

Review of: "The End of Objectivity and Subjectivity in Education Sciences"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

I liked what the article was trying to achieve, which I took to be a thoughtful review of some of the characteristics of education as a field of research. This is an ambitious topic, and I don't think it's possible to cover both the breadth and depth adequately in a short article. As a consequence, this article gave a broad overview at the expense of depth of analysis.

My primary concern was that the claims about 'education sciences' were not grounded in any body of evidence, but rested on truisms and common-sense assertions. Other analyses that I have seen (e.g. Czerniewicz, L. 2010. Educational technology - mapping the terrain with Bernstein as cartographer. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*. 26(6): 523-534) ground claims within more tightly specified fields, and use evidence such as analysis of patterns of citation.

A secondary concern was about the fluidity with which concepts were used. There was an attempt to address this in the section that looked at different theorists' accounts of science, but this section made it clear that 'objectivity' and 'subjectivity' did not mean the same in different places. (To turn the paper's analysis on itself, are these different ways of thinking about science incommensurable?) As a consequence, continuing to use these terms glossed the variability of meanings, which meant that I was not persuaded by some of the connections that were drawn.

A third concern was about the scope of theorists included here. I didn't really understand why Latour, Woolgar and others were excluded - surely the field of Science and Technology Studies, of which they are an important part, has something to say about how we might understand education as a science? I accept some of the other theorists - particularly Sandra Harding - can be understood as part of that field, but given the centrality of complexity to the arguments here, the work in STS on relationality and emergence, and on the durability of concepts as an achievement, seem directly relevant.

For these reasons, I didn't see how the concepts proposed in the conclusion (inter-subjectivity, inter-coherence and inter-necessity) were developed from working through the debates earlier in the paper. They are suggestive, but not defined, nor related to any of the preceding theorisations.

Finally, while this didn't detract from the argument, errors in things such as authors' names will limit how readers can connect this piece to the foundational work it draws from.

In summary, although I found that the historic overview was useful, and the topic is important, I was not persuaded that this piece meets its aims.

