that the two ideas are mutually exclusive based on their incompatible
ranking orders. However, the ideas and their ranking orders are also collaborating to reinforce the dualistic order of discourse which reflects the traditional social positions that ‘theory’ is learnt on campus and ‘practice’ at work placements. This means that the ideas and their ranking orders collaborate to reinforce the main order of discourse in which they thrive, and by doing so, they also provide scope for each other’s existence.

Furthermore, we argue that the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning is the more insidious of the two ideas when it comes to reinforcing this discursive order. This is because the theory vs. practice idea is recognised as dualistic due to its antagonistic and asymmetrical nature, while the other idea is an account of the seemingly harmless reciprocal approach to the theory–practice relationship which is acknowledged as non-dualistic. In other words, this harmony-based idea is the more insidious of the two because it disguises its dualistic nature. This is a feature which this idea shares with contemporary WIL-related research topics which are lauded as non-dualistic and state that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ should be integrated, and the theory–practice gap bridged. It is important to note that these research topics disguise their dualistic nature and are tacitly counterproductive, by shedding light on two related problems that this study takes as its point of departure. What we refer to here is the fact that contemporary research generally ignores (a) that these topics are forces of the polarising theory–practice terminology and (b) that there is no non-dualistic alternative to this terminology in today’s discourse. Against this background, we now discuss some requirements and a possible basis for a non-dualistic terminology, and how an alternative design of WIL could provide scope for it.

Creating a third place for WIL: providing scope for a non-dualistic terminology

This study has shown how the idea of theory vs. practice as the point of departure for learning and the idea of theory and practice as harmonious points of departure for learning are formed by certain ranking orders and reinforce the theory–practice terminology. This terminology is based on the dualistic order of discourse whereby theory means campus-based training or the research-based knowledge taught on campus, whereas practice means work placements, what is done there etc.

We argue that a non-dualistic terminology must use neither this nor any other distinctions which disconnect theory from practice but instead signify that they are inseparable. An example is a terminology based on the idea that theory and practice always coexist in learning. By this we mean that theories (principles, ideas etc.) are always learnt in and through different forms of (social) practices. Such a terminology is tricky to create because it cannot be based on binary oppositions, which are very much embedded in our discourse. In fact, it must avoid using theory and practice and other conceptual pairs, such as education and work, as binary oppositions altogether. It is these conceptual binaries which disconnect theory from practice in the first place and reinforce the dualistic order of discourse which (a) organises the theory–practice terminology and (b) is reflected in and by the usual WIL design. Clarifying this, and that the idea that theory and practice always coexist in learning can be a basis for a non-dualistic terminology, are ways of providing scope for such a terminology.

However, this study will not present a more detailed description of how a non-dualistic terminology could be designed. We argue that the key to providing scope for this is more about creating a place where it can belong than about designing it in detail. This is because such a terminology currently has no natural habitat and must belong somewhere to take hold. A good basis for discussing where a non-dualistic terminology could thrive is to consider that the usual WIL design is at odds with such a terminology because it disconnects theory from practice and embodies how they are separated in learning. In fact, because this WIL design consists in students going to university to learn ‘theory’ and into working life to learn ‘practice’, it forms a dualistic setting where the theory–practice terminology thrives and is reproduced. University and working life are also two usual places where this terminology is dominant.
This means that the usual WIL design cannot provide a place for a non-dualistic terminology. Achieving this requires WIL to be designed in a non-dualistic way and thus take place in a single setting rather than at two separate locations. As the university domain and the working-life sphere are places appropriated by the theory–practice terminology, it is also key that this single place is located outside these usual places, i.e. at a third place. There are educational designs which are close to being located at third places. For instance, several universities and public schools in the US are together using Professional Development Schools (PDSs) to prepare student-teachers for their occupation (Mule 2006; Gravett and Ransaroorp 2015). However, PDSs are not located at third places because they are situated in public schools where teachers work.

We imagine that a third place for WIL, located between university and working life, can be created and be a place where students can engage with professors, working-life professionals and their future ‘clients’. A WIL design of this nature could be co-funded by universities, companies and/or public organisations, and also designed in different ways to fit various professions.

To further explain (a) what a ‘third place for WIL’ means and (b) how this place can provide scope for a non-dualistic terminology, we use the Foucauldian concept of heterotopia and a Bhabhian notion of third space. Heterotopias are spaces which lie outside and are other than yet related to our usual places (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986). They are also spaces where hybrids of the usual places, e.g. university and working life, whose practices abide by different and/or conflicting logics, can be created and form other ways of living (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986). Bhabha (1990) argues that a third space is, in general, a space for otherness and, in particular, a space for avoiding a polarised discourse.

What we mean by a third place for WIL is thus a place between university and working life which gives students the opportunity to learn and practise theories (ideas, principles etc.) at the same location. Our argument is that if theories are learnt at the same place they are practised, this could be a WIL design which embodies the idea that theory is learnt in and through practice, or in other words, that theory and practice coexist in learning. We also argue that a WIL design which is organised in this non-dualistic manner could be a suitable place for the terminology we seek.

However, to be this locus, this third place-based design of WIL must not only ensure that students learn and practise theories at the same place. This WIL design must further avoid dividing the learning activities carried out at this place into ‘theoretical’ and ‘practical’ activities, and instead use learning activities which can show that theory and practice coexist in learning. Otherwise, it would only allude to the theory–practice distinction that is reflected in the usual WIL design, and thereby be an educational design which embraces the theory–practice terminology instead of a non-dualistic alternative. A third place-based design of WIL which succeeds in embodying how theory and practice coexist in learning can also avoid embracing a key idea of the theory–practice terminology which polarises theory and practice for students. This is the idea that theory is the research-based knowledge you learn on campus and practice is what you do at work placements. This idea has a polarising effect because it is closely associated with, and therefore reminds students of, the dominant idea that theory and practice are each other’s opposites.

