

Reflection and Improvement on the Localization of New Zealand's "Learning Story" in China

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the criticism and doubt encountered in the practice of the heterogeneous educational theory of "learning story" in New Zealand. On this basis, through in-depth analysis and comparison of different social cultures and specific national conditions rooted in different educational concepts of the two countries, the author reflects on the its practical problems and objective shortcomings in the localization process of "learning story" in China and actively seeks for improvement strategies. As a paradigm of early childhood evaluation and development, New Zealand's "learning story" needs to be adjusted and improved continuously in terms of evaluation purpose and content as well as acquisition of observation data in the process of combining with the practice of early childhood education in China, so as to truly serve the development of early childhood education in China.

Keywords: learning story, localization, reflection, improvement

I. INTRODUCTION

As a heterogeneous educational theory, "learning story" from New Zealand has its roots in reality and its limitations in practice in other countries. In the process of using "learning story" for reference, China must be rooted in its own culture and reality, and clearly recognize the different social culture and specific national conditions of China and New Zealand. Only in this way can such education practice not fall into the misunderstanding of adopting doctrine and lead to the meaningless reference and learning in mere form.

II. REFLECTION ON THE LOCALIZATION OF NEW ZEALAND'S "LEARNING STORY" IN CHINA

First, the New Zealand curriculum for early childhood education "Te Wh a riki" does not describe the specific educational purpose and content of preschool education institutions in detail, and does not define them uniformly. It holds that learning is complex and situational, and allows preschool education institutions and teachers to adopt different curriculum content and teaching methods in practice, emphasizing the participation and interaction of children. Therefore, in early childhood education institutions in New Zealand, children have greater autonomy in their daily life and have enough time to study and explore independently, while teachers have enough time to independently expand and flexibly support children's learning. However, due to the influence of the Soviet Union, kindergarten education in China features serious

disciplinization, the curriculum is clearly framed; there is excessive presented content and insufficient generation; teachers have much control over children, with excessive planning and insufficient flexibility. So basically, children's daily life is carried out step by step according to the daily life schedule. Therefore, such a situation happens from time to time: When some children get interested in a certain thing and is doing some research in high spirits, they have to be interrupted by the next activity organized by the teacher. This is obviously not conducive to children's independent exploration, and prevents teachers from accurately capturing children's interest and timely discover children's progress.

Second, the New Zealand "learning story" emphasizes recording each individual child. It regards each child as an individual who can interact independently with the surrounding environment and has an individualistic orientation. However, under the influence of traditional collectivism and seriously unbalanced teacher-child ratio in Chinese kindergartens, collective teaching activities have become an important form of education organization. For example, teachers often use the statement "what do some children do, and what do others do" to make vague statements about the group in the observation record, with a lack of continuous and specific records of individuals. This means that how to use "learning story" in collective teaching activities to carry out scientific evaluation of children has become a subject that needs to be explored further.

Third, the New Zealand learning community includes children, teachers, parents, community workers, education experts, etc. Multiple subjects interact with each other to discuss and write children's "learning story" together to create an environment suitable for children's learning and development. This learning community constitutes a collective evaluation environment that helps teachers understand children comprehensively and develop learning plans in line with their individual development. By contrast, in Chinese kindergartens, it is expected that children be evaluated comprehensively and accurately through the strength of a single teacher. However, parents are not active in the process and community workers are less integrated with educational experts in terms of participation and guidance. Therefore, the future educational reform should include more participation of these personnel in the early childhood education.

III. PROBLEMS OF THE LOCALIZATION OF NEW ZEALAND "LEARNING STORY" IN CHINA

Although the evaluation system of "learning story" has been tried and implemented in many early childhood institutions in China, it has also encountered various doubts in practice, resulting in many problems. Some critics directly refer to the practice of "learning story" as a "problematic practice", which is questioned mainly in the following aspects.

A. The evaluation purpose and content of "learning story" are not clear

"Learning story" is designed to be formative assessment, but there are no clear rules or discussions about how to assess a child's development. Its founder, Professor Margaret Carr, believes that "learning story" should focus on a child's propensity to learn, but the definition of this concept seems unclear, and there is no clear definition of how to assess a child's propensity to learn and how to identify a child's progress. In 2001, Carr used learning strategies to define learning tendency: "Learning tendency is a set of activities involving appropriate learning strategies and motivation in which learners identify, select, process, respond, search, and construct learning opportunities." Critics believe that this definition is too open and can be understood and interpreted in a variety of ways; this definition makes the focus of "learning story" unable to correspond with the specific main areas of children's learning development, and fails to meet the basic requirements of the purpose of evaluation and the basic principles of educational evaluation. Critics also argue that New Zealand's pre-school curriculum framework lacks a specific curriculum area and advanced system, compared with the British basic curriculum; it has no clear assessment purpose and does not provide teachers with useful information.

