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## History of curricula and development of sociological curriculum theory in Estonia

The Paper outlines and develops a sociological curriculum theory. It starts from the subject of student development and promotes it as a model for other subject syllabi, too. This enables to integrate subject knowledge and student development. All former Estonian National Curricula (1921–1940 and 1989–2010) have aimed at this integration, but failed for a lack of a relevant theory. In the last decades, the curriculum policy has been dominated by subject groups. Now, the main problem lies in teacher training institutions. Are they willing to accept this sociological framework and implement it in curriculum policy?

**Keywords:** educational aims, absolutist knowledge, social manipulation, sociological curriculum theory.

### Introduction. Essence of human knowledge and history of education

The concept of curriculum cannot be understood without its links to some other very broad concepts like *society, culture, knowledge, arts and education*. Humans differ from other animals, first, by their ability to make and use material tools. This has extended and developed their physical and mental capabilities. Second, they developed their cognitive and communicative capabilities by systematic use of mental tools — symbols — representing real objects and processes. The symbols may be different. There may be sounds, signs, singing, dancing, words and languages. These symbols and their systems have enabled the extension of human cognition and understanding far behind the visible and perceptive world, into the Universe and micro-cosmos. This also means that all people have created their own symbolic world, which includes also their knowledge about themselves. It follows that the essence of human knowledge and education is symbolic. Humans are by means of the systems of symbols able to generate new symbols and their systems (Lotman, 2001, 2009). Sociologists have become aware that culture is not just one social institution, but it belongs to the very essence of society (Hall et al., 2010: 8 etc.). Extensive use of tools and symbols created the need for education.

The invention of writing by use of pictures, hieroglyphs and later, phonetic letters had revolutionary significance for development of human culture. It also enabled to save all human knowledge outside of human heads, in papers and books. Written knowledge became a most important part of human education. Bible (books) was the first written collection of all human and divine knowledge. The special institution of **formal education** is a relatively recent invention. Centralized national states needed also centralized education systems. The industrial revolution created a need for literacy. Education became compulsory in Europe since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The need for mass higher education emerged in developed countries after 1960s.

## History and main ideologies of curriculum

In both, theories and practices, the curriculum has been treated and defined differently. The word itself has ancient origins. In Greece, it meant running or chariot tracks. In Latin, *currere* means to run. Curriculum was a racing chariot. These different meanings hint to a basic dilemma between a social actor following a prescribed track and an independent actor creating his own way. John Dewey's book *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902) brought the concept of curriculum into the centre of educational thought (see also Kridel, 2010: 179). In general, curriculum means a course of studies. The course may be determined by the needs of individual development or/and social requirements (Kridel, 2010: 228). The history of curriculum theory is considered to have its beginning with works by Franklin Bobbitt (1918) and Werrett Charters (1923). Bobbitt followed the managerial model of Frederick Taylor (his principles of management) and introduced the managerial and instrumental approach (goals, means, process and evaluation of outcomes). Still, only the *Principles of curriculum* by Ralph W. Tyler (1949) found a general acceptance. It outlined the rationale of four basic questions, from aims to outcomes. Since Tyler, curriculum theory has been focused on learning experiences. Teacher and students clarify their experiences, determine their goals, organize exchange of these experiences and evaluate the success (Kelly, 2009: 20, Dillon, 2009). Estonian Hilda Taba also developed the curriculum theory (1962, see also Kridel, 2010). She distinguishes seven steps instead of four in curriculum development.

Curriculum is a central concept in Anglo-Saxon educational studies.

There are many models of curriculum (Kliebard, 1987, Smith, 2000). William F. Pinar combines them into the following five conceptions (Pinar et al., 2008: 29): the self-actualization (child development), the cognitive process orientation (focusing on development of intellectual abilities and skills), the technological (or instrumental), the academic (to prepare scholars and artists), and the social reconstructionist (schooling as an agency of social change). Usually, the models have been combined. William F. Pinar et al. (2008, see also Pinar in Connelly, 2008: 491-513) argue that the *traditional curriculum development period* (between 1918 and 1969) is over. Now, the main concept is understanding curriculum as symbolic representation (Pinar, 2008: 15-16). Malewski et al. (2010) argues that different perspectives should be combined and related to various historical and social contexts. Tero Autio proposes to reveal the dominant curriculum discourses behind the educational practices. Many education scholars consider curriculum as the very core of education (Autio, 2006: 162, Pinar, 2008: 3). Its role could be compared with that of genes in biology.

It has been revealed that the instrumentalist traditions still dominate in educational practices in many countries (Kelly, 2009). Curriculum is still often just a list of subjects. Knowledge is usually considered as absolute, as independent from people and their interests. Sociology of knowledge reveals its social construction. The social critical theories focus on social creation of knowledge and its presentation by symbolic means (words, concepts, theories, sciences). Michael Foucault (1980) has demonstrated how knowledge depends on group interests and power relations. In practice, some power groups use the absolutist concept of knowledge. This enables them to consider their group interests as universal. The sociological approach enables one to recognize the relations between politics and education (Autio, 2006: IX). Problems of curriculum are very complex (Kridel, 2010). Psychological and sociological educational theories are linked with those of administration, management and policies. In the last two decades, curriculum as conversation between some interest

groups (that is a political problem) has become the main topic (Koski, 2009, Pinar, 2008: 868, Ropo and Autio, 2009). Relations between the general theoretical part and subject syllabi have remained as one of the main problems.

## History of education in Estonia

Historians have studied the history of Estonian education systematically up to 1917 (Eisen, Laul, 1989, Laul, 2010) and up to year 1940 (Andresen, 1997, 2002, 2003, Kruze, Sirk, 2009). The first schools were established at some Dome Churches already in the XIII century (Old Pernau 1251, Tartu 1299, Tallinn 1319, Haapsalu 1320) (Eisen, Laul, 1989: 51). There was usually only one teacher (*scholasticus*) who prepared new priests. The main learning method was by rote learning. The schools taught **seven free traditional arts**: trivium or spoken arts (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics) and some larger schools also quadrivium or calculative arts (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music). Education was provided also by monasteries as they prepared monks and nuns to join the order.

