THE LOGICAL VALUE FOR THE NURSING STUDENT: MEETING WITH MAX SCHELER

O VALOR LÓGICO PARA O DISCENTE DE ENFERMAGEM: ENCONTRO COM MAX SCHELER

ABSTRACT

Objective: to understand the logical value in the discourse of graduating Nursing students and discuss it in the light of the assumptions of the Theory of Value of Max Scheler. Method: exploratory-descriptive study with qualitative approach and phenomenological focus. The subjects were ten students of a higher education institution of Nursing in Belo Horizonte/MG. Data were produced in the period of August through September 2014 using phenomenological interviews. The Diltheynian hermeneutics was employed to unveil the sense of the words. Results: technical-scientific knowledge and sensibility are foundational to nursing care. Conclusion: nursing care is an expression of technical, scientific and human responsibility. It must involve sympathy, solidarity, understanding and fighting against insensibility before the patient, besides establishing a Me-You relationship. This condition confirms the axiological field of the profession. Descriptors: Nursing; Culture; Social values; Philosophy; Education.

RESUMO

Objetivo: compreender no discurso do discente concluinte de Enfermagem o valor lógico e discuti-lo à luz dos pressupostos da Teoria de Valor de Max Scheler. Método: estudo exploratório-descritivo, com abordagem qualitativa, com enfoque fenomenológico. Os sujeitos foram dez discentes de uma instituição de ensino superior de Enfermagem de Belo Horizonte/MG. Os dados foram produzidos no período de agosto a setembro de 2014 por meio de entrevista fenomenológica. Empregou-se a hermenêutica Diltheyniana para desvelar o sentido nas falas. Resultados: o conhecimento técnico-científico e a sensibilidade são fundantes para o cuidado de enfermagem. Conclusão: o cuidado de enfermagem é expressão da competência técnica, científica e humana. Deve envolver simpatia, solidariedade, compreensão e combate à insensibilidade diante do paciente, além de estabelecer relação Eu-Tu. Essa condição ratifica o campo axiológico da profissão. Descritores: Enfermagem; Cultura; Valores Sociais; Filosofia; Educação.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: comprender en el discurso del estudiante concluyente de Enfermería el valor lógico y discutirlo con base en las ideas de la Teoría de Valor de Max Scheler. Método: estudio exploratorio-descriptivo, con enfoque cualitativo, con enfoque fenomenológico. Los sujetos fueron diez estudiantes de una institución de enseñanza superior de Enfermería de Belo Horizonte/MG. Los datos fueron producidos en el periodo de agosto a septiembre de 2014 por medio de entrevista fenomenológica. Se usó la hermenéutica Diltheyniana para desvelar el sentido en los discursos. Resultados: el conocimiento técnico-científico y la sensibilidad son fundantes para el cuidado de enfermería. Conclusión: el cuidado de enfermería es expresión de la competencia técnica, científica y humana. Debe envolver simpatía, solidaridad, comprensión y combate a la insensibilidad frente al paciente, además de establecer relación Yo-Tu. Esa condición ratifica el campo axiológico de la profesión. Descritores: Enfermería; Cultura; Valores Sociales; Filosofía; Educación.
INTRODUCTION

The logical value is fetched by the nurse-teacher and by the nursing student through research and science. In this course, through reason, they aim to reach the truth from the appropriation of scientific knowledge. This value is important to pursue the exercise of the pragmatic nursing because it establishes its separation from common sense and promotes nursing care with safety, comfort and well-being of the patient and also gives guidance for teaching the profession.1,6

In this way, the career has been increasingly based on advances in science along with search for the best available scientific evidence reached from results of research from postgraduate products stricto sensu across the country and around the world. This perspective is philosophically grounded from Positivism, especially marked by the separation of the knowledge coming from human objectivity and subjectivity, bringing other consequences for the care and teaching of the profession. Thus, Nursing is influenced by rules of science with emphasis on doing and permeated by dichotomies: theory-practice, objectivity-subjectivity, practice-research, art-science, profession-discipline, make-know and care-cure.1,2

However, in the last two decades of the twentieth century, Nursing sought to overcome the limitations of the traditional model of science and specifically the biomedical-mechanistic model of health care. This change has raised the care valued by subjective elements, such as: being with the patient; and get to know him from the recognition of social, evaluative and cultural differences. This movement has allowed the establishment of a holistic vision in the career.1

