Curriculum Orientations

Four orientations to curriculum that assist in goal formulation —

• Academic Rationalism
• Cognitive Processes
• Self-actualisation
• Social Reconstructionist
The Humanities Curriculum Project

- A curriculum providing a discussion-based approach in which students critically examine evidences on controversial human issues

- Aim:
  - to develop an understanding of human acts, of social situations and of the problems of value which arise from them (no attempt was made to translate the aim into a specification couched in terms of behavioral objectives)

- Nine themes for study and experimental development:
  - war
  - education
  - the family
  - relations between the sexes
  - people and work
  - Poverty
  - living in cities
  - law and order
  - race relations.
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Classificatory Systems

Set of all curriculum workers

AR = Academic Rationalist
CP = Cognitive Processes
Self-A = Self-Actualisation
SR = Social Reconstructionist
Graphing curriculum orientations

- Transfer inventory responses to sorting form

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- Transfer data from sorting form to graph
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- Academic Rationalism
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Academic Rationalist Orientation

• Oldest curriculum orientation

• A knowledge perspective to curriculum
  – Subject areas most worthy of study
  – Depositories of accumulated wisdom

• Production of effective members in adult society
  – Development of the rational mind

• Two directions
  – Traditional pathway
  – Recent theories

• Approaches, characteristics and Issues
Approaches

• Forms of knowledge
  – Students learn how to acquire or justify facts rather than just recall them

• Integrated studies
  – Two or more previously separate subjects are combined

• Back to basics
  – The direct teaching of school subjects with the emphasis on learning to read, write and solve mathematical problems
Characteristics

• Purpose
  – To develop rational minds
  – To train students to do research

• Methods
  – Exposition
  – Inquiry

• Organisation
  – Themes
  – Integration
  – Problems

• Evaluation
  – Aligned to the objectives of the subject matter
Issues

• Selecting subjects
  – Categorising academic disciplines
    • 8 Forms of Knowledge
      – Mathematics
      – Physical Sciences
      – History
      – Human Sciences
    – Driven by university entrance requirements

• Making learning interesting
  – Fallacy of content
    • Preoccupied with ‘what’ rather than the ‘how’ of learning
  – Fallacy of universalism
    • Content is interesting regardless of learner characteristics
Jerome Bruner

• ‘Man: A Course of Study (MACOS)’
  – A humanistic framework
    • Anthropological
    • Biological
    • Ethnographic
      – What is human about human beings?
      – How did they get that way?
      – How can they be made more so?
  – MACOS engages students in answering these questions by organising required knowledge around the concepts of:
    • Values
    • World View
    • Communication and Language
    • Technology
    • Organisation of Groups
Materials and Activities

• Provides three broad categories of materials:
  – Film and other visuals
  – Written materials
  – Enactive devices

• Activities
  – Writing
    • Field notes, journals, poems, songs, stories
  – Games
  – Construction exercises
  – Observation projects
  – Individual tasks
  – Small group work

Students should work in the same way as an expert would in the field.
Learning Modes

- **Enactive**: Learn through movement or action
  - Play with a book

- **Iconic**: Learn through images or icons
  - Look at pictures

- **Symbolic**: Learn through abstract symbols
  - Read for research

Spiral Curriculum

- **Symbolic**: Search an online catalog
- **Iconic**: Draw Dewey signs
- **Enactive**: Place shelf markers

Example: Finding books

Cognitive Development

- **Early childhood**: Enactive
- **Middle childhood**: Iconic
- **Adolescence**: Symbolic

*Modes remain available throughout life, even after mastery*
Analysing Curriculum Materials

• Man: Course of Study

• In groups analyse “Man: A Course of Study” using the general analysis questions from the analysis scheme

• Think about design (product, process)

• Decide how to share the analysis for the purpose of processing the information

• Build up your response to the questions as feedback to the class
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Cognitive Processes Orientation

- Critical of academic rationalism
  - excessively content-bound
  - underemphasises processes
  - content is outdated

- The Progressive Education Movement
  - Focus on skill development
  - Enhance intellectual faculties
  - Assume cognitive faculties and abilities
    - Problem solve
    - Visualise
    - Extrapolate
    - Synthesise
    - Conceptualise
    - Evaluate
    - Deal with ambiguity
    - Analyse

