Review Article

Learning Schools and the Learning Discourse in Education Policy

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This manuscript analyzes the emergence, evolution, and fragmentation of the "learning discourse" in education policy, particularly in European contexts from the late 20th century onward. Drawing on conceptual developments and empirical examples, including the Danish 2014 school reform, the study examines two key strands within the discourse: the notion of "learning schools" as educational organizations engaged in continuous development, and the framing of "learning objectives" as policy tools for standardizing outcomes. It contextualizes these shifts within broader frameworks such as the learning economy, learning regions, and lifelong learning agendas promoted by the EU and OECD. Learning, as a policy concept, tended to displace other educational concepts such as teaching, socialization, and Bildung, leading to tensions in pedagogical practice and institutional governance. The article argues that the focus on learning was important and sound, but the implementation of the approach proved difficult. By revisiting critical responses and highlighting conceptual ambiguities, the manuscript contributes to debates on the role of education in knowledge societies and the future of educational professionalism.

Introduction

In recent years, the concept of learning has been introduced as a new element in social science fields such as organization studies, economics, and sociology, serving to modify existing theoretical approaches[1]. In research on education, however, learning is a well-established concept that has generally designated the process through which organized educational “inputs” – teaching, texts, other elements – impact on students and learners, installing knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In this sense, learning is the process element in education. Much traditional educational thought has given this element little attention because the focus has been on teaching and the curriculum. If the teaching was well prepared, careful,

 doi.org/10.32388/PoVTO7

and lively, it was assumed that knowledge, skills, and attitudes would be incorporated by students. Two historical developments, both taking hold in the years after the Second World War, served to move educational thought from this traditional position. One was the growth of empirical research on education, based on approaches and methods especially from psychology but also from sociology. The other was the growth of national education systems, where government became accountable for educational expenditures and needed to document the usefulness of education. These developments gradually promoted a more modern conception of education, in which the learning process connecting educational inputs and impacts became more visible and provoked research.

Towards the end of the 20th century, the concept of learning acquired broader meanings and was given much attention by governments and education policy stakeholders, especially in Western Europe and the United States. In EU education policy, lifelong learning became an important element. It is significant that in the presentation of the three strategic objectives for education defined as part of the Lisbon strategy, the EU Ministers of Education claimed that high priority would be given to learning at all stages of life[2]. After several working documents and memoranda, the European Council also adopted in 2002 a resolution on lifelong learning, in which general objectives were stated, contributions from different branches of the EU apparatus were acknowledged, and the division of labor between the EU and the member states was laid out[3].

The widespread acceptance and use of the concept of learning signaled a paradigmatic change[4]. The learning discourse reflected an increased interest in learning and the acquisition of skills outside school, in training schemes, on the job, or in other areas of adult life, and also an interest in learning as a dimension in governance and institutional development. This represented a change in both policy and educational theory, a change that was sometimes misleadingly labelled “from education to learning”. However, the learning discourse did not imply giving up the concept of education and the institutions linked to it; it was rather a question of seeing institutional education as an element (and a vital element) in processes of learning that also include other elements[5].

The focus on learning in education policy continued for more than a decade, but in recent years, the attention of policymakers to learning has weakened, and the concept has once again narrowed. Starting from the concept of the “learning school,” this article will trace the rise of the learning discourse, relate educational learning to learning in other fields, and discuss different interpretations of learning in education policy. I draw partly on developments and debates in Denmark, my native country, being aware of the limitations in this. The chapter discusses two different ways that the concept of learning has been

used in education policy. The first is the concept of "learning schools," where the prefix of learning indicates a certain way that schools may work, a way resembling learning organizations in other fields. The second is the concept of "learning objectives," which indicates a certain understanding of the objectives of education and schools, an understanding focused on the learning of students rather than on the planning and execution of teaching. These two approaches differ in their logics, but they are connected by the broad discourse on learning that emerged in the years leading up to the year 2000.

Learning Schools

An important dimension in the broader conceptualization of learning was an awareness that schools and other educational institutions not only provide inputs for and handle processes of student learning; they also engage in learning how to perform this work and improve it. Among other concepts with "learning" as a prefix, the concept of the learning school emerged.

