This preprint can be cited as: Boland, N. & Rawson, M. (2020) Emergent curriculum based on ideal-types: The example of Steiner/Waldorf education. Retrieved from http://www.learningcommunitypartners.eu/blog/

Emergent curriculum based on dynamic ideal-types: The example of Waldorf/Steiner education

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Abstract
This paper outlines the origins and concept of curriculum in Waldorf (also known as Steiner) education. This involves interrogating understandings of the German term *Lehrplan* and its translation into English in the early days of the movement as curriculum. The development of curriculum in the growing Waldorf movement internationally has been one in which an assumed intended curriculum has in fact evolved as actual curriculum largely in response to the requirement for translation in the wider sense and the needs to present Waldorf education to state authorities. The paper presents the notion of developmental tasks as an alternative to a purely developmental or instrumental approach and concludes by suggesting that curriculum should be dynamic and emergent if it is to respond to real educational need and that teacher supported by research are actually best placed to develop curriculum locally.

Introduction

The Waldorf School was founded in 1919 in Stuttgart, Germany, initially for the children of the workers in the Waldorf Cigarette Factory by its owner Emil Molt, who asked Rudolf Steiner to take on the educational direction (Zdrazil, 2019, Göbel, 2020). Since then this educational movement has grown to 3,142 educational entities in 74 countries including 1,958 kindergartens and 1,184 schools (Paull and Hennig, 2020) and 320 curative education schools and around 200 social therapy centres in 40 countries (www.freunde-waldorf.de/en/the-friends/publications/catalogue-waldorf-education/curative-education). These educational institutions are usually called Waldorf or Steiner kindergartens or schools. This educational approach has only recently been described in academic literature in English (Dahlin, 2017, Nicol and Taplin, 2017, Rawson, 2020), though there has been a growth in academic literature in German over the past 20 years (Schieren, 2016). Rawson (2020) offers a survey of the academic literature in English and German, including empirical studies on alumni (see also Randoll & Peters, 2015, Gidley, 2010,).

At the heart of this education is a curriculum. It is probably taken for granted by most teachers, parents and pupils in Waldorf schools around the world that there is such a thing as *The Waldorf Curriculum*, with a definite article and capital letters. According to this view there is a singular, definitive curriculum that practically defines Waldorf education and has almost institutional status. Indeed, it is one of the main distinguishing features of Waldorf education, referred to in schools' literature and on their websites. It is valorized by some as a complex, multi-layered work of art that brings the universal developmental nature of the human being to expression, offering archetypal contents that correspond in a fine-grained

way to the (universal) child's assumed development in year by year progressions. Its status and validity is affirmed by experience in practice and, indeed, what empirical evidence there is, confirms that Waldorf education is generally deemed to be successful (Schieren, 2016).

This paper questions the assumption that there is a single normative Waldorf Curriculum that can be translated into other languages and applied anywhere. We suggest that curriculum in Waldorf schools should be emergent rather than essentialized and normative. The paper uses arguments based on the historical emergence of curriculum in the first Waldorf schools, and on the notion that teachers should develop pedagogy that reflects the generative principles of the education and the actual needs of the students in the context they are located in. In fact Waldorf early education does not usually refer to its curriculum, but rather has key concepts or essential principles that "have been used to inspire a worldwide educational system, adaptable to many cultures, religions and settings" (Nicol and Taplin, 2018, 12). It also points to the fact that probably many schools around the world actually practice emergent curriculum development, though perhaps with an informal rather than formal, coherent practice of curriculum development. Indeed the authors will argue that the continued development and relevance of Waldorf education depends on a shift to emergent curricula. Though this question is primarily of concern for Waldorf schools, it does raise the wider issue of the functions of curriculum in an increasingly globalized and homogenous neoliberal educational policy landscape (Mundy, 2016, Ball, 2013) and indeed questions the function of education at all, which Biesta (2015) suggests, should enable socialization, qualification and the formation of the person (subjectification).