Since the 16th Century, the Lutheran Reformation influenced education in Estonia. Luther believed that people should be able to read the Bible and participate in the life of church. Luther compiled catechisms as textbooks to learn the Bible. **The first catechisms in Estonian** were published already in 1517, 1525 and 1535 (Kruze, Sirk 2009: 33). German and Swedish pastors used the Estonian textbooks to teach Estonian children. Children had to learn catechism (the Ten Commandments and paternoster, the Lord's Prayer) by heart. Catechisms were used as basic Estonian peasant textbooks for centuries.

Swede Bengt Gottfried Forselius started to prepare Estonian boys to become parish clerks and peasant teachers in his Seminar 1684–1688 (Liim, 1999: 192–194). He invented a new method of learning and published a manual for that. He followed Komensky's (1592–1670) ideas. Learning should be pleasant and without punishment. The main subjects were reading, catechism and singing. Some boys also learned to write and calculate. About 80 boys studied in the Seminar in a year. In 1687/88, there were 49 schools with more than 900 students in the territory of Estonia. The seminar was one of the first in Sweden and Nordic Europe.

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the pedagogical ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) and Heinrich Pestalozzi were also very popular in Estonia (Andresen, 2002: 25–31). Pestalozzi (1746–1827) reformed peasant schools in Switzerland. He recommended student development instead of learning texts by heart (Brühlmeier, 2008). He outlined elementary method for schools based on students' observations. Children observe, analyze, compare, calculate, draw, speak and write. First they observe real objects then they get familiar with their names. Pestalozzi published textbooks for observations and numbers, and also for mothers. In Estonia, G. G. Marburg followed the Pestalozzi's ideas in his learning and reading book (1805). Marburg recommended teacher-student dialogues in studying home and nature (Andresen, 2002: 232–234).

In 1850s, main textbooks for Estonians were published (Estonian, math, sciences, geography, history and health education (Kruze, Sirk, 2009: 49). The textbooks dictated the content of education. The books followed developmental learning ideas after Adolf Diesterweg (1790–1866) and Pestalozzi (Andresen, 2002: 240–243). In 1873, the first textbooks for Estonian teachers were published by W. A. Hansen and W. Norman (after K. Bormann's

*Schulkunde* — schooling theory). They cover also history of pedagogy, study plan (34 hours per week) and didactic after J. F. Herbart (1776–1841) (Andresen, 2002: 237–240). The main teaching methods were talking and conversations. In the 1860s, the restructuring of peasant schools started.

Historically, the main function of school education has been the ideological (knowledge of the Bible, reading of catechism, clerical singing). Families and communities introduced children into work and cultural life. The industrial revolution separated work and homes and created the need for vocational education. This happened since the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century in Estonia. The humanist ideal of student development started to disseminate in primary education since Russian revolutions (1905 and 1917) and the Estonian independence declaration in 1917.

### **Focus on student development in Estonian national curricula in 1919–1940**

National educational institutions developed quickly after 1917 in Estonia (Andresen, 2003, Karjahärm, Sirk, 1997). Peeter P Id (1878–1930) played the leading role in preparation of Estonian educational laws in 1917–1920 (Elango, 2001, P Id, 1993). Johannes Käis (1885–1950) criticized passive methods of teaching and segmentation of many subjects at Estonian schools. He stressed the role of teamwork in development of the students' abilities and social skills (Käis, 1996, 2004). Käis promoted the Dalton plan as outlined by Helen Parkhurst (1923). This plan rejected the class system and preferred individual studies. Estonian school counselors who followed the Dalton plan recommended general studies only for the first two classes in Estonia. In the 1920s, the theories of John Dewey (1859–1952), Georg Kerschensteiner (1854–1932) and Hugo Gaudig (1860–1923) were popular. These theories stressed the role of students' independent work and development of their abilities. These pedagogical ideas and innovation movements enable us to understand the theoretical basis of curriculum development in this period. These ideas were implemented already in curricula in 1928 and 1930. Johannes Käis coordinated preparations of the Curriculum for primary schools (*Algkooli ppekavad*, HM, 1928). It is outlined on 143 pages, including the theoretical part (4 p.), review of all syllabi for classes one to six (30 p.) and the whole syllabi of 15 subjects (96 p.). Such a structure facilitated integration of all subjects on class level. The short review of all syllabi enables all class teachers to integrate his or her subject with others. The extended subject syllabi were meant only for subject teachers. In theoretical part, there curriculum declares only two main aims, humanist (development of personalities) and ideological (education of democratic citizens). Theoretically, these aims may be interrelated. In this case, they are not, although Käis had aimed at this. All subject syllabi have the same structures, they have three parts: pedagogical (*kasvatus*, *Erziehung*) aims, content of knowledge and skills, and integration with other subjects. All subject syllabi have some educational, moral and intellectual aims. Still, the development of students was largely considered as a task of subject teachers.

These ideas are further elaborated in the Curriculum for secondary schools (*Keskkooli ppekavad*, 1930). Among others, students should realize an integration of their personal and social, national and human interests (HSM, 1930: 5–8).

Next, we analyze some subject syllabi, those of history and civics. Students studied both these subjects two lessons per week in grades 4–6 (Kaiv, Kurvits, 1938). The civic syllabus for 6th grade (HM, 1928: 31–32, 53–55) focused on formal descriptions of the local community and political institutions. It argued that all citizens should fulfill their obligations. The history syllabus for grade 6th stressed some important topics of European and Estonian history. Both syllabi aimed at the development of active citizens, but not critical ones. The lack of criticism is typical for authoritarian syllabi and curricula.

The civic syllabi for primary and secondary schools (HSM, 1930: 39–40) are complemented with more elaborated descriptions (HSM, 1930: 160–163). There is also nothing about critical assessment of authorities, if they make mistakes or misuse their power.

