Transformative education through social activities and curriculum de-encapsulation

Educação transformadora por meio de atividades sociais e desencapsulação curricular

Educación transformadora a través de actividades sociales y desencapsulación del currículo

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ABSTRACT: This essay discusses transformative education through social activities and curriculum de-encapsulation. Using the example of a museum visit, it demonstrates how integrating real-world, situated activities into the curriculum challenges traditional educational models by promoting student agency and critical engagement with the production of knowledge. This approach fosters educational environments where students are not merely passive recipients of predefined content but active participants in constructing meaning through experiences that connect school and life. Curriculum de-encapsulation enables interdisciplinary learning that bridges academic knowledge with social, political, and cultural issues, thus contributing to a pedagogy that is inclusive, critical, and socially responsive. By breaking the boundaries of rigid disciplinary structures, it allows for the integration of multiple perspectives and ways of knowing. This not only enhances students' cognitive engagement but also supports the development of their social and ethical awareness. The article concludes that such an educational orientation has the potential to prepare students to become reflective and responsible agents of social change within their communities. It suggests that transformative learning spaces, grounded in real experiences and dialogical practices, are essential for cultivating a sense of belonging, purpose, and the collective potential to act toward a more just and equitable world.
KEYWORDS: Transformative education; Social activities; Curriculum de-encapsulation; Student agency; Engaged multiliteracy.

RESUMO: Este ensaio discute a educação transformadora por meio de atividades sociais e da descapsulação curricular. Com o exemplo de uma visita ao museu, demonstra como a integração de atividades atividades reais e situadas no currículo desafia os modelos educacionais tradicionais, promovendo a agência dos estudantes e o engajamento crítico com a produção do conhecimento. Essa proposta favorece ambientes de aprendizagem nos

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quais os alunos não são receptores passivos de conteúdos previamente definidos, mas participantes ativos na vivência de experiências que conectam escola e vida. A descapsulação curricular permite um aprendizado interdisciplinar que articula o conhecimento acadêmico com questões sociais, políticas e culturais, promovendo uma pedagogia inclusiva e crítica. Ao romper com estruturas disciplinares rígidas, possibilita a integração de múltiplas perspectivas e formas de saber. Isso amplia o engajamento cognitivo dos estudantes e contribui para o desenvolvimento de sua consciência social e ética. Conclui-se que essa orientação educacional tem o potencial de preparar os alunos para serem sujeitos reflexivos e responsáveis, agentes de mudança social em suas comunidades.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Educação transformadora; Atividades sociais; Descapsulação curricular; Agência estudantil; Multiletramento engajado.

RESUMEN: Este ensayo analiza la educación transformadora a través de la integración de actividades sociales y la descapsulación curricular. A partir del ejemplo de una visita a un museo, se argumenta que la incorporación de experiencias del mundo real y situadas en el currículo desafía los modelos educativos tradicionales, promoviendo la agencia estudiantil y la participación crítica en la producción del conocimiento. Esta perspectiva fomenta entornos de aprendizaje donde los estudiantes no son receptores pasivos, sino participantes activos en la construcción de sentido a partir de vivencias que conectan escuela y vida. La descapsulación curricular favorece un aprendizaje interdisciplinario, conectando el conocimiento académico con problemáticas sociales, políticas y culturales, y fomentando una pedagogía inclusiva, crítica y socialmente comprometida. Al romper con estructuras disciplinares rígidas, se posibilita la integración de múltiples saberes y formas de comprensión. Esto no solo profundiza el compromiso cognitivo del alumnado, sino que también impulsa el desarrollo de su conciencia ética y social. Se concluye que esta orientación educativa tiene el potencial de preparar a los estudiantes para desempeñarse como sujetos reflexivos y responsables, agentes de transformación social en sus comunidades.
PALABRAS CLAVE: Educación transformadora; Actividades sociales; Descapsulación curricular; Agencia estudiantil; Multiletramento engajado.