An important trigger for the idea of learning schools was the so-called school effectiveness movement[6]. During the 1980s and 1990s, educational research, especially in the US and the UK, demonstrated that schools often did not deliver on their key objectives, that unsatisfactory and unequal educational achievement was widespread. The school effectiveness movement engaged in investigating this further, trying to locate the factors limiting school effectiveness and developing interventions to improve matters. Much of this research looked closely at structures and factors in the school environment, using quantitative methods and micro-economic models. In reaction to this, proponents of the learning school approach focused on the importance of culture and interaction in the school environment and on the role of teachers and school leaders. This approach is found, for instance, in an article on learning schools and professional communities[7], where the authors argue that teachers' work is a key instrument of reform, along with principals who can lead teachers' work in a meaningful direction.

> *"When schools are seen as learning organizations and professional communities, attention is focused on teachers' work as a key instrument of reform. The creation of principals who can lead teachers' work in a meaningful direction is no less an important task. (...) By focusing their efforts on increasing learning and community within schools, administrators can begin to address reform issues in substantial and meaningful ways"* [7].

Schussler[8] traced and discussed the concept of schools as learning communities. She concluded that:

> *"The milieu of current educational policy adopts a narrow lens, using accountability and standards as a rationale for examining specific outcomes of schooling, namely, scores on standardized achievement tests. Utilizing a narrow lens is nothing more than applying a simplistic solution to a complex problem, like improving a person's health by taking his or her temperature"*[8].

In the UK context, important contributions to the concept of learning schools were given by the educational researcher and policy actor David Hargreaves. In several publications, he argued that the recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers were necessary to improve schooling and student achievement. Teaching should be developed to *"a profession in which creative and adventurous but hard-headed pioneers feel at home"*[9]. Finding that existing teacher education, as well as existing educational research, did little to promote such creative professionalism, he turned to literature on knowledge management and learning in business and industry and pointed out some characteristics of successful knowledge-intensive companies that could also be relevant to schools. These features included more openness to the world outside the classroom, including external partners; a new school culture characterized by a commitment to continuous improvement as well as to coherent and flexible planning at the institutional level; new and versatile relationships; recognizing diversity and providing opportunities for reflection and dialogue; and knowledge production as a central part of teachers' activities, with a willingness to tinker and experiment and an acceptance that this also involves mistakes.

Roughly the same approach characterized an OECD project and report on "knowledge management in the learning society"[10], to which Hargreaves also contributed. The report described how knowledge is produced, mediated, and used in different sectors of society and tried to tease out the lessons for education. The main point was that education has to be part of a broader learning system, including networks connecting education practitioners and researchers, developing new forms of professional development, and providing infrastructures to support knowledge management.

The connection between learning schools and broader system environments was also investigated in a study by the English educationalist Paul Clarke, published the same year[11]. In contrast to the economic approach of the OECD, Clarke drew his inspiration from the humanities, arguing that both effectiveness and improvement need to be redefined away from a technical problem-solving model toward a continuous search for meaning at the school level.

In sum, the concept of learning schools emerged around the turn of the millennium. The concept did not attract widespread attention among researchers and practitioners, but it has remained an active field where new research is produced and discussed[12][13]. The key approach is investigating schools and other educational institutions as learning organizations, taking account of the special types of service that schools produce as well as the special contexts and actor constellations they are embedded in.

Learning Economies and Regions

The concept of the learning school is an example of the realization, which gradually emerged in social science and policy, that learning not only changes individuals but also affects and changes the organizations and institutions that the individuals are part of. In organization theory, the emergence of the concept of "learning organization"[14] was an important step. Other examples are the concept of the learning economy[15], the concept of learning regions[16] and the concept of learning cities[17]. These concepts and research fields can be seen as contributions to understanding the broader contexts and conditions for schools to operate as learning schools.

The learning economy is understood as an economy where the economic performance of individuals, firms, and nations more than anything else reflects the capacity to learn[18]. Learning is needed, so the theory says, because the rate of economic and technical change is accelerating and imposes a strong transformation pressure on national economies. The acceleration of change results from shorter product life cycles and intensified global competition, as well as politically driven deregulation of financial markets. At the level of the firm, it is registered as an intensification of competition. At the level of the individual, it is experienced as a need to renew skills and competences in order to remain "employable".

> *"Change and learning are two sides of the same coin. The speed-up of change confronts people and organizations with new problems, and the capacity to tackle the new problems requires new skills. When employers select more learning-oriented employees and when the markets select in favor of change-oriented firms, innovation and change are further accelerated. (...) In a learning economy, it is a major task for policy to design institutions that regulate education and labor markets so that they promote and establish resources for processes of learning in the private and public sector"* [19].