Richard Rägo (later Räägo) has written textbooks for social studies (*Kodaniku petus*) in period of 1924–1938. Jüri Parij gi and Toomas Adamson (Algma) compiled another textbook “Young citizen” (*Noor kodanik*) in 1934. A. Mölder and E. Asson published a combined textbook on both history and civics for primary 6<sup>th</sup> grade in 1931. All of them introduced the main social, political and economic institutions in a rather practical and technical way. There was no place for critical assessment of possible misuse of power by authorities. To sum up, the civic textbooks followed the syllabus and introduced the main social institutions like family, community, societies, local governance (but not student organizations and self-governance). They were focused on political institutions, and covered also some main economic institutions. From one side, it is important to recognize the positive aspects of these books. They provide future citizens with introductory technical knowledge of main local and national institutions. This knowledge facilitates their social and political activities in society. From the other side, it is vital to reveal the limits of these textbooks. They rely on an inadequate social theory. They consider social actors and institutions as isolated from each other. These social, economic and political institutions regulate relations between people. Some actors have better opportunities than others to use these institutions. The institutions introduce a social inequality. This inequality has usually been justified by the need for efficiency. In practice, this inequality is not a guarantee for efficiency and effectiveness. In the contrary, it can enable a misuse of social and economic resources. An ignorance of these social factors may actually stimulate and facilitate the misuse of social resource by power groups. A focus on technical knowledge and lack of social criticism are typical for authoritarian civic education (Haav, 2008 and 2011). There was nothing about possible misuse of social, political and economic institutions in both the syllabi and textbooks. As a result, there was possible to deny the existence of these phenomena in practice, too.

The curriculum declared human development most important (HM, 1928: 1). In the textbooks, there was nothing either about this development or the quality of life.

### **Criticism of the Soviet education**

In the years 1940–1941 and 1944–1991, the Estonian education system was replaced by the Soviet one. There is not much academic research on this period. The author has reviewed differences in school systems in Estonia in three main periods in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Haav, 2004a, b). This review has remained the only comparative analysis so far. The program for communist education has aimed at subordination of all students (people) to the socialist order (PE, 1966). In practice, it meant total obedience to communist oligarchy.

Individual freedom was not tolerated. The school system itself relied first on the orders of Communist party. Afterwards, the orders were complemented with Soviet educational laws. Students were treated as objects. Even textbooks on education and school management considered school administration, teachers and parents as decision making subjects and the students as the objects of education (Shtschukina, 1982). All students had to participate in many organizations and fulfill many obligations. All student organizations and social events were surveyed by three institutions.

School administration, communist organizations and secret police were responsible for any acts of dissatisfaction or disloyalty.

The Soviet study plans and syllabi have been recently briefly commented by Edgar Krull and Rain Mikser (Krull 2009, Krull and Mikser 2010) in Estonia. The curriculum for secondary education 1944–1945 consisted of 20 syllabi on 50 pages. It did not declare any educational aims. The text about history referred only to the main textbooks like the history of the Soviet Union by Andrei V. Shestakov (1877–1941) for basic schools and Anna M. Pankratova (1897–1957) for secondary schools. The Estonian history textbooks were forbidden already in 1944. Students had to study the Stalinist Constitution in grades 7 and 11. Russian language was introduced since the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, it was not considered as a foreign language. Later, the subject syllabi were extended.

In 1963, a textbook for secondary schools on Communist ideology called *Social Studies* (*Ühiskonna petus*) was published by Georgi H. Shahnazarov (1924–2001) et al. (Shahnazarov, 1963). In difference to Estonian textbooks on civic education in 1920–1940, it did not introduce the main social, political and economic institutions on the local and national levels. Thus, it hampered understanding of and participation in real social processes. The Soviet textbook outlined the simplified basics of Marxist-Leninist ideology and then justified the Soviet system. It did not provide students with a system of concepts for the understanding of social realities. Its main functions were justification of the totalitarian order and manipulation of people. The contradiction between the utopian ideology and totalitarian practice was typical for the Soviet system, including the educational system. The role of the Communist textbook can be compared with that of the Catechism in the medieval ages.

It has been widely believed that this Communist ideology and textbook belong to the past and they should be forgotten. It is correct for Communist phraseology, but not its authoritarian and demagogic principles. After 1991, communist phraseology was replaced by the capitalist one. Formerly, teachers taught that the Communism was good, but the Capitalism was bad. Now teachers convince students that the Communism was bad, but the Capitalism is good. Thus, authoritarian ideas and values have remained. There has been no serious criticism of these ideas in the last 20 years. The authoritarian and demagogic principles play still important roles in the educational ideology, curriculum theory and practice in Estonia.

The Soviet pedagogy followed the Herbertian traditions and elaborated didactic principles of text delivery. The prominent Estonian educational theorist, Heino Liimets often criticized the encapsulation of school subjects and called it the “subject idiotism”. In the Soviet period, Moscow determined study plans, educational policies and the model of school administration. The Metropol had also a monopoly on research of these topics. Estonian scholars studied mostly didactics and methods of teaching subject knowledge to students in classrooms. Still, some scholars were interested in broader and deeper approaches to education. Heino Liimets (1928–1989) was one of them (Liimets A., 1998). He promoted integration of subjects on different educational levels. He also developed a broader approach

to educational sciences, combining them especially with psychology and sociology (Liimets, 2001). A more complex approach to education combines pedagogical sciences with educational leadership and policy (Kreitzberg et al., 1989).