Introduction

The objective of this essay is to explore how the concept of curriculum de-encapsulation, grounded in social activities, offers a transformative and critical approach to education. By focusing on the practical example of a museum visit as a key organizer of educational experiences, the article demonstrates how de-encapsulation challenges traditional educational models by integrating lived experiences, fostering student agency, and promoting critical engagement with knowledge production. This emphasizes the importance of socially relevant, inclusive, and critical pedagogical approaches in addressing contemporary educational challenges.

Throughout the text, the concept of curriculum de-encapsulation is introduced

and analyzed through various dimensions, beginning with a theoretical discussion that frames de-encapsulation as a process of breaking down traditional subject boundaries and integrating real-world social activities into the curriculum. The museum visit serves as a practical example of how students may engage with cultural and historical narratives, connecting these narratives to their lived realities and fostering interdisciplinary learning. The article further explores how this social activity supports the concept of Engaged Multiliteracy, where students engage with multiple genres and modes of communication, navigating through social realities in ways that challenge and transform conventional educational practices.

Central themes such as educational agency, the decolonization of knowledge, and critical pedagogy are addressed throughout the discussion, demonstrating how curriculum de-encapsulation fosters an inclusive learning environment that encourages students to critically engage with power structures and reflect on their role as active participants in their education. The article concludes by reflecting on the broader implications of curriculum de-encapsulation for education, underscoring the need for approaches that not only connect academic learning with real-world social issues but also empower students to become agents of change within their communities.

1 Necropolitics and the Perspective of the Global South

Necropolitics, as defined by Mbembe (2003), refers to the sovereign power's ability to control life and orchestrate death through systematic mechanisms rooted in terror, a legacy of colonial and apartheid regimes (Mbembe, 2003). This system relies not on direct warfare but on the constant threat of violence, establishing a state of emergency that justifies extreme measures (Mbembe, 2003). At its core is a racial hierarchy that divides humanity into superior and inferior races, legitimizing the authority to take life.

Given the harmful impact of necropolitics, it is essential to question the theoretical assumptions and research practices that perpetuate these mechanisms of

control and marginalization. As Santos[2] (2018) argues, researchers must adopt tools that challenge injustice and inequality, promoting transformation in social practices. This ethical and political stance involves developing new methodologies and concepts that break away from colonial perspectives (Mignolo; Walsh, 2018; Pennycook; Makoni, 2019; Santos, 2018). The goal is to move beyond mere description and understanding, working toward transforming unjust practices across various dimensions of human experience—acting, feeling, thinking, and knowing.

This article adopts the perspective of the Global South, as described by Santos (2008), who sees the South as a metaphor for the human suffering caused by capitalist modernity. From this viewpoint, the text advocates for autonomous, self-directed actions rooted in the Global South, addressing the coloniality of knowledge and power. This effort is part of an alternative life project encompassing cultural, economic, political, and scientific dimensions.

Freire's concept of "sulear" (1970), or "heading South," is central to this vision. Rather than rejecting modernity, "sulear" involves constructing a new world grounded in the experiences and struggles of marginalized communities. This article aims to "sulear" Activity Theory by applying its concepts to the lived experiences of impoverished communities in São Paulo, Brazil, proposing an educational transformation framework from within the Global South that addresses the complex realities of marginalized communities.

Effective engagement with reality, as Freire (1970) argues, requires not just observing but actively transforming the world while being transformed by it. This involves creating the "right to express oneself, create, and decide" (Freire, 1982, p. 49). Activity thus engages subjects in the world, where real life begins with practical action, as suggested by Marx and Engels (2006).

The article focuses on using diverse tools to carry out concrete actions (Vygotsky, 1994). Leontiev (1978) expands this, framing activity as a stable system

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[2] Despite the serious accusations of sexual harassment against Boaventura de Sousa Santos, which deserve condemnation, and the consequent loss of respect once held for him, his intellectual contributions remain relevant for understanding the relations between the Global South and North. I acknowledge the value of his earlier work, while also recognizing that, unfortunately, the author himself did not manage to escape the very contradictions he critiqued. Thus, I continue to reference his past academic work, fully aware of this complexity.

where labor divisions separate goal-oriented actions while combining them toward a shared motive. Engeström (2002) and Sannino (2020) further emphasize that activity systems are contextually and historically situated, requiring constant negotiation and learning cycles that connect participants' aims with broader utopian visions.
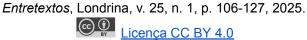
2 Curriculum De-encapsulation