The paper discusses the meanings of curriculum in relation to pedagogy and the aims of education within the Waldorf discourse. It sketches its historical origins going back to the founding of the Waldorf School in 1919 and its relationship to the core principles of Steiner's educational approach and pedagogical anthropology. It will then explore some of the issues arising when the curriculum travels as the Waldorf movement has expanded and continues to grow from its origins in Germany to other countries and the need to translate this across time and cultural space. In particular the paper will question the notion of curriculum equivalence and offer new understandings of curriculum as an emergent and historical process. Waldorf education has increasingly had to justify itself in the face of education standards and prescribed learning outcomes and this has meant changes in the way curriculum is developed and represented. By finding a dynamic balance between the needs of enabling qualification linked to external requirements and the development of the person, the paper explains why curriculum should perhaps be an emergent process and not only within the Waldorf movement.

Origins

Steiner selected and inducted the teachers of the Waldorf School by giving them a short but intensive course comprising lectures on pedagogical anthropology from the perspective of spiritual science and gave example of their application in practice (Lindenberg, 2013, Zdrazil,

2019). In these lectures- referred to here as the Foundations (1996b) – Steiner outlines the dynamic relationship between body, soul and spirit during the course of child and youth development, focusing successively on how this interaction is perceived, experienced and understood and how this forms the basis for the relationship of the subject to self, others and the world in terms of thinking, feeling and willing and what implications this has for education. This account and builds on and extends his earlier theory of knowledge and development of anthroposophy as a path to the spiritual dimension in the human being and the world (Oberski, 2006, 2011). Steiner's clear assumption, as outlined in the Foundations and reinforced across his many subsequent lectures, is that through engaging with the Foundational ideas, the teachers individually and collegially in the college of teachers would be able to develop the educational provision, implement it, evaluate it and develop it further (Rawson, 2011, 2014). The regular meetings of the teachers were to be a "the living higher education for the college of teachers- a permanent training academy" (Steiner, 2007, 208) in which the teachers share their reflected experiences and generate insight and knowledge about their practice and where a shared vision could be cultivated. He used the metaphor of these meeting being the heart organ in the school organism (ibid). We know from the transcripts of regular meetings between the teachers and Steiner up until his death in 1925, that many curriculum issues were discussed, with innovations being planned and reviewed (Steiner et al, 2019).

We know that following the first school inspection, one of the criticisms was that there was no written curriculum, that teachers knew what they were teaching but there was no indication of expected outcomes (Zdrazil, 2019) . In preparation for the follow-up inspection, Steiner planned to produce a curriculum statement, but due to his unexpected death in 1925, this work was only completed in October 1925 by Caroline von Heydebrand, who produced a 40 page document. In her introduction, Heydebrand briefly explains Steiner's method in relation to curriculum. This was to present his understanding of the nature of the developing human being from the perspective of his anthroposophical anthropology, on the basis of which the methodological and didactic details necessary for practicing of the art of education should be developed. There are examples of content, either given by Steiner or developed by teachers in the school. She explains that on the basis of this, each teacher is expected to develop and extend the curriculum out of her own insight and experience. She emphasizes that "what is presented here as the sequence of teaching material for the various classes should not be taken dogmatically as a rigid law. The ideal curriculum must follow the changing picture of human nature in the different age-groups, but like every ideal it must deal with the reality of life and adapt itself to this" (von Heydebrand, 1925, 3). Heydebrand structures her account of the curriculum with a short characterization of "the being of each individual developmental stage", starting with the age-span of 6 to 9 years. This is followed by a brief summary of what was taught in each class up to class 12. Another of the teachers in the original schools collated Steiner's curriculum statements distributed across many lectures and transcripts of meetings with teachers (Stockmeyer, 2015) and together with Heydebrand's curriculum, these two texts were the basis until the 1990s. Supplementing this

was a modest collection of secondary literature by Waldorf teachers and teacher educators focusing on various subjects and aspects of teaching. In many cases these works became standards, offering a somewhat monotone version in each field and much of this literature was also translated from German.