- Qualifier
  - Academic disciplines provide the framework or structure that make sense out of acquiring cognitive skills
John Dewey

• Anti European tradition of philosophy of:
  – Plato
    • Stable and static social structure
  – Plato and Aristotle
    • Reason as a reliable approach to the acquisition of knowledge
    • Experience as an unreliable approach to the acquisition of knowledge

• Committed to Thomas Jefferson’s notion of progress
  – ‘indefinite perfectibility of man’
    • aristocracy of birth replaced by an aristocracy of talent

Aristocracy ➔ Meritocracy
Beliefs

• Society changes
  – individuals need to be aware of the forces of change
  – change does not necessarily imply decay or loss or guarantee progress

• Change is about new possibilities
  – It can bring with it serious social problems that have to be faced and solved
  – The question of social control is raised when individuals seek to direct social change
  – process of problem solving involves change

• Education prepares individuals to
  – solve problems
  – anticipate problems
  – make choices
  – think reflectively
  – grow through interaction

The task of education is to prepare individuals not only to solve problems but also to anticipate them.
Developing Thinking

• Solving problems and arriving at decisions are now a common experience in classrooms throughout the country

• In the cognitive processes curriculum, the development of thinking skills holds a central place

• The result of thinking is subsidiary to the *process of thinking*

• Reflective Thinking
  – An educational aim
    • An ability to respond to experiences, situations, events or new information
  – An educational method
    • A 'processing' phase where thinking and learning take place
Reflective Thinking

• Pre-reflective stage
  – doubts, conflict, disturbances

• Reflective stage
  – five phases of thinking
    • Suggestions
    • Problem Formulation
    • Hypothesis
    • Hypothesis Elaboration
    • Testing the Hypothesis

• Post-reflective stage
  – clarity, coherence, harmony
Qualities of Reflective Thinking

The qualities required to think reflectively are:

- Judgment
- Emotional Awareness or Sensitivity
- Imagination
- Reasoning
- The Presence of Certain Attitudes
  - desire to apply this method to problems
  - a willingness to act
  - restrain from jumping to conclusions
  - open-mindedness
  - responsibility – prepared to put new ideas to the test of experience and to change in the light of evidence
Dewey’s Position

In addition to other matters of curriculum Dewey saw himself as operating within two domains:

- A moral domain
  - Developing the ability to not only use social norms to make moral judgments but also to re-examine them in new situation
- An aesthetic domain
  - To encourage people to:
    - realise that there is beauty in everyday things
    - improve the world rather than reject it
Dewey and Education

• Three stages of child growth
  – Stage 1 4-8 years
  – Stage 2 8-11/12 years
  – Stage 3 13 years

• Advocated
  – instruction by specialists should begin in the first years of school
  – teachers need to confer to achieve unity
  – practical application of knowledge both an end and means of learning
  – secondary school students (at about 13) able to deal with a subject from the logical standpoint
  – the adult as expert
A curriculum for thinking
- Carol McGuinness
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Self Actualisation Orientation

• A Confluent (add-on) Curriculum
  – Adding on the affective domain (emotions, attitudes and feelings) to the traditional cognitive domain (intellectual knowledge and abilities) of curriculum

• The curriculum does not teach students what to feel or what attitudes to have but provides choices that encourages students to take responsibility for their choices

• Intrinsically rewarding experiences to enhance personal development
  – Third force of psychology
    • supportive environment
    • facilitation

A response to public pressure for growth in subject-matter knowledge
Resisting Academic Rationalism

- A concentration on subject matter might lead to depersonalisation

- Element of a Confluent Curriculum
  - Participation
    - There is consent, power sharing, negotiation and joint responsibility by co-participants (Nonauthoritarian)
  - Integration
    - There is interaction and integration of thinking, feeling and action
  - Relevance
    - The subject matter is emotionally and intellectually linked to the needs and lives of the participants
  - Self
    - The self as a legitimate object of learning
  - Goal
    - The purpose is to develop the whole person within a human society
Self-directed Learning

• A response to the threat of depersonalisation of academic rationalism

• A desire to promote the characteristics of the self-directed learner (sense of ability, clarity of values, positive self-concept, capacity for innovation and openness)

• Key curriculum ideas
  – Achievement motivation
    • Realistic challenge and an expectation of success
  – Attribution theory
    • Seeing oneself as the cause of one’s success
  – Student’s interests
    • Freedom to learn concentrates effort
  – Locus of control
    • Internal control is highly correlated with achievement
Carl Rogers