Curriculum De-encapsulation represents a critical shift from traditional academic approaches that promote a singular, hegemonic form of knowledge toward an inclusive ecology of knowledges (Santos, 2008). This approach, drawing from various sources, offers a range of possibilities for expanding learning and knowledge production (Engeström, 2002). At its core, de-encapsulation requires an engaged pedagogy, one that promises full student participation, fosters mutual relationships between teachers and students, and creates an atmosphere of trust and commitment (Freire, 1970; Hooks, 2013).

In practice, curriculum de-encapsulation allows participants to experiment with insurgent practices, discovering their voices and projecting their ideas. Through this process, they develop an active stance, realizing that they are not merely passive recipients within the world but are implicated in its dynamics as co-creators (Stetsenko, 2017). This empowers voices that are typically silenced and provides opportunities for vulnerable groups to gain visibility and recognition through meaningful activities.

This form of curriculum not only acknowledges the diversity of knowledge present in reality but also recognizes that learners bring a wealth of experience to the school environment. These experiences present multiple possibilities for expanding learners' identities and their ways of acting in the world (Liberali, 2009, 2013, 2020, 2022). The LACE research group has spearheaded efforts to organize school curricula based on social activities, using various school subjects as tools to empower students' engagement in life (Liberali, 2009). Such an approach aims to foster more equitable ways of acting, thinking, feeling, and living (Liberali, 2020).

A curriculum organized around de-encapsulation is not static; it is subject to

ongoing analysis, investigation, and reformulation. This dynamic process, starting with the de-encapsulation of content (Engeström, 2002; Liberali *et al.*, 2015), transforms schoolwork into a matrix of socialization and action within the community and the broader world. Traditional curricular content, often isolated from the lived experiences of learners, is reconnected to the realities students already know, facilitating a deeper understanding of their knowledge and experiences (Liberali, 2017).

Reflecting on encapsulated content and proposing expansive learning (Engeström, 2002), this approach incorporates three key dimensions: discovery, practical application, and criticism. In the discovery dimension, learners experiment with knowledge rather than merely receiving it passively. Practical application focuses on the relevance of knowledge to community engagement, while the critical dimension encourages students to analyze content and procedures based on their context. This multidimensional approach broadens students' participation in society.

In a multicultural perspective, the curriculum must incorporate the ecology of knowledges (Santos, 2008), embracing epistemological, cultural, and ontological diversity. This approach involves working with various forms of knowledge and fostering relationships between hegemonic and non-hegemonic, scientific and non-scientific, local and global, traditional and alternative, monocultural and multicultural knowledge. Such an inclusive framework creates opportunities for expanding learning (Engeström, 2002) and promotes teaching and learning beyond the boundaries of disciplinary silos.

In line with Freire (1970) suggestions, the curriculum organized through de-encapsulation encourages participants to relearn how to see and read the world, overcoming the rigid roles and content stratification that maintain social control (Pérez Gómez, 1998). In rethinking knowledge, curriculum, and culture, the school becomes a space for promoting active participation and facilitating social, economic, cultural, and identity changes (Freire, 1970).

This curriculum de-encapsulation (Engeström, 2002, 2006, 2016; Liberali, 2019, Liberali *et al*., 2015) goes beyond content by addressing the preconditioned roles of participants. It organizes teaching and learning processes outside the

traditional "capsules" of knowledge, participants, and the institution itself. This process fosters human development, extending learning beyond the classroom and integrating it into everyday life.
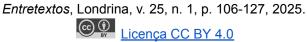
In line with Vygotsky's ideas (1994), development occurs through subjects' engagement in social activities. Liberali (2009, 2022) emphasizes that development involves connecting everyday concepts with scientific knowledge, reflecting the historical accumulation of society's heritage. This implies an interrelationship between all types of experiences and knowledge in life activities, where curriculum organization is based on specific, concrete activities that satisfy the needs of the subjects involved (Leontiev, 1978).

