

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

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Abstract:

Recognizing the importance of personal narratives in general and in the field of teacher training in particular, this paper first presents a review of research in the field, offers several definitions and theories of analysis, then it provides readers with the personal narratives and the analyses of three fourth-year students in the department of English at a college for teacher training. The goal is to find out, learn and make use of the voices, attitudes, experiences, visions, successes, failures, hopes and frustrations of students engaged in teacher education. The conclusion asserts the necessity of adopting a model of training which is based on students' personal narratives - one which encourages and strengthens partnership between students, cooperating teachers and academics.

Introduction

Personal narratives have whetted the appetite of scholars interested in studying human behavior. Through narratives, psychologists, for instance, seek to explore the hidden parts of the human psyche; sociologists investigate the various aspects of society; anthropologists look into cultural contexts (Kupferberg and Gilat, 2002 6). And educators find out about the professional self of all parties engaged in the process of education, whether it is teachers, cadets, headmasters, guides, students or other staff members (Horn, 2000; Mattingly, 1991; Connely and Clandinin, 1999; Clandinin and Connely, 2000).

These academic scholars focus on the significance of personal narratives as tools for self-reflection, self-understanding, self-confidence, self-analysis, self-promotion, inner and outer communication, self expression, creativity

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

and imagination. In addition, personal stories represent a major source of study for people interested in learning about others' experiences.

Being a reflective profession entailing practicum, teaching necessitates learning from others' experiences. Hence, narratives pose a perfect answer for scholars interested in teacher training. Furthermore, narratives are thought to attract people's attention; people are inclined to well remember stories which impact profoundly on the direction of their commitments (Schulman 1992, 23). Besides, people believe what they are told and, in consequence, they internalize acquired lessons which help shape their future attitudes and opinions (Schulman 1992, 23).

What is a narrative?

The unexpected rise in the study of narratives has offered a variety of definitions of a narrative. Of these definitions, Labov's is the most famous. According to him, a personal narrative is a structured unit which is inherent in a discourse and which has within its folds evaluative linguistic tools of crucial importance (1972). Labov notices that in each story there are a few recognizable constituents: an abstract, orientation, complicating action, resolution and evaluation (1972).

Polanyi (1989), to give another example, affirms the fact that a narrative is told for the purpose of making a point; every story element is harnessed to show that the meaning of this point is achieved through symbols shared by the narrator as well as the narratee who both come from the same cultural context.

The definitions of Labov and Polanyi are interesting but do not relate to the plot, conflict, characters, setting, point of view, or tone often emphasized in the field literature.

In my study I will endorse Kainan's definition which makes a compromise between the world of education and that of literature. She

maintains that a narrative is "a rehearsal of a personal experience made with the help of very short stories which are governed by chronological sequence, which contain a plot and characters and which have a certain moral lesson " (2002, 83).

Theories of story analysis

Approaches for accessing personal narratives correspond with the active academic research. Believing that a discourse is a workshop where the meaning of mental life is built and structured, Edwards (1997) advocates an approach emphasizing discursive psychology. Schriffrin (1996) confirms the socio-cultural context where a discourse is conducted. Labov's approach (1972) examines the linguistic evaluative tools, especially metaphors to check how they promote the understanding of inter-personal communication. And Green and Kupferberg (2000) offer an analytical method which integrates the former approaches.

Because my study savors of literature, we have adopted "narratology," a branch of structuralism which is concerned with narrative structures. To be more precise, it, as Peter Barry maintains, studies "the nature of 'story' itself, as a concept and as a cultural practice " (2002, 223).

Narratologists are guided by five major points:

Firstly, they examine individual stories to locate the "recurrent structures' characterizing all narratives. Underlying these structures are "themes and moral purposes" of these stories.

Secondly, narratologists tend to focus on spheres of actions and structure rather than on character and motives for character, which as Aristotle says, is expressed in action. So actions, roles and characters are parallels.

Thirdly, instead of foregrounding the tale itself, they seek out to learn the process of telling. Barry quotes Gerard Genet, who affirms that there are six areas to be discussed: the narrative mode being "mimetic" (showing) or

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

"diegetic" (telling); the narrative point of view; type of narrator; the handling of time; the order of telling versus the order of happening; the "packaging" of the story and the representation of speech and thought.

