Analysis of Technology Education Development at Schools in Slovakia

Alena Hašková, Silvia Dvorjaková
Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia

Curricular reform in Slovakia
ISCED 1, ISCED 2, 2008 – 2013
Reform of technology education
- compulsory (70 %) + disposable subjects (30 %)
- school subject renamed to technical education
- decrease in the subject time allocation from 1 lesson per week taught in each grade of the lower level of secondary schools to 0.5 lesson taught only in 7th and 8th grade (+ the offered possibility to use disposable lessons to support just teaching technology)
- 2015 innovation of the compulsory State Educational Programme: time allocation of the subject technology increased to 1 lesson per week provided in all grades of lower secondary schools

Aim of the research
- to find out technology teachers’ opinions on the impact of the curricular reform on teaching technology and the development and current state of technology education at schools

Used methods
- focus groups interviews with teachers teaching the subject technology (carried out in 2015)

Overview or the main findings related to technology education development at schools in Slovakia resulting from the carried out focus groups interviews
- better conditions for technology education at schools before the reform (premises, workrooms, tools and material equipment) ⇒ currently prevailing ratio 20 – 30 % to 80 – 70 % in favour of theoretical way of teaching technology to practical way (although the teachers are aware of the fact that this subject should be taught mainly practically and in a matter of fact they also prefer the practical ways of technology teaching)
- barriers to the scope of the pupils’ skills which are developed in frame of the practical way of teaching technology:
  - limited material the schools have at disposal (mostly only paper plus wood and plastic)
  - currently the classes (pupils) are not divided into groups neither for the practical teaching (as it used to be before)
- teachers’ opinions / evaluations related to the introduced changes and the current state of technology education at schools:
  - very low acceptance of the subject
  - feeling that the state has not any great regard for the work of teachers, specially the work of technology teachers, and absolutely does not accept teachers’ opinions
- high appreciation given by the teachers to the national project Support for professional orientation of pupils of primary and lower secondary school to vocational education and training through the development of polytechnic education aimed at developing work skills and work with talents (2013 – 2015)

Changes which should be done to promote technical education at schools
- by means of legislative proceedings from the side of the Ministry of Education to oblige the school founders to establish and support workrooms at schools assigned to technology teaching
- in cooperation with the relevant state bodies to design and implement into the practice a prescription defining basic facilities of schools (teaching premises) including their obligatory equipment and material supplies for theoretical education and practical training in technology education
- in cooperation with boards of education to ensure establishment of the regional centres of school services and to broaden the scope of their activities also by systematic and complex activities focused on delivery the needed technical materials, tools and devices to schools
- by means of legislative proceedings from the side of the Ministry of Education to oblige the school leaders to allocate a part of the school budget for development of technology education carried out at schools

References