

# **Narrative Research on the Professional Development of Novice English Teachers in Higher Education**

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**Abstract:** This study tells the story of the novice English teachers in higher education, focusing on how they think, act and feel in specific situations. Through these narrative stories, the Novice English teachers will have better professional development.

## **1. Introduction**

Narrative research is a way of understanding experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In the West, narrative research as a research method has a history of more than 20 years, but it has only emerged in recent years. This study tells the story of the novice teachers in higher education, obtain a glimpse of their daily life and the inner world, and the professional development process. It promotes the professional development of the novice teachers by presenting two examples for readers' reference.

## **2. Entering the research site and identifying cooperative novice English teachers**

The study was conducted at a college (X) in Nanchang, Jiangxi. Since I am a full-time teacher of the school, it is convenient for collecting relevant materials and communicating with cooperative teachers. Therefore, during the research process, interviews and communication were conducted with eight novice teachers, and the lesson of these eight teachers were heard. These teachers show great interest to narrative study. Due to the limitations of personal energy and the need for research, the story of two cooperative teachers is presented in the text. In the data collection phase, the research focuses on two teacher's respective status and experience. It is worth pointing out that this study shows two teachers, but not all teachers, and the conclusions drawn are different from the conclusions drawn from large-scale sampling studies, which indicate more about understanding of the novice teachers' professional development. However, related people, through understanding, can get a more real feeling than the Abstract."universal law."

## **3. Data Collection and Presentation**

The collection of information is mainly based on classroom observations, interviews, and the teacher's reflective diary. In the study, I walked into the world where they lived, communicated openly with cooperative teachers, and got a deeper understanding of the world in which they live.

## **4. Miss Xia: the Rainbow will Appear after the Storm**

Miss Xia was a little nervous during class when she took the class for the first time. She felt powerless for the management of the class.

"I felt so nervous when I entered the classroom for the first time. The students I teacher are sophomores. There are some tensions, but it is still within the controllable range. What I can get more is expectation and Happiness. In the face of every new face, I really want to stimulate their class atmosphere. The self-introduction before class was quite active, but when I handled the textbook, I felt that most of the students were starting to look down on the mobile phone. It seems that the sophomore students have already entered the period of learning burnout, so that the

teacher-student interaction that I was very much looking forward to sometimes became a one-man show, and I felt a little powerless in my heart.”

As a young, novice teacher, the experience is not very rich. In order to teach each class better, she actively summarizes her shortcomings and deficiencies, thus improving her English classroom teaching.

“I am young and I am lack of diversified teaching experience. I feel that I still have a lot of flaws. First of all, I feel that I am still not well prepared for the class. I usually plan the syllable to the situation of perfect class and ignore the various management of the class. I think that I have to spend more time in the lesson preparation; secondly, since starting teaching, I feel that my class is not focused enough. I want to teach students with new teaching skills, but my teaching process usually steps into the old teaching mode, which makes me frustrated. The students did not respond. Sometimes, in order to make the students react, but usually the class will deviate from the place where the text is not relevant. Finally, the classroom management is relatively inexperienced. In my consciousness, the college students should be more self-conscious, and the teachers do not need to give too much. The teacher still needs to be stricter, give relevant management regulations, and be bound to the students so that the students will follow the pace of your lectures.”

After the experience and study, Miss Xia has accumulated a lot of teaching experience. Although there are still some shortcomings in each class, she will try her best to prepare for the class, focus on the key points, design more interesting activities, and promote students’ interest in learning and create a good classroom atmosphere.

“In order to get a better class performance, I used my brains before and after class to design different teaching activities to stimulate students’ interest in learning. For example, carry out tongue twist training, discussion, problem solving, speech and case analysis, etc., exercise their oral English and train them.”

After half a year of teaching, Miss Xia experiences a complex feeling, and at the same time, she also established a deep relationship with the students.

“In this half-semester time, although the time is very short, I really learned a lot. Thanks to the cooperation and support of this group of students. This teaching also made me realize that it is not easy to be a teacher, but also Inspire me to work harder to do better in the future.”

Miss Xia is young and full of enthusiasm. Although she has experienced setbacks and confusion in teaching, I believe that after the storm, she will see the rainbow. She will certainly achieve even greater achievements in the future teaching.

## **5. Mrs. Tian: Progress in Reflection**

Mrs. Tian has been teaching at X College for a short semester and has a lot of feelings. On the one hand, she has accumulated a certain amount of teaching experience, on the other hand, she has some reflections on English teaching and learning.

“I will record the feelings of my class before and after the class, and master the learning status of the students. At the same time, I will review the course of the day in my mind and think about each detail. Sometimes I also ask students to write a course feedback and suggestions. The role of teachers is to organize various activities inside and outside the class and to guide students to learn in class and extracurricular, to answer questions and help them develop good study habits and cultivate their self-conscious learning. The ability to maintain only a permanent learning enthusiasm.”