In this context, educators and students are encouraged to reflect on the activities that compose their everyday lives and how they can engage more fully in them. This involves participating in new experiences with people from diverse cultures, experimenting with different values and interests, and organizing curriculum based on Engaged Multiliteracy (Liberali, 2020, 2022). Engaged Multiliteracy expands the multiliteracy practices of the New London Group (Cazden, 1996) through a dialogue with Vygotskian and Freirean perspectives. It emphasizes immersion in reality, critical generalization, and the production of social change, empowering participants to engage with and transform their realities actively.

Thus, a curriculum organized around activities aligns with Sánchez Vazquez's (2007) notion of human activity as a means by which individuals modify their world. Human life is sustained by participation in object-oriented activities, and curriculum de-encapsulation situates learning within a collective life perspective, directing individuals beyond their personal interests.

Children's development, as Van Oers (2013) supports, occurs through their participation in social activities. For example, make-believe play—central to early childhood development—allows children to engage in imaginary situations, assume roles, and navigate rules, thus recreating their understanding of the world. This underscores how curriculum de-encapsulation connects social activities to cultural practices, expanding learning opportunities and fostering collective engagement.

Alongside the concept of activity, play is essential in supporting a

transformative perspective. Play transcends immediate activities by harnessing imagination to generate new possibilities, allowing subjects to participate in, appropriate, and transform culture (Vygotsky, 1966).

Play and performance promote development, create space for changes in needs and consciousness, and foster creativity and new possibilities (Newman; Holzman, 1993; Holzman, 2016; Lobman, 2017). Through activities and play, people gain intentional control over their lives, taking responsibility for the course and moral implications of cultural practices (Van Oers, 2013). This agency represents the potential to break from established frameworks and initiate transformative action (Virkkunen, 2006). It also enables individuals to develop authority and authorship over their lives and the transformation of reality (Engeström; Sannino, 2010; Engeström, 2006, 2016; Virkkunen, 2006).

Agency, therefore, embodies participants' involvement in the collective production of shared decisions, where they question established practices and theories to construct new futures (7). Stetsenko (2017) defines this as the process of co-creating, co-authoring, and inventing the future, embedded in the ongoing struggle to change the world and shape how it, in turn, shapes us—through taking a stand, staking a claim, making commitments, and claiming positions.

Procedures and Analysis

This study was a critical collaborative research project (Ninin; Magalhães, 2017; Liberali; Fuga; Lopes, 2021) conducted with a group of teachers who developed the museum visit project during a course taught by the author. The teachers implemented the project and presented the results through descriptions of the activities, videos of participants engaged in the tasks, and photos documenting the entire process. However, due to ethical concerns, data involving the students cannot be used. The teachers, on the other hand, authorized the use of their descriptions and observations on the outcomes of the activities, as demonstrated in the data they provided.

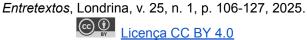Therefore, for this article, the focus was on the teachers' descriptions of the

project and the written and visual materials. This decision was made to align with the main objective of discussing transformative education through social activities and curriculum de-encapsulation, with an emphasis on the teaching and learning process rather than the final results. By concentrating on the teachers' narratives, it allows for an understanding of how pedagogical practices were conceived and implemented, offering insights into the instructional decisions and challenges faced during the project. Additionally, analyzing the written and visual materials provides an opportunity to explore how content was presented to the students and how they interacted with these materials throughout the activity, highlighting the importance of the educational process as a space for critical and collaborative construction.

3 Social Activity: Visiting the Museum

This section explores how visiting a museum exemplifies curriculum de-encapsulation principles through Engaged Multiliteracy. It integrates real-world cultural experiences into the curriculum, enabling students to critically engage with historical narratives, power structures, and knowledge construction. The museum visit is not a passive experience but connects academic learning with students' lived realities, fostering critical literacy, interdisciplinary collaboration, and cultural agency.

Students interact with various genres—visual, textual, and oral—within a socio-historical context, encouraging them to question dominant narratives and reflect on how power, exclusion, and representation shape the stories they encounter. This activity serves as a platform for deconstructing traditional knowledge frameworks, promoting student agency, and enabling them to become active participants in their learning and communities. By breaking down barriers between formal education and social engagement, it illustrates how curriculum de-encapsulation leads to a more integrated, transformative, and socially relevant educational experience.