Fourthly, they focus on the reader's "pleasure and interest" obtained through the decoding of the affinities between all narratives rather than a few examples (Barry, 2002 241).

Goal

Based on the personal narratives of three four-year students, this study attempts to find out, learn and make use of the voices, attitudes, experiences, visions, successes failures, hopes and frustrations of students engaged in teacher education.

Subjects and Procedures

I asked three four-year students in the department of English at a college for teacher education to write their personal narratives related to a central incident in their actual experience in practicum from their first year until the present. The students were asked to resort to metaphors in their narratives.¹

¹ . Since metaphors are major composites of the stories written by the subjects of this study, we believe it is essential to give a definition of the term and point out its contribution to the narratives' significance.

Dictionaries, resource books and encyclopedias dealing with literature offer similar definitions of the term. Laurence Perrine and Thomas R. Arp, for example, describe the metaphor as "A figure of speech in which an implicit comparison is made between two things essentially unlike" (1992, 378).

Although metaphors have been regarded as the most frequently used figure of speech in poetry and fiction, it was not until the 18th century that researchers, Vico being the first, realized their central function in the process of human thinking (Kainan, 7). Nowadays researchers believe that the metaphorical language is a means that allows story-tellers and their audience to express abstract concepts or

These students, some of whom attend a special track for the gifted, have experience in reading, analyzing and writing narratives. During their studies, they have been to different cooperating schools and have worked with various cooperating teachers under the supervision of three different coaches (one of the authors included). Yet before the students were engaged in writing their narratives, they had been briefed on the essential components of a narrative and told about the goals of the study. It is important to emphasize that the narratives were written in English, the students' field of study, albeit their mother tongue is Arabic. Thus, the narratives were checked to eliminate writing and grammatical mistakes. Otherwise, the narratives are faithful to original texts. The names of students are fictional.

Analyses of narratives

All three narratives (See appendixes A, B, and C) offer six of the seven spheres of actions, which to quote Vladimir Propp, can be seen, in Aristotelian terms, not as characters but as roles (quoted in Peter Barry, 229). These spheres are: the cadet, the cooperating teacher, the guide, the pupils, the headmaster and the school. As such, these spheres comprise a similar plot of the three narratives. Worried, anxious and fearful, the three speakers in the three narratives willingly embark on a tiring process of practicing what they have learnt and are learning; they cope with unexpected difficulties, explore unknown fields and eventually they recognize they have been successful and discover the potential in themselves. The experience of unfamiliar ones through other concepts derived from spheres more familiar to human experience (Gibbs, 1994; Taylor, 1995). Moreover, the metaphorical language helps summarize and organize acquired knowledge (Honeck, 1997 and Thompson, 1996) and contributes greatly to the discovery of the narrator's summarized professional self (Kupferberg & Gilat 2002).

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

three speakers makes up, in the words of Narratologists, the deep content of these stories: the themes and moral purpose.

In "Roseland in the Wonderland," (Appendix A), to start with, Roseland, the speaker, tells us about her tough experience during one week when all students train intensively. The surface level of the narrative presents a cadet who manages to pass the three stages of her experience: her arrival at the "Wonderland" and sense of isolation; the tour, engaging in the work and the obstacles and the stage of finding answers and evaluation. Roseland relates positively to the six spheres of actions (herself included): the sun, the soil, the plants, the workers, the wonder workers and the wonderland. Apart from one critical remark, the speaker praises the atmosphere of cooperation that overwhelms the place, the unconditioned help and support she is offered. She emerges as a qualified teacher who is ready to train new cadets.

The deeper level demonstrates a different story, however. The cluster of metaphors she uses allows her to retreat into a world of fiction where she reveals her weakness, sense of terror, mistrust and lack of support and warmth. The speaker is "a colorless tiny butterfly," which can "be shattered into pieces" at the slightest danger. At night she has "nightmares." On her way to school she is accompanied by "lightning, thunders, hail, and storms;" teachers expect a lot from her; she does her utmost to satisfy her guide, the evaluator; the pupils look at her with wonder; she hides "in a weird place in a hidden corner" and the school is a wonderland.