As the Waldorf movement grew internationally, with Waldorf schools opening outside of Germany, for example in the UK in Kings Langley in 1922 and in London in 1925, in Budapest in Hungary, in Oslo in Norway in 1926, in the Hague in the Netherlands in 1927, in the US in New York and in Prague in Czechoslovakia in 1928 (Göbel, 2019, 2020), key educational works of Steiner's and Heydebrand's curriculum were translated. Initially the content of this curriculum was more or less taken over with minimal modifications for the local language and history, often local translations of the original German literature were used, where available. It was not until the 1960s that schools outside of Germany started using some vernacular material. Stories play a significant role in Waldorf early years and primary level classes involving a progression from fairy tales and folk tales, to fables, Bible stories, legends and myths (Rawson, 2019) and this was a field in which some local material was used. There is no research on this, but anecdotal evidence gathered by both authors over the past 30 years in the international Waldorf movement suggests that curriculum adaptations were relatively minimal, except in some schools in the UK and Australia.

The rapid expansion of Waldorf Schools into Eastern Europe following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the possibilities many of these schools had to gain public funding led to demands for accounts of the Waldorf curriculum that could be compared with state curricula. At the same time, and starting with the National Curriculum in England (with similar versions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), a trend began toward what Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) call the 'Second Way of Markets and Standardization' (following a 'First Way of Innovation and Inconsistency' bound up notions of the welfare state following the Second World War). The Second and Third Ways of educational development were characterized by neoliberal policy technologies of standardization, managerialism and performativity (Ball, 2013). This meant Waldorf schools had to demonstrate some kind of equivalence in order to be eligible for state recognition and funding. In the UK, New Labour engaged in a process of 'bringing Steiner into the maintained sector' and a comparison between the then English National Curriculum and Waldorf practice was drawn up (Mepham and Rawson, 1997). A similar process was being carried out at the international level in German during the 1990's with manuscript versions of an expanded curriculum being produced with the participation of around 80 teachers under the editorial leadership of Tobias Richter (Frielingsdorf, 2019) and circulated as part of a consultation process. This process, as Zech (2016) notes, ran into considerable internal resistance in Germany, mainly due to the widely held view that Waldorf schools should avoid any form of standardization, even though Richter's draft was framed very much as recommendations of possible content. It was finally published in 2006 and has been updated and expanded regularly (latest version Richter, 2016).

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In 2000 an English language Waldorf curriculum blending work done by Richter's team and a UK curriculum produced by a team of teachers coordinated by Rawson as editor was published (Rawson and Richter, 2000, second edition Rawson et al, 2014). This rapidly became the international 'standard'(i.e. only available version in this form) and this has been translated into at least 18 languages, adapting the text to varying extents to their own local requirements. The Rawson & Richter curriculum was innovative in that it outlined the main aspects of Waldorf educational practice, include early years and had sections on assessment, school management and leadership as well as offering guidelines for minimum learning outcomes in maths, English and second language. None of these aspects have appeared in the subsequent German versions, partly because until now the state has not required them and partly because of a reluctance to have even advisory guidelines regarding educational outcomes. Germany has the largest national group of Waldorf schools (currently some 245) and is seen by many as being the bearers of the tradition going back to the first Waldorf School. This has led to Germany being relatively insular regarding curriculum development with the influence on Waldorf education worldwide travelling mainly in one direction. With the need to compare Waldorf outcomes with the new competence-based national standards in Germany, a research project began culminating in the publication of a 'competence' curriculum (Götte, Loebell & Maurer, 2016). From 2011 onwards Steiner Education Australia produced an Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework that is mandatory for all Steiner (Waldorf) schools and is recognized by both the Federal Government and most federal states (https://www.steinereducation.edu.au/curriculum/).

All recently published versions of Waldorf curricula have taken account of scientific, technological, historical and social developments since 1925, though to varying degrees and the process of adapting curriculum to include media and IT literacy, themes such as globalization and political developments since 9/11 are in slow process. This is due to a large extent to a lack of research, the absence of a central regulatory body and the traditionally strong sense of autonomy in schools. These factors sometimes mean that Waldorf schools are in a weak position to resist government directives that limit the education in some way, though efforts to engage with the state can be successful. An example is in New Zealand. The Certificate of Steiner Education (NZCSE) is an approved qualification registered on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework, which certifies and validates a senior secondary education based on a full Waldorf curriculum. Several schools in the UK, Austria, Australia, and Germany are now using the NZCSE as an alternative university entrance qualification as it allows schools to offer and valorize a full Waldorf curriculum to the end of grade 12 (age 18) and has no compulsory external exams, being based on internal assessments with external Waldorf moderation. The system is points based with learning outcome descriptors for the various subjects and activities including arts projects, research, outdoor curriculum and internships, which are an important part of the Waldorf approach. Some small-scale qualitative research showed that this model could be adapted to Waldorf schools outside of New Zealand from a pedagogical perspective, though there are issues about what constitutes

