Educators’ literacies practices associated with research-engaged andragogy contribute significantly to improving learning outcomes: implications for leadership

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Literacies

Context: adult literacies are increasingly recognised as an essential component of socio-economic equity and inclusion, with intergenerational characteristics.

Theoretical Frameworks: social practices approaches to adult literacies recognise an inherent multiplicity of contextually dependent practices and ideological hegemonies. They challenge an autonomous model which suggests that a literacy practice has effect independent of social context. The New Literacy Studies examine facets of this. There are curriculum implications.

What are literacies practices? Literacies practices illuminate how forms of data are perceived, collected, processed and shared. They vary across educators, learners and learning environments as they interact through pedagogic, research or management lenses. Outside the education environment, for example in communities, business and politics, it becomes more complex.
Working with literacies practices and models
Questions To You

1) If there are a multiplicity of literacies practices in local hegemonies, what are the curriculum implications in your field?

2) Is the impact of distinct literacies practices likely to vary from nursery through to further and higher education, and the wider world?

3) If we require contextually nuanced understanding of our curricula, how do we go about achieving this between learners, institutions and other factors?

4) Are there implications in this for our own literacies practices as educators?
Study Outline

General population: adult literacies educators in post-compulsory education

- sample population: n=209
- survey respondents: n=36
- interview respondents: n=11, 7.5 hours
- approx 90% UK, 10% international

Pragmatic, mixed methods approach

- Quasi-quantitative and descriptive statistical profiling of educator characteristics, practices and evaluation of impact, mainly via Likert scales
- Qualitative profiling of educator perceptions, via thematic analysis
Main findings

Findings are strongly indicative that literacies practices associated with research-engaged andragogy improve learning outcomes, and educators’ professional well-being.

However, there is often low *explicit* awareness of the practices engaged in.

The educators studied find teaching and learning more rewarding, it increases their confidence and they become more involved in developing and supporting their peers.

The educators studied at times struggle to access wider peer support, input and feedback, or the theoretical frameworks to work with data.
Implications

Salient characteristics of the literacies practices relate to
• reading and talking for ideas and evaluative feedback;
• talking about learner profiles, contexts and evidence;
• writing to generate and process ideas, evidence and evaluative feedback.

These are emphasised as dialogic processes, and implicate professional learning communities.

Full report freely available on https://ioe.academia.edu/TaraFurlong
Theoretical Frameworks in Leadership

This presentation questions which practices may best support teaching and learning in any given context, and how a systems leadership approach utilises policy to create an environment responsive to diversity across teaching and learning contexts.

This elucidates an interdisciplinary space where navigating the ideologies and hegemonies of a social practices approach are contextualised against defining and establishing the criteria for trust inherent in creating common moral purpose.

Concepts of distributed leadership are counterpoised within a self-improving system. Attention to literacies practices provides technical mechanics absent in many leadership models perhaps more focussed on social dynamics.
Final Thoughts?

How do we best support all educators to interact effectively in these practices?

A model for deriving new epistemological bases: literacies practices, professional learning communities and research-engaged andragogy
Thank you!

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