Clearly, the speaker's discourse shows the following:

1. She is silent, passive, scared and lacking self-confidence. In fact, she functions under the impact of a "deficit model" where she positions herself at a level lower than those surrounding her (Bullough and Draper, 2004, 408).
2. In line with the "position theory," the guide heads the educational pyramid, followed by the headmaster, the cooperating teachers, the

cadets; the pupils conclude it. The guide is the omniscient; he holds the reins. His whispers are commands and his looks see everything, even the hidden.

3. This educational edifice is solid and stable; it encourages isolated and non-collaborative work. The student is withdrawn into her internal world, hides in an unfamiliar place in the wonderland, which is cut off from the rest of the world. She has no serious or real communication with the guide, the wonder workers, the pupils or colleagues.
4. Yet she believes that she can acquire her training through the direct instructions of her guide, whose satisfaction she wishes to attain, and her cooperating teachers, who expect a lot from her.
5. She assumes that the guide's task is to evaluate her performance. She never tries to develop her own tools of self-assessment or reflect on her own achievement or progress.
6. She places herself almost at the bottom of the hierarchical scale of education. The pupils, being lower than her, are passive recipients of her teaching.
7. It seems she conceives of training as having only technical aspects. She never emphasizes, reveals or shows how she copes with the content.
8. She compares the school to a "WONDERLAND," which indicates artificiality, amusement and entertainment, distance from the real world and from the social and educational environment, confinement to one place and closed circles and strict rules and systems.

Interestingly, the process of telling the narrative suggests that even now, Roseland, the speaker has not changed her attitudes. The basic narrative mode is misleading. On the face of it, the mode is "deigetic" that is "telling" or "relating," because she tells us about her experience. Telling means absence of dialogue and reference to past actions and to places not seen by

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

the audience. Yet, the speaker manages to turn the mode into "mimetic" that is "showing" or "dramatizing." Using the present progressive tense, she describes to the readers her past experience while she is reliving it. In so doing, both she and the readers are drawn inside the tale and see the events here and now. In other words, Roseland's experience is not a past story that is told to us. There is no reference to the past; she tells the story in her own voice (first person narration) rather than hide behind the masks of "overt" or "dramatized" or "intrusive" narrators. Her past experience nests inside her.

Furthermore, the focalization of the narrative tells a lot about Roseland's tendency to hide and evade reality and exposes the fear she still has. The narrative point of view is internal. This means that Roseland tells us what she is doing, feeling and thinking and describes to us what she hears and sees. Her choice of this perspective helps her confine the readers to her viewpoint. We are locked inside her. She wants us to join her allegedly exciting adventure and see the beautiful scenes she describes. To her misfortune, being inside her, the readers are direct witnesses to the reality of her terrifying experience.

In short, Roseland hopes to show us a bright image of six spheres of actions, in order to emphasize the strong ties between them, the cooperation that typifies their work and good results that can be achieved. She does show the bright image of the six spheres of action, but the structure she designs is a labyrinth of circles with an outward circle isolated from the world and with her placed at the center. She knows that after she can climb the walls of one maze to perceive her job, she will find herself in another maze. The result is that she prefers to hide inside and talks to the reader believing she has broken through all circles.

In "A Sweet Tough Journey," (Appendix B) Howaida tells the readers the story that Roseland wished to tell. Indeed, reading Howaida's narrative, one

realizes that it is a "journey;" it is "tough" and it is "sweet." It is a journey of a "seed" (an inexperienced cadet) which starts from under the ground (the stage before going out to training); thanks to the devoted help and guidance of a faint light developing into the sun (the guide), the seed ends as a plant (trained teacher) in a paradisiacal spot on the face of earth (school). There she is received by the sun and huge trees (cooperating teachers and the headmaster) which help her safely reach her final destination.