3.1 Exploring Cultural Memory and Power through Museum Visits

The social activity described took place in the context of a visit to the Museu do Ceará, organized by teachers for students in the 4th year of Fundamental Education. The students, aged between 8 and 10 and coming from a middle- to upper-class background, were guided through this experience with the aim of fostering cultural, critical, and social development. This activity was part of an effort to connect students with cultural, social, and material memory while encouraging them to analyze critically how the past influences the present. It included a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach that integrated history, geography, language, science, and mathematics to create a holistic learning experience. The primary objectives were:

- *Valuing cultural and social memory:* Students were encouraged to understand the importance of museums and cultural objects as part of their history.
- *Developing critical thinking:* By examining historical artifacts, students were guided to understand the social, political, and environmental implications of these objects.
- *Interdisciplinary collaboration:* The activity combined lessons from various subjects, such as Portuguese (developing oral and written communication), mathematics (working with data and geometrical figures related to the museum objects), and geography (understanding the transformations of Ceará's landscapes).
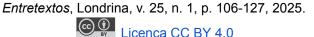
The social activity of visiting a museum integrates various components that provide a holistic and immersive learning experience, designed to engage students in both academic and socio-critical contexts. At the core of this activity is the connection of students to cultural, social, and material memory, while critically engaging with the power structures that define historical narratives. As students, accompanied by teachers, museum guides, and coordinators, explore the museum's collections, they are not merely learning about cultural heritage—they are challenging the ways in which history and culture are represented. This exploration is supported by various instruments such as videos, pamphlets, debates, interviews, and written texts like museum catalogs, all of which serve not just as tools for learning but also as sites for critical reflection on how knowledge is constructed and controlled.

From the perspective of teaching genres and discourse analysis, this activity exposes students to multiple communicative forms while encouraging them to question the authority and origins of these narratives. As they engage with materials such as leaflets, interviews, articles, and visual exhibits, students are introduced to different genres that extend beyond the classroom and into real-world contexts imbued with power dynamics. For instance, while museum pamphlets and exhibits provide informational texts, students are asked to deconstruct the perspectives these texts favor. Likewise, debates and interviews provide opportunities to critique the way oral narratives are used to uphold dominant historical and cultural views. By engaging with this broad spectrum of genres, students develop critical literacy skills that not only allow them to interpret and produce texts but also to analyze the power relations embedded within them.

Through this activity, students are encouraged to actively participate in discussions about the artifacts and exhibits, questioning not only the content but the historical processes that led to their display in the museum. This critical engagement fosters an understanding of the role of language in shaping historical and cultural memory. The students are not passive consumers of information; instead, they are expected to critically analyze, synthesize, and challenge the information presented to them. This transformative engagement ultimately leads to the creation of a cultural-historical catalog that reflects their critical understanding of how culture and history are represented, rather than a mere reproduction of the museum's own narratives.

In terms of subject areas, the museum visit serves as an interdisciplinary and decolonial learning opportunity, combining knowledge from history, social studies, language arts, and visual arts, all while pushing students to interrogate the Eurocentric underpinnings of these fields. The historical artifacts serve as starting points for discussions about the politics of representation, where students are encouraged to think critically about whose histories are being told and whose are omitted. This encourages students to connect the past and present not as linear, objective realities but as contested spaces of memory and identity construction. Tied closely to language arts, students use written texts, oral discussions, and visual
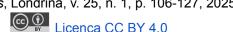
representations to not just learn content but to question the authority behind the content.

The social nature of the activity, where students work collaboratively and interact with museum guides and peers, introduces elements of social studies that highlight the cultural and political significance of museums as institutions of power. Students are learning about cultural preservation; at the same time, as they are analyzing how museums play a role in maintaining or challenging power dynamics. The collaborative creation of a catalog and the creation of the museum within the school at the end of the activity taps into the subject areas of art and design, but this too is framed critically, as students create representations that resist or subvert the dominant narratives they encountered. This integration of art and design allows students to develop both visual literacy and critical agency, reinforcing their understanding of how textual and visual genres serve as tools of cultural production and power.