Following this discussion, it is important to clarify why we have outlined thoughts about (a) what a non-dualistic terminology can and cannot be based on and (b) how a third place-based design of WIL can provide scope for such a terminology. These thoughts are intended to be neither final drafts nor improved alternatives to the theory–practice terminology and the usual WIL design. The aim was to clarify that it is possible to escape the dualism which forms the basis for this terminology and this design of WIL. We also argue that a third place-based design of WIL does not guarantee that a non-dualistic terminology will emerge. Rather, this seems to be a requirement if WIL is to avoid a polarisation of theory and practice and provide scope for such a terminology. This clarifies a particular problem with the usual WIL design, namely that this educational design aims to bridge the theory–practice gap for students but provides them with a dualistic terminology and setting which in many ways polarise theory and practice and thereby reinforce this gap instead. A non-dualistic terminology and a third place-based design of WIL can avoid this polarisation, and therefore we argue that they could be useful ways of ‘living the present otherwise’ (Fejes and Dahlstedt 2013, 7).
Notes

1. This terminology and the usual WIL design were assumed to be in a co-constitutive relationship. By this, we mean that this WIL design is not only based on the theory–practice terminology but also operates as a dualistic setting where this terminology can thrive and be reproduced. A more detailed description of how we understood this co-constitutive relationship is outlined in the ‘Theorisation and analytical approach’ section.

2. By this, we mean that the usual WIL design is founded on the existing condition that the university domain is separated from the working-life sphere.

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Notes on contributors

Ville Björck is a doctoral student in Education with specialisation in Work-integrated Learning at the Department of Health Sciences, University West, Trollhättan, Sweden.

Kristina Johansson is an associate professor in Education with specialisation in Work-integrated Learning at the Department of Social and Behavioural Studies, University West, Trollhättan, Sweden.

ORCID

Ville Björck http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7028-9469
Kristina Johansson http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5259-0538

References


Study 2
The idea of academia and the real world and its ironic role in the discourse on Work-integrated Learning

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The idea of academia and the real world and its ironic role in the discourse on Work-integrated Learning

Ville Björck

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The idea of academia and the real world and its ironic role in the discourse on Work-integrated Learning

Ville Björck
Department of Health Sciences, University West, Trollhättan, Sweden

ABSTRACT
Work-integrated Learning (WIL) seeks to bridge the gap between ‘scholastic’ training and work. This study explores the ironic fact that the WIL discourse remains formed by the idea of academia and the real world, an idea that in decisive ways creates this gap. A genealogical discourse analysis of how this idea operates in 79 present and past official documents promoting the Cooperative Education (Co-op) WIL model is used to explore this ironic fact. Two accounts of this idea are dominant in both present and past documents – the deficit account, which merely creates the stated gap, and the collaborative account, which both creates and bridges this gap. I emphasise that the Co-op and other standard WIL models embody and (re)produce the stated idea because they locate ‘scholastic’ training outside the ‘real world’. This separation dates back to scholê – the ancient Greek school that aimed to disconnect ‘school’ from ‘work’. Because WIL has the opposite aim, I argue that this separation is in fact counterproductive for WIL. Finally, I argue that locating WIL in a third place outside university and working life can be a way of avoiding the separation that (re)produces the idea of academia and the real world.

Introduction

While on work placements, university students are sometimes told that their on-campus training has no concrete use in the ‘real world’. This instance of the idea of academia and the real world illustrates how this idea encourages students to believe that on-campus training is irrelevant in working life. In so doing, this idea creates a gap between what students ‘study’ on campus and what they ‘do’ at work placements known as the academic-real world gap or the theory-practice gap. This study uses a genealogical discourse analysis to explore a descent of the idea of academia and the real world, which begins with the emergence in 1906 of Cooperative Education (Co-op) at the University of Cincinnati (Sovilla and Varty in Coll and Zegwaard 2011). This emergence was seen as one ‘birth’ of Work-integrated Learning (WIL), a form of higher education that typically embodies this idea because its usual design implies that students go to ‘academia’ to learn ‘theory’ and into the ‘real world’ to learn ‘practice’.

CONTACT Ville Björck ville.bjorck@hv.se Department of Health Sciences, University West, Trollhättan 461 86, Sweden

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The academic-real world distinction applied here is the traditional distinction whereby ‘academia’ means the university domain and the ‘real world’ means the working-life sphere existing outside academia.\(^3\) Co-op is a WIL model which since its emergence has typically used a certain version of the usual WIL design, which ensures that students alternate periods of ‘theoretical’ training in academia with periods of paid ‘practice’ in the ‘real world’. I define Co-op and other WIL models, which use the usual WIL design, as standard models of WIL. While these models can be very different in terms of how they design the relationship between on-campus training and work placements, they all use the stated WIL design to bridge the academic-real world gap.

This study explores the ironic fact that the discourse on these models remains formed by the idea of academia and the real world. I call this the WIL discourse because its topic covers all standard models of WIL, and the irony I refer to is that this idea in decisive ways creates the very gap that these models seek to bridge. Here, it is important to note that while all accounts of the stated idea create this gap, some are ambivalent because they both create and bridge it. The differences between the ambivalent accounts and the accounts that merely create this gap are explained in the theorisation and analytical approach section.

It is also important to note that I did not assume that the academic-real world gap is merely created by the idea of academia and the real world. Rather, this gap and this idea were understood to be founded on the physical separation between academia and the ‘real world’ that forms the basis for the usual WIL design. This WIL design was assumed to create the gap because it disconnects ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ training from each other by locating them in different physical domains. However, while I saw this disconnection as a material condition that creates the academic-real world gap, I also assumed that the usual WIL design could bridge this gap because this makes it possible for students to move between and integrate these forms of training.

