A critique

Advancing student teachers' learning in the teaching practicum through Content-Focused Coaching: A field experiment. (Becker, Waldis & Staub 2019)

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For this critique, I took the Becker, Waldis & Staub (2019) article on "advancing student teachers' learning in the teaching practicum through Content-Focused Coaching: A field experiment." To guide my critique on this article, I decided to use the following evaluation standards that draw developing introduction using the CARS model respectively. These are establishing a territory, establishing a niche and occupying the niche (Swales, 1990).

Key words: Establishing a territory, establishing a niche and occupying the niche

INTORDUCTOIN

In establishing the territory of the research, Becker, Waldis & Staub (2019) first described the research problem and provided evidence to support why the topic is important to study. Let us see the following statement. "The teaching practicum serves various functions and is considered to be "a unique time in teachers' professional development" (Fives, Hamman, & Olivarez, 2007, p. 917).

Becker, Waldis & Staub also provided statements about the current state of knowledge, consensus, practice or description of phenomena to set up the territory, and they synthesized prior research that further supports the need to study the research problem. They addressed the importance of the research problem like "It offers the opportunity to develop and reflect on teaching skills, gain vicarious experiences by observing and learning from…." They further described as "Furthermore, the teaching practicum is considered one of the most important components of…." This shows dealing with the problem is probably important.

During establishing the niche, they introduced opposing viewpoints or perspectives or identify a gap in prior research that they believe has weakened or undermined the prevailing argument. They signaled this by saying "However, it is not practice per se that makes a teaching practicum "effective" (Grudnoff, 2011). They also put emphasis on the importance of the problem by using prior studies. For instance, they said "Hodges (1982) found that STs could not handle the classroom pressures (e.g., pupil management) in an unsupervised teaching practicum and were overwhelmed by handling their experiences alone." Similarly, they noted other scholars work for further evidence. They reported,"Ronfeldt & Reiniger (2012) showed that it was not the length of the

teaching practicum that was associated with … but the quality of perceived support." This showed the likely controversy.

Finally, they developed the research problem around a gap or understudied area of the literature. Similar to gap identification, the researchers were engaged presenting key points about the consequences of gaps in prior research that could be addressed by their study. For example, "Despite a growing body of research focusing on the teaching practicum, most of it is based on qualitative research designs (Lawson et al., 2015) and the impact of specific mentoring and supporting tools on STs' development and teaching skills has not yet been sufficiently researched." Using this statement they claim that the issue demands further investigation to understand the essence of practicum.

Regarding to occupying the niche, Becker, Waldis & Staub (2019) first described the purpose of their study in terms of what the research is going to do or accomplish like "The present study seeks to address this research gap through a field experiment evaluating the effects of short professional development training for CTs…" But the writers of this article did not outline the research purpose in clear language. And the writers need to state the research question clearly. For me, it is perhaps good to address in the interrogative way rather than using statements because the former is more focused. For this reason, the actual problem statement might be a little more difficult to pinpoint. Whereas, using question format to assert the research problem is probably the clearest way to identify the problem area of a study. However, the authors did not use this. I believe that declarative sentences sometimes may not be vivid.

The other point Becker, Waldis & Staub(2019) made in occupying the niche is their presentation of a general summary of key findings which is written like "We investigated effects on CTs' practice and learning in the teaching practicum, i.e., STs' professional development…"Lastly, the authors of this article stated how the remainder of their paper is organized. One could see the way they did this in the following sentence. "CTs were randomly assigned either to a control group or to one of three intervention groups that received brief training sessions in.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, using my limited experience of the CARS model, I could say Becker, Waldis & Staub (2019) followed proper procedures. These authors stated the introduction utilizing pivotal points that expose the phenomenon. This means the authors tried to demonstrate the situation, set up the problem and announce the solution. Consequently, I appreciate the authors sensibly did the introduction.

REFERENCES

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