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Operationalization of Competency-Based Approach: From Competency-Based Education to Integration Pedagogy

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Abstract

Advocates of integration pedagogy such as Peysner et al. (2006) and Roegiers (2010) consider this instructional approach as a distinct pedagogical trend, while opponents of this view such as Hirtt (2009) regard integration pedagogy and competency-based education (CBE) as two sides of the same coin. In the view of this inconsistency and in order to help teachers and scholars have a well-informed idea on the essence of these educational movements, this article attempts to explore their similarities and differences and show how integration pedagogy has attempted to interpret the principles of competency-based approach (CBA). In so doing, the study traces back the origins of integration pedagogy in relation to CBE. This analysis of the historical and theoretical background of integration pedagogy indicates that this instructional approach is relatively different from CBE in that it has emerged in the 1980s as a late reaction to objective-based pedagogy, but as a concrete attempt to operationalize and simplify the broad principles of CBE, which evolved earlier in the US in the 1970s. Also, the results spell out the theoretical similarities and differences relating to these teaching approaches. Accordingly, teachers, researchers, and program evaluators are advised to approach integration pedagogy as a fairly different realization of CBA with distinct teaching guidelines.

Keywords: Bureau d'ingénierie en éducation et formation (BIEF), CBA, CBE, objective-based pedagogy, pedagogy of integration, school reforms.

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