

Summary

CO-CONSTRUCTION OF CURRICULUM AND THEORIES OF (EARLY) EDUCATION

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Numerous studies have acknowledged the unsuccessful attempts of educational reforms during the 1990-s. Most authors emphasize (only) one relatively successful example of the reform in Chicago. It was a nongovernmental reform project, carried out on a huge number of institutions in the course of 8 to 10 years. Neither the theory about what would be changed nor the curriculum has been determined in advance. Instead of that, the theory and curriculum were built (or co-constructed) during the work in practice. The authors of this reform project came to the conclusion that it was necessary to first create inner and outer infrastructure for implementation of the high-quality educational process and adequate organization of the institution, and thereupon to (evaluate) control. In reality it is usually the contrary.

In England, as a markedly centralized educational system, in which everything — from curriculum to legislation, inspection, control, etc. — comes from the top administration, nothing important has been accomplished concerning the crucial goal — enhancement of achievement of all pupils. Educational institutions realize that external reform-interventions have no impact either on their practice or their pupils' results. Therefore, they individually direct their efforts on searching for the solution which could directly influence their pupils' better performance.

In the states where there is no centralized administration, various changes in the system are enabled, most usually in the form of wide choice of reform projects, even the possibility of adapting the project to each institution specifically. Examining the process of implementation of changes, it is concluded that it is always a process of co-construction. By co-construction we mean the process of joint building of theory (about changes) and curriculum, which is created and developed in interaction with real people, real problems and in a certain social context. Completely contrary to the standard perspective, it is argued that schools have more impact on changing reforms (theories) than the reforms change schools.

In the early education in developed countries, especially in Reggio kindergartens and in New Zealand, the starting position is exactly the proposition we have emphasised. In those countries it is held that not only curriculum but also the educational theory should be co-constructed in educational practice. Accordingly, there is no finished or defined curriculum, and it is being co-constructed from year to year, in accordance with the development of theory and practice. Numerous investigations and studies corroborate that.

Key words: curriculum, national curriculum, implementation, reform, centralized reforms, co-construction, evaluation, scaling, authentic school improvement, projection of transfer product

1. Obrazovne reforme, kurikulum i odgojne prakse

Devedesete godine dvadesetog stoljeća bile su godine velikih reformi odgojno-obrazovnih sustava.

Većinom su doživjele neuspjeh, zaključuje se u brojnim izvješćima znanstvenika koji su ih evaluirali. Drukčije rečeno, rezultati su bili daleko od onih koji su se očekivali.

Uspoređujući rezultate reformi u pet zemalja u Engleskoj, Novom Zelandu, dvije provincije u Kanadi i jednoj saveznoj državi u SAD-u Levin (2001) zaključuje kako sve imaju slične razloge neuspjeha. Jedan od tih razloga jest što od ideje reforme, njezine koncepcije do implementacije postoje goleme razlike, a postignuti rezultati su vrlo umjereni. Posebnu pozornost posvećuje implementaciji reforme jer je ona sastavni i vitalni dio svakog reformskog