Curriculum Design as Being-in-the-World of Study and Teaching: An Autobiographical Re-conceptualization

by

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Abstract

Curriculum theory’s re-conceptualist movement, exemplified by William Pinar and Madeleine Grumet’s notion of currere, shifted the field’s emphasis from making curriculum to understanding it. The stream of curriculum thought was diverted away from the technical formation of curriculum and toward explorations of the lived-experiences of students and teachers. This study reconnects the re-conceptualists’ general neglect of the conversation about making curriculum with their historic move toward understanding.

Using currere—a re-conceptualist method of self-conceptualization—the author explores his own lived-experience as a curriculum designer and his scholarly re-conceptualization of curriculum design. The conceptual foundation of currere as a study of educational experience is explored as a prototype of curriculum design’s re-conceptualization. Currere as a method is posited to be a design, which acts to design the author’s autobiographical study of design, folding back upon itself, and becoming in part the subject of this study. Currere’s designing power iteratively gives shape to the author’s self-conceptualization as a re-conceptualist curriculum designer in four moments of inquiry: (1) the regressive, (2) the progressive; (3) the analytical; and (4) the synthetical.

Currere’s designing power acts to problematize the author’s experience of Tylerian curriculum design by revealing its technological irresponsibility as a negation of the future, a neglect of the temporality of lived-experience. Then, the temporality of currere’s design helps recover what has been lost. In his experience of currere as a theorizing of re-conceptualized curriculum design the author recovers a presence of beingness—his being-in-the-world as a biographically situated curriculum designer that is present with the lived-contexts of teaching and study. Re-made by this conceptual journey of currere a new understanding of curriculum design emerged: 1) the productive understanding that brings forth curriculum; 2) a co-evolution of understanding and making curriculum, which identifies and takes responsibility for what is lost; 3) an ensemble of co-created texts made by, and made to fit well with the contingencies and indeterminacies of, the lived-contexts of students and teachers; and 4) something produced from people’s lives.

Keywords: Curriculum; Curriculum Design; Currere; Study and Teaching