In this context of transition between the biomedical-mechanistic to the holistic model, a graduating nursing student comes into scene. He is an existential being, absorbed in a given culture, nourishing from the biomedical-mechanistic model and experiencing the search for a disruption through the valuation of the patient as a person. This perspective moves the nursing student toward the process of rediscovering the values that founded the axiological field of the profession and its respective re-organization of hierarchies, aiming its incorporation into the act of assisting. In this context, nursing care is an expression of the technical-scientific and human knowledge, forming an amalgam.6,7

It must be also pointed out that the axiological field of the profession is plural. This is founded harmoniously on a set of values that interact with each other and reveal nursing as science and art. The constituents of this axiological field were listed by Florence Nightingale, namely: social, ethical, logical and useful values and are present in the very being of the nurse.1,5

Despite the tendency to search for the axiological field of the profession, the simple fact of being graduating students does not give them, at first, the assurance that they will have their act of assisting rooted in the Being-nurse. As paradoxical as it is, it is possible to obtain the professional registration after completing the course even when the student has not risen and developed the Being-nurse yet. This happens because it may occur that in the process of search and seize the value, the student may carry out a refusal of the axiological field that constitutes the profession and, this way, produce anomaly in the administration of nursing care.4

Taking into account these considerations, the justification of the present study lies in the fact that the graduating student that faced the values of the profession present in nursing care from the pedagogical-caring practice toward the patient throughout the academic training starts to make inquiries about what values mobilized his acts. The study adopts the Shelerian perspective to the search for evaluative understanding, because it shares the view that the values are seized by feeling and not by reason.4

Thus, the aim of the present study is to understand the logical value in the speech of graduating students and discuss it in the light of the assumptions of the Theory of Value of Max Scheler.

METHOD

Exploratory-descriptive study with qualitative approach and phenomenological focus aimed at enhancement of subjective data and seeking the understanding of the world of everyday life to elucidate the meaning of descriptive accounts of social life in order to enable researchers to clarify aspects of living facing the meanings of noticing. The object of research is the phenomenon that shows to itself and in itself.8

The setting was a higher education institution of nursing located in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil. Data collection occurred after the subjects were informed about the ethical aspects of research and signed the Informed Consent.
The technique employed was the phenomenological interview recorded on electronic media with the following guiding question: "How do you evaluate the Being-nurse?". The phenomenological interview has peculiarities that needed to be considered to maintain the necessary precision for its use. Thus, awareness was required from the researchers in the sense of: seeing and observing without prejudices, keeping an empathic relationship characterized by a state of approximation, valuing and respecting each other; comprehensively interpreting the language of the respondent and its significance, relying on an active listening, remaining receptive and avoiding judgments that could interfere with the narrative of respondents. Data were collected by the researchers. As inclusion criterion, participants needed to be students enrolled in the last semester of the nursing course.9

The selection of participants occurred by convenience sample. Students were contacted by e-mail, through a letter of invitation and then a meeting was scheduled for respondents. In this meeting the research content was presented and, with the student’s deference, the interview was scheduled. The interview occurred in a private room in the institution with an approximate duration of 40 minutes and the subjects were ten graduating students. That time duration was designed after data saturation and after that the phenomenon had been unveiled to the conscience of researchers. Participants were identified in the text by alphanumeric system by the letter S, plus Arabic numbers from 1 to 10. Interviews were conducted from August 10 to September 30, 2014.

It was possible to unveil the meaning in the words towards the understanding of speech through the Diltheyan hermeneutical analysis. Some of its assumptions were adapted and used as guides to unveil the phenomenon, namely, speeches of the interviewees were transcribed in full and these were initially read so that there could be an approximation with the whole and then separately; in sequence, the careful and detailed textual reading was proceeded, over and over again, until the definitive nature of speeches were revealed to consciousness.10

In the process of textual analysis, it is essential the interpreter to have pre-understanding, that is, information about the historical and social background founding the historical setting where the participants are inserted, those who assume the role of author of the produced text since, without such prior knowledge, it is not possible to begin the game of circularity. The hermeneutical method is characterized by a coming and going between the whole and its parts, considering that this way an understanding of the text is reached.10

In this sense, the interpreter has to put himself in the position of those surveyed in both the objective and subjective side. The objective side is given by the knowledge of the language used by them and, subjectively, it is about gaining knowledge of their inner and outer lives. It follows that both things can only be completely acquired through their own interpretation.10

Therefore, the textual writing functions as the totality from which the thinking must be understood as something private and vice versa. It follows that the interpretation of the text can be not done at once. A little more is understood in each new reading, once the necessary knowledge for a full understanding is being incorporated.10