The Estonian singing revolution was first initiated by some critical journalists and scholars. They started to criticize the Soviet economic, social and national policies in mass media in 1987. I myself analyzed and criticized the Soviet ideology, economic and national policies in my books and publications since February 1987. Estonian Teachers' Congress started educational innovation in March 1987. In addition to other things, they criticized the Soviet study plans at schools for their focus on the memorization of facts. A competition for educational innovation took place in 1988 (Vernik, 1989). Estonian scholars outlined Estonia's Educational Program in 1989 (Kreitzberg et al., 1989: 13–15). It was and still continues to be the most ambitious and complex approach to educational innovation. It heralds the humanization of the content of education (curriculum) and the democratization of the institutional system. The Estonian Teachers' Congress approved it in 1990. The program declares that innovation should combine educational research, management and policies. Now, 20 years later, compilers of a new educational strategy ignore this principle. Scholars do not combine research on school practice, educational administration and policy. Policy does not support such research on improvement of educational system. In 1989, the Program declared that the democratization should enable all educational partners to take part in decision-making on all levels: from school management to education policies (it did not mention the development of national curriculum). The Program criticized the Soviet study programs and promoted the curriculum types of study. The Soviet syllabi and textbooks were science-centered and over-loaded with facts. They did not aim at the development of students (PE, 1966: 517). The same was typical for teachers. They did not develop the students' intellectual and other skills (Kreitzberg et al., 1989: 5–6). The Program promoted humanist and democratic ideals, the integration of the individual and social development, educational contents and pedagogic processes (Kreitzberg, 1989: 11, 15–18). The paper will reveal that the Estonian curriculum policy has not yet overcome the Soviet practice of subject delivery. The Ministry of Education and Research of the independent Republic of Estonia does not refer to the Program of 1989 in their programs and curricula.

### **Attempts to subordinate subject knowledge to student development (1992, 1993, 1994)**

Inge Unt and Urve Läänemets headed the preparation of curricula for basic and secondary schools at the Development Centre for Estonian Education (*Eesti Hariduse Arenduskeskus*, EHA, 1992 and 1993). Both curricula focused on development of students' multiple abilities. They defined similar (six and seven) didactic principles. One of them was a right balance between student development and subject content. Still, the balance was not specified. The subject syllabi largely ignored this principle. Another principle was openness. Again, it did not define, was it openness for student development or knowledge delivery. The Curriculum referred to H. Taba, K. Frey and U. Lundgren, but not to their ideas. In 1993, the Ministry of Education closed the Centre and the Curricula were never implemented.

Parallel to the Läänemets and Unt group, Tallinn Pedagogical University (now University of Tallinn) started to deal with curriculum. They set up a project team and then a laboratory for Curriculum studies. Since 1992, Viive Ruus acted as its head. Formerly, Ruus

headed the Laboratory for communist education. The ideology of communist education provides an explanation for her role in curriculum administration and development since 1992. Ruus (and the ideology) have had significant roles in compilation of the general parts of all adopted Curricula (1996, 2002 and 2010).

In 1994, a project team of 34 persons published a booklet of 65 pages **The General Principles of Estonia's Curriculum Project** (*EV p hikooli ja gümnaasiumi riikliku ppekava üldalused. Projekt*. Ruus et al., 1994). The Project was very eclectic, controversial and wordy. It defined curriculum as a plan of studies (after Ralph Tyler, 1949 and Hilda Taba, 1962). It focused on development of individualist personalities. The successful personality was described as a collection of 8 and 12 skills (mainly intellectual and social skills) (Ruus, 1994: 23 and 27). At the same time, the concepts of students might be reduced to a collection of knowledge (ibid: 22). Next, it defined competence as readiness to act in the eight different areas and distinguished between seven area competences. The competences as skills were complemented with "minimal knowledge". The subjects had to define the minimum. Later, this enabled the subject groups to expand the minimal knowledge. This Project asked the subject groups to structure the content of their knowledge and study process to the tasks (skills, competences) of the curriculum (ibid: 29). It outlined the structure of primary education in first three grades according to complex topics (as in Estonia in 1920s). The Project proposed to structure the education by courses (35 lessons each) in gymnasium. It aimed at development of students' skills and competences, but it failed to structure the subject knowledge according to them. The failure was programmed by Project's dualist and confusing theoretical framework. It relied on isolated concepts of student (identity) development and subject knowledge. It aimed at student development via some basic concepts (like space, time, information, actor, action and development), extra-curricular topics and relations between person, society and world. The Project declared (Ruus, 1994: 7) that the idea of student development was introduced into most syllabi already at the end of 1992! But all this was vanished in the adopted curriculum (1996).

### **NC 1996: curriculum ideology fails to influence subject syllabi**

In 1996, the **national curriculum** for both basic and secondary education (*Eesti p hi- ja keskhariduse riiklik ppekava*, NC 1996) was adopted. It consists of introduction (13 p.) and 15 syllabi (137 p.). Actually, it does not refer to any educational or curricular theories. The structure of NC follows the traditional instrumental aims-and-outcomes framework. The general introduction is rather technical and informative. It describes learning, but does not define it. Knowledge is also not defined. The introduction consists of a number of humanistic and democratic slogans (13 aims, 8 principles and 18 competences). The successful person is defined by 7–8 skills and 7–9 normative attitudes. The gymnasium should aim at 18 competences. There are 13 skills and 5 normative attitudes. The list is eclectic. If there are as many goals, outcomes, competences etc., they do not have any regulatory influence. Subject groups and teachers are able to implement only 3–5 aims (Biggs, Tang, 2009: 69–71). The subject syllabuses follow only the technical structure of the general theoretical part. They also outline some introductory ideas, and then learning aims, content and outcomes for all the main school periods.

Ene-Silvia Sarv, Lii Lilleoja, and some others, explained the theoretical basis of NC 1996 to teachers in study materials some years later (HTM, 2001). Sarv repeated her argument that the personal development of students was the highest goal and value for schools.



Teaching alas was considered from a constructivist point of view, with some phenomenological and holistic elements (HTM, 2001: 19). Learning was a discovery and a construction of new knowledge (ibid: 24). These theoretical ideas could be revealed from the general part (description of learning) of the NC 1996 only. Sarv mentioned that subject syllabi ignored them (Sarv, 2000: 195). Subject teachers had difficulties in using of constructivist ideas. Sarv referred to a study to argue that only 10–15 per cent of teachers had been creative (Sarv, 2000: 201–205). Lii Lilleoja stated that many teachers still delivered simple knowledge and educated obedient citizens (HTM, 2001: 30). Educational authorities published much material for curriculum development at schools (Salumaa, 1997, Kadakas and Kalamees, 1999).