For the teaching method, Mrs. Tian believes that the traditional “teacher teaching-student listening” is a typical wrong way, it completely ignores the student’s learning initiative. In the new curriculum reform situation, teachers should change their thinking, change their roles, and make themselves become the organizers, guides, creators of the classroom teaching, and even the assistants of the students’ learning rather than the rulers.

“Traditional teachers say that the students’ teachings are full of scorn. I started to accept teacher education, and I advocate to have teacher-student interaction or to let students take the lead as much as possible. Teachers should act as supporting roles. We need to reform the traditional teaching mode: advance with the times, adopt the flipping classroom, take the students as the center, the

teacher as the guide, and as for the new teacher, although it is quite difficult to implement the reform, it is worth trying. In my opinion, the students can incorporate into the classroom and the teacher's active cooperation, and respond to the tasks assigned by the teacher, the discussion in the class and the teacher's comment, which can not only stimulate the students' initiative and enthusiasm, but also help to improve students' comprehensive English ability."

During the teaching process of X College, Mrs. Tian found that students were not enthusiastic about learning English. "*Some students are even afraid of English*". In response to such a situation, she uses the textbook flexibly and creatively, and at the same time, chooses the appropriate teaching mode, "*to give full play to the main role of the students, that is, to implement the teacher-student participatory teaching mode.*"

"Learner-centered, using flexible and intuitive teaching methods, encourage learners to actively participate in the teaching process, strengthen the information exchange and feedback between learners and educators, so that learners can deeply understand and master the knowledge. And apply this knowledge to practice. At the same time, encourage students to proceed from the details and attitudes."

For students with varying degrees of English, Mrs. Tian actively reflects on how to teach and will not dampen their enthusiasm, especially for poor students. "*Teachers should be cautious and euphemistic, and they must not give up their efforts.*"

"Every class I teach has a part of the classmates who are serious about class. There is also a part of ones who show indifference to your class. I find that students with poor English are not too interested in book knowledge. When you talk about something outside of the class, they are quite interested in your talking. When we go to the detailed text study, they just watch you and listen to you and silently bow their heads. How to solve the problem? I try using hierarchical teaching, layering the contents of a class and taking care of each Students. Students who are treated to a lesser degree should be encouraged to give simple questions in the classroom and enhance their self-confidence."

Mrs. Tian treats students' with delicate love, and students also like her teaching.

"This short half-year time has made me know so many lovely students. I am so touched with their greetings and small gifts in the festival, their serious and tender eyes in class, and their cordial conversation with me after class, which often touched me. I often say to the students, 'you must be confident, don't think you are inferior to others because your starting point, you will be sure that everyone can become an elite in your own way. The key is how you design your own life.' I hope my students can remember this sentence forever and continue to move forward bravely."

One semester listened to the sweet story of Mrs. Tian's story inside and outside of his classroom. I was deeply touched by her patience and love. I sincerely wish that Mrs. Tian will achieve even greater achievements in teaching reflection.

## 6. Conclusion

Through interviews and classroom observations, it can be found that the teaching experience of the novice teachers is relatively scarce. The teaching experience mentioned here refers to the use of classroom teaching methods and basic skills, how to grasp the difficulty of the course content, and the skills and means of classroom management. Teaching experience does not naturally become a learning resource for teachers' professional development. Only through reflection, teaching experience can become a valuable asset for teachers. With the passage of time and reflection on teaching, the loss and pain caused by the lack of experience of the novice teachers will gradually fade away. Through the educational narrative, discover the problems in teaching and the advantages and disadvantages of their own teaching, so as to give full play to the advantages of the novice English teachers and constantly change their own disadvantages through independent professional learning, so that the teaching classroom and educational stories of the novice teachers of higher education are richer and more vivid. The novice English teachers in higher education can conduct educational narratives through the following aspects:

Firstly, write a narrative diary, record your own teaching practice activities, think about the

design and ideas of teaching, grasp and present the difficult point, teaching methods and means, interaction and communication with students, whether teaching enlightens thinking and innovation, and the efficiency of classroom management, etc., to find teaching problems or highlights in a timely manner;

Secondly, Record the teaching behaviors and classrooms of yourself or others, observe and reflection the teachings of others, and optimize their educational and teaching behaviors;

Thirdly, teachers should apply their own educational reflections to teaching practice, and test the effectiveness of teaching reflection in practice, through which the novice English teachers can effectively improve the teaching, thus deepening their professional development. Teachers' professional development has a long way to go. The novice English teachers should recognize the importance of teachers' independent professional development the beginning of teaching, which has a profound impact on their lifelong teaching career and professional development.

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