a 'full Waldorf' curriculum, since various versions exist (Rawson, 2016, Rawson, Wendt & Hardorp, 2018). Issues of acceptance by universities have been gradually overcome. The study referred to above suggested that the main resistance to NZCSE in Germany is due to the strong commitment to the national Abitur exam within the Waldorf community because it is seen as the 'gold standard' qualification and the concern is that a Waldorf specific qualification would have lower social status, thus weakening the credibility of Waldorf, especially in academic circles.

The complex meanings of curriculum

The problems with the notion of a normative Waldorf curriculum start with the word curriculum and the fact that in Waldorf discourse its usage is a translation of the German word *Lehrplan*. The first published curriculum was compiled by a teacher in the original Waldorf School, Caroline von Heydebrand (1925/1994) and was entitled *Vom Lehrplan der Freien Waldorfschule* (Frielingsdorf, 2019). This was translated in England as *The Curriculum of the First Waldorf School*. In the 1930s, when this was translated and circulated in mimeographed copies, the word curriculum already a had a long educational history going back to the 1630s in Scottish universities with a Calvinist mission to enlighten (Goodson, 1988). But are *Lehrplan* and curriculum the same? And is the meaning of Waldorf *Lehrplan* from 1925, the same as Waldorf curriculum today?

According to Horlacher (2018), there are differences today between the German notion of *Lehrplan* and what she refers to as the 'Anglo-Saxon' term, *curriculum*, though such differences have become confused since both terms have been used in Germany since the 1960s, when the American term curriculum was introduced. A Horlacher's case studies show, the meanings of *Lehrplan* in German-speaking countries have changed over the past century. What they all have in common is that they refer to that which matters in teaching and instruction and Lehrplan "designates the particular guideline for what should be taught at a particular grade level and is developed by the educational administration, teachers, and/or by experts. For implementing the Lehrplan appropriate teaching materials must be developed that have the aim of implementing the content or competencies as prescribed in the Lehrplan, and in this process, contemporary teaching methods must be considered" (10). This involves considering the structure and sequence of content, specified teaching methods and theories of learning.

Furthermore, *Lehrplan* as conceived by Kerschensteiner (1899, 1910) – a progressive educational reformer – was holistic, integrated, adapted to social, cultural and economic realities, constituting "an integrated construct with a specific beginning and end, one that is not random, that cannot be arbitrarily modified or expanded upon, and that only makes sense in its entirety" Horlacher, 2018, 6). This included modification for different school types (e.g. an academic or a vocational school). Nevertheless, the overriding principle of educating the future citizens focuses not on the actual social, political and economic conditions but towards the aim of enabling the state to becoming a more moral community (Kerschensteiner, 1910,

cited in Horlacher, ibid). Kerschensteiner also envisaged that a Lehrplan should explicitly bear the stamp of the personality of its creator, who is responsible for conceiving the coherence of the whole. One can certainly recognize many of these attributes and intentions in Heydebrand's 1925 Waldorf Curriculum. It is likely, given Heydebrand's academic background (Zdrazil, 2020)that she was familiar with Kerschensteiner's theory. Nevertheless, as Horlacher shows, *Lehrplan* has shifted in its meaning from content and structure of teaching *as* something ideal or universal, not bound by the particular requirements of a given time or place to an outline of outcomes in the form of competencies, that is, the qualifications that make a person potentially competent to participate in the economy and civil society. In specifying competencies in detail that are also measurable it in effect becomes highly normative.