Furthermore, I assumed that there was, and that there still is, a key reason for the use of the academic-real world distinction to describe university and working life. The reason is that these domains had and still have different defining features and roles in society. Working life outside of academia has long been and remains the domain where most people work; a condition that ensures that this domain has remained essential to peoples’ daily lives and is thereby still seen as the ‘real world’. Academia was historically and remains the place for research and formal education activities, such as reading and writing about theories. Because many occupations outside academia were not and are still not usually focused on these ‘academic’ activities, I argue that this is a key reason for why people distinguish academia from the ‘real world’.

Furthermore, while contemporary research acknowledges that polarisations of university and working life are harmful for WIL, there is limited research into the counterproductive role that the idea of academia and the real world has in the WIL discourse. There is also limited research that emphasises the irony that because standard models of WIL embody this idea, they (re)produce an idea that in decisive ways works against their common aim. Thus, I argue that it is important to explore the stated descent of the idea of academia and the real world.

The bulk of the empirical material used in this analysis consists of 75 student-oriented documents about Co-op which the University of Cincinnati, USA, the University of Waterloo, Canada and University West, Sweden, distributed between 1928 and 2018.
These are paper- or web-based documents which promote Co-op to inform prospective and enrolled Co-op students about Co-op. Some of them have also been distributed to employers. Four other official documents about Co-op published in 1914, ca. 1930, 1944, and ca. 1960 were also examined.

The genealogical discourse analysis examines the accounts of the idea of academia and the real world that are not only dominant (i.e. often used) in the present and past documents examined here, but that are also established in today’s discourse on all standard models of WIL. I was able to examine such accounts because the selected documents include accounts of the stated idea that are not only common statements about Co-op, but also established statements about all standard models of WIL. The theorisation and analytical approach section explains how such accounts were identified.

Furthermore, the genealogical discourse analysis examines how these accounts are expressed and create the academic-real world gap. It also examines whether the accounts bridge this gap in certain ways and how they mobilise different ranking orders between on-campus training and work placements. The discussion problematises the ironic fact that the idea of academia and the real world remains dominant in the WIL discourse because standard models of WIL have over time (re)produced a discourse that is formed by this idea. It also emphasises that locating WIL in a third place outside university and working life can be a way of avoiding the physical separation between these domains that reproduces the idea of academia and the real world. What a third place-based WIL design (Björck and Johansson 2018) means and how it can avoid reproducing this idea is explained in the discussion.

Certain things need to be clarified before I describe previous research and then describe the present role of Co-op at the three mentioned universities, the empirical material, and the theorisation and analytical approach that was taken.

Co-op emerged during the second industrial revolution, which is generally assumed to have taken place between 1870 and 1914 and which changed US manufacturing from small-scale to large-scale industries (Sovilla and Varty in Coll and Zegwaard 2011). This expansion of industry led to working conditions that created a need for the mass production of educated workers who could work in these industries (Sovilla and Varty in Coll and Zegwaard 2011). Higher education institutions (HEIs) were used as key places for this mass production. A clear indication of this is that HEIs offering degree programmes in engineering were established in the US after the Morill Act of 1862, a grant that supported the institutionalisation of HEIs that offered degree programmes in engineering and science (Jolly 2009).

At the start of the twentieth century, some voices argued that the engineering education provided by HEIs did not give a sufficient preparation for working in the manufacturing industry (Sovilla and Varty in Coll and Zegwaard 2011). The norm at that time was that students of higher education only attended a ‘theoreticum’, and these voices argued that a more ‘practice-based’ engineering education would be more sufficient. One of these voices was Herman Schneider, a Dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati (UC) who argued that a mix of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ was needed in order for students to be prepared for this industry. Drawing on this argument, Schneider promoted the idea of using Co-op in UC’s engineering education, and in 1906, Co-op was introduced there as a ‘pragmatic’ complement to the ‘traditional’ form of higher education whereby students generally only attend a ‘theoreticum’. This description clarifies a key component of the
historical context in which Co-op first emerged. However, it is important to note that the voices supporting the emergence of Co-op were not in the majority. Rather, many academicians were sceptical because Co-op involved the ‘real world’ in students’ education (Sovilla and Varty in Coll and Zegwaard 2011).

Furthermore, it should be reiterated that Co-op offered students paid ‘practice’ from the outset. This meant that Co-op ensured that less privileged young men could afford to attend engineering education and become the engineers that the manufacturing industry demanded.

In light of the description of the link between the second industrial revolution and the emergence of Co-op, it should be noted that this study recognises that we are now in the fourth industrial revolution. However, this study only provides a historical description of the second industrial revolution. This is because it was that revolution that provided the scope for the ‘birth’ of the usual WIL design that Co-op and other standard models of WIL still use, and which still ensures that the WIL discourse remains formed by the idea of academia and the real world.

The final thing I need to clarify is that the past and the present discourse on these models is based on the widely used theory-practice terminology (Björck and Johansson 2018), which comprises various ideas such as the one I examine here. This terminology is based on the dualistic ‘order of discourse’ whereby concepts such as theory and practice, and academia and real world, are used as binary oppositions and are thereby given polarised meanings. The stated discursive order uses ‘theory’ as a generic term for on-campus training or for the research-based knowledge acquired there and ‘practice’ as a generic term for work placements or for the activities carried out there (see Björck and Johansson [2018] for a description of this theory-practice distinction). It also uses the academic-real world distinction I described earlier on in the introduction. The theory-practice terminology and the idea of academia and the real world and their link to the usual WIL design are further explained in the theorisation and analytical approach section.

