

The Application of Narrative Pedagogy in Social Work Teaching

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Abstract: Narrative pedagogy achieves the purpose of education and research by narrating, explaining and reconstructing the stories and experiences of teachers and students. In the teaching of social work, rational use of narrative pedagogy means such as material display and discussion, situation simulation and role playing, writing and rewriting reflective journals, which can help students intuitively understand the humanistic background of the disadvantaged groups from the stories, and effectively improve students' empathy and professional quality.

Keywords: Narrative Pedagogy, Social Work, Narrative Gerontology

1. Introduction

There are two cognitive models for the construction of realistic meaning: one is the paradigmatic cognition model or logic-scientific model, and the other is the narrative cognition model. The purpose of paradigmatic cognition is to predict and control the external world through the causal explanation. The main purpose of narrative cognition is to interpret, that is, to understand the meaning of an action or experience. Narrative cognition reveals the uniqueness of human actions by placing human actions in a specific context of time, which cannot be expressed by conceptual definition, factual statement and abstract proposition.

In daily life, people's meaning construction is usually carried out in a narrative way. The understanding of the other is the understanding of its narrative thinking in a certain context. A private story with individual meaning, including personal problems, has acquired legal status after self-telling, others' telling and repeated telling, and individual meaning has been transformed into public meaning, and personal problems have become public dilemmas. Thus, the private story becomes the stock story of culture, and the stock story of culture is heard and internalized into the narrative framework of the individual, so that the individual constructs the meaning. Culture is enriched and developed in the process of story circulation.

With the postmodern shift of knowledge cognition, humanistic and social sciences have ushered in a narrative shift on the way of exploring the development different from natural sciences. The major of social work is developed from social practice. It pays attention to social value and personal value, and emphasizes the treatment of vulnerable groups with empathy[1]. In the teaching of social work, it is not only the need of social work education, but also the responsibility and obligation of social workers to make rational use of narrative pedagogy so that students can understand the situation of vulnerable groups from the stories and improve their empathy.

2. Narrative Pedagogy

Narrative theory holds that the process of life is the process of story development. On one hand, stories make us know the world, others and ourselves. On the other hand, each person is shaped by the social and cultural norms and customs conveyed by the story. Narrative originates from life, reflects people's cognitive structure related to life events, and becomes the main way for human beings to experience life and the world. Narrative appeals to experience, which is constructed as a narrative and exists as a story. Through unique stories, rich language and diverse statements, the narrative realizes the narrator's interpretation of his or her own identity and the meaning of life.

Narrative pedagogy, by paying attention to the teaching process and the life world, regards the

teaching process as a cooperative experience in which teachers and students progress and grow together. The foundation and platform of narrative pedagogy is the lifeworld which is experienced by teachers and students. The lifeworld is the source of all purpose, meaning and value. People communicate with each other in the lifeworld, and each party in the communication community interacts with each other as an equal and independent subject, which is the basic way of dialogue and the improvement of individual experience. This interactive subjective view means that the teacher's teaching turns from monologue to dialogue, and the student's learning turns from obedience to dialogue [2]. In many cases, the educational dialogue between teachers and students means that teachers infect and influence students by telling their own life stories or life stories related to them. In other words, educators carry out the educational influence through the way of life narration.

Education is the reconstruction of experience. Narrative pedagogy achieves the purpose of education and research by narrating, explaining and reconstructing the stories and experiences of teachers and students. Its essence is a teaching method and a teaching research method to describe experience and explain phenomena. The core of narrative pedagogy is to achieve the purpose of communication, understanding, motivation and inspiration through narrative. Narrative pedagogy emphasizes the significance of practice and life, the subjectivity of narrative and the importance of individual inner experience. Contemporary narrative is more about individual narrative, which shows the richness of group wisdom through the diversity of individual experience.