Tenorth & Tippelt (2007) distinguish between *Lehrplan* and *Curriculum* in their lexicon of educational terminology as understood in current educational discourse. *Lehrplan,* they say, is a presentation of what is, and should be taught in the form of a programme, what in English would usually be described as a syllabus, whilst *Curriculum* refers to the wider context of learning including the theory of learning, teaching methods, school cultures, institutional and external expectations, qualifications of the teachers, the way learning outcomes are determined and measured and so on.

As Künzli (2009) has pointed out, understandings of curriculum in German speaking countries are bound up with humanistic and neo-humanistic notions of *Bildung* (Hastedt, 2012), meaning self-formation through engagement with culture associated with Wilhelm von Humboldt (2000) and more recent critical notions of *Bildung* associated with Adorno (2012), Klafki (2007) and Mollenhauer (1987). As current critics such as Nida-Rümelin (2013) have argued, government has appropriated the term *Bildung* and used it to refer to *Bildundsstandards* and *Bildungpläne* , in other words, whereas Bildung was once understood as the open-ended self-formation of the person, it is now used to refer to prescribed curricula with specified and measurable learning outcomes- more or less reversing its meaning (Künzli, 2010). Today most federal states in Germany publish a Bildungsplan (education plan) or Rahmenplan (*Rahmen* means framework and it is implicit that it is a curriculum framework). The current published Waldorf curriculum in Germany (Richter, 2016) refers to itself as a *Rahmenplan*.

Comparative Waldorf understandings of curriculum, pedagogy and education

Ball and Bowe (1992), referring to policy, identify three modes intended and actual policy and policy-in-use. We can apply this to curriculum; 'official' intended curriculum, actual curriculum, which allows space for interpretation and curriculum-in-use, which comprises what teachers actually teach, which will vary from context to context and depend on individual perspectives. The Waldorf curriculum discourse has not always distinguished between these three manifestations of curriculum. As Zech (2016) argues in one of the only

academic discussions of Waldorf curriculum, what began as a brief summary of teaching content – Heydebrand- has grown to become a curriculum in the sense of an overall presentation of the educational aims- as intended curriculum. At the core of these aims is individuation (Zech, 2016) or what in the wider Waldorf discourse is referred to as the development of the personality or personal development (e.g. in Rawson & Richter, 2000), or what Biesta (2013) calls subjectification. Zech emphasizes that one major distinction between state curricula and Waldorf ones is that curriculum in Waldorf schools has the character of a recommendation, as an orientation and exemplification rather than as a mandatory prescription. For this reason he defines the Waldorf curriculum as an orientation-plan (or perhaps better in English, an orientational work of reference). Indeed, in Zech's experience and this is confirmed by the authors of this paper, and in the absence of any research, our experience is that practice is even more diffuse and variable than even the orientational character of published Waldorf curricula suggest. Waldorf teachers, for a variety of reasons, frequently do what they want as curriculum-in-use.

In some education discourses the terms curriculum and pedagogy overlap and as Alexander points out in discussing comparative pedagogy, it is always important to take changing cultural differences into account;

> Because the range of meanings attaching to pedagogy varies so much in English—quite apart from differences between English and other languages—we have to be stipulative, and to be stipulative in a way which allows us to use the term for comparative analysis. My own preference is to eschew the greater ambiguities of 'curriculum' and the resulting tendency to downgrade pedagogy, and use the latter term to encompass the larger field. I distinguish pedagogy as *discourse* from teaching as *act*, yet I make them inseparable. Pedagogy, then, encompasses both the act of teaching and its contingent theories and debates—about, for example, the character of culture and society, the purposes of education, the nature of childhood and learning and the structure of knowledge. Pedagogy is the domain of discourse with which one needs to engage if one is to make sense of the act of teaching—for discourse and act are interdependent, and there can be no teaching without pedagogy or pedagogy without teaching. It is the aspect of education which most tellingly brings together macro and micro (Alexander, 2001, 513).