B. "Learning story" does not carefully categorize the teacher's observations

"Learning story" advocates that teachers observe children in their daily work and write "learning story" based on observation and record, but it does not make clear what teachers should do and how to do in the teaching scene. It is known that there are significant differences in the points and structure for different types of observations, but this is not mentioned in the Guidelines issued by the New Zealand Ministry of Education at different times.

C. The efficiency and timeliness of "learning story" are relatively poor

Critics argue that teachers take a lot of time to write "learning story", although there is no clear rule on how many "learning stories" teachers need to complete in a given period of time. In New Zealand, teachers in early childhood education institutions write "learning stories" at a rate of one per child per month to describe specific events that occur in the educational scene. However, this small amount of data does not allow teachers to use it as a basis for planning children's future learning experiences and plans. In addition, it takes much time to write "learning stories". Usually, teachers need to take two steps: firstly, they observe and record the children, and then write three parts of the "learning story" according to the record. But when "learning story" is written, children's learning and interest may have already shifted, so that the theoretical value of "learning story" can only be written down.

IV. IMPROVEMENT OF THE LOCALIZATION OF NEW ZEALAND "LEARNING STORY" IN CHINA

In fact, doubt is not terrible. Doubt means that although people in China can use this method, how to use it in combination with the practice of early childhood education in China to form the localized "learning story", still needs further exploration in practice.

First, in view of the question that the purpose and content of evaluation are not clear, front-line preschool teachers need to be considerate in teaching practice. They should pay attention to the multi-dimensional teaching research, collection and record, adjust their own teaching objectives and content at any time according to the local class, kindergarten children's actual situation, and gradually form a clear evaluation purpose and content suitable for their own institution. Managers should schedule the regional achievements within a certain time limit, conduct research and evaluation step by step, and finally form their own unique and suitable evaluation purpose and content of "learning story" from a higher level. This is a circular process. Only through continuous exploration and progress can the "learning story" of China be formed.

Second, power of observation is the essential professional ability of teachers, and observation is the prerequisite for teachers to promote the development of children's personality. "Learning story" requires teachers to correctly observe, analyze and judge children and their behaviors, and then select and determine reasonable supporting strategies. Therefore, on the one hand, it is necessary to pay attention to the cultivation of teachers' observation ability in work and let them learn scientific methods of observation, analysis and record and improve teachers' observation and interpretation of children's ability, so as to effectively generate teachers' practical teaching wisdom. On the other hand, careful classification and division of observation. Since the time and scope of one person is limited, the kindergarten or institution can make specified division of labor to make clear the category, content, time and number of children observed by each teacher in a class, and then summarize them to form a complete observation data. This not only makes clear the observation task of everyone, the make clears the purpose, saves time, but also can form the complete observation data of children, laying a good foundation for one step of work.

The development of preschool education in China has a bright prospect, but there are also many problems. For example, the number of kindergartens cannot meet the social needs; the ratio of teachers and children is worrying, and the workload of teachers is large; the professional development of preschool teachers is insufficient and the individual level of teachers is uneven. All these restrict the concrete implementation of "learning story" in the work. Therefore, when implementing the "learning story" method in the kindergarten, it is necessary to study and make feasible plans according to the actual situation of the garden. For example, the improved method of learning annotation can be adopted. At the same time, teachers should constantly improve their own quality to ensure the timeliness of "learning stories" and truly reflect the value of learning stories. Managers should also organize teacher training and "learning story" communication frequently, make clear assessment of the phenomena in the implementation process, and let teachers know what should be done and how to do it.

V. CONCLUSION

New Zealand "learning story" focuses on the complexity and situational nature of children's learning, recognizes their learning ability and communication ability, advocates "child-environment-relationship" oriented education, pays attention to the process evaluation of children's learning, and is good at capturing the advantages and progress of individuals. These are of reference value for the implementation of the spirit of the Guide and the improvement of preschool education quality. At the same time, in the

face of cultural differences and national conditions, it is still necessary to constantly reflect and improve on how to solve the localization dilemma of "learning story" in China and explore the reasonable practice path of local characteristics.

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