Articles:
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Extended Education in the Netherlands

Manuela du Bois-Reymond

Abstract: The article deals with the concept of extended education as it is applied in Dutch primary and secondary schools. While the development of "the brede school" (broad school – BS) in the primary sector is now part of all schools, the introduction of BS in secondary education did not proceed with the same speed. The main argument of the article is that in the BS the formal and the non-formal curriculum remain largely at a distance from each other, less so in the primary and more so in the secondary sector, and that is disadvantageous for the development of a learning biography. The article accrues research findings supporting this argument.

Keywords: learning biography, Dutch "brede school", transitions, teacher training

1 Introduction

Educational politics have become an ever more urgent issue in the European member states and at European (EU) level. Rising figures of youth unemployment and early school leaving are serious problems for most national education systems and labour markets.[1] Problems are aggravated for students and young people with migrant backgrounds.[2] EU benchmarks in the field of education and training for 2010 and the coming decennium are the reduction of early school leavers and a substantial decrease of the percentage of low achieving pupils in reading and literacy. EU politicians – who are, one should not forget, also national politicians – strive to have at least 85 per cent of young people complete upper secondary education (EC 2009, p. 14; Education and Training 2010, 2020).

At the heart of the proposed educational reform lie two prominent discourses, one might call them the "Big Two": lifelong learning and non-formal education. Both pertain to the knowledge society which demands an ever better qualified workforce (Sachs, 2008). The concept of lifelong learning points to the evident fact that schooling is not restricted any longer to a well defined age group, as it was in past times and covered the age brackets 6–15 years for most children and young people in practically all European countries. For present generations, learning has become a

1 About 20 % of all young Europeans 15–24 year are unemployed (Social Agenda – July 2011: 13); in the Netherland it is about 12 % (CBS, 2012).

2 It is estimated that between 25 % and 40 % of 15 year old first and second generation immigrant students perform below level 2 – established as minimum qualification by the EU – in at least one basic school subject (see PISA, 2006; Council of the European Union, 2008).

life task. A complementary development concerns the places and ways of learning. It is not only within the classroom and the traditional subjects that pupils and students are supposed to learn but also outside school and in various settings of formal and non-formal combinations.

Although the Netherlands belongs to the most prosperous member states of the Union, it has educational problems as well. In this article we will discuss the concept of the extended school, which in Dutch is called "brede school" (broad school), and its implementation in the educational landscape within the larger frame of new learning imperatives in and for knowledge societies. Section 2 deals with the notion of life long learning and its implications for young learners in contemporary schools. In the main part, section 3, the development of the Dutch "brede school" and its educational tenets come in focus. Section 4 discusses the relationship between formal and non-formal education and learning; section 5 takes up the notion of non-disruptive learning trajectories and organizational structures of the broad school, including teacher training, and section 6 opens the vista again for a European perspective.[3]

2 Learning Biographies

In past years education is perceived by European and national politicians and pedagogical professionals as a process which has to span the whole trajectory from preschool to upper secondary and, preferably, higher education. Early and primary education has become one of the prime areas of attention. To combat social and educational disadvantage and, as a consequence, social exclusion, children should start at the age of three at the latest with their learning career, in free and playful as well as structured learning environments and guided by well trained competent caregivers. Amplified efforts and initiatives of extended education in the pre-primary sector by most EU member states, to which the Netherlands belongs, testify to the recognition of quality education for the little ones.

Already in their early years children should be enabled to develop a *learning habitus*; habitus understood quite in the sense Bourdieu (1977) uses it: as dispositions individuals acquire when they live and act and make experiences in their every day environments. This disposition is the process *and* outcome of the interaction between a person's agency and the social structures which provide opportunities as well as restrictions for acting and experiencing.

It is this acquisition of a learning habitus which makes learning in preschool and primary school so hugely important as is pointed out in learning theories and experiences with compensatory and enriching education programs. If students later leave education too early, it is because they have not been able – or given the chance – to develop a learning habitus as basis for their further learning biography (Pohl et al. 2006). Learning, they would report, was not stimulating to them, they were missing intrinsic motivation. The school is experienced by discouraged learners not as a place to learn but rather as determined by systemic properties which do not connect to the life world and state of mind of the students (Stauber, 2007). Across the EU, more than ten per cent of native young people and twice as many migrant youth

3 The article is partly based on du Bois-Reymond 2012.

abandon school early (EUROPA – Press Releases, 2011). It is very hard for educational systems to regain these young native and migrant men and women as learners (Walther et al., 2006).

