
ABSTRACTS

TÓTH, TAMÁS: The Production of Social Inequalities – A New Leftist, Critical Analysis of Neoliberal Education Policy in the Light of Social Inequalities

Keywords: *critical discourse analysis, critical pedagogy, neoliberal education policy, social inequality, poverty, equity*

The basis of my theoretical research is the contradiction between social inequalities and the unprecedented economic growth. In this article, by the critical analysis of the neoliberal philosophy of economics, I make an attempt at revealing the effect of neoliberalism on education and, indirectly, its effect on inequalities. The analysis identifies such logics of the functioning of economic processes which – contrary to the neoliberal narrative – do not contribute to the creation of prosperity but to the production of inequalities. According to the critical discourse, social inequalities are not symptoms of the malfunction of capitalism, instead, they are deliberate results, originating from its smooth functioning. One of the most important pillars of the social legitimation of processes creating inequalities are schools. Thus, I also examine the effects of neoliberalism (which sustains capitalism)

on education policy, by critically analysing two guiding principles – preparation for the job market and equity – determining neoliberal education policies. My analysis leads to the conclusion that for the economy it is irrelevant whether the education system is equitable or not, because as long as one of the outcome goals of education is to satisfy the needs of the job market in the most effective way possible, the production of inequalities can be sustained simply by the functioning of capitalism. The end of the study, besides criticising the uncritical adaptation of the current pedagogical thought to the market economy presents the revolutionary potential of critical pedagogy. Developing a critical stance towards society and towards the system in youth can become the pedagogical basis of the transformation of economic conditions beyond capitalism.