In sequence, the ideas were recorded and the respective clustering was made, giving rise to units of meaning (they express meaning in itself and in relation to the context, it can be a word, a sentence or paragraph, what matters is that it’s a set of propositions that express certain topic). Thus, values attributed to nursing by the graduating students were obtained. Finally, this material was discussed in the light of some of the assumptions of the Schelerian axiology and of scientific literature.10

The research followed the parameters established by the Resolution n° 466/12 of the National Health Council (CNS), being referred to the Ethics Committee and the Federal University of Minas Gerais, registered and approved with CAAE number 26467213.2.0000.5149.

RESULTS

Ten students participated in the study, seven were women and three were men. The average age was 22 years. It was possible to understand the logical value in the graduating nursing student speech. This was manifested in care and pedagogical practice from the scientific knowledge and is considered by students as foundational to the establishment in the pragmatics of nursing care. In doing so, the students recognized its importance to the care and pedagogical practice.

At the same time, they valued the issues surrounding the human, from the sensibility, understood to them as the ability to "stand alongside", to "give attention" to "get involved" in the Schelerian concept, by a relation of
sympathy and love. The students intuitively unified the instrumental reason (scientific objectivity) and practical reason (subjectivity) so that in order to proceed the administration of nursing care. This consideration is illustrated in the statements of:

[...] In my perception, being a nurse is to be a skilled professional with scientific technical ability to practice the profession. (S1)

[...] In the pre-partum, we administer the medicines prescribed intravenously. There, the nurse must use nursing skills, such as puncture technique and know about the drug interaction. (S2)

[...] The nurse needs to know physiology, pharmacology, techniques and human relations. The nurse has the role to manage, because it is important in order that the nursing work may happen. (S3)

[...] Being-nurse means to have scientific and human knowledge. It means to think in being and having. To take care means to be close, with the other. (S4)

[...] We come as a little sponge and go on absorbing [...] as an intern I’ve been doing, and hopefully, I won’t lose it, although many say that over time, the nurse starts to create resistance and loses sensibility, I hope I do not lose it. (S5)

[...] The scientific expertise that you receive at the university is very important, but there is also your own sensibility [...] it directly influences what you will be as a professional. (S6)

[...] I thought that being a nurse was to have the scientific technical knowledge. Know all the techniques. But, when we go to practice, we find out that this is not the case. The main role of the nurse is to engage, to become responsible and organize all assistance. (S9)

It was possible to observe the implication given by deponents, in their speeches, to the combination of science and sensibility. Notably, the technical and scientific knowledge must be linked to a friendly attitude so that nursing care may be administered. Parts of speeches of deponents are presented below:

[...] I had a blind patient [...] it was the first time I administered insulin [...] after administration of the drug the patient told me: You have applied the injection correctly [...] I hope you continue treating your patients with attention. (S7)

[...] The nurse is made up of small things [...] to be close, to give attention [...] In the clinic, the patient comes to me to evaluate the laboratory examination [...] we do not remember everything, but we go back to the books and retrieve knowledge. (S8)

DISCUSSION

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[...] I understand that the nurse must have the ability to deal with people. We deal with patients, family members and each person has a way of seeing and understanding life, health and being sick. (S1)

[...] I spent the entire time I was on call telling colleagues that the patient was calm and without restraint. In the next day, the night duty informed me that the patient was agitated and had to be contained [...] I noticed that she was with bladder distention [...] we have to find out how the patient is, not only checking vital parameters. (S10)

The socio-demographic profile of respondents showed the influence of the female gender as founder of the career and also the trend of integration of young people into the profession, namely, invigorated by the expansion experienced by the Brazilian higher education in recent decades.11-2

The logical value is expressed in the pedagogical-caring praxis based on the scientific knowledge used to provide nursing care. Although sometimes, the students made reference to the disciplinary knowledge in the speeches, they were referring to scientific knowledge. It was possible to understand that this knowledge gave them security in decision making in relation to patient, staff and front of the management activity of the unit. This knowledge is the basis on which rests the care and that promotes health care with security, competence and humanity.1,7,11-4

The students intuitively recognized this knowledge as an expression of the truth. This is considered value not for its content in itself, but for matching the human desire to know the real. The motivation of knowing the truth is intrinsic to the human nature because it has the possibility to complement it.7