The Netherlands, besides Germany and Austria, belongs to the European countries with a rigid tracking system, selecting pupils at an early age (12 years in Germany and Austria, 10 years in the Netherlands) into different learning levels: vocational and general education. That break is disadvantageous for the education system as well as for the individual learner as much talent is lost for further general and professional education. In view of demands for lifelong learning and in many different learning environments (see Bekerman et al., 2006), the institutionalized breach between high (general) and low (vocational) education is outdated; concepts of extended education are supposed to bridge that breach and integrate different learning modes.

By comparison, selective systems are generally regarded as less prone to the learner's potentials than comprehensive systems which give the learner more room to develop and deploy his or her talents before choosing their further school career. While the latter system accounts for a rather effortless transition into lower secondary school and the students do not have to adjust to a totally new school regiment, in selective systems that transition is harsh, dividing the student population into "theoretical" vs. "practical learners".

But that does not mean that systems with an early start of vocational education are in all respects disadvantageous to learners' needs. Member states with dual vocation schools, like Germany, generally succeed better in providing successful school to work transitions than educational systems which decouple vocational education from work experience.[4] Yet both systems have difficulties working out sensible strategies to prepare students for a life in knowledge societies and globalizing labour markets.

Under conditions of uncertain labour market conditions young people cannot develop long-term anticipation of their future and working life. They only know that they will have to adopt an attitude of flexibility ("generation flex") in order to swiftly adapt to unexpected situations. At the same time they are urged by their teachers (and parents) to make a career plan and find out what further steps to take that will lead them to the aspired goal knowing that the plan might not work out – and what to do then.

In this situation it is not just the accumulation of knowledge which counts but the acquisition of a set of social and personal competences (Rychen and Salganik, 2003). Discourses about competencies pertain to formal as well as non-formal and informal learning and have entered the school curricula as well as teacher training. The learners are supposed to develop the competence to work productively within groups, communicate competently with diverse interlocutors, present themselves convincingly to others (teachers; employers), be able to negotiate their own interests, acquire social diligence and deploy an attitude of self-assuredness.

In short: the concept of competencies is based on a broadening of knowledge, opening "hard" subjects to domains of "soft" subjects like music and arts as well as "soft" competencies, the most important of which is to organize their own learning

4 For an extended discussion about the pro's and con's of the respective education systems see Allmendinger 1989; also Schoon & Silbereisen 2009.

paths (EFA, 2008: 21). Extended school models are supposed to supply the learners with these kinds of new learning imperatives.

3 The Dutch "Brede School" (BS)

In contrast to other countries like Germany, the discussion about extended education in the Netherlands is characterized by a pragmatic and "down to earth" approach. There is not much theorizing and politicizing about the desirability or undesirability of the introduction of the BS as was the case in the 1970s when the concept of an all-day comprehensive school ("middenschool") was discussed so fiercely among politicians, parents and educationalists. That discussion faded away in the 1980s and the concept as such was not revitalized by any party. Instead various models of partly integrated schools were established, with two or three bridging years after primary school and before further tracking. In practice that led to three school types: gymnasium without bridge classes, schools with options for vocational or general secondary education after the bridge classes, and schools with predominately vocational education. Primary education was extended to eight groups/classes (5–12 years) and open for four-year olds to enter, which almost all parents choose to do.

The Dutch version of extended education developed independently from these school models. They were quite other reasons that boosted the expansion of the BS. One main pull factor was the inadequate infrastructure of caregiving arrangements for preschoolers. Until the 1990 it was quite accepted by society and families that women would spend the first years of their children's lives at home and interrupt their working careers. During the last two decades though it became evident that the labour market could not do without women labour and the young women themselves exerted pressure on politicians to establish more and better facilities for preschoolers to enable them to combine work and family obligations.[5] For that reason the BS was first introduced in the primary sector. It had two broad goals: connect preschool care with the primary school and enrich the curriculum for preschoolers and primary school children in order to support disadvantaged pupils, among them immigrants.

