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# After curriculum reform: some reflection of a teacher/researcher in Taiwan<sup>1</sup>

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is first to survey the actual state in the “Grade 1-9 Curriculum Reform” which implement on 2001 in Taiwan. This thesis is based on data from a case study. The site of the case is an elementary school where I teach. I use methods of participant observation, in-depth interview and document analysis. It then investigates the interplay of teachers’ belief, working style and power relationship in curriculum decision-making in an attempt to understand the implement issues of the integrated Grade 1-9 curriculum.

Further, this study analyze the satisfactions and opinions of teachers, students and students’ parents, those factors evolving content and educational goals, and looks critically at the contemporary curriculum implementation in the Grade 1-9 Curriculum. Finally, this study views

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<sup>1</sup> **\*Has not completed the manuscript, please not to quote.** This thesis is influenced and inspired by Chuang (2004). The author is very grateful for professor Chuang.

teachers not only as the executor of the Grade 1-9 curriculum, but also as transformative intellectuals in pedagogy who reactivate in social equity through searching for their professional identity.

**Key words: curriculum reform, professional identity, Grade 1-9 Curriculum Reform, critical pedagogy**

## **Introduction**

The reaction to the call for action from the Taiwanese Report of Educational Reform (Legislative Yuan , 1996). In 2001, the Taiwanese government began a movement toward educational reform with the introduction of the “Grade 1-9 Curriculum Reform”. In my country, our government--- Ministry of Education(2003) , view curriculum reform is a chance to develop, not only to help students achieve their full potential, but also to good citizenship, and to assure national competition.

Effort to map education with social trends in the development of the school-based curricula, an “Integrative Activities” component has been added to each of the learning areas in the Grade 1-9 Curriculum, include seven learning areas (i.e. Language Arts, Social Studies, Arts and Humanities, Science and Technology, Mathematics, Health and Physical Education and Integrative Activities), and provides students with alternative learning periods. The school curriculum development committees, together with teachers, will now have the authority to design

their own curriculum for these alternative learning periods.

However, we teachers, in the grassroots, recognize that, the “Grade 1-9 Curriculum Reform” is a chance to change the form of teaching, the relationship of teacher-student, and the way of school management, it need put something not just more money into school, but more curriculum development material, students’ learning style, especially in teachers’ work-life. “Something” is what ?

The purpose of this study is first to survey the actual state in the “Grade 1-9 Curriculum Reform” which implement on 2001 in Taiwan. This thesis is based on data from a case study. The site of the case is an elementary school where I teach. I use methods of participant observation, in-depth interview and document analysis. It then investigates the interplay of teachers’ belief, working style and power relationship in curriculum decision-making in an attempt to understand the implement issues of the integrated Grade 1-9 curriculum.

Further, this study analyze the satisfactions and opinions of teachers, students and students’ parents, those factors evolving content and educational goals, and looks critically at the contemporary curriculum implementation in the Grade 1-9 Curriculum. Finally, this study views teachers not only as the executor of the Grade 1-9 curriculum, but also as transformative intellectuals in pedagogy who reactivate in social equity

through searching for their professional identity.

## **After centralization control---the forms of knowledge for student**

By Bernstein (1971) and Apple (1999), the selection, classification, structure, and spread of knowledge are bound to the structure, arrangement, and social control of power in a society. In traditional Taiwan culture, the emphasis on knowledge as the main component of curriculum results, as well as from the structure and arrangement of knowledge and power. For longtime, the power to select textbook for students is belong to government, teachers were viewed as a passive role in teaching process.

In 2001, according to “Grade 1-9 Curriculum Contemporary Guidelines” (Ministry of Education , 2000), the government decentralize control for textbook selected, and through the integration of the 21 subjects in the junior high school curriculum and the 14 elementary school curriculum subjects into 7 learning areas, reflecting both the integration of knowledge areas. Teachers got the right to make decision and choose the textbook, and the chance to infusion more critical issues into the curriculum.

The forms of knowledge for student are more variety, and increase

the opportunity which, the number of times and the depth the teacher interacts, teachers seem more empowerment. In fact, traditional subjects and instructional models reflected in national standardized tests, such as the “Academic Attainment Testing,” teachers need face the challenge of restructuring and reframing central issues of curricula : how does the knowledge for student ? For Foucault (1977), knowledge is interdependent with power, not only collaborates with power relations but is also greatly increased when learners are empowered. In other words, where the power acts is where the knowledge raises. We, teachers got to develop curricula for school-based, more considerate student's characteristics. Grasp the opportunity for teacher professional development.

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