Looking into the six spheres and the resulting plot which Howaida relates, we can foreground the following points:

1. Compared with Roseland, Howaida enjoys a strong sense of self-confidence, self-awareness, and a loud, authentic internal voice. She means what she says and knows what she wants.
2. Unlike Roseland, who happens to be in a wonderland, Howaida knows that training is not a technical, fixed situation but a transformative process where she moves from ignorance to knowledge and experience.
3. She is aware of the whole process, its start, its course, its end and of the difficulties involved. More important, she recognizes that her role is most central. As such, she depends on her power, trends and character. She is equipped with "persistence and stubbornness," and "energy and power."
4. Rather than position herself at a level lower than others, she realizes that the guide and the cooperating teachers merely help her from a distance. They are fixed but important entities (trees and sun) while she is a moving, transformative creature.
5. She doesn't hold the guide or the cooperating teachers as evaluators. In fact, she never places herself as a target of evaluation. Rather, she is a

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

self-motivated student who in the process of her training does reflection on her performance to change it or improve it.

6. This means she regards training as a course where theory and practice merge and where the guide and cooperating teachers encourage processes that are democratic, participatory and collaborative.
7. Although Howaida has been successful in depicting the process of her training, like Roseland she does not give a true image of school. The former gives a degenerate reality of school when she compares it to wonderland, the latter portrays a perfect picture; she regards school as a type of paradise.

Howaida's attitudes aren't temporary conclusions drawn at a rough or quiet period during her training. The process of her telling the tale affirms these are solid convictions formed in the wake of deep thought. The basic narrative is "deigetic." She saves us the trouble and the accompanying stress of seeing and feeling the difficulties she has undergone by telling us about these difficulties. At a safe distance from the course of training, she tells us about a past nostalgia whose painful stages are past events that generate precious lessons together with amusing moments.

Like Roseland, Howaida's story has internal focalization. While Roseland focuses on what she feels, thinks and sees now, Howaida narrates to us what she felt, thought and saw to indicate a gap between her present situation and past experience. This explains why the story is told in the past tense, why the order of telling corresponds to the order of happening and why it lacks direct speech and contains mostly transposed speech. The aim is to interpose the maximum isolation between now and the past and between the reader and the direct impact and tone of the spoken talk.

Although Rawan's "The Flower" (Appendix C) offers the same plot and spheres of action as the previous narratives, it, nonetheless, represents

advancement over the two in terms of the reality of attitudes, the maturity of character and the mode of telling. The metaphors used tell a lot: "The Wise Uncle" representing the guide provides Rawan with the theoretical knowledge and proper guidance she needs along her journey; he gives her care, warmth and blessing and briefs her on the expected result, which is a type of evaluation. As for the "sea," it stands for the other spheres combined. It is the training institute surrounded by the social, political, economic and educational environment. In the sea, Rawan meets the cooperating teachers, the headmaster, the co-trainees and the students. Unlike Roseland and Howaida, who are received by helpful, good-willing characters and a friendly atmosphere, Rawan's sea can be friendly and hostile, peaceful and strong, helpful and harmful. Lack of stability is its main feature. Perhaps its good point also lies here. It teaches real life lessons: how to swim and, better, how to survive.

So Rawan's narrative foregrounds the following points:

1. The role of the guide concentrates on three main fields:
 - a. The socio-psychological: the guide helps Rawan shape her identity, form her conceptions, and cope with social and psychological difficulties before she embarks on her journey (Lipka and Brinthaupt 1999; McLean 1999).
 - b. The professional: the guide provides Rawan with the theoretical knowledge, proficiency and skills she needs through her journey (Wang and Odell, 2002).
 - c. The evaluative: the guide lets Rawan understand that the success of her journey depends on her ability to evaluate her progress (self-evaluation), to better comprehend her relationship with others (evaluation of others' performances) and that her final achievement

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

will be evaluated by the guide himself, cooperating teachers and society. (Zimmerman, 2000).

2. The cooperating teacher develops the student's understanding of the school environment.
3. The cooperating teacher provides Rawan with authentic training, makes her see the difference between theory and practice and, in consequence, helps her integrate them through giving her tasks necessitated by the classroom requirements.
4. The cooperating teacher gives Rawan real opportunities to develop professional habits based on cooperation, reflection and critique.
5. Rawan is aware of her decisions and choices. She has a character of her own but is willing to get guidance and collaborates with her teachers and guides.
6. Rawan's narrative portrays a model which encourages and strengthens partnership between participants: students, cooperating teachers and academics.

