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Czech teachers' attitudes to contemporary school curricular reform: current view

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the issue: *What are the current Czech teachers' attitudes to the school curricular reform in 2015?* The first part describes some of the most dominant documents as well as issues or aspects of educational change/s initiated in 2001 by the key White Paper (*National Programme for Education Development*). The focused aspects include: framework educational programmes (FEPs), school educational programmes (SEPs), pupils' key competences, electronic evidence of pupils, state-level of matura examination, school optimization (merging and closing down of schools), school self-evaluation, teaching standards, innovative teaching technology. The latter part specifies 2015 survey, including key methodological aspects as well as key empirical findings (main technique: questionnaire, SPSS, sample: secondary education teachers). The survey monitors teachers' attitudes to selected aspects of the educational change. There are employed descriptive, analytical and comparative views. Teachers' attitudes are viewed as inner components of subjective evaluation substituting also key element of school culture; the survey is based on Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM). The paper provides an insight into the current view of teachers' attitudes to the contemporary school curricular reform (2015).

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1. Introduction

Teachers in the Czech Republic have been active participants of quite a complex school educational change, so-called contemporary Czech school curricular reform. In the first part of the paper there are specified some of the most dominant documents as well as issues or aspects of educational change/s initiated in 2001 by the key White Paper (*National Programme for Education Development*). The reform description in terms of three partial stages (systemic reconstruction, general implementation, reform modification according to Janík, 2013) is applied to monitor Czech teachers' attitudes during the so-called reform modification. This paper focuses on the issue: *What are the current Czech teachers' attitudes to the school curricular reform in 2015?* The survey follows some other previous efforts of the author in this area and uses concept of '*competency-oriented concern*' (positive attitudes to competency-oriented educational change/s). The concept is grounded also in concept '*innovation-oriented concern*' (synonyms: '*positive attitudes to innovations generally*', '*pro-innovative concern*', '*pro-innovative attitudes*', '*pro-innovativeness*'). *Innovation-oriented concern* is viewed as a complex of not only subjective evaluation and emotional feelings in the direction of innovative changes, but also as tendencies to innovativeness. Pro-innovative attitudes represent a construct formed by selected components of educational change theories (Rogers, 1969, Hall, Hord, 1987, Shostberger, Crawford, 1999, Havelock, Zlotolow, 1995). The subject of pro-innovative concern is represented by exogenous conditions of innovative changes but also teachers' self-assessment of their professional competencies. (Vrabcová, 2006). The concept '*competency-oriented concern*' (Vrabcová, 2007) is based in Houška and Tlustý (1977) typology of five basic attitudes to society; consequently the basic attitudes are applied for differentiating five levels of '*competency-oriented concern*' (Vrabcová, 2007):

- competency-oriented involvement,
- competency-oriented conformity,
- competency-oriented indifference (or/and ambivalence),
- competency-oriented disagreement (disagreement with competency-oriented teaching),
- competency-oriented resistance (active resistance to competency-oriented teaching).

The main aim of the paper is to present selected findings of empirical research realized within a so called specific research project at Faculty of Education University Hradec Králové during the year of 2015. The data are related to diagnosis of Czech secondary education teachers' pro-innovative attitudes to competency-oriented school reform initiated almost 15 years ago. The paper focuses on attitudes to Framework Education Programmes as key curricular documents of the education reform. Fundamental features of the Czech school curricular change are specified in the following section. The change is staged and the third stage of reform modification is surveyed from the perspective of teachers' attitudes and selected aspects.

2. Czech school curricular reform: basic specific features

Janík (2013) describes the Czech school curricular reform as a partial change of only one specific part of the education system under the condition that the curricular reform is a component of wider educational reform called educational transformation. The key change aspects include: framework educational programmes (FEPs), school educational programmes (SEPs), pupils' key competences, electronic evidence of pupils, state-level of matura examination, school optimization (merging and closing down of schools), school self-evaluation, teaching standards, innovative teaching technology. The Czech school curricular reform might be divided into three stages (Janík, 2013): 1. systemic reconstruction, 2. general implementation, 3. reform modification. The stages can be dated and specified briefly in the following way (for more see Vrabcová, 2015):

2.1 Systemic reconstruction (1999-2004)

According to some descriptions, this stage might be considered to be initiated in 1999 by Educational Strategy (Konceptce vzdělávání, MŠMT, 1999) as one of the key documents. Another key document that is often described as the one initializing the reform and the stage is the White Paper (*National programme for Education Development*, MŠMT, 2001). Among other documents forming the base for this stage of systemic reconstruction we can enumerate:

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