In Waldorf discourse, which we remind the reader has largely been a one-way direction of influence from German to English, Steiner frequently used the term *Waldorfpädagogik* (Waldorf pedagogy) and sometimes the *Waldorfidee* or *Waldorfgedanke* (the Waldorf idea) to refer to the entire educational approach including curriculum in the Waldorf School (e.g. 1996a) and at the same time, he used it in the narrower sense of teaching or educating in the sense of leading or guiding the child, for which he also frequently used the term *Erziehung* and its verb *erziehen*. *Erziehen* is usually translated as educating (etymologically *erziehen* implies pulling out/up, whilst educating implies leading out). This problem of translation is further complicated by shifts in the meaning of many of the key terms relating to education such as learning, pedagogy, competence or *Bildung* (Nieke, 2012). In Biesta's (in press)

discussion of the distinction between *Erziehung* and *Bildung*, he follows Benner (2020) in seeing *Erziehung* as the act of directing the gaze of the student towards something important and salient and *Bildung* as the process by which the learner engages with this and in doing so, forms herself. While *Bildung* is a lifelong process, *Erziehung* ends at some point when formal education ends. Biesta takes this distinction further by not restricting the aims of *Erziehung* to prompting *Bildung* as learning, but expanding it to encouraging and enabling the emergence of the subject as someone who has the grown-up desire to take responsibility for her action and the ability to act in 'eco-logical' rather than 'ego-logical' ways, thus serving the common good. In Biesta's terms education, and thus curriculum and pedagogy as means to this end, involves ways of arousing the desire "in another human being for wanting to exist in the world in a grown-up way, not purely driven by one's desires but always asking whether what one desires or encounters in oneself as a desire is what one should desire, in light of living one's life well, with others, on a planet with limited capacity for fulfilling all our desires"(ibid, 14).

Zech (2016) notes that curriculum in the Waldorf discourse is a slippery term, difficult to compare with uses in mainstream educational science. Therefore we need to be stipulate, for this is indeed a complex field of semantics and comparative pedagogy. We propose to use the term curriculum as Dahlin above defines it. Curriculum includes:

> everything that children or students in a Waldorf school or preschool may experience or are supposed to experience, consciously or subconsciously, during their school day. Thus, not only the contents of teaching and learning, but also the way the teachers teach, and the teachers themselves as persons are included in "the curriculum". Even the aesthetics of the internal and external architecture of the school house is part of it, because in an ideal Waldorf school, this aspect of the external environment is consciously designed to support children's development. All aspects of the curriculum are related to potentials for the learning that children have in different ages and phases of development (Dahlin, 2017, 87-8).

The distinction between curriculum and pedagogy then, is one of perspective, particularly as an object of research. We suggest that pedagogy be understood as the art, craft and science of the relationship between teaching and learning and becoming, much as Nind et al (2016) define it, though with the added notion of understanding learning as becoming or development (Rawson, 2020) within specific institutional learning cultures (Hodkinson et al, 2008). One of the generative principles of Waldorf education (Rawson, 2020) is that the teaching should involve skilled artistry as knowledgeable action with purpose. The purpose is serving the development of the person in the service of the common good. Thus when we are researching the relationship between teaching and learning in learning cultures, we are doing pedagogy. If we want to present the whole educational approach, for example to parents, school inspectors, academics, we refer to curriculum. As a short-hand term, teachers use curriculum, when they are referring to various representations of possible content, learning settings or organizational structures as an orientation. Having discussed all the nuances of meaning of the available terminology, Zech (2016) in the end favours, in German, the term

Lehrplan, which given the history of the term does on balance tilt the scales towards a holistic, ideal notion of a coherent whole, that cannot be easily modified. To some extent the English-speaking world is spared this debate and can use the word curriculum as Dahlin defines it. Once we have discussed the link between curriculum and development, we may need to modify this definition.