### **The NC 2002: technical improvements**

This time, Curriculum (*P hikooli ja gümnaasiumi riiklik ppekava*, NC 2002) was slightly renewed, but the main problems remained the same. Again, subject groups ignored the student development as they had done in the Soviet period. It was explained by saying that the groups received the lists of general aims too late. But the aim of student development has been declared already in 1992 by education law, in Project 1994 and NC 1996. Both the 1996 and 2002 Curricula have been analyzed and evaluated many times by national and international experts. Among others, the Finnish Ministry of Education (*Opetushallitus*, 1999) and the OECD experts (2001) did this. Maria Jürimäe summarized all these analyses in 2003. All these evaluations agree that the general parts of the Curricula declare good intentions, humanistic and democratic goals and values. Unfortunately, all this is not introduced into the subject syllabi (HTM, 2001: 4, Kadakas, Kalamees, 1999: 5, T nisson in V lli, 2004: 8).

In difference to the Soviet period, the collections of subject syllabi are complemented with a general part. This general part regulates the technical structure of the syllabi. It does not subordinate the syllabi to the main aim, to student development. It was considered that teachers read the general part and use it in their teaching. In educational practice, it hardly happened. Teachers read and followed but their subject syllabi.

We do not analyze projects of Curriculum by Tartu University (2000–2005, Ain T nisson headed the project team) and National Examination Centre (2005–2007, Urve Läänemets and Sulev Valdmaa headed this project), as they were interrupted and never adopted.

### **The NC 2010: a triumph of subject groups and a blockade of curriculum development**

In 2008, Minister of Education and Research offered a new Order (*Lähteülesanne...*) for curriculum development (HTM, 2008). This document recognized the isolation of the general part from subject syllabi in the former National Curricula. It confessed the failure, but not its theoretical (incompetence of the general group) and political (resistance of subject groups) reasons. The absolutist concept of knowledge went on. Concepts of individual, society, culture and nature remain isolated in both the general part and subject syllabi. The Order did not ask to subordinate the delivery of subject knowledge (syllabi) to student development. It did not challenge the principles of Soviet study programs (PE, 1966: 517). Viive Ruus and the general team aimed at this in 1994, but failed to accomplish this in NC's 1996

and 2002. Ain T nisson and the Tartu University's Centre were not much more successful in 2000–2005 (Ots, 2005, Ots, Arendi et al., 2006). In 2008, they and four other persons were declared as the only curriculum experts (*Õpetajate Leht*, Teachers' weekly, January 8, 2010). They did not attempt to develop the theoretical introduction on the basis of contemporary educational and curriculum theories (Ruus, 2009). They compiled the general part again in a mechanical way, just altering the lists of goals, competences and values.

As in 1996 and 2002, isolated subject groups compiled their subject syllabi and ignored the student development as did the Soviet study programs. Altogether, about 200 teachers, teacher educators and other experts took part in this compilation. Only the names of group leaders were published. The general group declared again their humanist ideals to readers, not to the subject groups. The latter relied on instrumentalist approach as usual.

At the beginning of 2009, the projects of general part and subject syllabi were presented in Internet ([www.oppekava.ee](http://www.oppekava.ee)) for comments and proposals. Some experts and institutions like Tallinn University of Technology and The Union of Estonian Parents criticized the inadequacy of the general ideology and proposed their assistance. The Ministry did not make these proposals public. This way, they violated the Estonian rules for governmental communication and followed the Soviet ideology of manipulation. In difference to the former NCs, there was neither academic analysis, nor public discussion on the general framework. They did not accept any criticism and assistance from other experts (e. g., from those at the Tallinn University of Technology) beyond themselves. The theoretical development was replaced by total social manipulation with interest groups and experts (Lukas, 2010, Ruus, 2010, T nisson, 2010a, b). I tried to arrange some discussions at universities. I was told that the Ministry itself will do it. It never happened. I tried to publish a critical paper, at least. One daily newspaper rejected it. Another daily, *Postimees*, published it only three days before its adoption by the Government in January 14, 2010.

The NC's were actually adopted and published many times, also in January 28, 2010, and January 6, 2011. The NC for Basic schools (*P hikooli riiklik ppekava*, NC 2011a, B, 25) covers 281 pages. It contains introduction (15 p.), 22 subjects in 8 subject groups, 3 electives and 8 extracurricular themes.

The NC for Gymnasium (*Gümnaasiumi riiklik ppekava*, NC 2011b, B, 26) covers 310 pages. It contains introduction (12 p.), 17 subjects in 7 subject groups, 54 electives and 8 extracurricular themes. In comparison with NC 1996, the scope of general part (13 p. in 1996) has remained the same, but that of subject syllabi has increased more than four times (from 137 to 564). Introductions remain once again eclectic collections. The number and lists of main aims and competencies have been altered. The list of principles (7 in 2002) was replaced by a list of values. As mentioned before, it is impossible to follow all these normative requirements (Biggs, Tang, 2009: 64–90).

The National examinations do neither measure nor evaluate these competences and values; they focus on subject knowledge and skills. The collection of these competences is eclectic. E. g., the social competence in general part differs from that in the social subject area. The goals of main subjects in social sciences are not integrated with each other and those of the subject area. The general group did not put much effort on subordination of the subject syllabi to student development, as the Project 1994 did.

The general parts of NC 2010 declare that students' intellectual, moral, social and physical skills are equally important. Do the social and humanitarian disciplines follow this principle and balance the importance of students' knowledge, feelings and values in lower secondary schools? It occurs that the subject groups linked but loosely their subject contents to development of

students and clarification of their attitudes and values. The syllabus on national (Estonian) literature values orthography and compulsory literature. Students' feelings and values might be side-products of that. The syllabus does not aim at clarification of students' values. The history syllabus stresses the significance of discussions on historical processes. The diversification of students' value orientations might be a side-product of that. The syllabus outlines but a number of historic events, without any social theoretical reference. Such a syllabus and textbooks do not facilitate intellectual development, critical thinking and value clarification.