The development of the BS in the primary sector proceeded quickly and could rely on broad societal consensus. Meanwhile every primary school is required by law to offer young parents preschool and after school care facilities which are connected to the school directly or by contract with private organizations.[6] Pedagogical targets are to provide optimal conditions for the development of children, to create a non-disruptive learning trajectory from pre-school entry throughout obligatory education (5–16 years), and to increase non-formal activities. Behind such targets lie more general expectations of fostering social cohesion and security in the neighborhood, especially in cities with high percentages of migrants ("new Nederlanders").

Ideally the BS functions as a network school: the primary school forms the centre in a net of all actors and institutions in the neighborhood and municipality which would contribute with their respective resources and knowledge to the work of the

5 The author was engaged in an EU-financed project which evaluated the "combination problems" of young families in six member states, among them NL (du Bois-Reymond et al., 2008).

6 Of a total of 7000 primary schools, 2000 are part of a BS; growth has significantly slowed down in the meantime (Jaarbericht, 2009).

BS, like libraries, cultural centers, health and child well-being services, including parent advice, traffic and security education etc. This ideal is implemented by very few BS. Most schools can and will only use some of these cooperation forms and respond first (and often only) to the desire of parents to extend care hours. Parents should be drawn closer to the school and be asked for their commitment, a development fostered by the BS as the parents enter the schools daily when bringing and fetching their children.

BS schools in the primary sector are evenly spread in the country, big and small municipalities, but are mostly concentrated in disadvantaged neighborhoods, often with substantial amounts of migrant families (Jaarbericht 2009, p. 11). The need to engage the parents in school affairs and enhance the educational opportunities of their children is most urgent in such communities.[7]

The situation is quite different in secondary education. There the BS has spread less effectively, and with different features. Secondary schools in the Netherlands are usually large organizations, often consisting of several hundred if not thousands of students and complex management structures and an array of different professionals, inside and outside school. Schools are usually housed in big locations outside the neighborhood where the students and their families live. Therefore the concept of neighborhood school in the primary sector is applicable only to a certain extent and also the cooperation with the parents is more distant; the students are at an age when they do not need parental support in getting to and from school. Their school day extends into the afternoon hours already with the formal curriculum and many students do not like after school activities in school; they have their own leisure agendas.

Most BS schools started in the early years of 2000; about 40 % are still in the phase of consolidation.[8] One third of all secondary schools are part of a BS (Jaarbericht, 2011: 11). As in the primary sector, there are more restricted and rather broad BS which adhere to the concept of network school and would cooperate with many different partners, from libraries, sport, art, music and other leisure clubs to social work, police, health service and youth welfare. But most secondary BS schools focus on language proficiency and preparing students for their future career in work and society.

An important drive sphere for schools to offer non-formal activities is to compete with other schools in attracting students and prettifying their school profile. This development points to the fierce struggle to secure personnel when means are cut and evaluations of students' insufficient academic accomplishments endanger the future of the school. BS schools advertise themselves with the following five profiles (not mutually exclusive):

- Enrichment curricula in the fields of language, nature and science, art and culture, sport, ICT;
- Enlargement of educational opportunities;
- Offering specific care arrangements for special students;
- Connecting to the neighborhood;
- Offering out of school care.

7 We do not go further in the development and the curriculum of the BS in the primary sector in this article; see Doornebal et al 2012; du Bois-Reymond 2009.

8 Gymnasia do not partake in BS.

In a bi-annually repeated study[9] BS schools are asked which profile they identify with and want to develop further. Curriculum enrichment is the most often chosen form of BS in secondary schools (76 %). They concentrate on subjects like art, culture and sport. That profile is followed by "enlargement of educational opportunities" and "special care arrangements". Least developed are neighborhood schools (24 %) and offers of care after school (15 %); (Jaarbericht 2011: 50/1).

For secondary schools, cooperation with parents is vital. Lacking contacts are especially detrimental for students with migrant backgrounds whose families are even harder to reach through the established communication channels than native Dutch parents. The problems are aggravated if the school is populated by up to thirty or more different migrant groups, which is more rule than exception in many Dutch towns, certainly in the four large cities Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Utrecht and Den Haag.[10] There are secondary BS schools which do run parent programs, that offer language courses or organize information evenings where specialists offer information on healthy food, drug prevention, and any other issue that might interest (migrant) parents. Yet it does not seem that BS schools differ much from non-BS schools in their difficulties to realize and maintain vital parent-school contacts.