**Previous research**

The topic of how to bridge the academic-real world gap is discussed in contemporary WIL research (see e.g. Anderson and Freebody 2012; Álvarez 2015) and universities use WIL to bridge this gap. Furthermore, this research accentuates that WIL bridges this gap by integrating on-campus training with ‘real world experience’. This accentuation implies that this experience is gained in working life rather than on campus, and this implication is important to note because it suggests that on-campus training is not realistic enough.

Contemporary research also conceptualises WIL as a partnership (Choy and Delahaye 2011; McRae 2014) or marriage (Gellerstedt, Johansson, and Winman 2015) between academia and working life. In this connection, much research emphasises that WIL is based on the ideas that ‘theory-based’ and ‘practice-based’ learning enrich each other and are of equal value to the education of professionals (see e.g. Groenewald et al. in Coll and Zegwaard [2011], who emphasise this).

There is also research about WIL and related topics that emphasises the value of and/or favours ‘practice-based’ learning, which is also referred to as ‘workplace’, ‘real world’, or ‘experiential’ learning. Kruger, Kruger, and Suzuki (2015) emphasise that experiential
learning is valuable because it facilitates the possibility of making classroom learning applicable in the ‘real world’. Discussing the difference between learning in a classroom setting and learning in workplaces, Raelin (2016) argues that real world learning, and not classroom learning, is the best preparation for management work.

There is also a key feature of contemporary research that I need to reiterate here. While such research recognises that polarisations of university and working life are harmful for WIL, there are few studies about the counterproductive role that the idea of academia and the real world has in the WIL discourse. Andrew et al. (2010) provide one such a study. They studied teachers in a nursing degree programme whose role on campus is to inform students about the ‘real world’ of nursing. The authors state that because these teachers call themselves experts from the ‘real world’, and thus imply that academia is not the ‘real world’, they may well widen rather than bridge the academic-real world gap (Andrew et al. 2010).

Another example of research that problematises the discourse produced by the traditional academic-real world distinction is that of Orr (in Naples and Bojar 2002). She emphasises that this distinction creates a polarised discourse that embraces gaps between academia and other spheres of society. In this connection, I argue that historical studies of the idea of academia and the real world are useful for problematising and understanding our current tendency to use the stated distinction. Because there is a lack of such studies, I also argue that this study is needed.

Co-op today and its role at the University of Cincinnati, the University of Waterloo, and University West

In some countries such as Canada, Australia, and Thailand, Co-op is used at several universities, while in others Co-op is only used at certain universities. Some universities use Co-op as an overall educational strategy, which means that they use Co-op for many degree programmes, while other universities only use Co-op in some degree programmes. The University of Cincinnati (UC) and the University of Waterloo use Co-op as an overall educational strategy. In recent years, UC has annually had more than 32,000 full-time students and about 4000 Co-op students (M.B. Reilly, personal communication, November 20, 2017), and the University of Waterloo has annually had over 36,000 full-time students and more than 19,000 Co-op students (M. Drysdale, personal communication, October 25, 2017). At University West, WIL is the overall educational strategy (University West’s website 2018). This means that University West uses different WIL models in different degree programmes, and Co-op is only used in degree programmes in engineering, economics, and information science. In recent years, University West has annually had about 5000 full-time students and about 150 Co-op students (University West’s annual report from 2017).

Empirical material

Both the student-oriented documents distributed by these universities and the other four documents about Co-op were selected because they have an important feature in common. They promote Co-op by using the theory-practice terminology and its key ideas that permeate all standard models of WIL. Thus, these documents include instances of the
idea of academia and the real world, and I argue that this common denominator ensures that these documents together form a body of empirical material that suits this study. Before a more detailed description of the empirical material is provided, I want to clarify one thing. Because I took a genealogical approach and wanted to trace the idea of academia and the real world from the current time back to the early discourse on Co-op, I selected documents used at different dates during the time frame in which Co-op has existed.

Regarding the student-oriented documents, it is important to note how and why they were selected from the three universities. At University West, where I work and where Co-op has been used since 1989, I had observed that such documents were formed by the idea of academia and the real world. To be able to trace this idea all the way back to Co-op’s emergence, there was a need to not only select documents from University West. Because Co-op emerged in the US and has existed in Canada since the late 1950s, I also selected documents from the universities that first used Co-op in these countries. The University of Cincinnati began to use Co-op in 1906, and the University of Waterloo started to use Co-op in 1957. With the assistance of archivists at the three universities, I found about 200 student-oriented documents about Co-op distributed from 2018 and dating back to 1928. All of these documents promote Co-op by informing prospective and enrolled Co-op students about Co-op. After reading them carefully, I determined that they were all very similar in the way in which they promote Co-op. On this basis, 75 such documents, which were distributed at different dates during the stated time period, and which include several explicit and/or implicit instances of the idea I examine, were selected.

The other four selected documents were published in 1914, ca. 1930, 1944, and ca. 1960. The oldest document is a transcript of Herman Schneider’s 1914 hearing about Cooperative and Vocational Education before the US House of Representatives’ Committee on Education. The document from ca. 1930 is a newspaper article about Co-op at UC called A university based on a new idea. The document from 1944 is a UC pamphlet called Is Higher Education obsolete? – University of Cincinnati Co-operative Plan bridges gap between industry and college classrooms. This pamphlet includes six articles originally published in various US newspapers. These articles promote Co-op as a useful educational strategy. The document from ca. 1960 is called Excerpts from Writings and Speeches on Co-operative Education, and is written by H.C. Messinger, a former director of the Department of Co-ordination and Placement at the University of Cincinnati. This document comprises past statements promoting Co-op, some of which were voiced by Schneider between ca. 1900 and 1935.

Theorisation and analytical approach

The genealogical discourse analysis is based on a Foucault-inspired reading of discourse and power. This section starts by explaining this reading and how it was used to explain the theory-practice terminology, the idea of academia and the real world, and their links to WIL. Thereafter, I describe genealogy as an analytical approach and how the stated reading formed the genealogical discourse analysis.

