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Critique 1

February 16, 2013

Article

Rolling, J. r. (2010). Art education at the turn of the tide: The utility of narrative in curriculum-making and education research. *Art Education*, 63(3), 6-12.

Synopsis

This article is a narrative of professional practice intended to suggest Art educators to consider changing the Art education with new ideas and models. After experiencing some frustration in his teaching school, Rolling decides to observe and collect stories of his individual educational practices. He suggests art educators to do a narrative analysis and social research to transform art education. He firmly believes professional narratives are vital because they generate the possibility of new story emerging from interpretive acts of research. By doing his own narrative research, Rolling seeks to model the utility of this research in analyzing the many facets of art education practice and arts learning. In this article, the author compares three fundamental models of practice in art education that oppose one another; empirical analytic paradigm, interpretive-hermeneutic paradigm and critical-theoretic paradigm.

Use of Theory

The purpose of this narrative research was to analyze the practice models in art education to suggest renovation in art teaching. Each of these models is a good example of the three learning theories; behaviorism, cognitivism and constructivism. The art education models Rolling focused on are empirical analytic paradigm, interpretive-hermeneutic paradigm and critical-theoretic paradigm.

According to Pearce, empirical analytic paradigm defines art as a “system of production, a cause-and-effect intervention into a stockpile of material elements, a commodity-oriented process that has as its basic intent a cognitive interest in the control of objects in the world” (Rolling, 2010) This model supports behaviorism theory for students learn to create “beautiful” artwork in which is used to decorate walls but ignore the possibility of thought processes taking place in the mind. Rolling opposes to this paradigm and explains he finds little relevance in using students’ artwork as decoration to remedy bland corridors. “Students work should

provide evidence of learning, represent curricular connections, and reflect an emerging critical awareness (Rolling, 2010). In other words, he prefers constructivism theory.

Interpretive-hermeneutic paradigm “defines art as a system of communication, the expression of situated knowledge about a person’s relationship with his or her social world. The ways, in which we immediately experience an intimacy with the living world, attending to its many textures, sounds, flavors and gestures”. (Rolling, 2010) This reflects the cognitivism theory for changes in behavior are observed and used as indicators as to what is happening inside the learner’s mind. With this kind of art model, the student learns to communicate through their art and the viewer is able to see feelings and expressions inside the artist’s mind.

The last art education model is critical-theoretic paradigm. According to Pearse, it defines art as a system of critical reflection, a relativist from of activism, rendering invisible assumptions, values, and norms newly visible “in order to transform” and critique unjust social relations and empower marginalized individuals and communities within the practitioner’s social world (Rolling, 2010) This is a great example of the constructivism theory, which it is based on the idea that we all construct our own perspective of the world, through individual experiences. Learners construct their own reality or at least interpret it based upon their perceptions of experiences.

From these three art education models, Rolling suggests critical-theoretic paradigm is the best way to use it with art students since it dominates in defining art and arts policies in the modern era (2010).

For each art education model, the researcher gave a story to analyze its effect and to model art educators on writing narratives to generate stories. Stories that told and retold to shape other point of views. Stories that are part of experiences but that could provoke thinking and lead to interpretation. Just like the constructivism theory in which learners construct their own reality or at least interpret it based upon their perceptions of experiences, mental structure, and beliefs that are used to interpret objects and events (Gredler, 2009).

Evaluation

This article explores the utility of narrative methodologies to educational research. Rolling is able to illustrate his point of view of the constructivism theory by sharing his own teaching experiences and telling those stories to provoke other’s interpretations. The first story is descriptive, the second story is speculative and the third story is a negotiation. All of these stories were collected as data which is connected to art education practice. This article incites critical thinking by supporting the real significance in art education. With the collected data,

the author is able to prove the meaning behind students' artworks. School art are not meant to decorate empty walls but to give proof of the students' learning to make connections and show critical awareness.