In the perspective of the learning economy, it is seen as a key responsibility for public policy to design institutions and labor market regulations promoting processes of learning. Examples of such regulations

and institutions could be providing strong incentives both for employers and employees to upgrade skills; new training programs for those with the weakest positions in the learning society (low-skilled workers and certain ethnic minorities); different types of work-based learning as key elements in adult education and training programs; establishing and using new indicators for the quality of work; engaging representatives for managers and employees in the diffusion of good practice for organizational learning[19].

The concepts of learning cities and regions have been developed primarily in the field of human geography, and they have been taken up by international organizations such as UNESCO and the OECD. UNESCO organizes a global network of learning cities and defines them as cities that effectively mobilize their resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education, including learning in families and in workplaces, and fosters a culture of learning throughout life[20].

The OECD has promoted the concept of learning regions in its policy analysis and recommendations. An early example was a report entitled “Cities and regions in the new learning economy”[21]. The report argues that physical proximity can promote learning via immediate interaction because actors in the innovation system are more likely to run into each other. It may also be assumed that much relevant knowledge is local and embedded in specific local environments and that it therefore cannot automatically be codified and circulated in formal systems. Access to and use of this knowledge, concerning, for instance, important aspects of the local production system, requires participation in the local social system. It can also be claimed that exactly these forms of localized knowledge constitute a significant contribution to competitiveness in a world where access to many other components of competitiveness has become generalized due to globalization.

In this understanding, a learning region is characterized by regional institutions supporting individual and organizational learning through coordination of flexible networks of economic and political actors. The OECD report[21] envisages a regional policy that is not an education policy in the traditional sense, but rather a policy for innovation and learning. Because many nation-states have decreased their central regulation of economic policy and planning, local and regional authorities have had to take more responsibility for maintaining social equality and cohesion. The report lists principles of a regional policy for innovation and learning, including, for instance, the following: ensuring high-quality and well-resourced educational provision; coordinating carefully the supply of educated individuals with the demand in the regional economy; coordinating policies across departmental responsibilities and levels of

governance; establishing framework conditions for the improvement of organizational learning in and between firms and other organizations[21].

In my view, this approach tends to overestimate the possibilities of coordinating different sites of learning at the regional level. Vocational schools, universities, municipal institutions, and private companies may all contribute positively to boosting regional competence and innovation, but they each have their conditions, frameworks, goals, and priorities, and strategies for coordinating their contributions may encounter many obstacles.

Nevertheless, the concepts of learning economies, learning regions, and learning cities have been important for the learning discourse in education policy because they have shown how educational institutions and practices are embedded in broader societal fields, interacting with many private and public actors and contributing to economic and social development.

Learning, Socialization, and Bildung

The concept of learning schools linked the prefix of 'learning' to the school and education sector through a logic resembling that of learning economies and regions: learning is a resource and a strategy for improving the unit's ability to confront challenges, adjust, and improve. This was an important element in the learning discourse that emerged in education policy and related fields around the year 2000. However, the main focus of the learning discourse was a redefinition and reorientation of education and educational institutions – the paradigmatic change signaled by the catchword "from education to learning". This discourse was broad and inclusive, seeing learning as a process of creating change through the accumulation of knowledge and competence over the human life course. However, the discourse tended to obscure the social differences and conflicts in which learning and education are embedded. Learning was portrayed primarily as a process of growth in cognitive or technical competence, more or less independent of values or social interests. The fact that the concept of learning was in many cases not directly linked with the traditional educational institutions and their embedding in society may have contributed to this.

This aspect of the learning discourse may be compared to the concept of socialization. As pointed out by Danziger[22], the use of the term socialization in its modern sense started in the United States in the late 1930s and marked an increasing emphasis on society as an active influencing force, setting goals for the ability and development of individuals. The concept of socialization also had a more descriptive and

analytical perspective, where upbringing and education was not just a matter of social philosophy but also a matter of empirical behavioral science. This empirical and analytical dimension is also found in the concept of learning.