• *Freedom to Learn* (1969) and *Freedom to Learn for the 80s* (1983)

• The Human Being
  – Free and unique (able to make choices in all situations)
  – Consciousness is private, internal world of living

• The Problem with Curriculum Development
  – Impossible to predict in advance the learning experiences that student will require or the behaviours they will exhibit
Roger’s Theory

• Goals
  – To provide a non-threatening environment
  – To assist each individual to become a fully functioning person

• The school environment
  – Develops individual’s sense of reality
  – Causes individuals to act
  – Develops the individual’s self-concept

• Classroom climate
  – intrinsic rewards of acceptance
  – understanding and empathy predominate
  – authority is shared between the student and the teacher

• Teacher’s Role
  – To create a climate of trust and openness in which self-direction can occur
  – To facilitate individuals or groups to work out their own self-directed plans for learning and development
  – make resource materials available
  – be non-judgmental
  – convey respect for students
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Social Reconstructionist Orientation

- Purpose of Education
  - No universal objectives and content
  - To confront the learner with the problems facing humanity in an effort to produce a better society
- Schools as agents for social change
- Possible areas of study
  - environmental issues
  - world peace
  - political corruption
  - racial prejudice
  - religious values
- Role of the Teacher
  - Help students discover their own interests
  - Relate local, national and world purposes to students’ goals
  - Stress cooperation with the local community and its resources

Learning opportunities must be real, require action and teach values.
Paulo Freire

- What has motivated him in the work he has done?
  - plight of his fellow countrymen

- What is the fundamental idea in his philosophy?
  - Human beings as conscious beings that act in light of their understanding of
    - themselves and the world they inhabit
    - the political and social position in which they find themselves
    - the role they fulfil
  - Transforming their environment
    - physical environment
    - social environment
    - promote the wellbeing and progress of members
  - Capitalism an unjust society
  - Humanise the world and so transform ourselves
Paulo Freire and Education

– Giving the knowledge needed to be truly human
  • Knowledge alone is not enough
  • Must act in the light of that knowledge
  • Reflection and action
  • Creative activity
– Teacher-student relationships
  • encourage freedom to think
  • to say their own words
  • to act in accordance with their convictions
– Education as problem-posing
  • Both teacher and student should approach each problem with open minds and reflect on it as individuals
    – discuss it
    – share their views on it
    – see the difficulties
    – explore the possible answers
    – agree or disagree on solutions

It's an education system not a banking system!
More on Freire

• Does his teaching apply generally or only in the Developing World?
  – Uses politically and socially-motivated words
  – Conveys a sense of the freedom and dignity
  – Everyone portrayed as creators of culture in their daily lives

• Is he a Marxist?
  – Writes in Marxist terms but out of Christian convictions
  – Uses the Marxian model of analysis
  – Belief in God
  – Rejects dogmatic certainty
  – Humane attitude towards the most oppressed

• Does he advocate revolution?
  – Uses words like ‘the fight’, ‘the struggle’, ‘rebellion’, and ‘conquest’
  – Creates a vision of bloody revolution
  – Revolution is a cultural action for freedom
  – Violence is contrary to all he teaches
  – He points out that violent revolution usually leads to another vertically-structured society
  – He does not rule it out
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<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Academic rationalists</th>
<th>Cognitive Processes</th>
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<td>Guardians of an ancient tradition tied to the power of reason and the finest elements of the Western cultural heritage</td>
<td>Human life comprises constant change. Education tied to developing the thinking skills necessary to manage the problems of adapting to change</td>
<td>The natural order of development in the child as the basis for determining what should be taught</td>
<td>Schools as the principal force for social change and social justice</td>
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<td>Development</td>
<td>Seeks a curriculum that introduces students to the rational power of disciplinary knowledge</td>
<td>Seeks a curriculum that focus on developing the cognitive skills necessary to deal with a changing world</td>
<td>Seeks a curriculum in harmony with the child’s ‘real’ interests, needs and learning patterns</td>
<td>Seeks a curriculum that confronts students with corruption and vice, inequalities of race and gender, and the abuses of privilege and power with the aim of raising a new generation equipped to deal effectively with these abuses</td>
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**Key thinker**
- Bruner
- Dewey
- Rogers
- Freire

