Bruner's Educational Theory and its Implication: Focusing on New Humanities

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to analyze pre-existing humanitie's tendencies and to suggest the new viewpoint based on Bruner's educational theory. As many subordinating disciplines are divided under humanities, humanities have a separate approach. This problem showed many limits to represent the human's lives in an integrated way. Furthermore, researchers in the humanities field approached them in separate way. To renovate the pre-existing separate traits, this study focuses new totality of humanities based on Bruner's educational ideals. For this, the methodology of this study is to review the literatures and analyze them in philosophical ways. The existing humanities pursued objectivity and tried to theorize into one theory or formula. As a result, it ignored the essence of humanities and lost its identity by mimicking the popular natural science in the era. For resolving the phenomenon, Bruner's educational ideals have been showed by suggesting a narrative view of approaching human's lives and experiences in an integrated way. According to him, humanities now have to return to the discipline based on coexistence, breaking down boundaries and accepting various possibilities and diversity. Regarding his viewpoint, pre-existing humanities should be re-conceptualized into narrative science or narratology. Humanities as a narrative Science have advantages for integrating diverted subordinating disciplines into human experience's narrative and for paying attention to the totality. Since, this study is based on Bruner's literature, future research on the direction of humanities will need to be further developed and generalized through various literatures and practice.

Key words: Humanities, narrative, narrative science, narratology, Bruner's educational theory, humanities

INTRODUCTION

In Korean society, humanities have been understood with the word of "crisis", since a few years ago. In a rapidly changing era, humanities were a discipline that could not meet the times and social needs. The reason was the advancement of science and the pursuit of objectivity. Therefore, science and engineering are enjoying great popularity and prosperity but humanities are gradually getting downgraded. The problem does not end by itself. The nation and the government have only fully supported the department of science and engineering but did not provide much support to the humanities (Biju, 2016; Dianita, 2015). As a result, the demand for students has changed and as a result, the number of people studying humanities is gradually decreasing.

In addition, humanities are not only superior to natural sciences but also their way of inquiry has also changed in a way that imitates natural sciences. Rather than exploring a phenomenon or human being philosophically, academic attempts have been made to create a universal and objective concept from a reductionist perspective (Lee, 2007; Sriboonyaponrat, 2016). However, as shown in the name of humanities, there are limitations in carrying out objective and empirical research in human-related research. This is because there are many blind spots that cannot be objectified, even if scientific results lead to objective results.

Therefore, it is necessary to back to the basics in order for the humanities to return to their original place. It is necessary to be able to derive inquiry methods and results that can reflect the essence of humanities and the identity of humanities. The purpose of this study is to establish a new identity of humanities through a narrative inquiry method that can truly understand human beings, out of an empirical scientific inquiry method.

Beyond the boundaries of each discipline, scholarship must be able to converge in a narrative way and that will be the task of humanities in the future. Individual studies including humanities and Science, insist that maintaining their boundaries has their particularity and specialty. However, when regarding the primordial background of the emergence of scholarship, specificity and specialty should be avoided in future times. Until the era of Aristotle, the boundaries of discipline were not deep and individual disciplines were created in a more detailed and subdivided way as a way to solve common problems. Therefore, even if each existed, each essence was the same by sharing the common

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purposes. In this respect, the discipline was interrelated rather than mutually exclusive from the beginning (Choi and Joo, 2007; Kang *et al.*, 2016).

However, such beliefs have not been long and in modern society, individual studies have now become more prominent and their boundaries are higher. It is demanding the world of convergence all over the world but convergence is not easy as it cannot be done overnight. In this regard, in order for the humanities to return to their original place, it is necessary to reverse the essence of humanities through the medium of 'narrative'. Therefore, in this study, Bruner's educational theory which emphasizes narrative in particular is sought.

Research design: This study is based on literature analysis. In this study, Bruner's work is the main subject of analysis and therefore, based on his thoughts and arguments, the research will try to find a solution using the diagnosis and narrative of the humanities crisis. In this study, especially, Bruner's book, Actual Minds, Possible Worlds in 1986 and Culture of Education in 1996 are analyzed in detail. As his books elaborated on humanities, narrative and disciplines, there would be a number of implications and directions of humanities area. Therefore, by analyzing pre-existing humanities problems and new resolutions in the texts, the research would like to present the relevant viewpoints and implications.

Literature review

Problems of humanities; contents and method: Humanities have been degraded in part of contents and methods. Many researchers Jeon (2015), Cho (2014), Ahn (2013) and Bak (2007) have searched for the reason of this symptom. Representatively, according to Cho (2014), the crisis of humanities came out because of the below.

Some philosophers have argued that all disciplines must follow natural sciences and that their academic and objectivity can only be guaranteed by how close they are to Science. They found that only the nature of the universally valid scientific knowledge and the research model and methodology could be theoretically rigorous and that the verification principle of meaning, inductive method of inquiry and covering law model can be main principles of integrated Science.

