

Heller, Nina (2010): National Standards and School and Teaching Development in Faculties. A Reconstructive Study on the Implementation of German National Standards in Education. Doctoral Thesis. University of Göttingen. Faculty of Social Sciences.

Summary of the Doctoral Thesis

This doctoral thesis focuses on the implementation of national standards (German: 'Bildungsstandards') in German schools. In a qualitative-reconstructive approach, the study analyzes how teachers deal with this reform. Group discussions were arranged with teachers from several federal states, working at different kinds of school and teaching different subjects. They were asked to talk about their considerations regarding the educational standards and their lessons. The teachers' orientations structuring their everyday practice were reconstructed by using the documentary method (Bohnsack, 1997).

One of the main findings of the doctoral thesis is the fact that for implementing national standards in class the professional system that teachers relate to is relevant (socio-genetic level of typecast): Teachers with an orientation towards pedagogy plan their lesson in accordance with their pupils' learning processes and work on pedagogical issues. These teachers take a constructivist perspective on teaching and learning that is linked to competence orientated teaching.

Teachers in grammar schools (German: 'Gymnasium') with long-term experience in processes of school and teaching development stand in the tradition of their subjects and related sciences. Due to dealing with didactics and methods of teaching changes in the classes occur that document the orientation towards subject related didactics. The teachers also show a constructivist approach to teaching and learning. They focus pupils' learning when planning lessons and set competence orientated tasks. Also students' learning is connected to content related problem solving in the subjects.

Grammar school teachers without experience in school development are oriented towards their subject as a professional system they relate with. Lesson planning is based on the subjects systematic and problems. This instructivist perspective prevents a content related dealing with the concept of national standards.

The results of the doctoral thesis were discussed along the 'Theory of Systems' and connected to current research. Furthermore assumptions were drawn about implementing national standards in schools as well as about future research.