Review of: "Integrating Community Service in Language Education: Fostering Social Change via Inclusive and Transformative Learning Experiences"

Raffaella Cavallaro[1]

1 Polytechnic Institute of Milan

The article deals with a topic that is certainly relevant and interesting but develops it generically. Nowadays, we live in a world in which cultural disparities and differences, due to various factors, are bound to increase, so the issue of language teaching and learning will become central to including those from different backgrounds within a society that welcomes them. The construction of inclusive classes aims to prevent the marginalisation of students who struggle to integrate precisely because of their lack of language and experience. For this reason, the topic is relevant and challenging.

Therefore, the reader can perceive that the issues explored relate to inclusion, equity, and integration, which can be achieved by reflecting on how language is used in teaching. However, what context this should happen in and how this issue is approached today needs to be clarified: it would be helpful to specify these aspects at the outset.

The introduction confirms, as perceived in the abstract, the lack of clarity concerning the peculiarity of the subject matter intended to be explored, probably due to the generic nature with which the many themes dealt with - also of considerable value, which would deserve much broader reflections to develop in separate studies - are treated. The feeling is that the sentences are correct in their meaning and in what, taken individually, they want to express: unfortunately, however, taken as a whole, there is no apparent connection between one sentence and the next.

This observation also applies to the interesting list of theoretical frameworks selected to support the topic: all extremely stimulating but not very incisive in the complexity of the text precisely because they are listed without any in-depth study, application example, or contextualisation and, therefore, weakened by the apparently superficial way in which they are treated.

It would be helpful to rethink the structure of the introduction text starting precisely from the 'research question', placed at the end of the paragraph. Starting with the question, followed by the specification that closes the passage, and developing the list of theoretical frameworks in an integrated way with the first part of the text, also through the introduction of personal viewpoints, would certainly guarantee a greater incisiveness. Reversing the order of the paragraph could be an operation to check whether the text can better express the thesis formulated.

Furthermore, the choice of the desk research method perhaps comes from the fact that the investigation is probably at an early step. However, the development of the method also through field research - consisting of interviews, questionnaires,

and verifications - would help to clarify statements and provide a personal critical viewpoint.

The list of bullet points in the section 'Results and Discussion' weakens the topic. It mentions the introduction of several principles that may facilitate cultural fluency, but does not specify what they might be and how their introduction might benefit. The part of the text that follows the list of points turns out to be a further list, this time of sentences that follow one another without any connection between them and that describe, without any critical reflection, what has been learnt and summarised from the reference texts.

The conclusions are a rewriting of the list by points from the previous paragraph; instead, it is suggested to formulate proposals, even open-ended or in the form of a question, that can answer or specify the question posited in the first paragraph. The lack of practical cases to support the arguments discussed blurs the author's aim, or rather the hypothesis he intends to prove. This makes the role of language teaching in processes of social change, and how it benefits the community, unclear.

The last note concerns the writing quality of the text, which should be carefully reviewed, replacing, as already mentioned, the bulleted list of arguments and developing sentences in a more scientific way, avoiding repeating the same statements.