BS-activities of the enrichment profile take place irregularly, between a few times per year or weekly; only additional educational offers usually take place weekly. BS schools are free to determine the frequency and kind of the activities. Most schools contract sport clubs, music schools or theatre groups to enrich the curriculum. As many other secondary schools do the same – again on a larger or smaller scale – it is difficult to define what exactly discerns a BS from a non-BS school.

4 Formal and Non-Formal Education and Learning

Extra curricular activities are an integral part of a BS only to a limited degree. About half of the BS schools have extra activities organized outside the regular curriculum while the other half has them integrated in the formal curriculum. In the former case the activities take place after school time (and are therefore voluntary), in the latter case during school time (and are therefore obligatory).

If we look at the relationships between the school and the non-formal partners, we see a corresponding picture: about half of the BS schools work with their respective partners "face to face" which means they communicate with each other only as far as necessary to keep the organization running. But "one cannot speak of close cooperation or mutual use of facilities" and in about one fifth of the cases the partners work even "back to back" which means that the participating organizations do not know about each other's work and do not share facilities – or only incidentally. Only in 1 % of all BS secondary schools is there close cooperation between inside and outside school partners in all respects (Jaarbericht 2011: 56).

9 Done by the independent research bureau Oberon which publishes its findings in "Jaarberichten".

10 In the latest edition of the OECD report "Education at a Glance" 2012, 33.7 % of all students in the Netherlands have immigrant backgrounds (table A5.2). The percentage is over 70 % in disadvantaged schools as defined by low educational level of the mother, and from low occupational status families (40.6 % of non-immigrant students) (table A5.3).

The more functionaries and professionals within and outside the formal curriculum have to work together, the more important coordination becomes. Teachers are overburdened with such tasks. Therefore secondary BS schools engage so called BS-coordinators; about 40 % do so, the rest do not. BS-coordinators are usually engaged for half a day to two days per week, to be paid from the regular school budget. The continuity and further development of the BS is much dependent on a coordinator for well functioning, as he or she has knowledge of all participating members and can channel and bundle information. Where such coordination does not exist, a BS school has great difficulties in guaranteeing cooperation and will probably refrain from including too many different parties. About fifty per cent of BS schools don't have regular meetings and only in 15 % all partners take part (Jaarbericht 2011: 58).

Although a main goal of the BS movement is to find new combinations of formal and non-formal/informal education, it was never intended to integrate formal and non-formal curricula in such a way that they would form one coherent curricular scheme. The dominant position of the "formal school" with its emphasis on cognitive achievement in separate subject disciplines is in no way questioned. In that sense a thorough renewal of the formal curriculum cannot be expected. This is all the more unlikely as there is, as in other countries and further boosted by PISA and other international comparisons of educational performance, a growing tendency of going back-to-basics in the formal curriculum with emphasis on reading, writing, mathematics and science subjects.[11]

The fact that about half of the secondary BS schools have integrated non-formal activities in the formal curriculum, as we saw above, together with everything but well staffed and functioning interdepartmental coordination leads us to the conclusion that the Dutch version of extended education is *additional* rather than integrative. That impression is supported by the outcome of a self evaluation of the BS. Only about half of the BS schools are of the opinion that their extra curricular program has demonstrable effects on the students. What these effects are, precisely, and how to measure them, is not clear. Also unclear and not measured is the relationship between the supposed positive effects in the extra-curricular sphere and the formal curriculum. In other words: if students use non-formal education offers, what kind of influence does that have on their overall achievements and school career? Or even, if BS schools run educative programs for disadvantaged students, are there long-term effects to be seen in their academic performances or transitions to further education?

These kinds of questions cannot be answered by the presently applied evaluation method.

11 According to a recent report of the school inspection, test scores in English, math and Dutch in *all* secondary school types have dramatically deteriorated and one in ten teachers in secondary schools does not have the capacities to teach effectively and competently while 18 % of the teachers has not got the required degree and qualification (Ministerie OCW, 2011).

5 Non-Disruptive Learning Trajectories and Organizational Structures

Whereas the threshold between kindergarten/preschool and primary school has been lowered considerably, even to the extent that practically all children begin their school career at the age of four and stay together until they are 11/12 years old, the transition from primary to secondary school still forms a major hurdle for many pupils. The nationally administered CITO test[12] at the end of primary school forms a deep censure in the school career of every child because of the tracking system in secondary education, be that a BS or regular school.

