

Storytelling for teaching in Diagnostic Radiography

Amy Robertson FHEA. MSc. BSc (Hons). Doctor of Philosophy, December 2018.

Lancaster University.

Abstract

Background: There is a noted lack of definition in storytelling practice. The definitions that are present in the literature are slippery at best. Stories fit under the umbrella term of narrative and can be reflective, creative and value laden – often revealing underlying importance about the human condition. Research in the discipline of Radiography concerning educational storytelling is novel. The concepts of storytelling for adult teaching, assessment and learning in other areas of health and wider practice do not appear to follow a logical pattern of development. Storytelling has potential to impact the learning and teaching practices in Radiography – can be transformative, reflective and powerful.

Research Question: How is ‘storytelling for teaching’ understood and incorporated by educators within Diagnostic Radiography HE?

Method: The research incorporated a two-stage process that enabled exploration of the existing research base in a ‘new’ collective way and how this was articulated in a local community of practice. The two parts were:

Part 1. A systematic review of the literature - a Meta-ethnographic review. To establish a collective understanding from the work of others to create a new understanding.

Part 2. A collaborative process - Appreciative inquiry action research (n=18). To explore, understand and develop ideas for storytelling for teaching's integration into a community of practice with a range of stakeholders in the learning environment.

Findings: There were six overarching common themes relating to the 'practical applications' of storytelling and exactly how it could be incorporated into teaching and learning in Part one of the research. These were grouped as: Relatability; Analogies and contrast; Reflective practice; Setting and the visual; Practicalities of the 'how'; and, Common pitfalls. In part two there were six overt themes identified from the AI working group discussions: Intrinsic story skill; Emotions; Real, Clinical world; Story practices; and, Resources.

Conclusion: A model for storytelling practice for teaching is proposed and can be used as a toolkit to enhance learning and teaching practices using story. The model should be approached as a tool not a panacea and used when classroom conditions are developed (collaborative, personal and community focussed) for transformative experiences to occur. There are some key contextual features which need to be considered when implementing story practices such as; transformative focussed leadership, school-wide culture and de-centralised ownership. Storytelling may have a large role to play in developing 21st century ready learners who can think critically but who remain open to identity changes in a changeable and unpredictable future. This is critically important the fast evolving and changeable field of healthcare not least Radiography.