Rawan's skill in making use of the tale's elements lends her story neutrality, transparency, reliability and maturity and, therefore, it has a profounder impact on the readers than the other stories.

Unlike Roseland and Howaida, who embrace the medium of first person narrator to tell their stories, Rawan adopts the third person device. This narrator emotionally detached from the events s/he describes is a telling tool which strives for objectivity and reliability. Although s/he tells the story from Rawan's perspective, s/he has unlimited access not only to what other characters say and do but also to what they think and feel. In making use of this narrative technique, the narrator provides the readers with first hand information about training. Readers learn from a neutral, transparent source what each participant in the process of training thinks and says about

training, about the role of others and about his own role, thus affirming the necessity of partnership between them.

The narrative modes employed place Rawan's narrative at a rank higher than Roseland's or Howaida's, reflecting a more conscious author and sharpening the moral codes and themes conveyed by the narrative. The basic narrative mode of the major events which involve teaching situations i. e. the encounters between the guide and the student and the cooperating teacher and the student are represented in a "scenic" way. The setting is specified and there is dialogue containing direct speech. Of the numerous merits conveyed by the scenic representation, the educational aspect is perhaps the most important. Teaching is more likely to happen when conveyed through dialogue rather than through traditional techniques of giving knowledge to passive recipients (Shoshana Felman, 1994, 418-19). Since the situations described by Rawan are about teaching, these situations provide the student with additional messages. The students get the impression that they are seeing and hearing things for themselves without mediation; they are reminded of a teaching medium capable of affirming precious content and moral codes: respect, care, encouragement, professional habits, authentic teaching experience and theoretical knowledge.

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

Conclusion

It is only natural to say that students' narratives are indeed crucial tools which help us draw on lived experiences, authentic voices, bright hopes, promising visions, important strategies, painful failures and frustrations of participants involved in teacher training rather than spend our time "living out someone else's theory" (Kemmis, 1995). I, therefore, believe it is necessary to adopt a model of training frequently employing narratives which transcend the personal use to workshops where students are engaged in deep discussions of their own narratives as well as their peers'. Better, the involvement of cooperating teachers and academics in these discussions will increase the merits gained and will strengthen the partnership between three main factors of training. Better still, this partnership will become more effective when each participant (academics and cooperating teachers included) employs the medium of narrative, takes part in workshops for the discussion and the study of narratives and makes use of the conclusions reached in these workshops. When narratives are employed, each participant will have the following personal gains and tasks which will promote the process of training as a whole.

a. The students:

They will enjoy a strong sense of self-confidence, self awareness, loud and authentic internal voice. They will be aware of their decisions and choices, have a character of their own but be willing to get guidance and collaborate with their teachers and guides.

b. Academics:

The guide will help the students shape their identities, form their conceptions and cope with social and psychological difficulties before embarking on the process of training. Moreover, the guide will provide the students with the theoretical knowledge, proficiency and skills they need

through their training. Furthermore, the guide will not present himself as the evaluator; evaluation is part of his task but not the only task. Rather, it is recommended that he help the students develop techniques of self-evaluation to check, direct and improve their progress, techniques of evaluation of others' performances to understand their relationships with others, and written instructions to let them see how their final achievements will be evaluated.

c. Cooperating teachers:

The cooperating teachers will help develop the students' understanding of the school environment. They will also provide the students with authentic training to make them see the differences between theory and practice through tasks necessitated by the classroom requirements. Cooperating teachers are to give the students real opportunities to develop professional habits based on cooperation, reflection and critique.

Appendix (A)

Roseland in the Wonderland

I happen to be in a land where the workers plan tall kinds of plants. I have never imagined being there.... Can you imagine a world where plants become humans? It is a sophisticated combination! You know, the soil of the same piece of land is never the same, not even in wonderlands. The planted seeds are not exactly the same. The glorious sun does not deliver the same amount of its brightness, heat and rays to all the plants. The workers come from everywhere to work in that wonderland; so they are diverse in characteristics, interests, values, and beliefs. Although the chief worker directs them, they have their own way of planting and watering! They seem to have an ultimate goal that they are attempting to achieve. However, I bet they do not. Some are there only to gain money. Others are trapped within a fatal routine unaware that the plants will grow to be workers. Yet there are better kinds of workers, the wonder workers, whom you may meet once in a life time. These wonder workers live for the sake of growing junior workers who can perform the work better than they themselves can.