There is only incidental cooperation between primary and secondary schools to realize a non-disruptive learning trajectory, regardless if the schools are BS or not. The advancement of such trajectories simply does not belong to the aims of regular or extended education and are being noticed only in the administrative sphere by national educational policy. More generally (vaguely) a general increase of educational opportunities is expected by municipalities when they stimulate the development of BS schools. When they enumerate "non-disruptive lines" as one of the main goals, they do not refer to vertical lines (primary – secondary – further education) but to *horizontal* lines which mean the cooperation between formal and non-formal professionals. That is a remarkable change, as vertical lines were emphasized in a former report (Jaarbericht, 2009). And even horizontal lines are weak because there are only sparse out of school facilities for teenage students.

The other crucial transition, from lower to upper secondary (vocational or general) education, does not belong to the spear point of BS schools either – exceptions excluded, although it is this transition which is so extremely important for the further school career of a student. Lacking support in this respect draws the attention of national education policies though, but again without particularly referring to underused resources of extended education and non-formal learning.

Municipalities realize that the cooperation between the different formal and non-formal professionals is sub-optimal and regard better cooperation to be of great importance, not only for the individual school but within the whole education and youth policy of the municipality. About one third of municipalities have appointed a project manager for all BS schools who must help regular schools develop into extended schools and about half of municipalities have established above that a so called steering group which is responsible for the general policy and course of the BS in the city or region.

It is the intention of the Dutch government to integrate special education in regular education and reduce special education schools. Although teachers and principals are not per se against such integration, schools are fiercely against the measure if it is not accompanied by more and specialized professionals and financial compensation. It is noticeable that the BS development is not explicitly used to facilitate the intended integration.

Municipalities are asked to evaluate the development of BS within their overall social integration policy. Municipal functionaries are most content with offers of extra curricula activities and least content with the cooperation between parents and

12 CITO: Centraal Instituut for Toets Ontwikkeling (Central Institute for Test Development).

school and neighborhood activation. For the near future they see the BS evolving in the direction of an efficiently governed organization which would connect all educational, child and youth services in a municipality.

One might expect that teacher training would be in step with the development of BS. That is not the case however although teacher training institutes are in the course of renewal. Future teachers, it is claimed by the government and educationalists, must become better professionals to face the challenges of schools in a knowledge society (Cramer et al., 2011). It is then all the more astounding that teacher training curricula do not pay systematic attention to the concept of extended education. Non-formal learning as an ever more salient part of the learning biographies of students as such is not addressed in teacher training; nor are the strengths and weaknesses of existing BS schools (although it must be emphasized that teacher training institutes in the Netherlands are autonomous to regulate their curriculum so it might be that there are institutes which do pay attention also to BS and non-formal education).

At the same time teacher training curricula are modernized by specifying the *competencies* the students must acquire during their studies. Competencies are specified per subject discipline but cover also social and managerial skills needed to master classroom tasks, deal with parents and function in the school as an organization. Only after a student becomes a teacher in a BS school, or has served in-service periods during studies at such a school, does he get the chance to get acquainted with the specific structures and aims of extended education. If they are assigned to a BS school in a disadvantaged neighborhood, young teachers will be confronted with social and learning problems which they might realize cannot be solved by formal learning arrangements alone.

6 Education in European Perspective Revisited

The European-wide "Big Two" rhetoric – lifelong learning; non-formal education – referring to the all-round, flexible, vocationally as well as generally sufficiently if not better educated individual who is self-assured and competent economically as well as socially; who is, in short a responsible citizen – that rhetoric falls short when confronted with the reality of multi-problem neighborhoods and families, of housing segregation and white flight in cities and schools, and of unresponsive labour markets and employers unwilling to accept low-achievers.

It is not easy to find convincing answers to the pressing question, which confronts contemporary education and educational politicians: how to find a sound balance between urgently needed reforms for more integration of different learning modes on the one hand, and facing the equally urgent challenge of competing with international quality standards on the other.

National education systems steer a middle course between two extreme positions. Either they opt for comprehensive schools with a fully integrated curriculum of formal and non-formal learning for all students, or they bend towards a stiff course of back-to-basics and selection. The Netherlands has decided to keep its selective system but back it up with extended education.