Foucault used various readings of the concept of discourse, and I have applied some of these here. One is that a discourse is ‘a group of statements’ that address the same topic (Foucault 1972), and this study reviews past and present statements about Co-op. I
have also assumed that a discourse comprises various ‘orders of discourse’ (Foucault 2002). These regulate how the topic of a discourse is, and can be, spoken of, and in doing so they ensure that a discourse includes some statements about this topic while also excluding others (Foucault 2002). The past and the present discourse about Co-op was, just like the discourse on all standard models of WIL, assumed to be based on the theory-practice terminology and its dualistic order of discourse. This terminology uses binary oppositions, such as the academic-real world binary, that create the academic-real world gap because they polarise on-campus training and work placements.

The same terminology also comprises various ideas, such as the one I examine, that are based on these binary oppositions and thereby create this gap as well. Many of these ideas comprise both antagonistic accounts, which merely create the stated gap, and harmonious accounts that are ambivalent because they both create and bridge it. If we take the idea of academia and the real world as an example, then antagonistic accounts of this idea only create the academic-real world gap because they pit academia and the ‘real world’ against each other, for instance, by accusing one of these ‘worlds’ and their specific form of training as being insufficient.

Harmonious accounts of the stated idea argue for a partnership between academia and the ‘real world’ that gives students a bridge between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. These accounts bridge the stated gap because they encourage students to find connections between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. They also create the gap because they use the academic-real world distinction or other binary oppositions that encourage students to believe that university and working life are different worlds and to focus on the gaps between them.

Furthermore, drawing on the view that discourse forms and is also embedded in and (re)produced by our institutions and practices (Foucault 1990), I made an assumption about how Co-op and other standard models of WIL are linked to the theory-practice terminology and its ideas. These models were assumed to be based on, and therefore also to embody and reproduce, this terminology and these ideas. For instance, the stated models were assumed to embody and reproduce the idea I examine because they imply that students go to ‘academia’ to learn ‘theory’ and into the ‘real world’ to learn ‘practice’.

A Foucault-inspired view of power was also used to understand the theory-practice terminology and the idea of academia and the real world. Stating that power operates through discourse and that discourse is embedded in our institutions and practices, Foucault (1990) concludes that power exists ‘everywhere’. He also emphasises that power is a relational and productive force. The former means that power is a force that exists in the different networks of relationships on which our institutional practices are based, rather than a force that a person or an institution can possess. The latter means that power produces and organises these relationships, and power is also assumed to be a force that can take different forms (Foucault 1990). I study the idea of academia and the real world, which is a force that creates specific relationships between university and working life.

This section will now describe genealogy, which is an analytical approach that uses history to problematise a currently dominant figure (e.g. an idea) and its role today (Foucault 1984). A basis for this approach is that this figure does not have one origin but various descents, and the genealogist problematises the figure’s current role by exploring one or more of these descents (Beronius 1991). The modus operandi is to first examine how an idea etc. is currently expressed and operates. Thereafter, its past forms of expression and modes of operation are examined (Beronius 1991).
The genealogist must also explore a descent that actually problematises an idea’s present role. Tracing an evolutionary descent, which shows how an idea has gradually become more advanced over time, is not the way to proceed. Instead, a genealogist explores a descent that shows how this idea’s emergence and current role in a discourse is ironic. What Foucault (1984) means by an ironic descent is clarified in this quotation about the ‘birth’ of the things we cherish today:

> We tend to think that this is the moment of their greatest perfection, when they emerged dazzling from the hands of a creator or in the shadowless light of a first morning … But historical beginnings are lowly: not in the sense of modest or discreet like the steps of a dove, but derisive and ironic, capable of undoing every infatuation. (Foucault 1984, 79)

I explore the ironic role that the idea of academia and the real world still has in the WIL discourse by examining how this idea operates in present and past documents about Co-op.

A more detailed explanation of the genealogical discourse analysis is now outlined. The starting point for this analysis was to identify the accounts of the idea of academia and the real world that are common in the present⁴ documents on Co-op that I examined and that are established in today’s WIL discourse. To identify these accounts, I searched for accounts that are not only common in the present documents, but that are also established in contemporary WIL research. Two such accounts were identified, and their forms of expression and modes of operation were analysed. The analysis of forms of expression focused on the explicit and implicit ways of talking that these accounts comprise. This analysis determined that one is an antagonistic account and the other is a harmonious account. They were respectively called the deficit account and the collaborative account.

The analysis of modes of operation focused on how these accounts create the academic-real world gap and how the harmony-based collaborative account also bridges this gap. Furthermore, this analysis identified the different ranking orders between on-campus training and work placements that these accounts mobilise and their effects.

After examining the present documents, I proceeded to the past documents. The focus was to determine whether the deficit account and the collaborative account are common in the past documents and/or whether different accounts of the idea of academia and the real world are common there. It was concluded that these accounts were also the accounts that are common in the past documents. Quotations illustrating the deficit account and the collaborative account are now analysed.

Results

This section uses six main quotations to clarify the forms of expression and modes of operations that are specific to these accounts in both the present and the past. To develop the analysis further, I also use some complementary quotations. The first three main quotations illustrate the deficit account, and the remaining three illustrate the collaborative account. Each account is first described by a present quotation and thereafter by past quotations.