I think that I am going to be like these wonder workers. I know that I might face trouble; some plants will certainly hurt me while I help them grow.

Suddenly, I find myself stuck here. The sun, the soil, the workers and the plants surround me. I come from nowhere. I do not know what to do or what on earth has brought me here. I can see the faces looking at me in wonder. I am astonished because I've been here before. I see him—the all-knowing worker is in the wonderland with me. He whispers, "You should go there." He has always something to say, a tip to give. He has that revealing look which enables him to approach all the figures that live in the wonderland. He is the guide, the evaluator who I believe to be just and kind. I am trying

to seek his approval and benefit from his kindness! But even now I have doubts that I will ever get his approval since his standards are high and I can only be me, only me....

I look where the all-knowing worker has pointed and I see some female workers welcoming me! I am relieved; they seem nice to me. I am sure they expect a lot from me. They take me on a huge bird to show me all the parts of the wonderland. Now that I see the dreamy tiny plants down there, I realize that I am also a worker in this WONDERLAND; I should do the best I can to join all living souls here. I have been in many wonderlands before but it has never been the same as this. The only similarity that I find between all these wonderlands is the name! Every moment I learn something new and, in consequence, the power of my magical stick increases. The more time I spend here, the more I discover that my life in the wonderland is not a routine or empty of efforts. I am so engaged in work here that I tend to forget that I have been to other wonderlands. Now I'm to take care of the plants that I have just met. These plants know I am the only visitor who comes occasionally and acts like a worker! I do not know if I should be treated like a worker at all. I should worry about that. I think I should find out about more this place, study the atmosphere, the activities held, the staff working here and the tasks performed by everyone. In short, I have to figure out how these parts come together to create a whole.

I am going through the most difficult moments in my life. Nothing goes well. However, I know that the week is about to end so I have to call the workers who usually lend me their plants to take care of every Monday. Life is tough; I feel lousy...I feel that I will burst into tears any moment. I do not want to meet people but I have to, so I talk with them. I know deep inside me that the following Monday will be the worst. When I feel frustrated, I tend to withdraw into myself. What will I do this time? Will I stand in front of all my

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

lovely plants with heartache, feeling lost and knowing nothing? Sure, I will disappoint them. They will surely hate me.

I have had nightmares all week. I feel time running too slowly. Eventually Monday comes; lightning, thunder, hail, and storms accompany me all the way to the wonderland. I feel sorry because I know that all this will harm my plants. I get pale and I feel a terrible headache. I do not know what to do. I rush to a weird place in a hidden corner of the wonderland; I know I will not find anybody there. When I get there, all the pain vanishes; there is a mirror; I look at my reflection and I see a colorless tiny butterfly. What has happened to me? What should I do? Have I forgotten that I am at a wonderland? My terrible mood must have caused all of this. I decide to use some magic to recreate my real image. That is a dangerous thing to do because I am too sensitive and anything can break that image down in a single word. If that happens, even the tiny butterfly will be shattered into pieces.

After a minute, I hear someone calling my name and saying that the workers whose plants I take care of are absent. Knowing that makes me feel relaxed a little bit. Now I am free to do whatever I want, though I prefer to do nothing! A few minutes afterwards, the big bell rings. It is time to start the lesson. I step forward very slowly. I approach the plants; a warm breeze blows; a smile betrays my sadness. The plants' innocence and weakness charm me; so I start talking with them. Warmth comes from inside. They make me forget everything but them. My fake self-image breaks down and I have myself back to me. I have always thought that they are supposed to be enchanted; on the contrary, they enchant me, but I do not know what kind of magic they have. Being among my sweet plants helps me to get rid of all my depression.