We have argued in favor of an integration of various and different learning modes and against the present reality in Dutch BS of merely adding non-formal activities to the formal curriculum, be that within or outside school. Adding instead of convincingly integrating curriculum subjects essentially means continuing the split between general and vocational education. The former is superior to the latter and therefore results in a discrimination against students who attend vocational tracks. That so many vocational students dislike the so called theory subjects has precisely to do with the separation of these different knowledge forms. Students will never develop a *learning habit* and become lifelong learners if they are not convinced by the sense and sensibility of what they have to learn and if they don't do that without intrinsic motivation. It is, apart from subjective frustration, socially and economically a very expensive way of organizing an education system as insufficiently prepared students produce many follow-up problems, such as early school leaving, expensive re-integration trajectories, endangered social inclusion of minority groups, and permanent exclusion from the first or even second labour market for the educationally disadvantaged.

One compensatory strategy to prevent, or at least mitigate such problems is the creation of vertical non-disruptive learning trajectories, from preschool to the end of obligatory education. We have seen that aim was more or less abandoned in favor of horizontal trajectories to warrant workable formal – non-formal curriculum schedules. Further development of vertical trajectories would ease the school careers particularly of disadvantaged students, among them those with migrant backgrounds, who cannot rely on social and cultural capital to the same degree as their non-migrant contemporaries. As we have seen, the BS has realized that crucial aim at the transition point from preschool to primary school, and it has become a success; a success with a "but" attached to it though. Already during primary school a pre-CITO test is administered, the outcomes of which are influential for the further education of the child. In fact that pre-test overshadows the last years of primary school and begins to quasi-separate children. Enrichment and other BS-offers can only partly compensate for that early pre-selection.

Apart from that, the kind of learning and working forms the pupils got used to during their primary school period, and which are freer and more integrative, certainly at BS, have to be abandoned when they enter secondary school. For one, it is by no means certain that they will continue their educational career at a BS, and even if they do they will find a more separated program between the formal and non-formal curriculum inherent in all secondary schools. The disruption between primary and secondary school is by no means mediated through extended education.

The other disruption occurs at the transition point when the students enter upper secondary education and when extended education stops altogether.

We thought it important to pay, if only aside, attention to teacher training. There is no systematic feedback from the experiences with BS to teacher training institutions. The reason for that unwanted situation is nevertheless explicable: there is simply no unified theory and only scattered discussion among educationalists in the Netherlands referring to non-formal learning in the framework of formal education and BS.

As we have shown, the extended program of a school consists of an array of more or less combined elements and activities; some offered regularly, others irregularly, some within, some outside the formal curriculum, some administered by the

regular teaching staff, some by hired additional personnel. And each school does it differently and with different financial means (Jaarbericht, 2011).

Perceiving the pedagogical process as a holistic human undertaking interconnecting generations, one must ask what the effects on that undertaking are if ever more pedagogical functions are "outsourced" to other than teaching professionals. Must one not be afraid of a creeping de-professionalization of the teaching profession by that outsourcing? Modern secondary schools have become enterprises which are run according to economic logic rather than pedagogical principles. Regular as well as BS schools work with a highly differentiated staff, consisting of professional teachers, teaching assistants, social-pedagogical and social workers, numerous – and often changing – out of school functionaries, commercial care and leisure as well as labour agencies, etc. The question of how to establish *governance models* which are appropriate to deal with these kinds of complexities is, we would argue, one of the most urgent demands for the further development of extended education in the Netherlands, as well as in other countries.

Thinking about a research agenda for the nearby future, the following themes and problems come to mind:

First and foremost: the scientific discussion about *integrative learning-teaching models* should go on to overcome the historically outdated separation of formal, non-formal and informal education. That discussion – and research – must become more inclusive in that it must include all actors involved in the different educational fields.

Secondly: The discussion and research findings on extended education miss out on *connecting organizational models with* the *motivational needs* (and frustrations) of pupils and students (and their parents). Obviously, that disconnection has to do with different disciplinary research traditions. But viable teaching-learning models can only come into existence and survive if organizational (and financial) rational does not overrule the specificities of the work of teachers and learners.

From that follows, thirdly, that *new governance models* have to be designed and experimentally put to the test in various and different field settings. Such models should be tested in national as well as international-comparative contexts, and here I see the main challenge for IJREE.

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