Narrative in Social Work Education

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The lecture is aimed at analysis of existing understanding of narrative method of teaching by modern scholars, as well as the specific ways and goals of its application in everyday practice. Specific consideration is given to exploration of narratives in social work education in higher education settings. Detailed description and in-depth analysis is provided on the use of narratives in teaching social work courses at the Bachelor program at the School of Social Work of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. An analysis is provided for the content of topics of studies where such narratives are used, like life history, oral narratives etc. Specific cases of narrative use presented in the lecture include: students' creating and telling the narrative on behalf of the imagined character with the relevant characteristics; using visualization (photos), based on which the narrative is created; creating and delivering the future narrative by participation of the other character; understanding the history narrative; analysis and interpretation of narratives collected by the use of oral narrative or life story. It is claimed that using the narrative promotes students' activization, empowers them for the project work, enables their gaining new experience and experiential learning. Moreover, developing and telling the narratives enhances students' intense communication and creativity as well as their engagement into the education process which is of high importance within the distance learning framework. The narrative is of high value for the social work education and training as this approach ensures developing capacity to listen to the clients' stories, to analyze and to understand their life stories, to assist in changing clients' lives by using success stories. Since the full scale war in Ukraine in 2022, people's war narratives bring a wide range of personal and professional insights for social work students.

Key references:

1. Crawford, F., Dickinson, J., Leitman, S. Mirroring Meaning Making: Narrative Ways of Reflecting on Practice for Action. Qualitative Social Work, 2002. 1(2), 170-190.
2. Lenette, C., Cox L., Brough, M. Digital Storytelling as a Social Work Tool. British Journal of Social Work, 2015. 45, 988–1005.
3. Riessman, C. K., Quinney, L. Narrative in Social Work: A Critical Review. Qualitative Social Work, 2005. 4(4), 391-412. URL: http://www.fayandassociates.com/pdf/narrative-in-social-work.pdf

Recommended readings:

1. La Rose, T., & Detlor, B. (2021). Social Work Digital Storytelling Project: Digital Literacy, Digital Storytelling, and the Makerspace. Research on Social Work Practice, 31(6), 599–609. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731521992427
2. Lydia Sapouna (2021) Service-user narratives in social work education; Co-production or co-option? Social Work Education, 40:4, 505-521, DOI: 10.1080/02615479.2020.1730316
3. Phillips, Joan & Mac Giolla Rí, Denise & Callaghan, Sue. (2012). Encouraging Research in Social Work: Narrative as the Thread Integrating Education and Research in Social Work. Social Work Education. 31. 785-793. 10.1080/02615479.2012.695200.

NADIIA KABACHENKO

Dr. Nadiia Kabachenko is an Associate Professor at the School of Social Work, the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv, Ukraine. As a local expert and researcher, she has worked on many international projects led by UNDP, UNPF, MATRA, Deloitte, Holt International, and other organizations. She has over 25 years of experience in teaching and researching social work and social policy. She teaches Social Research Methods, Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Programs and Projects, Qualitative Research Methods and other social work courses. Her research focuses on social work education development and the development of social services, including community needs assessment and services for elderly people, housing for seniors, and homeless issues. She is the author of more than 60 publications, including research studies and a monograph "Homeless Policy: Theory and Practice (Kyiv, 2015). In September 2022, she got a grant from CARA (the Council for At-Risk Academics), and now she is the Visiting Research Fellow at the Social Research Institute University College London. At the Social Research Institute, she studies the systematic review process with colleagues from the department's EPPI-Centre. This approach is rarely used in Ukrainian social policy and social work fields but could be valuable for enhancing the relevance and application of research. Additionally, she has started her research, "Elderly People in Situations of Armed Conflicts". It aims to understand the needs of people in such situations, as well as the possible ways to provide affordable services and change the social policies and regulations to improve the support and care for this vulnerable group of people in emergencies.

OKSANA BOIKO

Dr. Oksana Boiko is an Associate Professor and the Chair of the Department School of Social Work at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv, Ukraine. She is also the Head of the Master's Program in Social Work and has both MA and PhD in Social Work. Oksana teaches the courses: Teaching Social Work and Social Policy; Professional Concepts in Social Work; International Social Work; Social Entrepreneurship; Strengthening Community Resilience and Crisis Networking, and Advanced International Social Work. She has developed in cooperation with international colleagues, introduced the first Ukraine International Social Work Course (EU-funded project, 2009-2011), and has been the course leader for the 7th year already. She has over twenty-two years' experience as a coordinator, an expert, a trainer, a researcher, and an educator in various national and international projects on social work education and research, mental health and psychosocial support, community crisis management, and international social work. She has been a member of the MHPSS Technical Working Group in Ukraine for the last seven years. Oksana is a WHO trainer on MhGAP and a WHO Ukraine Consultant on social work and mental health issues. She has also contributed to developing national educational and professional standards for social work in Ukraine. Since February 2022, Oksana Boiko has been coordinating from the Ukrainian side the Initiative for Support and Solidarity with Social Work Educators from Ukraine (with the support of IASSW, EAsrSSW, and EASSW). Oksana has also been, for the third year, a Project Local Expert and Crisis Management trainer working on an International Project, 'Enhancing community resilience in Ukraine. Psychosocial first aid, support and anti-crisis leadership', supported by Norway Ministry for Foreign Affairs, implemented by NaUKMA and Norwegian Centre for Trauma and Suicide Prevention. Her research focuses on social work education, social work and mental health issues, and international social work. She has over 40 publications on various social work issues, including one methodological guide on teaching ISW, 1 chapter for the manual on social work education and 1 chapter for the social entrepreneurship manual.