The task of compiling a cultural-historical catalog and organizing a museum-like exhibit within the school demands that students apply knowledge from multiple disciplines while working towards a shared, tangible outcome that reflects their critical analysis. This interdisciplinary approach exemplifies *Curriculum De-encapsulation* by breaking down isolated subject learning and promoting the integration of various knowledge fields into a unified, critical social activity. Students do not simply link history, language, social studies, and arts; they engage with these areas as sites of contestation, where knowledge is constructed, negotiated, and applied with a critical lens. The museum visit, through its use of informational texts, narratives, interviews, and visual exhibits, allows students to see how power is embedded in knowledge production and to understand the real-world implications of the cultural and historical narratives they encounter.

Moreover, this activity encourages students to challenge and deconstruct dominant historical narratives by examining how power and exclusion shape the stories museums tell. The critical reflection that emerges from this activity promotes an understanding of equity and justice, pushing students to consider whose voices have been marginalized and how those voices might be reclaimed. By engaging with

museum exhibits in this way, students are not just learning about history; they are learning to question the structures of power that have determined which histories are preserved and celebrated. This fosters a deep sense of agency, empowering students to engage actively with their cultural heritage and to become agents of social change in their communities.

3.2 Engaged Multiliteracy and Curriculum De-encapsulation through Museum Visits

A curriculum structured around a museum visit offers a dynamic opportunity to work with Engaged Multiliteracy, a concept that goes beyond the traditional boundaries of literacy to incorporate multiple forms of communication and meaning-making. This approach emphasizes the active role of students as producers of knowledge, engaging with real-world contexts in ways that are socially and culturally relevant. Engaged multiliteracy fosters a critical and transformative pedagogy, encouraging students to navigate and synthesize diverse genres and modes of expression—visual, textual, oral, and digital—while interacting with their social and historical environments.

In the context of visiting a museum, this framework allows students to immerse themselves in authentic cultural experiences where they can engage critically with historical narratives, question power structures, and use their understanding to influence their communities. A curriculum designed through the lens of engaged multiliteracy is therefore de-encapsulated—it breaks down the traditional separation between academic learning and real-world social activities, integrating both to create a more meaningful and transformative educational experience.

This process unfolds across multiple stages: (a) immersion in reality, (b) the critical construction of generalizations, and (c) the production of social change. In each action, students are invited to critically engage with various textual, visual, and communicative forms, using them as tools for critical inquiry and social participation.

(a)Immersion in Reality: Before the museum visit, educators provide students with a comprehensive introduction to the content and context of the museum. This stage is not limited to a basic overview of the artifacts but can encourage students to
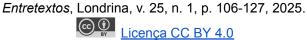
question the historical significance and representation of the objects they will encounter. Educators use various instruments such as videos, pamphlets, and interviews to familiarize students with the museum's themes, to support them in thinking critically about whose stories are being told. This preparation phase also includes a discussion on possible ways to act in museums, which moves beyond simply teaching students about rules and norms—it provides an opportunity to reflect on the institutional power of museums and their role in shaping cultural memory.

(b) Critical Construction of Generalizations: During the visit, students are divided into research groups, each tasked with addressing specific questions related to the museum's content. These questions are interdisciplinary in nature, compelling students to examine aspects of history, geography, culture, and the environment while keeping in mind the broader social and political implications of the artifacts. On the day of the visit, students—accompanied by teachers and museum monitors—explore the exhibits, engaging in critical observation and documenting their findings. They are encouraged to interrogate the narratives presented in the museum, analyzing how these representations are constructed and considering how they relate to historical power structures. This process is facilitated by museum guides, who provide context, and teachers, who help mediate discussions that push students to reflect critically on the significance of the artifacts in light of current social and environmental issues.

Throughout the visit, students are expected to identify connections between the exhibits and their prior research. This phase emphasizes collaborative learning, where students work together to deconstruct the cultural narratives they encounter and make sense of how these artifacts fit into broader societal discourses. Upon returning to the classroom, students engage in group discussions to compare their findings and reflect on how their visit has altered their understanding of cultural heritage and historical memory. This reflection moves beyond personal insight and becomes an opportunity for students to critically engage with the museum's institutional role in shaping public perception of history.