Thus, the subject groups have by and large ignored the good intentions of the general part. They followed the oral advice of the general group and ignored the written recommendations of the general part to develop students' intellectual, emotional, social and moral competences and skills. The curriculum remained a collection of a number of syllabi, but formally linked to the student development. This means that the Soviet tradition of subject-centered education still continues. This tradition is hidden by the extension of the humanist slogans in the general part. In 2010, the slogans are introduced into the theoretical parts of subject syllabi, but not into the content of subjects. It follows that the Soviet ideology still goes on. Curriculum combines utopian phraseology in general part and administrative arbitrariness in subject syllabi.

Why did the official curriculum experts reject assistance of other educational experts?

If they had not enough expert knowledge and energy, then they had to accept all proposed assistance. It can be explained only by their lack of willingness. The Ministerial experts were neither able, nor willing to develop the National Curriculum. Viive-Riina Ruus had failed in 1994–2002, Ain T. Niisson in 2001–2005. Although the subject groups have resisted to the ideals of student development, this was not considered as a failure of the official curriculum policy. In the contrary, the failure has been declared as an innovation.

The Estonian Ministry for Education and Research started to separate higher secondary classes (gymnasia) and basic schools. It was justified by differences in their curricula. The Minister declared that lower secondary schools focus on student development, whereas higher secondary classes focus more on subject knowledge. The student-centered curriculum was considered as the main evidence of school reform and educational innovation (Lauristin, 2010). As we have demonstrated, both the higher and the lower secondary curriculum have remained subject-centered. Thus, the separation of Curricula did not justify the separation of higher secondary classes from basic schools.

## Theoretical frameworks

20 years ago, Estonian progressive educationalists criticized the Soviet education system and policy (Kreitzberg et al., 1989). Still, the Soviet totalitarian thinking has not been seriously criticized and its influence goes on. In post-communist countries, the new political and economic elite took over the neo-liberal ideology. As Ulrich Beck (1999: 22) mentions, the neo-liberal and communist ideology rely on common principles. As Zbigniew Brzezinski has predicted (1989), the communist authoritarianism cannot be replaced by pluralist democracy at once. After first free elections, the post-communist or capitalist autocracy will follow first. The totalitarianism and authoritarianism relies on subordination of individuals to society, isolation of theory (Communist ideology) and (totalitarian) practice, and the absolutist concept of knowledge. The neo-liberal ideology heralds individual freedom. It isolates the concepts of individual and society and also uses the absolutist concept

of knowledge. Many Estonian scholars still isolate concepts of individuals, society, culture and nature. Many teacher educators still ignore social scientific theories of education, curriculum and knowledge. Already in 1994, the Curriculum project failed to link student development and delivery of subject knowledge.

In developed countries, knowledge has been considered as problematic since 1970s.

In Estonia, the absolutist concept dominates and knowledge is still treated as something objective, real and neutral. It is rather God-given than socially constructed. It is rather something real than a system of symbols. The Law on Education (1992) defines the education as a collection of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and norms. The adopted National Curricula (1996, 2002 and 2010) define learning and its environment, but not education and knowledge. As the knowledge is not defined, then its interpretation depends on the authority of teachers, schools and universities. It is the prerogative of the University teachers to define their sciences. It is the arbitrariness of the school teachers to define their pedagogical roles. Both the general and subject groups have used the absolutist concept of knowledge that is isolated from students' former knowledge, experiences, feelings and interests. This absolutist concept enables the subject groups to ignore and reject the need for student development. It means that these groups have determined the curriculum policies. They still do so.

The model of students did not change significantly in Estonian curricula in the last two decades. The individualist psychological model (Abraham Maslow, Carl R. Rogers) dominates. The self-contained person develops his or her abilities and skills (intellectual, emotional, social, moral, physical etc.). There had been not many discussions about this model. The Estonian educational scholars argue that they develop students in a social constructivist way. In all National Curricula (1996–2010), the psychological individualist model is outlined in the general parts. The subject groups have refused to introduce this model into their syllabi. There had been not much analysis on the model in subject syllabi yet. In the following, I try to outline it. The subject groups have taken advantage from the dualist framework, isolation of individuals and society. This has enabled them to ignore the individualist student-centered concept. The subject groups have focused on society and considered themselves as representatives of the education system. They have known what the society required and defined the content of their subjects. They have followed an instrumental model and defined a number of cognitive and normative study objectives and outcomes. The cognitive outcomes have been assessed by national examinations. These outcomes may have been achieved, but development of students' emotional, social, ethical and physical skills has remained very problematic. It is not considered as part of subject syllabi and textbooks. Rather, it is considered as the responsibility of individual teachers. The general parts of the curricula provide some instructions how to do this (Ots, 2005, Kikas, 2009 etc.). Usually, most teachers and schools do not evaluate their students' competences. In school practice, simple behaviorist models (information delivery) still dominate. Some teachers and scholars develop and use theories of social and professional identity.

There is not much research on the educational leadership and policy in Estonia. In practice of curriculum development, the role of administrative and political theories (power struggles) is fully ignored. This enables to use them for social manipulation. Subject groups do not consider knowledge as socially constructed, because they define and construct the "necessary" knowledge themselves. Subject groups have the right (monopoly) to decide the necessary knowledge in the area of their competence. The curriculum "experts" have the right (monopoly) to do the same in the general part. They don't need any open theoretical discussion. They don't criticize each other. They define their absolute knowledge and then

take advantage of political and administrative models of domination. These groups follow their group interests first. Thus, the National Curriculum is not a national, but a corporate document. The absolutist concept of knowledge enables them to hide their real interests and ignore the national, humanist and democratic ones. Who protects the interests of students? Some institutions like TUT and Parents' Union have been ignored. The students' union has been easily manipulated.

In sum, Estonian curriculum policy has been as demagogical as were the Soviet ideology and social studies textbooks. The general parts have declared humanist and psychological model, but the subject syllabi have implemented instrumental model. An ignorance of sociological and political models has facilitated this.

The social critical theories of education and curriculum enable to explain the stagnation of Estonian curricula. Some educational groups have hidden their pedagogical incompetence by effective use of theories of political communication and propaganda. This practice enables them to manipulate with masses and interest groups. This enables to ignore and reject educational, curricular and sociological experts. Social manipulation has jeopardized the student development in practice (Lukas, 2010, Ruus, 2010, T. niisson, 2010a, b).