In pedagogy, the learning discourse implies a changed focus where insight into the conditions of students' learning processes gains importance compared to issues of the teacher's knowledge dissemination[23][5]. With the concept of learning, more emphasis is placed on people's active development of their abilities and the acquisition of knowledge and skills from the outside world. However, the meaning of learning depends on the contexts in which it is used. In the school system, learning is often equated with the development of cognitive and intellectual skills, while emotional and social skills are overlooked. Although the concept of socialization had a deterministic overtone, suggesting that the human life course is determined from the beginning, it did maintain an awareness of links between learning, life, and societal conditions which was often lacking in discourses on learning.

In education policy texts, the rise of the learning discourse tended to marginalize the concepts of teaching and education. Most often, this happened not by explicitly rejecting these concepts, but rather by not referring to them and, in this way, downplaying the role of institutionalized teaching. Still, explicit criticism was also voiced. An example is a book with the title *Turning Learning Right Side Up: Putting Education Back on Track*[24], where the authors argue that schools are restricting learning because work in classrooms is based on traditional forms of teaching and curricula are organized around disciplines. This cuts many of the links to the world outside of schools and undermines student motivation and creativity. The authors conclude that schools seem to be run more for the benefit of those employed in the system than to enable students to learn. Although such direct criticism is unusual, the reservations of Ackoff and Greenberg toward institutionalized education capture much of the sentiment in the turn "from teaching to learning".

This turn certainly provoked debate and objections from many educational researchers. Critical responses often drew on Foucault's concept of governmentality, arguing that "learnification" shifts the responsibility for education to the learning individuals, who become responsible for their own educational outcomes and careers[25]. An explicit argument was made by Gert Biesta, originally in an article with the striking title "Against Learning"[26] but followed up in later works. Biesta argued that the language of learning, presenting learners as always proactive and autonomous, their initiatives being hampered by formal institutions, has made important aspects of education very difficult to articulate. Biesta saw this type of language as a result of the erosion of welfare states. The idea of social

redistribution through public provision has been undermined, and the relationship between governments and citizens has changed from a political relationship to an economic relationship between provider and consumer.

As an alternative to the learning discourse, Biesta argued for reinventing a language of education. Not in the sense of traditional educational theory, but as a set of the three interlocking concepts: trust, violence, and responsibility[27]. Violence may seem an odd choice here, but to Biesta, it signals challenging students to show them who they are and where they stand instead of pleasing and harmonizing them. While the three concepts capture vital elements in educational relationships, they share a limitation with much philosophically based educational theory: The focus is on an ideal-typical relationship between an educator and a student, without taking sufficient account of the social and institutional environments of the educational relations. Educationalists are not just individual persons; they are embedded in and employed by educational institutions, and their trustworthiness depends very much on the character of the institutions. When Biesta argues that needs for learning must be clarified with the help of education professionals who violate rather than please, he displays the helping side of professionalism; but as documented in much social science research, professionalism can also have a controlling and authoritarian side[28].

The concept of "Bildung," which is often contrasted with the concept of learning[29], also draws on the helping side of professionalism. In theories of Bildung, the driving actor is often the mature and knowledgeable educator or teacher, who represents and embodies the qualities of humanity and culture as well as civilized and responsible judgement, and education happens through the student's exposure to and interaction with the educator[30]. In the discourse of learning, the focus is different; the student is presented as the core actor, the person driving his or her own learning, while institutionalized education and its educators are parts of the framework for and input to this learning. This approach is fundamentally in line with constructivist cognitive science as developed by Piaget[31], and later researchers in the same tradition. Conceptualizing the learner as the core actor does not mean that learners are always active and have clear ideas about their purposes and capacities. Learners often do not know what they need or want, and in many educational contexts, learners may be unable or unwilling to take learning initiatives on their own. What seeing the learner as a core actor means is that for significant learning to happen, the learner must be an active driver in the process, and educators must empower learners for this[23].

In sum, the learning discourse that emerged in education policy around the year 2000 emphasized the role and importance of learning in contrast to education and teaching, focused attention on the interests and actions of learners rather than teachers, saw learning as something broader and more versatile than cognition, and emphasized connections between processes of learning at individual, organizational, and societal levels. In this ambitious conceptualization, the discourse glossed over important conditions and tensions in the fields of learning.

Learning and Outcomes in a School Reform

The reorientation of education implied by the learning discourse could logically have led to introducing a concept of "learning education"; but this never happened, probably because the two concepts were too closely connected from the outset. Instead, "learning" often replaced "education" in policy discourse. But at least one concept emerged with learning as a prefix, the concept of "learning objectives."

