Analysis of Technology Education Development at Schools in Slovakia

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Introduction

CURRICULAR REFORM IN SLOVAKIA
ISCED 1, ISCED 2, 2008 – 2013

Reform of technology education

- compulsory subjects (70 %) + optional/disposable subjects (30 %)
- school subject *technical education* renamed to *technology*
- 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 from 0.5 lesson per week taught in the 7th and 8th grades only to 1 lesson per week provided in all grades of lower secondary schools
Methodology

**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)
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 practical ways of technology teaching)
Main findings related to technology education development at schools in Slovakia resulting from the carried out focus groups interviews

• 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)
Main findings related to technology education development at schools in Slovakia resulting from the carried out focus groups interviews

• 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
Main findings related to technology education development at schools in Slovakia resulting from the carried out focus groups interviews

• high appreciation given by 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
Changes which should be done to promote technical education at schools

• 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 leaderships to allocate a part of the school budget for development of the technology education carried out at schools
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