The deficit account

The first quotation is from a student-oriented brochure called CO-OP published by University West in 2014. Here, a student praises work placements:
It is there that I learn how you work as an engineer. I have to test what I’ve read about, and develop enormously. For with all respect to theory, the work periods give me a more complete and reality-based knowledge. (CO-OP 2014, 7)

By claiming that it is work placements rather than the ‘theory’ learnt on campus that gives her reality-based knowledge, the student uses the deficit account. This is an antagonistic account that accuses ‘academia’ in general, and on-campus training and ‘theory’ in particular, of lacking a proper connection to the ‘real world’. Thus, this account identifies on-campus training and ‘theory’ as deficient in this regard, while also forming academia as something other than the ‘real world’. It is also by emphasising this lack, and thereby encouraging students to believe that on-campus training has no concrete use in working life, that the deficit account creates the academic-real world gap.

Furthermore, in this quotation this account is expressed rather clearly by the statement that it is work placements rather than ‘theory’ that ensures that the student acquires ‘reality-based’ knowledge. However, in both the present and the past, the deficit account alternates between being expressed on a more implicit and a more explicit level. Thus, some past and present instances of this account imply that on-campus training and ‘theory’ lack a proper ‘real world’ connection, while others state this explicitly. Furthermore, the deficit account's message that on-campus training lacks this connection is generally implied by contemporary WIL research. This is because this research accentuates that WIL bridges the academic-real world gap by integrating on-campus training with ‘real world experience’, an accentuation that implies that on-campus training is not realistic enough to bridge this gap. This indicates that the deficit account is not specific to statements on Co-op, but is established in today’s general WIL discourse.

The next quotation is from a document called Gear UP, a Undergraduate Admissions Handbook that the University of Waterloo used in the autumn of 1990 to promote Co-op ahead of the 1991 spring term. Here, a student states:

The Co-op challenge is definitely rewarding, both academically and financially. Applied Studies provides excellent practical experience, not to mention a healthy dose of reality and break during your academic career. (GEAR UP, 1990, 10)

The deficit account is here implied by the statement that you get ‘a healthy dose of reality’ when you attend work placements. This statement implies that on-campus training lacks a proper ‘real world connection’ and that you need to leave the campus in order to get a ‘real world experience’. Statements that imply this need to leave the campus are common in the present and past documents that were reviewed. One appears in a chapter of a 1967/1968 University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar that discusses engineering education. Here, it is stated that Co-op introduces students to ‘full-scale engineering projects and installations, far beyond the scope of any university laboratory’ (University of Waterloo Undergraduate Calendar, 1967, 48), a statement implying that students need to leave the campus in order to meet the ‘real world’ of engineering.

A feature of the results that has not yet been fully clarified is that the deficit account devalues on-campus training for being ‘unrealistic’, while also idealising work placement-based training for being ‘realistic’. Thus, this account mobilises an asymmetrical ranking order between the former and the latter forms of training. This is further discussed in connection to the third quotation that appears in a newspaper article from ca. 1930.
This article is called A university based on a new idea and identifies Co-op as more useful than the ‘traditional’ form of higher education:

Men active in practical work outside the academic field have known for many years that something is amiss with our regular college training. Too much of the information, too many of the theories imparted at college have proven inapplicable to life outside. Too many college graduates have learned, on plunging into the business of earning a living, that their particular period of university training was merely an expensive investment in theoretical culture. Too much of their academic knowledge has run of the roof. (A university based on a new idea, ca. 1930, 82)

Here, the deficit account is expressed rather clearly in the statement that many of the theories learnt on campus are ‘inapplicable to life outside’. This quotation also shows that this account can operate through conceptual binaries that refer to the academic-real world distinction. In other words, the deficit account can operate even though the concepts of academia and real world are not used explicitly. In the present and past documents that were reviewed, this account often operates through the theory-practice or the study-work binary. In this quotation, it is, for instance, operating through the binary distinction between ‘college training’ and ‘life outside’.

Furthermore, as stated, the deficit account mobilises an asymmetrical ranking order that devalues on-campus training for being ‘unrealistic’ and idealises work placements for being ‘realistic’. This ranking order tacitly assumes that it is the placements provided by the ‘real world’, rather than the academic training done on campus, that teaches students a profession. In other words, the stated ranking order tacitly assumes that working life rather than university is the best place for learning a profession. Research, such as that by Raelin (2016), which emphasises that ‘real world learning’, and not classroom learning, represents the best preparation for management work, mobilises the deficit account and its ranking order.

By spreading the message that academia cannot provide the ‘real world experience’ that teaches students a profession, this account also requests an education of professionals that is more realistic. Furthermore, by mobilising this request, the deficit account supports working-life’s interest in challenging academia’s influence on how this education is designed. This account is also a call for Co-op and other standard models of WIL that respond to the stated request by offering students a ‘balanced’ education that includes both ‘theory’ and ‘practice’.

The metaphor of a balanced education can also be used to portray the collaborative account. This account was voiced by Schneider in 1914 when he emphasised that Co-op is about integrating ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ in a reciprocal manner (Hearing about Cooperative and Vocational Education before the US House of Representatives’ Committee on Education 1914, 5).

The collaborative account

The first quotation is from a Cooperative Education Student Handbook that was published by the University of Cincinnati (UC) in 2014, and that was still available on UC’s website in March 2018 (https://www.uc.edu/careereducation/experience-based-learning/co-op/student-resources/handbook.html):
Through cooperative education, the professional world partners with the university to integrate theory and practice ... cooperative education extends student learning beyond the classroom providing an enhanced educational experience which includes paid, discipline-related work experience to further students’ career preparation. While students are gaining practical experience in their chosen field, they acquire an understanding of the world of work, integrate theory and practice, and have the opportunity to further develop professional and interpersonal skills. (University of Cincinnati Cooperative Education Student Handbook 2014, 5)

This quotation expresses the collaborative account, which in the present and past documents emphasises that academia and the ‘real world’ should be combined to give students a mix of and a bridge between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. The collaborative account assumes that the combination of these ‘worlds’ is perfect because it means that students can integrate theory and practice.