Furthermore, some scholars have argued that such methodologies and explanations can be applied not only to natural phenomena but also to history, society and human understanding. Some scholars are looking for the cause of the crisis in the changing academic character of the humanities by tracking the progress of these disciplines. In this context, the internal crisis of the humanities is diagnosed as "a crisis caused by the fact that the humanities were also intended to be a science,"

and "by aiming at becoming science, the humanities cannot attain the goal and even it has ruled out the moral judgment, value judgment, human consciousness and inner face and even the personal person who was created in the image of God".

As shown in the above, humanities have focused on the universe and objective knowledge. Moreover, methodologically, they centered on practical and verifiable methods. As a result, the humanities have lost its identity and have suffered from the confusion of the direction.

Bruner's educational theory: Bruner's theory is largely divided into former and later theories. The former theory is centered on the structure of knowledge and the latter one is centered on narrative. The transition from the former to the latter theories is based on the issue of each period of education. In 1960s, American schools taught rote learning and teacher's professionalism was not guaranteed. As a result, Bruner argued for the structure of knowledge. The structure of knowledge is the core idea underlying each discipline. It assumes that if there is a structure of knowledge, it can be taught in the right way to children in any developmental stage in any subject. It is also the discovery learning and the spiral education curriculum that enables the structure of the knowledge. Discovery learning is a learner's center which explores and discovers the principles of the discipline itself. In spiral education courses as the grade increases, the breadth and depth of the spiral education course becomes wider and deeper and the maturity of learner's perception of learning contents is also deepened according to each period. This idea had a great influence on organizing the curriculum into discipline-centered curriculum in the United States.

However, with increasing immigrants and disparities between socio-economic status, discipline-centered curriculum in American education was appropriate only for a small number of students and for most students it began to appear as a form of education that produces discrimination. As a result, Bruner reflected on his previous ideas and changes his mind. Bruner then argued that education should be able to carry out education for all, taking into account the culture and the actual characteristics of students.

This trend ultimately turned Bruner into a new educational idea in the 1980s. In the latter theory, Bruner argued for school education to take into account political and cultural contexts. In particular, he argued that education is a part of culture, culture constitutes human mind and school education should be able to organize student's subjective education experiences and knowledge through culture. Therefore, students should create experiences in school education through their own

narratives and these experiences come together so that each individual forms a self and the school itself forms a culture.

Narrative: Narrative does not simply mean content that appears in a novel or play. For Bruner (1996) narrative is a way of thinking, a structure for organizing knowledge and a tool for the process of education. Narrative consists of successive events, all of which have meaning. From a cultural point of view, narrative is also a narrative form of human cultural origin or belief in our minds. In other words, what humans are talking about their lives is that they are talking in the form of narratives. Thus, narratives play a crucial role in organizing a human life.

Also by Bruner (1990), narrative is constructivism. Man makes meaning in narrative. To understand a phenomenon, people do not analyze the phenomenon one by one to understand it but rather look at the whole in a larger structure. And that big structure is the context in which each element is interpreted. In this respect, constructivism sees "world making" as one of the main roles of the mind. In this constructivist perspective, stories are not "things that emerge" in the real world but are "composed" in the minds of people through a continuous process of interpretation and reinterpretation (Bruner, 1987).

In total, narrative has three traits (Bruner, 1990). First, the narrative consists of a series of special events or states of mind of a human character and actor. However, these events and the state of mind itself are not life or specific meanings. In order for a series of events or states of mind to be meaningful, it must be viewed from a holistic viewpoint and it depends on how interpretive subjects perceive it. The second attribute of narrative is that the narrative content is "fact" and "imagination". In other words, it does not mean that the narrative must be true. And such narratives are always in the form of narratives. Finally, narrative links between ordinary one and unusual one. Since narrative has a narrative form, the meaning of each phenomenon can be interpreted from the point of view of narrative so that both ordinary and unusual one can be interpreted meaningfully.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Change and characteristics of new humanities
Change point for restructuring humanities: Whereas, the humanities have focused on objectivity and universality until now from now on it is the narrative that can solve this problem. As it can be seen in the previous study, narrative is contrary to the traits of existing natural sciences. Narrative is characterized by relativity and constructivism and based on them, new possibilities and humanistic rationality are given. Bruner (1986) in particular, provided the following possibilities for humanities in relation to narratives.

As for art and the humanities, they too are constrained in the kinds of hypotheses they generate but not by constraint of testability in the scientist's sense and not by the search for hypotheses that will be true across a wide range of human perspectives. Rather, the aim is that the hypotheses fit different human perspectives and that they be recognizable as "true to conceivable experience": that they have verisimilitude.

