UNESCO BANGKOK’S STUDY ON TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCIES

Orientation Meeting for NEQMAP’s Regional Study on Assessment of Transversal Competencies in the Asia-Pacific
Bangkok, Thailand
29-30 October, 2015

Naoko Asano Enomoto
Programme Officer, UNESCO Bangkok
Introduction: Education and Training in a Changing World

URL: https://youtu.be/XsLV37IkA6g
About the ERI-Net Regional Study on Transversal Competencies
About ERI-Net

- Education Research Institutes Networks in the Asia-Pacific (ERI-Net)
- Established by UNESCO Bangkok in 2009
- Regional collaboration on education policy issues
- Two research areas: **School Education** and **Higher Education**
ERI-Net Regional Study on Transversal Competencies

- “Integrating transversal competencies in education policy and practice in Asia-Pacific region”

- 2013 Phase I: Education Policy
- 2014 Phase II: School-level Practices
- 2015 Phase III (ongoing): Teacher Preparation
## Working Definition of Transversal Competencies

### Transversal Competencies for the ERI-Net study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Examples of key characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical and innovative thinking</td>
<td>Creativity, entrepreneurship, resourcefulness, application skills, reflective thinking, reasoned decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Communication skills, organizational skills, teamwork, collaboration, sociability, collegiality, empathy, compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal skills</td>
<td>Self-discipline, ability to learn independently, flexibility and adaptability, self-awareness, perseverance, self-motivation, compassion, integrity, self-respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global citizenship</td>
<td>Awareness, tolerance, openness, responsibility, respect for diversity, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, ability to resolve conflicts, democratic participation, conflict resolution, respect for the environment, national identity, sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media and information literacy</td>
<td>Ability to obtain and analyse information through ICT, ability to critically evaluate information and media content, ethical use of ICT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case study for Phase I and Phase II

- Australia
- China
- Hong Kong SAR (Phase I)
- India
- Japan
- Republic of Korea
- Malaysia
- Mongolia
- Philippines
- Thailand
- Viet Nam (Phase II)
Data Collection

- Desk Study
- Interviews with stakeholders
  (Phase I: Policy makers, Phase II: Educators)
- Focus group discussion
- Questionnaires
  (Phase I: Policy makers, Phase II: Educators)
- Classroom observations (Phase II)

*Research framework was proposed by the ERI-Net secretariat and discussed/approved at ERI-Net expert meeting/steering group meeting before the case study*
Highlights from Phase I study
Emphasis on transversal competencies in education policies/curriculum are reported in all the ten case studies.

Rationale for integrating transversal competencies in education:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Economic Discourse</th>
<th>Social Discourse</th>
<th>Humanity Discourse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global Perspective</strong></td>
<td>Competitiveness</td>
<td>Understanding &amp; Peace</td>
<td>Global Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Perspective</strong></td>
<td>GDP Growth</td>
<td>HDI Growth</td>
<td>Patriotism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Perspective</strong></td>
<td>Employability</td>
<td>Community/Harmony</td>
<td>Moral Formation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HDI: Human Development Index
Policy/Curriculum Review (2)

Modes of integration of transversal competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/economy</th>
<th>Specific Subject</th>
<th>Cross-subject</th>
<th>Extra-curricular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong SAR(China)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanghai (China)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skills and Competencies: Similarities (1)

Key Findings 1

Skills and competencies found in all ten case studies
- critical thinking
- innovative thinking
- reflective thinking
- reasoned-decision making
- communication skills
- collaboration
Skills and Competencies: Similarities (2)

Key Findings 2

Prominence of Critical and Innovative Thinking domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I</th>
<th>Critical and Innovative Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-personal Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intra-personal Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical and Psychological health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skills and Competencies: Similarities (3)

Key Findings 3

Inter-Personal Skills vary across countries and economies

Inter-personal Skills

Critical and Innovative Thinking
Intra-personal Skills
Global Citizenship
Physical and Psychological health
Skills and competencies related to ICT are also widely included in the education polices.

Examples:
- “ICT capability” (Australia)
- “ICT ability” (China)
- “digital literacy” (Malaysia)
- “media and information literacy” (Thailand)
Highlights from Phase II study
Case studies confirm that the importance of transversal competencies is reaching school level, which is well supported by school leaders and teachers.