At this stage, it is possible for students to begin a process of constructing their cultural-historical catalog, a product that synthesizes the knowledge they gained

during the visit. They review their notes and select relevant information with an emphasis on highlighting alternative perspectives and marginalized voices. The catalog is a critical tool, representing not just what they learned, but how they interrogated the dominant narratives of the museum and reframed them in a way that acknowledges historical complexity and diversity.

(c) Production of Social Change: The final stage of the activity involves not only the creation of the catalog but also the organization of the "Go to the Museum!" campaign, which pushes students to think about the role of cultural institutions in society. The campaign encourages students to take what they have learned and use it to promote broader community engagement with local cultural institutions, particularly with an aim at cultural participation among marginalized groups. Students collaboratively design promotional materials, with posters and invitations, which are shared with their school and local community. This phase emphasizes the importance of active cultural participation and helps students understand their role as agents of change in promoting cultural heritage and critically engaging with the institutions that curate it.

As a culminating step, students are tasked with creating a museum within the school. This step is not merely a reflection of their learning but a production activity where students take on the roles of curators, educators, and cultural mediators, much like the professionals they encountered during their visit. This school museum provides students with the opportunity to reconstruct and challenge the narratives they were exposed to during the museum visit, showcasing alternative perspectives and reflecting on the institutional biases they identified.

Throughout the process, students can actively shape their own learning through several critical actions:

- *Researching and asking questions:* In both the preparation and museum visit phases, students can actively engage in research. Their inquiries are not neutral but framed around critical questions concerning the museum's content and its broader cultural significance. Students can challenge the traditional authority of historical narratives, seeking answers that acknowledge alternative viewpoints.

- *Collaborating and discussing:* In groups, students may analyze the exhibits, share their insights, and collaborate on the production of the catalog. This collaborative process is essential for deconstructing institutional narratives and building collective knowledge. Through dialogue, students can learn not only from the museum but from each other, creating peer-driven knowledge construction.

- *Synthesizing information*: After gathering information during the museum visit, students are tasked with organizing their findings into a coherent, critical narrative. The process of synthesis requires evaluating the museum's portrayal of history and contrasting it with the students' own critical research. This stage cultivates higher-order thinking, pushing students to connect fragmented pieces of information into a unified, critically reinterpreted whole.

- *Creating and producing:* In the final stage, students can create a historical-cultural catalog and design the "Vá ao Museu" campaign. This phase stresses the production of knowledge that is socially relevant and engaged with critical perspectives on culture. Students would be not just consuming knowledge—they would be using what they learned to produce new interpretations and to actively participate in community discourse about cultural institutions.

This curriculum, built around a museum visit, can offer students the chance to immerse themselves in real-world cultural contexts, to critically engage with how history is presented, and to contribute meaningfully to social change. Through a decolonial approach, the activity empowers students to challenge traditional narratives, rethink the role of cultural institutions, and take an active role in their learning and their communities. Ultimately, this curriculum may create opportunities for students to transform knowledge into action, fostering critical citizenship and cultural agency.

4 Curriculum De-encapsulation: Connecting Museum Visits to Cultural and Social Realities

In summary, this social activity is not just about visiting a museum; it is about
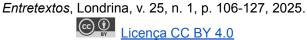
engaging with and learning through a variety of genres and subject areas in a way that connects formal education to cultural and social realities. It emphasizes active participation, collaboration, and the integration of knowledge across disciplines, all while reinforcing the importance of language and communication in understanding and interpreting the world. Through this interdisciplinary approach, students are encouraged to think critically about the information they encounter and to apply it in meaningful, creative ways that extend beyond the classroom.

Therefore, this social activity provides an example of how a socio-historical-cultural framework can be applied to educational practices. This approach, which centers on social activities as the core of curriculum organization, highlights the transformative potential of *curriculum de-encapsulation*—a concept that challenges the compartmentalization of school knowledge and seeks to connect learning to students' everyday lives and cultural contexts. In this activity, students are not simply passive recipients of knowledge; they can actively engage with the museum environment through a variety of tools and resources. The instruments used, such as videos, pamphlets, interviews, debates, and museum catalogs, offer a multimodal approach to learning. These tools can mediate the students' interactions with cultural, social, and material memory, helping them connect with history and heritage in meaningful ways, which aligns with Vygotsky's socio-historical-cultural theory and its emphasis on cultural tools as mediators of learning.