Education is a basic way for people to influence people, which pursues efficiency and stresses the value of purpose. As a form of dialogue between people, narrative has basic educational functions, clear educational psychological mechanisms and effective educational methods. The speech story constructed by educators has a strong educational purpose. In a particular educational context, the judgment and choice of educators on themselves and the life narrative related to them largely depend on whether the current narrative meets the expected educational purpose. In terms of the drama, vividness and interest of the story, the narrative text constructed based on the educational purpose is conducive to the students to quickly understand the meaning and value of the story, and to construct the cognitive structure and value dimension corresponding to the narrative text [3].

3. The Application of Narrative Pedagogy in the Teaching of Social Work Teaching

Narrative is the internal psychological construction of individuals. The function of narrative is to integrate scattered and fragmentary individual experience, and to construct meaningful and valuable structural units of individual psychology. The so-called narrative cognition is to put specific events into the overall story for understanding through the treatment of the situation. The tools used in narrative cognition mainly include contextualization, narrative type and narrative logic. That is to say, narrative cognition is the process of making use of certain narrative types according to the narrative logic to make the events more individualized, and the result is a good story.

Narrative pedagogy is a kind of postmodern curriculum paradigm, into the social work professional course, is to focus on process, pay attention to the teaching situation, the emphasis on the relationship between teachers and students interaction environment, guide students to focus on the characters in the story and plot, and then from the angle of psychology, sociology and culture, analysis of a series of problems caused by the plot. In narrative thinking, people use stories to understand and judge experience, and like novelists, they set plots, situations and characters to explain how and why people do things[4]. When we need to understand how people's goals and aspirations translate into action, and how these actions evolve over time, narrative thinking is the preferred approach.

Whether narrative has real educational value depends on the meaning conveyed by the story. From the perspective of educators, storytelling should not be satisfied with being pleasant to listen to, easy to understand and remember, but should convey truth, ideas and values to students through stories, which can only be realized by giving play to the metaphorical function of stories. The metaphor of the story is the general meaning and rules that can be transferred, deduced and used for reference behind the specific story. The teacher should metaphorize the truth in the story, and then let the students understand the truth themselves. From the perspective of evolutionary psychology, students are born with the ability to understand stories, and also have the ability to comprehend general truths from specific stories.

To a large extent, the story aims to restore and reproduce the true nature of people's actions and experiences. It is a vivid and concrete representation of the existence, life and communication of living bodies, which will stimulate students' strong interest and motivation preference. Wonderful stories

generally have a strong sense of presence, which can not only stimulate students' curiosity, arouse their sense of participation, but also trigger emotional reactions, so that students can project their own emotional desire in life onto the characters in the story, and complete a valuable spiritual journey and a meaningful psychological construction.

Social work is about mutual respect and help between people. Many cases of social work have to do with human relations, and in fact with ideas. If people's ideas are changed, many problems in their lives can be solved to some extent. In the work of helping others, social workers should first have the ability to know what the client thinks and needs, as well as the crux of the client's problems and difficulties. This requires social workers to have strong communication skills and in-depth understanding of the client's humanistic background, so as to provide more effective help and services [5].

Take the teaching of social work for the elderly as an example. Narrative pedagogy is applied to the teaching of work courses for the elderly. Under the guidance of teachers, students can interact with the elderly, listen to their stories and pay attention to their psychological state. By recording the life narrative of the elderly and reflecting on themselves in the process, the students deepen their experience and feelings of the elderly, and learn to consider problems from the perspective of the elderly by switching between the first person and the third person in the written narrative. Thus, it promotes the expression of students' empathy, improves their cognitive level of the elderly work, and helps to improve students' professional quality.

Based on the premise that life is a life with stories, narrative gerontology examines the themes of life, aging and death from the perspective of literature, and reflects on how society and individuals should realize active aging, especially how the elderly can be generated and regenerated into their own meanings. The phenomenon of "narrative foreclosure" is common among the elderly, which is to some extent a stress protection mechanism for the elderly to give up narrative when facing cultural discrimination [6]. For the elderly without narrative training, the active and interactive listening and the conscious raising of thoughtful and well-trained questions to stimulate their sense of meaning can stimulate the elderly to a certain extent to generate personal meaning. Narrative, especially written narrative, can not only help the elderly to delay the aging of language, but also innovate stories in various metaphors, bringing forward tension to the elderly life [7].