**Linked to**
- transmission
- product
- process
- praxis
Curriculum Trends

Considering contemporary factors impacting on the development of curriculum

Our Focus
Globalisation

• Global environment
  – 9/11
  – Global warming
  – Information revolution
  – the rise of China and India

• Research evidence
  – the economic impact of school education
  – the social impact of school education
  – Global Education – what do students need to know?
    • Case (1993): curriculum should incorporate both substantive and perceptual dimensions. The substantive dimension includes knowing about global systems, events, and issues whereas the perceptual dimension includes being empathetic and having an open-minded point of view
Globalisation

• International Competition
  – Educational Standards
    • Producing knowledge workers in a globalised marketplace
    • International comparisons
    • Mandating what students must know and be able to do
  – Education is crucial for:
    • future economic prosperity
    • developing skills young people need to operate in an information-rich world
    • both understanding and addressing emerging environmental challenges
    • promoting social cohesion
    • delivering equality of opportunity
    • Innovation and creativity
      – Fundamental to individual and national prosperity in a global market place
      – Critical in developing responses to social challenges
Standardisation

• The trend towards outcomes-based education is closely link to the standardisation

• Should one curriculum size fit all?
  – The move for consistent curricula across all schools
  – Loose-tight systems

• The increased ‘marketisation’ of education
  – The argument:
    • All students, regardless of where they live, should have similar opportunities to learn the same content, at the same depth and with the same academic rigour

• Critics worry that standardisation will downgrade quality by narrowing learning options and lower expectations in response to greater accountability
## Outcomes-based Education

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<th>Typical of outcomes-based programs</th>
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<td>Specific – lists of observable changes in the student</td>
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<td>Subject matter-based</td>
<td>Outcome-based</td>
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<td>Time for Instruction</td>
<td>Fixed time units</td>
<td>Continues until outcome demonstrated</td>
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<td>Mode of Instruction</td>
<td>Teacher as transmitter of specialised information</td>
<td>Teacher as facilitator of learning</td>
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<td>Focus of Instruction</td>
<td>What the teacher is able to and likes to teach</td>
<td>What the learner needs to learn to demonstrate outcomes</td>
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<td>Instructional Material</td>
<td>Narrow source (texts, workbooks)</td>
<td>Variety of materials and experiences based on learning styles</td>
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<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Delayed feedback</td>
<td>Results reported after performance</td>
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<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Norm-referenced</td>
<td>Criterion (outcomes) referenced</td>
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<td>Exit Criteria</td>
<td>Final assessment in grades or percentages</td>
<td>Demonstrated outcome at prespecified level</td>
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<td>Learning Emphasis</td>
<td>Acquire fixed body of knowledge transmitted by teacher</td>
<td>Development of learning skills</td>
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<td>Learner Responsibility</td>
<td>Follow a predetermined course</td>
<td>Develop independence and responsibility for self-monitoring</td>
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National Curriculum

• Developing nationally consistent curricula
  – Setting core standards and achievement standards
  – Providing flexibility for jurisdictions and school sectors
  – Establishing standards as a basis for national testing
  – Broadening options for students
  – Ensuring achievement reported on same scale nationally
Learning from Overseas

• Finland
  – Moved to national standards
  – Core content specification
  – Flexibility for schools in timing and methods

• United Kingdom
  – Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) developing a new national curriculum built around two fundamental aims:
    • to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve
    • to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life

• United States
  – Six US states considering ways of incorporating 21st century skills into their curricula
In what way do you feel current curriculum trends are impacting on you?

• Do you think the knowledge explosion has produced more information than teachers or students can master?

• Should we now focus on *how* we learn and use knowledge, including critical thinking skills, metacognition, and critical pedagogy?

• Do you believe education is too much like "fashion and design," in the sense that curriculum development is just a matter of popular opinion?

• Read *The Saber-Tooth Curriculum* – what does it teaches us about the purpose of curriculum?
Analysing Curriculum Materials

• Select from the curriculum materials

• In groups analyse your selection using the ‘materials in use’ questions from the analysis scheme

• Think about orientation (academic rationalist, cognitive processes, self-actualisation, social reconstructionist)

• Decide how to share the analysis for the purpose of processing the information

• Build up your response to the questions as feedback to the class