



RESEARCH-BASED-KNOWLEDGE, SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND TEACHER RESEARCH:

Impact on a teacher's working life

Reetta Niemi

PhD, Med, Primary School Teacher

Viikki Teacher Training School, University of Helsinki



THE GLOBAL AGENDA

Educating teachers to a strong model of teacher professionalism, meaning teachers' skills to evaluate their own work and to seek ways to improve it, is a globally shared goal in teacher education (Taber 2013, 8).



For example, the University of Helsinki defines its goals in teacher education as follows:

'The Degree Programme in Educational Sciences trains and educates teachers and other experts for positions that require expertise in education, schooling, teaching, learning, leadership, societal issues and educational sciences. The studies will also provide you with readiness to maintain and develop your professional skills and or academic post-graduate studies.'



THE GLOBAL AGENDA VS. REALITY

However, both global and national studies have shown that teachers, as well as student teachers, often feel that educational research or research based education do not connect to their everyday work

(Heikkinen, Kiviniemi & Tynjälä 2011; Loughran 2002; Mitchell 2002).

WHY?

⇒ Conducting action research projects as part of teaching practice?
(Heikkinen, Kiviniemi & Tynjälä)



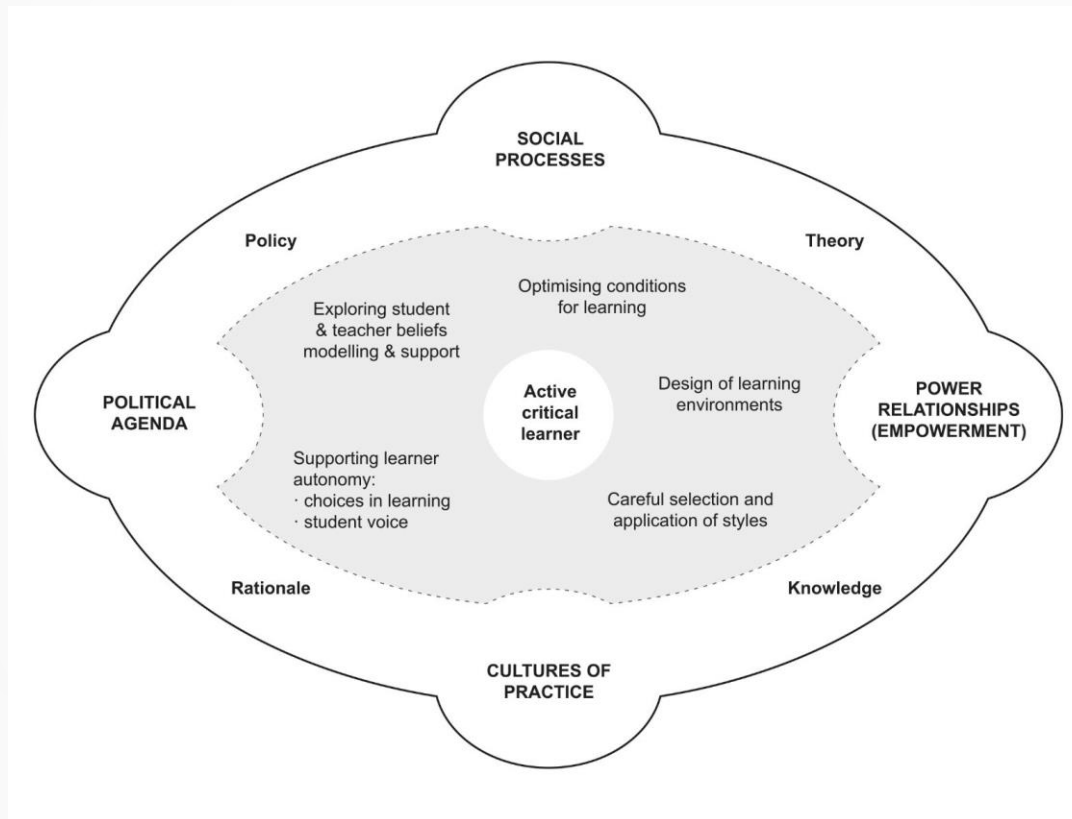
TEACHER RESEARCH: CONNECTING THEORY, CURRICULUM AND PRACTICE

Lawrence Stenhouse's legacy in promoting teacher research:

- Teachers are experts in implementing curriculum.
- Teachers are capable of producing knowledge to the universities about the workability of the teaching methods and about the real problems existing in classrooms.



PEDAGOGY AND CURRICULUM



Holistic conceptualization of pedagogy (Waring & Evans 2015)



HOW PRACTICE MEETS CURRICULUM AND THEORY

Multidisciplinary learning projects & transversal competences as starting point.

=> sociocultural theories, investigative learning, experiential learning, narrative learning

How pupils experience learning practices? Pupils' perspectives in developing classroom practices.

=> theories from participation, pupil's voice, visual methods



The most positive practice

The two most positive practices

The two most positive practices

Medium level

Medium level

Medium level

The two least positive practices

The two least positive practices

The least positive practice



PEER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What were your three first choices?
2. What were your reasons for ranking the first three slides?
3. What were your last three choices?
4. What were your reasons for ranking the last three slides?
5. How teachers should improve those practices?



NEW KNOWLEDGE FOR EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITIES

1. Knowledge from pupils' experiences.
2. Knowledge from the workability of methods in promoting pupils' participation.
3. Knowledge how teacher's practical theories can be developed.



HOW FINNISH SYSTEM SUPPORTS TEACHER RESEARCH

- Teacher's autonomy
- Curriculum
- No heavy structures in conducting a study or collecting data for teachers' own use
- Easy to become a PhD student if a teacher wants to become a post graduate student



THE PROBLEMS TEACHERS FACE

- The lack of time
- Lack of methods
- New duties around teachers' everyday work
- No access to journals
- Academic work is not supported financially
- In-service training focuses on specific skills => there is no systematic in-service training about evidence based research or teacher research



THANK YOU!

Reetta Niemi

PhD, lecturer

Viikki Teacher Training School

reetta.niemi@helsinki.fi