The visit to the museum can serve as a concrete application of *curriculum de-encapsulation*, where learning moves beyond the abstract or decontextualized lessons of the classroom and into the lived, culturally rich experiences that students encounter in their communities. In this case, the museum objects become the central focus of the learning activity, allowing students to develop a deeper understanding of the cultural and historical narratives that shape their society. These interactions with exhibits are not isolated from the students' realities but are rather bridges that connect their personal, cultural, and historical identities to the broader narratives preserved in the museum.

Incorporating the visiting of a museum as a part of the curriculum demonstrates the real-world application of learning and fosters a deeper reflection on

cultural identity, agency, and collective memory. The museum, as a cultural institution, is a space where students can engage with material remnants of the past, encouraging them to have discussions about heritage, identity, and belonging. Such reflective learning is essential for fostering cultural awareness and agency in students, helping them understand the connection between their own lives and the larger social and historical forces that shape their world. This critical engagement can promote the development of a sense of agency, where students are not just passive observers but active participants in interpreting, questioning, and applying the knowledge they encounter.

Additionally, the idea of *curriculum de-encapsulation* transforms the visit into a collaborative process that integrates knowledge across subject areas such as history, language arts, social studies, and the sciences. As students move between these disciplines, they learn to see knowledge not as fragmented or confined to specific subjects but as interconnected and applicable to real-world situations. By analyzing historical artifacts, writing reflective reports, and discussing social implications, students may learn to communicate, collaborate, and critically think across multiple genres, reinforcing their understanding of how knowledge is constructed and how it applies to their lived experiences.

This activity further aligns with Applied Linguistics of Resistance, as it emphasizes the need for students to critically engage with cultural narratives and resist hegemonic discourses. The museum visit provides an opportunity for students to challenge dominant historical narratives, question whose stories are told and whose are left out, and reflect on issues of power, exclusion, and marginalization. This critical engagement encourages students to become agents of social change, aware of how historical narratives shape contemporary identities and social dynamics and equipped to challenge oppressive structures in society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the social activity of visiting a museum exemplifies the principles of *curriculum de-encapsulation*. It allows for a deeper exploration of cultural memory,

identity, and history, while also fostering collaboration, critical thinking, and agency among students. By breaking down the barriers between formal education and the social world, this approach provides a holistic, integrated, and contextually relevant educational experience. It prepares students not only to actively participate in their communities but also to contribute to the broader cultural landscape, fostering a sense of responsibility and engagement with the world around them. Through this interdisciplinary and culturally relevant approach, students become active participants in their education, capable of connecting classroom learning with the cultural, historical, and social realities that shape their lives.

This article, using the social activity of visiting a museum as an example, demonstrates how curriculum de-encapsulation addresses key themes such as integrating lived experiences, fostering educational agency, promoting the decolonization of knowledge, emphasizing critical reflection, and encouraging interdisciplinary learning. The museum visit illustrates how social activities can serve as powerful curriculum organizers, making education more relevant to students' lives and helping them connect academic knowledge with real-world social and cultural realities.

By embracing these themes, curriculum de-encapsulation offers a radically different model of education, one that aligns with the socio-historical-cultural realities of learners and can position them as agents of change. Through this approach, education is not just a means of acquiring knowledge but becomes a tool for social transformation and empowerment, that can prepare students to actively engage with their communities in meaningful and socially responsible ways. By breaking down traditional educational barriers, as demonstrated in the museum visit example, curriculum de-encapsulation fosters a holistic, inclusive, and transformative educational experience that empowers students to challenge dominant narratives and create a more equitable world.

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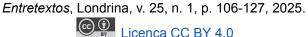LEONTIEV, A. N. *Activity, consciousness, and personality.* Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1978.

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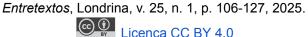
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