

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

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

Please specify what "Its" refers to here (2nd sentence in Abstract) so as to create a stronger link with sentence 1 of Abstract - this improves cohesion of ideas.

Some important moves or shifts that are usually part of an abstract include the following, and the author would benefit from working through these to encapsulate more succinctly, the gist of this study.

Include in the ABSTRACT

1. Reason for writing:

State the importance of the research?

2. Problem:

What problem does this work attempt to solve? What is the scope of the project? What is the main argument/thesis/claim?

3. Methodology:

May include specific models or approaches used in the larger study; May describe the types of evidence used in the research.

4. Results:

May indicate the results of the project and/or may discuss the findings in a more general way.

5. Implications:

What changes should be implemented as a result of the findings of the work? How does this work add to the body of knowledge on the topic?

Keywords: use 'transformative learning' instead of 'learning transforms'.

On Pg 2 - Is "Said" an author here or is this the term 'said'? either way, the sentence structure needs to be corrected here since it reads: "Said... that learners..."

5th sentence on pg 2 - here the jump to "Digital identities" is very abrupt. Maybe some context here with respect to how and where and why digital identities are important, and how this links up with the concepts of language and culture, will be useful for the reader. The impact of technology on how learners view, experience and navigate the world is important for considering issues of language and culture - and is thus intricately tied up with identity construction socialisation processes. Also see New Literacy theory's earlier work by James Gee: James Paul Gee (1989), *The Journal of Education*, Vol. 171, No. 1, LITERACY, DISCOURSE, AND LINGUISTICS. pp. 5-176. Also see his works of 1990 and 1996 for more insight on the acquisition of primary and secondary discourses.

Also, there is a later reference to ICT in sentences 7&8 - which could be tied to sentence 5 on the aspect of digital identities, instead of being separated by sentence 6. This will improve flow of ideas from sentence to sentence.

last sentence of paragr 1 on pg 2 - the section starting with "endeavours" must form a new sentence to sharpen the focus. As a core paradigm - the concept of social constructivism on pg 2 also needs to be defined much more clearly for readers, esp in relation to issues of culture, language and identity mentioned in paragraph 1 on pg 2. Context is core.

In terms of critical pedagogy (pg.2), stalwarts such as Paulo Freire could also perhaps be recognised here, especially with respect to transforming the teaching and learning landscape to usher in social justice imperatives where the 'local' is valued within the educational space. Culturally relevant pedagogy (pg.2) is inherently present in 'critical pedagogy' mentioned above, and can be combined with thoughts mentioned here, instead of a new bullet point. "Community-based learning (pg. 2) also links up with critical pedagogy as an over-arching structure. Maybe make the connections more visible between these bullet points here to show the alignment of foci and ideas which need to be emphasised here. At the moment these tend to be too separate, and the overlaps need to be made more apparent to show the connectedness of ideas here.

Pg. 3: The "research Question" (p.3) must be integrated into the paragraph - so that the flow of ideas and issues raised, offer a 'natural progression' to the question raised in the research. This is a good research question, which incorporates the core issues touched on in the intro, but as stated, include the question as part of the introductory paragraphs, and not as a stand alone sentence - it breaks the flow.

The last paragraph of introduction is direct and succinct - and brings a number of issues together nicely.

The one question about sentence 2 in this last paragraph that can be asked though, is to consider what (if any) are the differences between "effective methods, tactics, and practices?" These may well point to the same or similar things.

A numbering system is not usually used for headings in journal articles. Please check this.

Also, the author particularly highlights in the intro that "The initiative seeks effective methods, tactics, and practices to build instructional materials and activities that promote social change...". The assumption, therefore, is that there is quite a bit of importance attached to developing ways to boost instruction in the classroom. As such, readers would be interested in the methodology employed here, geared towards unearthing and experimenting with best practices to increase access to social justice imperatives. So how did the author set up the study? How was it structured? What was the filtering process employed? etc. It is unconventional to simply state in the methods section that "secondary and desktop methods" were used – readers, especially those unfamiliar with this approach, would like to know what this entails!