Jamal Assadi

Whenever I remember my experience at cooperating schools, I relive it here and now. I can never forget my nice tiny pupils who "got" me in trouble, the cute ones who gave me hope, or the cooperating teachers who were sometimes difficult to understand and hard to win their support but were very helpful. I, above all, will never forget my demanding, tough, yet understanding and amusing supervisor. All said, I hope they will remember that I was once there!

Roseland

Appendix (B)

A Sweet Tough Journey

I had a lot of endless questions and fears...I did not even realize that I would be forced to pass through a way full of obstacles and hardships.

When I was under ground I enjoyed my sleepy nights; I was really pleased with that peaceful and calm atmosphere. However, a distant call grew deeper inside me telling me it was time to wake up! And suddenly, a strong will pushed me to leave my paradise. Then, I left my outer tough layer with a painful soul and fearful mind. But later the pain became wonderful after passion led me towards the top!

I passed mysterious ways and I was aware of the difficulties which I would face. However, my insistence and stubbornness gave me hope and power to go on because going back to the place where I came from, to the quiet and relaxed position and even to my peel was impossible.

A certain bright light went through the ground and guided me to the right way towards the top. Afterwards, I recognized the codes of the game! The light wanted me to be independent and to use my internal energy and power. Well, even when I found myself lying under a dark heavy rock, I started to face difficulties bravely and confidently and urged myself to look for that light which would never let me lose my right way. Soon afterwards, the light appeared; it looked at me smiling leading me for a new way, increasing my confidence and letting me gain new things.

Then the light became much brighter and warmer, so I decided that it was the right moment to leave my present world of beauty under the ground. I was afraid to face the new life after this long and hard journey. Yet I did not give up and was hopeful and full of energy to go out and start my new life. I overcame my fears and went out. Luckily I found myself inside a new

paradise surpassing the old one. There I was fascinated with wonderful colors and strange shapes which I had never dreamt to see.

"It must be the Earth," I thought to myself, and that bright light was coming from a distant star. That star was a beautiful sun which was the source of knowledge, power and life. The light then stood proudly, smiling to me as it was congratulating me on my birth. At that moment I felt so shy. My innocence, magic and strength embarrassed me especially when I stood next to a few huge trees which surrounded me; amid them was a very big tree. Still, I felt a bit happy.

Days, months and years passed quickly and I was not any more a small plant; today, I am a bush which has an important role in life. Every morning, I stare at those huge trees which once surrounded me, offering their advice, love and protection; they were always so kind and helped me accomplish my tasks. In the beginning, I did not understand the language that the trees spoke with me, but afterwards, I managed to understand them.

Now that I am about to finish my studies, I look at the new plants and remember my journey. I will never forget the dark nights and the tough way I passed. I know that some day I must help those small plants to grow; it will be a hard for them but it will be rewarding. I will never forget that once I was a small seed too and was guided by the light.

History repeats itself: seeds grow and become trees which give protection, shade and food for coming seeds.

Howaida

Appendix (C)

The Flower

Like her friends, she was going to sail on a ship next to a calm island where sun rays danced on the sea surface and birds twittered on trees declaring that a new day had come, bringing a new experience for Rawan.

Rawan sat waiting for her father's arrival so he might bless her journey. While she was looking at the sea and deeply thinking of what the sea hid, her father appeared from between the trees. He was called "the wise uncle;" it was said that he had learned and learned till his hair turned white. His face, which gave on-lookers hope and pleasure, indicated the many experiences that he had gone through. Rawan turned round and gave her father a smile. But she was a little afraid of the future, of the tough journey and of the sea's disloyalty.

"The Wise Uncle" appeared with his broad smile on his face; he told her, "My daughter, you should know that the way to the garden is full of thorns and you will not get glory till you pass through cacti. It is a difficult journey but the most important thing, my daughter, is that you should believe that you can do it. You should depend on God and trust your abilities. Remember, there were many who went through that experience; they survived and succeeded. All you have to do is to bring the flower from a far island so you can get the right to live on our land. If you do not do it, you will be asked to find another place."

Rawan went aboard the ship and sailed towards the island to get the flower while the eyes of "the Wise Uncle" were guarding her. He taught her many lessons that would enable her to go through such an experience and get out of it in peace; he also provided her with all she needed for this journey the same as he did with her mates. He assured her he would keep protecting her till she returned home safe and sound.