How was it possible? How was the educational failure demonstrated as an innovation?

It can be explained by theories of social and political communication and manipulation. The Ministry hired specialists on public relations, invited public opinion leaders (Lauristin, 2010) and promoted aggressive campaigns in mass media. At the same time, they did not tolerate any public discussions or critical opinions in media (Haav, 2010b).

### **Development of social science syllabus and the social scientific curriculum theory**

I started to develop concepts and syllabus for social sciences (sociology) in 2000.

In the period of 2003–2010, I developed a system of concepts for democracy education (civics syllabus) for schools and promoted it at many conferences and in many publications (Haav, 2005, 2008, 2010a etc.). I also implemented it in my courses on social sciences to students of former Audentes International University and Tallinn University of Technology. This is a hierarchical system of basic social theoretical concepts. It starts from **dichotomies between individual and society, and social actors and structures**. Traditionally, concept of social actors is not used. This concept is inevitable to reveal the social origins of inequality.

Society is a complex and controversial concept. It combines equality and inequality: individual actors have equal rights, but unequal social opportunities. Dichotomy of social actors — structures refers to integration of these concepts. Social structure is a collection of hierarchical social positions. These positions have different opportunities to use social resources. The principal differences in the use of social resources are the basis for classification of main social actors. In democratic countries, there are four main social actors: citizens, politicians, public administrators and civil servants. The politicians control almost all public resources (state budget, legislation, public sector). Civil servants receive their income from public sector. People outside the public sector should manage by themselves. These social inequalities raise issues of social effectiveness and justice. These issues are relational and they depend on actors' positions, values and orientations (like elitist or solidarity ones). E. g., we know that Estonian MPs' have decided that their salaries should be four times

higher of country's average. Is it just or not? Should the differences be increased or diminished? It depends on the effectiveness of the Parliament. How to evaluate this effectiveness? Usually, we do not know this. Thus, this example reveals relations between concepts of knowledge, attitudes and values, from one side, and between them and the concept of social structure, from the other side. This means that the knowledge about society is neither absolute nor objective. Various social actors should know both how big are the income differences and how main actors evaluate them. They should have equal opportunities to discuss the inequalities. For that, actors (interest groups) need some knowledge (system of concepts and theories) and also some social skills (communicational, organizational and political skills) to express their values and protect their interests. As a result, their knowledge systems, evaluations and values become more congruent. It facilitates social cohesion and effectiveness.

Civic education should teach these concepts and skills to students. If they learn to use them in practice, then it would be difficult to manipulate with them. This is a framework for democracy education. It links all aspects of individual and social development or all main curricular aims. All former NC's since 1921 to 2010 aimed at this congruence, but failed. Now, the failure could be replaced by a success. But change of curriculum depends on many interest groups.

I was willing to introduce the social science syllabus into the new National Curriculum in 2003. Unfortunately, it was rejected by the social science subject project group. It was also ignored in 2008–2010. I was willing to integrate the social sciences with curriculum theory. Since 2009, I study curriculum theory and policy in Estonia. I focus on sociological and social critical theories on knowledge, education and curriculum (Autio, 2006, Bernstein, 1996, Foucault, 1980, Goodson, 2005, Kelly, 2009, Koski, 2009, Kridel, 2010 etc.). They criticize the absolutist concept of knowledge and stress its social construction. In Estonia, there is a lack of this knowledge and, even more, main power groups do not tolerate this criticism.

I discovered that the **absolutist concept of knowledge** totally dominates in Estonian education, although it is neither recognized nor expressed. It also dominates in curriculum development. Both the general and subject groups have used the absolutist concept of knowledge (in 1996, 2002 and 2010) that ignores the students' former knowledge, experiences, feelings and interests. This has enabled the subject groups to ignore and reject the need for student development. As noticed before, it means that these groups have determined the curriculum policies. Some Estonian scholars (Priit Reiska, Miia Rannikmäe etc.) promote a new paradigm of science education. It argues that teachers should develop the students' common knowledge into the scientific (or, more scientific) one.

I have relied on **semiotic concept of knowledge** (2009, 2010b etc.). According to this, human knowledge is expressed by signs, symbols and their systems (representative orders) (Danesi, Peron, 1999). Human beings differ from other animals by a systematic use of symbols and systems of symbols in communication. It means that the humans create a symbolic world to understand and influence the outer world. Even more, the symbols and their systems are also tools for human development. As mentioned before, humans can be treated as systems of symbols able to generate new symbols and their systems (Lotman, 2001, 2009). The symbolic essence of human culture and knowledge is still not enough recognized in the Estonian education.

Secondly, I analyzed the links between the most general concepts of human (symbolic) knowledge, culture and society. The concept of **society** abstracts from the individuals and stresses the visible activities and relations between individuals. Society is the sum of these activities and relations. Concept of **culture** focuses on signs and sign systems in human

communication. It is related to meaning-making in societies. It also mediates social actors and structures. **Individuals** are parts of society and culture, they depend on others. At the same time, individuals are integrated wholes, systems of activities and signs. To some extent, they depend on others, but they have some opportunities to influence others, too.

**Knowledge** is system of signs that refers to relations between humans and their physical, social and cultural environment. School subjects and teachers represent the different knowledge, various sciences, arts and technologies. Usually, they use their scientific concepts to improve their students' conventional understandings. They don't link their subject knowledge and intellectual skills to develop students' emotional and social knowledge and skills. That means that they do not integrate subject knowledge with students' development. Their subject syllabi neither prescribe nor facilitate this.

The other reason lies in inadequate education theory and teacher education. The latter are based on an out of date social scientific knowledge. Teacher educators are unable to generalize their pedagogical concepts and theories to basic concepts of knowledge, education, arts, culture and society. Without that, school subjects remain isolated from (social scientific) pedagogical theories. As a result, the social scientific and pedagogical education of subject teachers remains ineffective. Subject teachers are unable to complement the gaps later at schools. They remain isolated from each other and students. They can just deliver their subject knowledge using behaviorist and authoritarian models.