In contrast to the antagonistic deficit account, this account does not criticise theory for being ‘unrealistic’. Instead, it is a harmony-based account that idealises the partnership between academia and the ‘real world’ and the mix of theory and practice. Contemporary WIL research’s tendency to argue that university and working life are partners, and to idealise this mix, indicates that the collaborative account is not specific to statements on Co-op but is established in the general WIL discourse. This account idealises this partnership because it assumes that this union gives added value to students’ learning in both academia and in the ‘real world’. The stated account also assumes that without having both ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ students would not have sufficient knowledge of how to apply theory in the ‘real world’ nor have a sufficient ‘theoretical’ understanding of how their future work. These two assumptions typify why the collaborative account praises the mix of theory and practice.

This account also shares a specific feature with the deficit account. This is that they both assume that there is an academia and a ‘real world’. Thus, the former account is, just as the latter, forming academia as something other than the ‘real world’. Another link between the two accounts is that the collaborative account idealises the mix of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’, which the deficit account requests by emphasising that on-campus training is ‘unrealistic’. This link shows that these accounts are in one way compatible.

However, they are also incompatible because the collaborative account does not, like the deficit account does, value the ‘real world’ and work placements more than academia and on-campus training. Instead, the collaborative account assumes that the former and the latter domains and their forms of training are equally important to the education of professionals. This assumption is not articulated in this quotation, but is rather tacitly assumed. Many of the past and the present instances of the collaborative account identified in this study merely imply this assumption. However, some are more explicit. For instance, in a 1960s student information leaflet about the University of Cincinnati’s Cooperative Program, it is stated that the work placement assignments ‘are as much a part of the educational program as the academic training’ (Cooperative Program Student Information leaflet 1960s, 1). This illustrates that the collaborative account is, just like the deficit account, a force that in both the present and the past alternates between being expressed on a more implicit and a more explicit level.

The quotation that follows is used to further describe the collaborative account. This quotation is from a University of Cincinnati brochure that was used ca. 1945 and is called ‘Co-operative Training for Women – In Business – Applied Arts – Engineering’:
The student in the co-operative course alternates weeks of practical work on paid jobs with periods of learning on the campus. On her job, the student comes in contact with the realities about which the textbooks are written. She sees how theory is translated into practice. Experience in industry thus gives meaning and value to classroom discussions. (Co-operative Training for Women - In Business - Applied Arts - Engineering, ca. 1945, 1)

One can see here how the collaborative account was also in the past expressed by statements that praise how Co-op provides a bridge between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. A key feature of this account is that it spreads an ambivalent message that both creates and bridges the academic-real world gap. The collaborative account’s message is on the one hand that academia and the ‘real world’ and theory and practice should be united rather than separated. This message bridges the stated gap because it encourages students to unite these ‘worlds’ by integrating theory and practice. The stated account’s message is, on the other hand, implying that university and working life are different ‘worlds’. This message creates the gap in question because it encourages students to see and focus on gulls between these two domains. Andrew et al. (2010) argue similarly that the message that academia and working life are different worlds might widen the stated gap for students.

In connection to the description of the collaborative account’s ambivalent message, it is important to emphasise that a key difference between this account and the deficit account is that the latter only creates this gap. The fact that the deficit account only has this counterproductive effect becomes clear when you consider that its message is that on-campus training has no concrete use in working life.

Furthermore, as stated, the deficit account and the collaborative account are in one way compatible and in another way incompatible. They are compatible because the former’s message that on-campus training lacks a proper ‘real world’ connection is a call for the mix of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ that the latter account praises. They are incompatible because the deficit account’s ranking order values work placements more than on-campus training while the collaborative account’s ranking order values these forms of training equally.

A third quotation is now used to further clarify the collaborative account and its ranking order and how these are connected to the deficit account and its ranking order. This quotation about how Co-op is designed in engineering education is from Schneider’s 1914 hearing about Cooperative and Vocational Education before the US House of Representatives’ Committee on Education:

The practical work is just as carefully arranged as the college curriculum … Every detail of the practical course is carefully arranged and practice and theory are knit together in a uniform scheme through a carefully devised system of coordination. (Hearing about Cooperative and Vocational Education before the US House of Representatives’ Committee on Education 1914, 5)

Here, the collaborative account is expressed by the statement that ‘the practical work is just as carefully arranged as the college curriculum’, a statement that is rather explicit about this account’s symmetrical ranking order between on-campus training and work placements. This ranking order assumes that academia and the ‘real world’ offer different learning settings that are equally important to the education of professionals. Thus, this ranking is different from the deficit account’s ranking order, which assumes that the learning
setting provided by the ‘real world’ is the most important one. By mobilising a ranking order that assumes that academia and the ‘real world’ offer equally valid learning settings, the collaborative account supports both worlds’ interests in having an influence on how the education of professionals is designed.

Furthermore, this account is, just like the deficit account, a call for a mix of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’. However, while the call of the collaborative account arises from the assumption that this mix gives added value to academia and to the ‘real world’ with regards to students’ learning, the deficit account’s request arises from the criticism that academia is ‘unrealistic’. Thus, these accounts request the same thing but have different starting points for doing so.

The third quotation also shows that the collaborative account, just like the deficit account, operates through conceptual binaries that allude to the traditional academic-real world distinction. Here, the former account is for instance operating through the distinction between ‘college curriculum’ and ‘practical work’. These accounts’ abilities to operate through such conceptual binaries makes them influential because this means that they can spread their effects through many different labels. Having the means to operate through several labels other than academia and the ‘real world’ also ensures that these accounts can operate in silence and hide their activities and effects. The two accounts have this ability because they belong to the idea of academia and the real world, an idea that in general has the means to operate in silence.