Science is the result of the rational construction of the man and, the reason is improved through it, while letting common sense to apply science. However, it is important to stress that this quest for knowledge cannot suppress the tendency of human beings to search for values that do not end in scientific objectivity. This is completed from the service and recognition of subjectivity as it longs to be more worthy not only in the field having, but in being.7

The complementarity between scientific objectivity (instrumental reason) and subjectivity (practical reason). For him, despite dealing with different objects, while ways of knowledge, when taken in altogether they allow the understanding of all that deep
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reality. So the Schelerian proposition of science is opposed to the Positivism.15

Historically, the advancement of scientific knowledge of this philosophical umbrella as well as its influence on nursing and other careers in the health field, in the field of education, research and practice of care is undeniable. However, in the mid-twentieth century, Popper introduced the idea of uncertainties and probabilities in science, showing that all of it is based on conjecture that seeks to be confirmed or refuted. Now, the scientific knowledge arising from it has no value of absolute truth.3,16-7

For Nursing, this crisis has mobilized efforts of reflexive pairs about nursing care and its justification. Along the way, the race was faced with the Being-patient, not as objective fact, but as a person. Such an event triggered the valuation of care from the link between scientific objectivity and subjectivity, confirming the coexistence of instrumental reason and practical reason in the pragmatic profession, forming an amalgam to the foundation of care.18

This condition is imperative for healthcare practice as nursing care refers to love, solidarity, and friendship and seeks the promotion, preservation and restoration of health. Thus, it is not exclusively a procedure to be performed, in which triumphs the scientific technical aspect, but it is also the ability, by graduating students, of using the human sense to assist the patient as it is based on the Me-You relationship and in the abstract aspects involving life.3,19

Another relevant aspect pointed out by graduating students to judge the suitability of the union between objectivity and subjectivity for the expression of nursing care was the emotional ability rooted in the Being-nurse. Through it, they got close to the patient seeking an interaction permeated by reciprocity based on the value of the human being, its context, values, beliefs, interests and experiences. They acted sensitively perceiving the patient as a person and recognizing the patient’s dignity and uniqueness. Such a condition was imposed as a must-be. For them, this emotional ability resulted in “getting involved” and “becoming responsible”, that is, assuming a friendly relationship. In this way, they valued the Schelerian proposition Me-You, allowing the pursuit of knowledge of the essence of the patient.1,5,7

The students recognized that sympathy is the element that establishes the Me-You relationship. With respect to sympathy, the human being lives in others instead of in itself, lives more in the community than in the individuality. It is by emotion that he builds his theory of perceptual apprehension of the other human being, giving emphasis to the friendly feelings and love.1,7,13 These are broken with the Cartesian tradition and the prejudices that are rooted in it. Their basic claim is that in the seizure of the patient, it is not your body that can be seen, but the totality that is revealed steeped in subjectivity, and is seen as an expression. For him, the patient’s perception is possible only through sympathy and love as they undo the solipsistic delusion as acts of transcendence and allow access to the essence of the other.7

Despite similarities, there is a fundamental difference between sympathy and love. While sympathy is a reaction and response to the states experienced by the patient, what implies certain dependence, love is more spontaneous and personal. Though in the case of sympathy, equal value is recognized in the other, such recognition gives the patient only the right to attention, but not esteem. It is granted to him a place in the universe, but this remains more sensitive to its existence than its value. Therefore, sympathy and love, because of the transcendence that characterizes them, allow us to understand the patient in varying degrees and give to care its adjusted design as it has the power to free the act of self-centeredness. In this way, the students realized the importance of these virtues for the nursing care.7,13-23

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

As concluding remarks it can be said that the graduating students recognized the logic value as instituting the pragmatics of nursing, mainly grounded in scientific knowledge and human subjectivity. It is through the nursing care that this value was manifested in the practice of care. So, in the opinion of the students, the value of care lies in the fact that it is an expression of technical-scientific and human responsibility, sympathy and love, solidarity, understanding and fighting the brutishness and indifference before the patient, valuing the assumptions of the Schelerian axiology.

It is important to emphasize that the contemporary way of life, based on pragmatic and mercantile values, seems to impose a collective social practice that oppresses, alienates and forwards members of society to the loss of sensibility. Therefore, it is up to the nurse-teacher to safeguard them from this influence, in a maieutic way, by producing in them the “birth of ideas”, by moving them to criticism and reflection before the axiological
field of Nursing with a view to promoting the growth and development in the Being-nurse, as opposed to the influence of pragmatic and mercantile values of contemporary life.

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