More systematic conceptualizations of the learning approach seldom informed policymakers. What learning meant often remained unclear, and this led to problems in debates and policy proposals. An important problem was that the concept of learning could refer to both product and process. An example is the work of John Hattie[32] on visible learning, which became very influential. Hattie's research focused on primary and secondary schooling, and through comprehensive meta-analysis of empirical research, he tried to find the institutional arrangements and pedagogical methods that are most efficient in producing learning outcomes in students. The scope of Hattie's work is impressive, but his understanding of learning is focused on the content dimension, on students' acquisition of the knowledge and skills specified for the different levels of school education. This version of the learning approach was, in fact, shared by many because it seems logical for policymakers to think in terms of knowledge and outcomes. Prøitz[33] has shown how the concept of learning in Norwegian policy documents has been strongly associated with the definition and pursuit of learning outcomes and that policymakers mainly understand such outcomes as full-ended and measurable.

The 2014 reform of primary and lower secondary schooling in Denmark[34] proved to be an instructive example of these problems. The reform grappled with several policy issues, including the improvement of standards in key school subjects (in the wake of PISA results) through more teaching, connecting schooling with after-school daycare, improving student well-being, and strengthening the mandate of local school management. This last issue turned out to be highly controversial. The municipalities – employers for the teachers – insisted that previous general agreements about preparation time for

teaching should be abolished and that the local managers should have the authority to decide the allocation of work time for different teacher tasks. This marked a turning away from a tradition of giving considerable influence to teachers and their local representatives. Disagreement on this issue provoked a labor market conflict where the teacher union rejected a proposed settlement, and teachers were locked-outed for several weeks[35]. In the end, the state intervened and imposed a framework that severely restricted the individual teachers' right to plan and organize teaching.

The school reform text was informed by the learning perspective, both in the ideas for connecting teaching and after-school activities and in the ambition of optimizing learning for better achievement. The question of teaching and outcomes in the school subjects came to dominate the implementation of the reform and the ensuing debate. The different school subjects were to be described in terms of learning outcomes, and these were to be differentiated for different age groups of students and also in other ways. As could be expected, this led to curricula with very many learning objectives.

While the concepts of learning outcomes and learning objectives were relatively new in Danish schooling, the way of describing them was well established and continued the tradition of Anglo-Saxon curriculum theory. The basic principle of this tradition is that in order to work efficiently – develop the knowledge and skills of students – the content should be specified in terms of student behavior, so that teachers and institutions can observe the results[36]. In Danish education, this curriculum approach has existed in an uneasy balance with the German-inspired Bildung approach discussed above; but in the implementation of the 2014 reform, the multitude of learning objectives came to dominate the curricula, and it became hard to see any room for the more general educational perspectives such as those voiced by Biesta[27] and the Bildung tradition. As the school reform also strengthened the role of local school management, including the responsibility of school heads for making sure that teaching matches the learning objectives, the resistance from many teachers and educationalists came to target the idea of learning objectives. Criticism was often harsh, as in this statement by the educationalist Brian Degn Mårtensson:

> *'Put briefly, the problem with teaching directed by learning objectives is that it has very little to do with actual teaching (...) The content of teaching is seen only as a more or less random means for the production of competencies intended for the labor market. When teaching is directed so narrowly towards learning objectives, the unique meeting between the person and the subject with its content does not matter. Instead, the output in the form of competencies and the process*

of accommodation becomes the main thing. (...) In the teaching of literature, there is no reason to finish reading a novel if the learning objectives are achieved halfway through it'.[37]

Misfeldt and Tamborg[38] have summarized the most prominent criticism of teaching directed by learning objectives in five main arguments. The approach is criticized for (1) being technocratic, because it overloads teaching with too many and too detailed learning objectives that demand much planning and control and directs attention away from the key elements of content and teaching; (2) being individualizing, because it is combined with a view of learning as personal; (3) seeing children as unfinished adults to be made ready for work; and (4) overlooking both the content dimension and the educational aspect, and thus the purpose of the school itself. Finally, (5) the approach is criticized for having the underlying notion that education can and should be based on "best practice". I will explore some of these arguments further.