As Rawan was sailing safely upon the sea, the waves grew stormy; they almost overturned the ship upside down. Rawan screamed and begged the sea to save her; she reminded the sea that he had always been her good friend and wondered why he did that to her. The sea replied proudly that he was merely demonstrating to her that, in spite of the fact that she thought otherwise, he could drown her and cause her death.

Rawan said trembling, "But I know that you are stronger than me; you have been here for years and years."

The sea answered, "I want you to dive so you can discover the diamonds and the pearls that are found deep in me. How can you know how great I am without spending some time in my depths and gaining some experience? Listen to me! Those theories that "the wise uncle" has taught you are good but you should have exposure to reality; try and apply the acquired theories so that you can obtain the skills that will help you get back to your island safely."

Rawan said begging, "My dear sea, what can I do if I start to drown?"

The sea said firmly, "You mustn't! If you do, it indicates that you are weak and that you don't deserve success. But you should explore my depths to get the respect of the fish in me and feel the glory of success. You would perhaps mock my little fish and you would be afraid of the big ones. So I think you should dive and explore my deep water to know who I really am. Being inside me for a while will let you see that my silence doesn't mean weakness; you will learn how to behave and appreciate the flower you are seeking and, above all, you will learn how to appreciate yourself."

The ship capsized and Rawan found herself inside the sea facing drowning. She summoned all her strength and remembered what "the entire wise uncle" had taught her about swimming theories and proper behavior in emergency cases. Soon she tried those theories. She could not allow herself

Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

to be weak after having lived with her father for a long time. The sea felt her strength which she derived from her faith in her abilities; so he held her so gently and helped her get the flower.

The sea taught her how to obtain her self-esteem and how to put theories into practice. Rawan came back to "the wise uncle" holding the flower happily and proudly. Whoever saw her was happy too because Rawan, who was now more experienced and wiser, would not only continue living on the island but would benefit all.

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Students' Personal Narratives As a Major Tool in Teacher Training

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القصص الشخصية للطلاب كوسيلة رئيسية في التطبيقات العملية

تلخيص:

يشير هذا المقال إلى أهمية دور القصة الشخصية في التطبيقات العملية لدى الطلاب في كليات تأهيل المعلمين. يعرض القسم الأول للمقال الأدب العلمي في هذا المجال، ويناقش تعريفات مختلفة للقصة الشخصية ويورد عدة نظريات تحليلية. يقدم ويحلل القسم الثاني قصصاً شخصية لثلاثة طلاب في السنة الرابعة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في إحدى الكليات لتأهيل المعلمين. الهدف هو دراسة وتعلم وتطبيق ما يقوله الطلاب ومواقفهم وتجاربهم ونجاحهم وفشلهم وآمالهم ومواطن خيبة الأمل. الاستنتاجات تؤكد الحاجة لتبني نموذج تطبيقات عملية يرتكز على القصص الشخصية للطلاب- ذلك النموذج الذي يشجع ويقوي الشراكة بين الطلاب والمعلمين المدربين والأكاديمية.

סיפורים אישיים של סטודנטים ככלי ראשי בהתנסות מעשית

תקציר:

המאמר הזה מדגיש את חשיבות התפקיד של סיפור אישי בהתנסות המעשית של סטודנטים להוראה.

החלק הראשון של המאמר מציג סקירה ספרותית בתחום הסיפור האישי ובהגדרות השונות בנושא ובמספר תיאוריות ניתוח לסיפור אישי.

בחלק השני של המאמר מובאים שלשה סיפורים אישיים של שלשה סטודנטים בשנת ס הרביעית ממחלקה לאנגלית במכללה להכשרת מורים.

המטרה היא ללמוד, להסיק מסקנות ולעשות יישום מחוויית הסטודנטים, עמידותיהם, ניסיונם, הצלחתם, כשלנום ותקוותם.

המסקנות מדגישות את הצורך לאמץ מודל התנסות אשר נשען על סיפורים אישיים של סטודנט – מודל אשר מחזק ומעודד שותפות בין סטודנטים, מורים מאמנים והאקדמיה.