

The curriculum transformation of citizenship in England

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This study aimed to understand the discourse of citizenship represented in the formal and supported curricula, and the potential influential forces underlying the transformation of citizenship between formal and supported curricula. The analytical framework of citizenship was based on the geographical levels and elements of citizenship proposed in Heater's (2004) cube of citizenship. The formal curriculum referred to "Citizenship: National Curriculum in England" (DfEE & QCA, 1999), and the supported curriculum referred to two series of citizenship textbooks: "This is Citizenship" (Fiehn, 2002, Fiehn & Fiehn, 2002) and "Understanding Citizenship" (Thorpe, 2001a, 2001b, 2005). By employing the methods of critical discourse analysis suggested by Fairclough (1992, 2003), the present study found that different genres are adopted by the National Curriculum and two series of citizenship textbooks to regulate the delivery of citizenship. In terms of geographical levels of citizenship, the multi-layered citizenship is reflected again in the National Curriculum and the two series of textbooks but with slight inconsistency within and between texts regarding developing sequence and the broadest geographical level. The elements of citizenship (i.e. identity, virtues, rights and responsibility/duty) were also found in the National Curriculum and the two series of textbooks but with different emphasis and featured discourses of citizenship in different curriculum texts. The forces influencing the curriculum transformation in England contain the educational traditions, the influence from the National Curriculum for Citizenship, and the autonomy of citizenship textbooks publishers and authors. The reflections generated from this study on Taiwan curriculum transformation and the assumptions of citizenship in the curriculum include: to acknowledge the discursive power from the genre of a formal curriculum, to reduce the regulations of the textbook in order to promote the diversity of the textbooks, to empower the textbook publisher with transformative capability, and to reflect on what citizenship should be delivered in Taiwan curriculum.

Keywords: curriculum transformation, National Curriculum, textbook, citizenship

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