### Syllabus for student development

I started to overcome such eclecticism, the isolation of subject knowledge from student development. This isolation can be avoided, if one starts to design one's syllabus first for the subject of student development. In this case, the goals of the subject syllabus and general curriculum coincide. There should be but a small number of goals and study outcomes as recommended by other curriculum scholars, too (Biggs, Tang, 2009: 69). The subject becomes differentiated into a system of concepts and theories, into a collection of learning objects, study aims and outcomes.

The syllabus of student development and the relevant study materials (textbook) aim at integration with students' concepts, experiences, skills, feelings, values etc. In the study process, the system of relations between individuals, society, culture and nature become more differentiated, specific and complex. There may be distinguished different levels of these relations. In this respect, education can be treated as progress in understanding of one's integration with society, culture and nature.

The concept of social identity integrates individuals with broader social groups (from family, friends and nation to mankind), cultures and environments. I myself have developed social-psychological theory of organizational identity formation since 2004 (Haav, 2004c).

In this respect, education can be treated as mutual identity formation between educational actors, teachers and their students. Teacher describes his identity, and expresses his knowledge (not only his subject knowledge), feelings, relations and experiences. He shares them with those of his students. He outlines his integrated concepts of individual (himself), society (others, students), social institutions and culture (symbols, words, expressions). He shares them with his students and asks the students to do the same. Students express their relations to each other, teacher and other people. They express their perceptions, thoughts, feelings and experiences about themselves and each other. As a result, they become closer and their identities become more interrelated.

## Syllabus for student development as a theory for curriculum development

The theory of (student) curriculum development combines two basic ideas. First, it concerns relations between different forms of perception. In particular, relations between animal and human perception and communication are vital. Second, it defines a system of basic concepts as a basis for all other subject syllabi. Education relies on relations and differences between main ways of human cognition: perceptual, emotional, behavioral and symbolic ones. The more differentiated is one's system of symbolic tools (knowledge) and the closer is it to his/her perceptual, emotional and behavioral systems, the higher is one's level of education.

All subject teachers design a simple student-development syllabus and then link their subject syllabus and specific learning objects to this. All subjects (sciences, arts etc.) have social (contested and negotiated) and cultural (symbolic) essences. The subject knowledge is part of culture and a result of social and cultural development. It is also related to students' former knowledge, values and attitudes. In this way, teachers can link their subject knowledge to their personalities and subordinate it to development of their students' knowledge, feelings, relations, values and identities.

In this respect, education can be defined as ability to interrelate one's perceptions, feelings, activities (experiences) and symbolic knowledge (words, concepts, theories, sciences, pieces of art). All school subjects consider different clusters of perceptions, feelings, acts and symbols. They focus on different aspects between the main concepts of individuals, society, culture and nature. The differentiated systems of concepts (symbols, theories) should not forget their symbolic and social essence. They are not absolutist. The science syllabi and textbooks should remind the social creation of sciences by human beings using former knowledge of other scholars. They should also remind the social context of knowledge creation and utilization. The multimedia assists us to do so. Thus, all sciences and scientific subjects can and should develop different qualities of students. In integration of students' identities, the role of integrative subjects (arts, music, and literature) is decisive. In sum, the curriculum has but some main aims and outcomes (Biggs, Tang, 2009: 64–90).

This is my understanding of a social scientific curriculum theory. As the next step, it should be implemented in various other subject syllabi and textbooks, too.

## Conclusions

The Paper reviewed history of Curricula in Estonia in comparison with European curriculum history. It relied on sociological theories of society, education, curriculum and knowledge and developed a new sociological theory of curriculum development.

In general, curricula may have three main aims. Historically, the roles of these aims have been different. For Estonian peasants, the formal education started with Catechism after Luther in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The education was reduced to reading, learning the Ten Commandments and paternoster by heart and singing clerical songs. Thus, the main aim was ideological. After Industrial Revolution and abolishment of serfdom, a compulsory school system was set up since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The economy needed educated work force.

In 1921–1940 and since 1989, the Estonian educational ideology has heralded humanist goals and values (the student development). The same do the educational laws and general parts of National Curricula (1996, 2002, and 2010). Unfortunately, the subject knowledge



has remained isolated from students, their knowledge and development. To a large extent, this can be explained by the Soviet totalitarian system and its ideology. Estonian ideology has still remained authoritarian. The communist authoritarianism has been replaced by a post-communist (capitalist) authoritarianism. This altered ideology also relies on absolutist concept of knowledge. Formerly, individuals were subordinated to society (oligarchy). Now, the concepts of individual, society, culture and nature are isolated from each other. Sociological theories of society, education, knowledge and curriculum enable both to explain and overcome this. These theories integrate concepts of individual, society, culture and nature. They rely on social construction of knowledge. The Paper has broadened the concept of knowledge and that combines all main forms of cognition (in addition to symbolic knowledge, also perceptions, feelings and experiences). The Author has designed a syllabus for student development and implemented this in his teaching. A simplified model of this syllabus may and should be used for all other subject syllabi, too. In this way, all subject syllabi become subordinated to student development. Such a curriculum theory enables to overcome the isolation of subject knowledge and development of students' skills and identities. Now, the main problem lies in teacher training institutions. Are they willing to accept this sociological framework and implement it in curriculum policy?

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## **Заинтересованные группы в сфере науки и инноваций: «новые» стейкхолдеры или «старые» технократы?**

Статья подготовлена по результатам проектов: «Аналитическое обеспечение реализации государственной политики в образовании, научно-технической и инновационной сфере», выполненного НИУ ВШЭ для Правительства РФ, и «Мониторинг инновационного поведения населения», реализуемого в рамках Программы фундаментальных исследований НИУ ВШЭ.

**Ключевые слова:** общественное мнение о науке, заинтересованная публика, интерес к науке, научная грамотность, престиж научной деятельности, «утечка умов», последствия развития науки и техники.

Анализ результатов опросов общественного мнения о науке и технологиях выявил противоречие между декларируемым позитивным отношением россиян к науке и фактической дистанцированностью от нее большей части населения. Позитивное отношение проявляется, в частности, в признании высокого уровня профессионализма