Relativity and constructivism of narrative play an important role in the movement of humanities in the right direction again. While looking at human beings objectively brought about some achievements on the contrary, we could not find the unique characteristics or the different characteristics and meanings of each individual in the back of objectivity. And in essence, these properties are relativistic. Relativity should not be underestimated because it is unscientific. The various interpretations and possibilities of human beings open up a broader range of thoughts and possibilities. In this sense, narrative is a language of possibility and plays an important role in opening a new horizon in humanities.

Main characteristics: Bruner argued that reality realized through narrative has nine characteristics. If humanities need to form discourse again through narratives, humanities form narrative reality. The nine characteristics of the narrative reality emphasized by Bruner are as follows.

The first, characteristic is a structure of committed time. The time in reality through narrative is not the same as the physical time of the world in which we live; rather, it has a structure of 'first-middle-end' with the meaningful and important events. Second, narrative reality has a generic particularity. Each story belongs to a category or genre such as comedy, tragedy, irony or romance. Third, every action in a narrative follows its cause. Some actions implemented through narratives are not accidental but strictly from cause and effect. It reflects the "intentional state" of man and when the subjectivity is realized together in the intentional state, the behavior is manifested by the choice of the result. Fourth, narrative follows a hermeneutic composition. The term 'hermeneutics' has two meanings. First, it means that the same interpretation can be made in various ways. Secondly, it makes the reader understand the question of why the story was created by whom and under what circumstances.

Table 1: Comparison between pre-existing humanities and new humanities

Pre-existing humanities	New humanities
Physical time	Generative time
Generalization	Generic particularity
Natural outcome	Cause and effect
Solitary composition	Hermeneutic composition
Implied canonicity	Irregularity
Objectivity of reference	Ambiguity of reference
Visible phenomenon	Problem in one's mind
Truth	Inherent negotiability
True or false	Historical extensibility

Fifth, narratives do not follow implied canonicity. Narrative does not follow a specific anticipation or script but it follows the same rules as the third attribute of narrative but it also takes the form of being out of norm. The sixth is the ambiguity of reference which means that the narrative reality can be interpreted differently in a specific context not in a single perspective. Seventh, in narratives, the problem is always the center of trouble. A plain story is not a meaningful or worthwhile story.

The eighth, is the inherent negotiability. In the same story, the way in which each interprets is different and this difference does not necessarily cause any problems or controversies and it enables various narrative configurations. Finally, narratives have historical extensibility. The narrative formed in our lives is not merely a story that satisfies ourselves but the stories, characters and backgrounds of narratives are all extended to the history.

Therefore, by the same token, new humanities have 9 traits. When comparing new humanities with the pre-existing humanities, the difference is like see in Table 1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Narrative implication and narrative science: The new humanities based on narratives recognize the thought and subjectivity of the subject of recognition, thereby promoting the unity of subject and object of recognition. In addition, by focusing on the interpretation of human experience that has been neglected for many years, it realizes various interpretations, imaginations and possibilities. In addition, humanities are closely related to culture and individual human characteristics since, they are scholarship about human beings. Unlike the methodology of natural sciences, the humanities derived through narratives recognize the specificity and individuality and can establish close relationship with culture (Kang, 2016). Therefore, future humanities should have the character of narrative science.

CONCLUSION

Toward new humanities as narrative science: Until now, humanities have undergone many difficulties. Under the name of "crisis of humanities", it has suffered from confusion about its identity and methodology that only humanities have. Due to the popularity of objectification and generalization in response to the demands of the times, humanities have been caused by a series of efforts made to take the form of natural science. Nonetheless, humanities could not have emerged as a perfect and objective discipline like natural science. Because humanities are the study of human beings and there are many characteristics that cannot be generalized because not all humans have the same characteristics. Nevertheless, humanities have been explored as objective discipline. In this regard, it is difficult to solve this problem easily. Therefore, this study aimed to find a new horizon of humanities by combining narrative as a way to present new directions to existing humanities.

As a result of the research, narrative is composed of meaningful events that continuously affect the life of a human being, beyond the function of a simple story. Therefore, the narrative functions as constructivism and thinking style. Bruner expected that the narrative could open up new horizons in humanities. According to him, humanities should be not the subject to verification but rather capable of reflecting diverse perspectives of human beings as objects of possibility. In that sense, narrative and humanities are intrinsically linked. Therefore, the new humanities should be able to manifest the characteristics of narrative. In this respect, humanities should have the appearance of narrative Science.

By basing on Bruner's literature this study analyzed the characteristics and problems of existing humanities and suggested new humanities based on human. In this regard, this study seems to be meaningful in that it clarifies more clearly the future direction of the problems of humanities in the world. However, the limitation of this study is that only Bruner's literature was the main research subject. Therefore, more literatures should be studied for the generalization and development of the research.

SUGGESTIONS

In the future research, it is necessary to do actual case study and philosophical inquiry about how the humanities are more meaningful and diverse in the way of human life than the conventional object-oriented humanities. Through, the researches in the future humanities can have a light to cultivate the direction and its identity.

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