Table 1: Forms and arrangements of narrative pedagogy

Number	Teaching form	Teaching schedule
1	The presentation of narrative materials	Before class: teacher collects narrative materials according to the theme, and assigns reading, watching movies, thinking questions and other guiding tasks one week before class
		In class: multimedia presentation materials, teacher guides students into a vivid story situation
		Discussion: teacher guides students to discuss and reflect on their own experiences
2	Situation simulation and role playing	Before class: the experts of the teaching steering committee design the simulated work situations for the elderly, teacher randomly assigns the situations to each group one week before class, and students design scripts, roles, props, etc
		In class: group leader first briefs the background and characters of the story, then act in groups, and finally teachers and students vote
		Discussion: teacher guides students to reflect, analyze and solve problems
3	Writing and rewriting reflective journals	Before class: students write reflective journals in the first person based on their experiences in activities such as topic discussion and role playing
		In class: the representatives of each group speak for 3~ 5 minutes, then teacher and students comment
		Rewrite: teacher guides students to rewrite reflective journals in the third person from the perspective of the elderly

Narrative pedagogy can be taught in the course of social work for the elderly in the form of thematic display and discussion of narrative materials, simulation and role playing of social work situation for the elderly, writing and rewriting of reflective journals (refer with: Table 1). In the classroom, teacher uses multimedia teaching methods to display cases, literature works, films and other materials, so that students can have a more intuitive understanding of the humanistic connotation of the themes of disease, aging and death [8]. These materials combine abstract moral norms with concrete daily life, which can help students understand the value concept of social work and is an effective way to cultivate students' sense of professional ethics and social responsibility. Through group activities

such as simulating the working situation of the elderly, students narrate in the process of writing scripts and role-playing, which is not only telling the experience of the characters in the story, but also telling their own stories. Teachers and students work together to create this perceived narrative situation in the classroom in order to improve the cognitive level of the value of empathy.

Narrative pedagogy can exist both in the classroom and in social practice. Teachers lead students to contact and find problems in social practice, learn to use the existing knowledge of social work and interpersonal communication skills, and propose solutions and countermeasures. In the process of helping others, students not only narrate in language, but also in action, and not only listen to others' stories, but also tell their own stories, so as to distinguish the general and individual phenomena in the stories and manage the demands of conflicts of interests.

Narrative pedagogy is a process of dialogue and sharing, and also a process of mutual promotion between teachers and students. The mature development of students means that students have more experience, more diverse cognitive dimensions and more open and inclusive values. Whether the teacher's narrative expression can achieve the purpose of influencing the students' attitude change depends on whether it can promote the students' narrative processing and finally enter the state of narrative transmission [9]. In other words, whether students can create stories and bring their attitudes and ideas from the story world to the real world determines whether narrative pedagogy is truly effective. This process is not only beneficial to students' professional learning, but also helpful to promote and improve teachers' teaching and scientific research level.

4. Conclusion

In March 2020, China's National Health Commission and the Ministry of Civil Affairs jointly proposed to provide professional psychological assistance and social work services to people affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, so as to mitigate the psychological harm and social impact caused by the epidemic, and will focus on children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other people with special needs, and to adopt an "online + offline" approach to provide epidemic awareness, health guidance, emotional guidance, family support, social relationship repair and other social work services.

The epidemic has highlighted the value of social work and prompted it to change its working methods, enrich its work content and improve its effectiveness. In this context, social work education should be adjusted accordingly, and its content and form must be more diverse and open and inclusive, and narrative pedagogy will bring more humanistic care to people's response to the epidemic.

The epidemic has also accelerated the development of online education. Social work education should take this as an opportunity to think about how to use the constantly updated modern educational technology to improve the form of narrative text, the way of narrative information guidance, the channel type of narrative expression, to improve the quality of narrative pedagogy, and improve the quality of social work personnel training [10].

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