The argument that teaching directed by learning objectives is individualizing refers to the fact that in policy documents following up on the school reform, the approach was combined with an idea about personal learning, assuming that technology and data can provide relatively accurate information about where and how individual students learn best; and using this knowledge to support individual students' learning and achievement. Critics, drawing on learning theory and social science, have argued that such individualized learning objectives may undermine the learning community and the opportunities for social learning. The critique that learning goal-directed teaching sees children as unfinished adults is related to the technocratic aspect of the learning objectives approach. If the school assumes to know in advance what the student should end up being able to know and do, the student is no longer seen as a complex and growing person but as an unfinished individual who is not yet ready to proceed to the next level of education and ultimately to the labor market. Misfeldt and Tamborg[38] agree with this critique, arguing that if education is reframed simply as preparation, avoiding new ideas, challenges, and risks, it degenerates. On the other hand, they also argue, drawing on Dewey, that there is no education without direction, since education precisely is growth that depends on being directed.

The debate about learning objectives in the implementation of the Danish school reform demonstrated the difficulties of the broad learning discourse. In the concept of teaching based on learning objectives, the concept of learning was linked to a skills-based and mainly cognitive approach, while the broader dimensions of learning were neglected. The criticism and debate provoked by this tended to draw on and return to more traditional ideas of teaching and Bildung, rejecting (often implicitly) the focus on the perspectives of learners and the need for empirical knowledge about the processes of learning. Over time,

this led many actors to back away from the optimistic ideas and expectations of the learning discourse that had emerged around the year 2000.

Conclusion

During the years leading up to 2000, learning became an important concept in education policy discourse and initiatives presented by international organizations such as the OECD and the European Union. The learning discourse signaled that learning is at least as important as teaching; that learning takes place both in institutional education and in many other contexts; that educators as well as policies should focus on the situation and the needs of learners; that learning is a multi-dimensional process involving not only cognition and skills but also emotional and social aspects; that learning takes place not only in persons but also in organizations, regions, and economies; and that research on learning needs to be not only conceptual but also empirical. This broad concept of learning signaled optimism for learners and citizens. Learners could and should be empowered to be active drivers in their own processes of learning and skills development; learning was a task and a possibility not only for children and young people in schools and higher education institutions, but also for adults; changes in work and society were not to be seen as a threat, but rather as an opportunity to learn and improve one's life conditions.

Another prefix, which preceded "learning" but may also outlive it, is "knowledge". The concept of the knowledge economy[39] refers to economies where the production and circulation of knowledge and knowledge-intensive products is a key activity, requiring highly skilled and independent workers. It gained wide political attention when the European Union made it a core element in the Lisbon strategy, but it is also well established in mainstream economics. The concept of a knowledge society[40] conceives the role of knowledge in many dimensions of social life. The prefix of knowledge originates in the assessment that industry is no longer the main economic and social basis of modern society, that "post-industrial society"[41] has come. Compared to learning, the knowledge prefix is equally optimistic but less dynamic. The argument that the knowledge society will replace the industrial society implicitly defines knowledge according to the Western tradition, as conceptual and de-contextualized. This knowledge is seen as a beneficial and worthy substance, but there is less attention to how it works and why.

In contrast, the prefix of learning does not indicate a substance to be acquired but rather a process in confronting the challenges of societal communities. But the concept of learning drawn on is broad, in fact so broad that it proved fragile and difficult to pursue with consistency in the policy discourse. The actual conditions and opportunities for learning proved to be different in schools, work organizations, regions,

and other contexts. Over time, the meaning of learning tended to diversify, and certain versions of the concept came to dominate. The idea of learning schools is still being pursued but is a minor trend compared to rational school management. The idea of learning outcomes, seeing learning more as a product than as a process, has come to dominate. The case of the Danish 2014 school reform demonstrates some of the possible pitfalls in this approach. The ambition to describe learning outputs in precise ways to guide teaching and learning led to curricula becoming overloaded with narrow learning objectives; and this, in combination with a strengthening of the power of local school management and a corresponding weakening of teacher autonomy, provoked strong teacher resistance and undermined the positive potentials of the reform.

Today, the learning discourse has much less influence and visibility in education policy. Elements of the discourse have merged with different policy trends such as neo-liberal market logic, cultural traditionalism, and progressivism in the tradition of Dewey and European reform pedagogy. The fragility of the broad concept of learning probably made such diversification inevitable, but still, some important insights into the potentials of learning and perspectives for education policy have been lost, at least for the time being.

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Declarations

Funding: No specific funding was received for this work.

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.