Before the discussion begins, I want to clarify that the documents I have reviewed reject two traditional ‘academic’ views that polarise on-campus training and work placements and that might still be dominant in academia and instilled in students while they are on campus. One view is that academia should be isolated from the ‘real world’, and the other is that academic training, rather than ‘real world experience’, forms the basis for learning a profession. These views are not promoted by the stated documents because these documents emphasise that academia and the ‘real world’ should be partners and that academic training and ‘real world experience’ are equally important.

However, while the examined documents do not emphasise these two academic views, they often use the deficit account that takes the working-life view that higher education should be more ‘realistic’ and that the ‘real world’ is the best place for learning a profession. In that sense, the reviewed documents promote a working-life rather than a traditional academic perspective on the relationship between university and working life.

**Discussion**

This study has argued that the fact that the WIL discourse remains formed by the idea of academia and the real world is ironic because this idea in decisive ways creates the very gap that WIL seeks to bridge. One way to problematise this irony is to discuss the material condition that ensures that the stated idea remains dominant in this discourse. The condition in question is that the Co-op and other standard models of WIL have continuously embodied this idea, and thereby continued to (re)produce it. These models have continued to do this because they have kept on applying the usual WIL design that physically disconnects ‘scholastic’ training from the ‘real world’.

It is important to note that the stated models still apply this WIL design because it represents an institutionalisation of the idea of academia and the real world, and this can clarify why this idea works against WIL’s aim. What I am referring to here is that the
usual WIL design is based on the physical separation between the ‘scholastic’ domain and working life, which dates back to scholē. This ancient Greek school used this separation to create a place for vita contemplativa; i.e. ‘free’ studies that were completely disconnected from working life and fostered people’s self-cultivation and personal development (Masschelein and Simons 2013). This separation is perfect for vita contemplativa. However, it is counterproductive for WIL because it disconnects academic training from working life, whereas WIL seeks to do the opposite. In that sense, the usual WIL design is ironically founded on the physical separation that creates the gap that in turn needs to be bridged.

Because both this gap and the idea that I have argued creates it are produced by this separation, I emphasise that it is possible to create a third place-based WIL design that avoids the physical separation that reproduces this idea. By this, I mean a WIL design that ensures that students can go to a single (physical) place outside university and working life where they, along with professors and professionals from working life, can learn how theories (ideas, principles, etc.) are embedded in a specific line of work (for more information about a third place-based WIL design see Björck and Johansson [2018] who for instance discuss how it can be funded). Such a WIL design would not imply or (re)produce the idea that students move between academia and the ‘real world’. Instead, it could embody how theory and practice coexist in professional work and thereby encourage students to see that theories are not impractical and disconnected from this work but are embedded in it. Thus, I finally argue that a third place-based WIL design could avoid creating the academic-real world gap.

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Notes

1. To ensure a more readable text, I will hereinafter only use the term academic-real world gap. This applies regardless of whether the research I refer to uses this or other terms.
2. The emergence of Co-op was seen as one birth of WIL because it was an attempt to mix ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ in higher education, which occurred at a time when the norm was that university students only attended a ‘theoreticum’.
3. This study does not seek to determine the meaning of the concept real world nor does it assume that academia is ‘unrealistic’ and that the working-life sphere located outside academia is the ‘real world’. Rather, the study problematises the traditional academic-real world distinction. Hereinafter, when the concepts ‘real world’ and working life are used, I mean the working-life sphere located outside academia.
4. Because this idea is traced back over 100 years, I decided that the documents used between 2000 and 2018 constituted present documents.

Disclosure statement

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ORCID

Ville Björck  http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7028-9469

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Tidigare avhandlingar – Arbetsintegrerat lärande


ANNIKA ANDERSSON In case of emergency. Collaboration exercises at the boundaries between emergency service organizations. 2016:8.

MARIE WESTERLIND Knowing at work. A study of professional knowledge in integration work directed to newly arrived immigrants. 2016:9.


LARS-OLOF JOHANSSON Engaged in digital service innovation. 2018:15.


CAMILLA SEITL Informellt lärande i en formell organisation. Om meningsskapande, kunskapsdomäner och kompetens i arbete med kommunala mål. 2018:19.


Tidigare avhandlingar – Arbetsintegrerat lärande

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Learning ‘theory’ at university and ‘practice’ in the workplace

A problematisation of the theory-practice terminology that the dualistic design of Work-integrated Learning institutionalises

Work-integrated Learning (WIL) is a label for a form of higher education whose usual design in many degree programmes involves splitting students’ education into on-campus training and work placements. This thesis focuses on a theory–practice terminology that is reflected in and operates through this WIL design to disseminate dualistic thinking with a basic message. The message being that on-campus and placement-based training teach you two opposite bases for learning a profession, namely an abstract, research-based knowledge called ‘theory’ and a concrete work called ‘practice’. This thesis argues that when this dualistic thinking is passed on to students, it contributes primarily towards creating and also bridging the gap between these forms of training that the aforementioned WIL design seeks to bridge for them, the so-called theory–practice gap. Based on this argument, the thesis a) illustrates how this way of thinking is disseminated to students through four ideas in the theory–practice terminology, and b) discusses the possibility of establishing physical and/or virtual countersites to the usual WIL design that could give students a non-dualistic experience which in a key way could potentially avoid them falling into this so-called theory–practice gap. One contribution of this thesis is that it illustrates how spoken and written instances of the theory–practice terminology and the usual WIL design together create a dualistic setting that can be considered primarily responsible for creating, but also bridging this gap for students. Another contribution of this thesis is that it illustrates what physical and/or virtual countersites to this WIL design might look like and in what way they could potentially avoid creating this gap for students. A final contribution of this thesis is that it illustrates why such countersites can be considered as both possible and impossible to establish.

Ville Björck

Ville Björck works at the Department of Social andBehavioural Studies at University West. He has conducted research about WIL as a form of higher education since 2013.