Pg 4 "redefining teacher education to promote diversity..." seems like an incomplete sentence. The link between this sentence and the bullet points that follow, must be made more explicit to improve cohesion. Same can be said for sentences starting with "Leveraging digital identity..." & "Investigating specific methodologies..." & "Enabling learners to contribute...". These leading sentences (incomplete currently) must be stated as full complete sentences to avoid them being read like another bullet, esp since they (the complete sentences) serve the role of introducing and setting the context for the bullets below them. This will add to the cohesion and coherence of the text

Last paragraph of results and findings section there are no examples to illustrate the points being made? It would be useful to see how the author is thinking about the recommendations coming through here in an actual class setting, i.e. shifting focus from the theoretical desktop setting to thinking about actual application in the classroom – this can still be done through visiting the relevant literature and commenting on it to show relevance and impact. So what would this entail? What form would a typical lesson take to illustrate social justice and equity on the ground? Perhaps the magnitude of literature that the author has consulted, could be used to flesh out some of these illustrative examples, to allow readers to get a sense of the impact of application? This is desktop research, but surely examples or case studies where some of these ideas have been employed, can be made more visible in the paper to show the type of impact that can be achieved within the broad context that the author is addressing? And this raises another important issue – the author speaks in broad and general strokes – not naming or identifying and specific context where this research can be applied, i.e. in a local setting, so that readers can get better insight into the work being done here. This link between the literature used here and the actual physical and geographic location (e.g. as a case study) in which the 'theory/ideas' are to be applied, is missing!

Author needs to provide an example of where this work has been applied successfully. This would be very useful for the readers, who are diverse. What is the evidence for the claims being made in this section? There seem to be many claims that are not substantiated with evidence nor illustrative egs!! This detracts from the overall argument the author is trying to make here!

There are

powerful claims/statements in this last paragraph of the Discussion section - but the evidence /discussion/ interrogation of literature/ the issues it raises/ and the identification of the core players in the conversation, are missing in the text earlier on - which detracts from the weight and validity of the claims made in this last paragraph. It would, for example, have been really core, to include some discussion of where, who, when, what and how the critical pedagogy and transformational learning theory that the author foregrounds in the introduction as foundational lenses for this type of research, is being applied here! Without such critical engagement, much of the paper reads like a list of statements. What we need is to interrogate the bullet points making up the list - to show how impact can be and has been made!!

The very point of actually "examining and evaluating methodologies" being noted here in this paragraph by the author on pg. 5, is exactly *what has not been done* here in the article. The issue around "language acquisition" tends to be just another buzz word here - as there is no real and in-depth engagement with this language acquisition issue, in terms of illustrating or at least unpacking what the process entails in actual classroom practice. So much more needs to be done in terms of illustrating and providing evidence for the claims made here.

Conclusion

Are these the students who need to evaluate or the teachers? And is it the students who take it upon themselves to incorporate research articles and case studies and reflective exercises into the curriculum? What is the teacher's role here then, in terms of building and capacitating that sense of agency among students? The author also tends to shift from using the term "students" to using the term "learners" - maybe some consistency would be useful here for the reader, esp in terms of the understanding that 'students' are usually older (college/university) while learners (school goers) tend to be younger. Unless of course if there are specific types of activities and methodologies that are being applied to different age levels - but the author has made no such distinction in the paper. In fact, the context, which is very broad here, would benefit from being located within specific settings, so that a stronger connection can be made between the macro contexts and the more specific contexts in which theory is being applied. SO a shift from broad macro to more micro, to consolidate focus.

"cutting edge in which way?" The lack of depth of analysis and any form of evaluative lens to assess what is out there already, makes this statement shaky! Here in the last parag of the conclusion, "According to the book..." - What book is being referred to here?

Review Summary: The author has highlighted a very important and relevant issue in teaching and learning, with respect to creating awareness about the very real need for making curricula socially relevant and responsive to the lived realities of the learners/students participating in those activities. This need for alignment between the lived realities of the learners and the transformative goals of education come through strongly here, opening up much needed space for the hidden curricula to surface in dynamic and innovative ways. So overall, the aim of the research is well articulated. However, this articulation and the actual interrogation and application of the theory to real locations, is missing. There is no real indication of where and how these methods of inquiry which the author advocates for, and the impact thereof, has been used successfully. While the author has done a tremendous job of reading very broadly and gathering a huge number of literature to draw on, this abundance of literature has made it difficult to 'dig deep' into some of the issues it raises. So while theoretical and conceptual frameworks may be in place, it's the application of these that must be reinforced, to get a

better sense of 'affect and effect' with respect to teacher training, the methods employed, and how these contribute towards the generation of agency amongst learners to impact positive social change. It's the journey of impact towards this goal, the description, analysis, interrogation of this journey, that needs to be incorporated in this text.