

27.1.2026

Author

HUGHES, Jonathan

Title

Cameos, supporting roles and stars : citation and reflection in the context of initial teacher education

Publication year

2013

Source/Footnote

In: Educational research. - 55 (2013) 1, S. 16 - 30

Inventory number

34353

Keywords

Lehrerbildung : allgemein

Abstract

Background: Reflection is well established as an important part of teacher education, but it is also the focus of critical enquiry. This means that reflection is of interest to those who wish to explore its use to produce 'better' teachers. It is also of interest to scholars who are interested in the wider implications of reflection, for example, in relation to power and social control. Academic articles are the primary medium through which ideas and practices are communicated. However, they can only contribute if they are accepted for publication on the basis of making a contribution to knowledge. To be seen in this way, a journal paper needs to cite earlier work to show understanding of this work and how this is being augmented. Purpose: This paper aims to initiate an academic debate of citation practices which, it argues, should be based on an awareness of current practices and a willingness to share, and even change, them. To facilitate the debate and the development of a better understanding of citing and its implications, the paper offers a tripartite citation framework. Sources of evidence: The extensive citation analysis literature is reviewed to provide a context for an examination of the variety of citation practices found in 24 papers, which all focus on initial teacher education and which

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cite the same critical paper (Fendler, L., Teacher reflection in a hall of mirrors: Historical influences and political reverberations. Educational Researcher, 32, no. 3: 16-25, 2003; doi: 10.3102/0013189X032003016). Main argument: This paper argues that there is value in differentiating three categories of citation, labelled 'cameo', 'supporting role' and 'star'. These categories do not make judgements about what counts as 'good' or 'bad' referencing. Rather, they provide a way for authors to assess how they are citing and what the possible consequences may be. These can include an apparent lack of understanding not just of a cited paper but also of the wider literature. This means that citation that is not being carefully managed can undermine an argument. Conclusions: This paper concludes that there is a need to initiate an academic debate about citation which is premised on the development of self-awareness about current practice and its consequences. Such a debate could bring about a number of benefits. It would encourage individual scholars to develop self-aware and ethical citation; it would also clarify current expectations about citation and enable academic communities to reflect on whether enquiry is well served by them. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)