Most commonly referred to skills and competencies were critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, collaboration, and communication.
## Transversal competencies in school mottos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example of school motto, vision and objectives of sampled schools</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Self-discipline and integrity</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All-round development, human well-being and exploring the truth bravely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learning proactively and having compassion and zest for living</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be a child with dream and self-motivation, let’s make our school a happy place to be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intelligence is based on one’s ability to think</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Knowledgeable, Disciplined, Cultured</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sincerity, creativity, and cooperation</td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A school helps all students develop through true learning and teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Virtue, Academic, Health</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Friendliness (Smiles), Good Thinking, Virtue (Salam)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by ERI-Net secretariat from the case studies
Pedagogy (1)

- Student-centred learning
  Almost all cases observed that there was a concerted effort in classroom to encourage students’ active involvement in learning in order to develop students’ transversal competencies.

- Volley ball type lesson (Japan)

Source: Case of Japan (2014)
Teaching methods perceived to be effective by teachers

Top five effective teaching methods identified by teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Methods</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Shanghai (China)</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Philippines</th>
<th>Thailand</th>
<th>Overall Ranking *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GS</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group projects and presentations</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Field studies</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual projects and presentations</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small group discussions</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extra-curricular activities</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer-aided activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lectures by teachers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Others</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by UNESCO staff from Phase II case studies.

GS – Government School; PS – Private School

*Note - Rank of 1 is perceived as most effective. Rankings are distributed as such: 1 is given a weighted value of 5, 2=4, 3=3, 4=2, 5=1.
Teacher Training and Support

- Teachers reported they did receive some training in relation to teach transversal competencies.
- Many of them answered that they are not confident enough to incorporate transversal competencies into their lessons.
- The majority of teachers prefer their training to include the following training practices:
  - model classrooms
  - mentoring
  - discussion with colleagues
- Some case studies documented good example of teacher support, encouraging information exchange and learning among teachers (RoK and Japan).

Source: compiled by ERI-Net secretariat from the case studies
In many cases, schools are using current assessment systems/regimes to evaluate transversal competencies.

Some case studies reported about official assessment guidelines and policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study</th>
<th>Example of official assessment guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China (Shanghai)</td>
<td>The Green Indicator System (2010) for basic education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>The evaluation guidelines for “Special Activities” and “Period of Integrated Studies”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interview and questionnaire revealed that many teachers and schools are facing the limitations in guidelines and assessment tools, as well as clarity in the definitions.
Promising trends and Remaining Challenges from Phase I & Phase II
Promising trends

- Integration of transversal competencies is reflected in national guidelines, school policies and plans, and curricula.

- All stakeholders show awareness of the importance of transversal competencies.

- Cases point to an increased awareness in student-centred practices and varying methods to accommodate transversal competencies.

- Extra-curricular activities are given emphasis and are utilized as effective methods in developing transversal competencies in most of the case studies.

- There is a culture of collaboration among teachers surveyed to improve their methods and strategies to involve students in the classroom.
Remaining Challenges

**Definitional**
- Lack of clarity in and agreement on scope of transversal competencies

**Operational**
- Lack of assessment mechanisms
- Insufficient teaching/learning materials and teaching guides
- Lack of incentives
- Insufficient capacity of teachers
- Lack of budget (policy-budget inconsistency)
- Additional burden on teachers

**Systemic**
- Large class size
- Overloaded curricula
- Pressure for academic success
- Inconsistency with high-stake exams
- Lack of understanding among parents and other stakeholders
- Overall school/community culture not conducive
NEXT STEP: Phase III Study

- Two research themes
  - Part A: Teachers’ preparedness for facilitating TVCs learning
  - Part B: TVCs learning in increasingly interconnected world

- Eleven case studies
  - Australia, China, Hang Kong SAR, India, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam

- Results of case studies will be shared at the next ERI-Net annual meeting in February, 2016
Education and Training in a Changing World: What Skills Do We Need? (Video)
https://youtu.be/XsLV37lKA6g

ERI-Net Official Website
http://www.unescobkk.org/education/epr/epr-partnerships/eri-net/

ERI-Net Regional Synthesis Study (Phase I)
Available at:
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002319/231907E.pdf

ERI-Net Regional Synthesis Study (Phase II)
coming soon!
Thank you very much!