Curriculum and developmental tasks

As the quotation from Heydebrand above makes clear, the curriculum is developmental in that it is supposed to align with developmental processes. The nature of this alignment, however, is contested and has evolved, which in a way, is the reason why it is contentious. The traditional view, most recently articulated in its modern form by Glöckler (2020), is that the development of children and youth can be described in fine-grained stages on a year by year basis that are more or less universally typical and that the curriculum matches this with tasks and content. Whereas, earlier presentations and many school websites give the impression of 'typical' children (the class five child is…) and a one-to-one match with the curriculum (in the grade 5 the children are…therefore we teach them…), Glöckler contrasts a developmentally orientated curriculum with prescribed competence-based and measurable learning outcomes (presumably because the testing that goes with measuring learning outcomes encourages competition and learning to the test- though this is not explicit in her account). She emphasizes that a developmental curriculum fosters altruism and health and social well-being and counters self-interest.. Glöckler's (2002, 2018) salutogenetic approach to curriculum as a health promoting process is a vital new insight into Waldorf education and indeed the relationship between pedagogy and health and resilience, but, in our view, does not need to be linked so closely to year-groups

Waldorf education is fairly alone in the wider educational discourse in still insisting on an age-based phases and stages approach and most literature referring to it is in health care (Bastable, 2019). The reason for this is that although phases of development are recognized these are not pegged to specific ages because social opportunities for learning and environmental factors play such a significant role in the timing of development (Santrock, 2017). Following Largo (2019, 2004), what characterizes normal human development is uniqueness and individual developmental trajectories. At any given age, there is likely to be a wide range of levels of development if one takes all measurable aspects of development and maturity into account, such as social, emotional, linguistic, cognitive, fine and gross motor development and so on. Therefore the notion of a typical grade 5 child does not make sense, quite apart from possible cultural variation.

One solution to this conundrum is the construct of developmental tasks. Götte et al (2016) first applied this phrase to Waldorf curriculum by adopting Havighurst's (1982) construct, which described the social expectations on youth becoming adults (in the US in the 1960-80s). This notion was modified by the sociologist Hurrelmann (2012, Hurrelmann & Quenzel, 2013) in a postmodern context in which the traditional life-course structures no

longer apply. Götte et al apply the construct in a Waldorf context by defining it as incorporating intrinsic biological and biographical factors as well as extrinsic, social and cultural factors. Thus the construct can be used to structure curriculum in a way that both acknowledges and channels typical developmental task at various stages as well as fostering the development of the individual. They note that Havighurst's construct drew attention to what Waldorf education considers its central curriculum function, namely to support children and young people in their development in age-sensitive ways. Used pedagogically the construct of developmental tasks that includes teaching methods and content can be used to design curriculum that takes account of learner needs and social expectations. The idea of structuring the curriculum year by year matches the Waldorf practice of having long-term, mixed ability groups of students of the same age (i.e. all born within the same 12 months) in the same classes from grade 1 to 12. Thus at the core of curriculum are year-specific ideal-types of developmental tasks and content. As Zech (2017) points out;

> From the perspective of the heterogeneous developmental situation of the individuals in a [typical Waldorf] class, we cannot assume that age-specific stages are the norm. Rather they are set by the teaching. General developmental phases such as seven-year stages or developmental nodal points, such as changes around the age of 10 or 12 that can be observed, do not simply occur, but are brought about by the teaching and pedagogical approach that orientates itself, on the one hand, on ideal-types of developmental tasks, and on the other, on the actual situation of the pupils (Zech, 2017, p. 70, authors trans.)

In other words, the teaching, content and tasks activate and channel certain developmental processes that are inherent in the child or young person. The particular sequence of activities and content in the curriculum therefore influence the developmental trajectory significantly.

We would like to add another theoretical dimension to Götte et al's notion of developmental tasks. Building on Hedegaard's (2009, see also Fleer and Hedegaard, 2010) cultural-historical account of how social practices and especially institutional structures shape children's development and Rogoff's (2003) work on the cultural situatedness of children's development, we can understand how school and social structures shape children's learning and therefore development. Furthermore, as Dreier (2008, 2011) has shown, people weave together coherent identities, self-understanding and personality through the positions and stances they take when navigating across different social contexts and practices in everyday life and in doing so, they also give expression to their biographical interests in what is referred to as expansive learning (Grotlüschen, 2004, 2014).

The curriculum in a Waldorf school shapes the educational culture and affords certain developmental processes at specific times, thus prompting developmental in a certain direction. Biographical interests and previous learning history influence how individual children and young people respond, hence the need for a wide range of experiences and differentiated tasks for different learning types and interests. If a heterogenous group of

children of the same age share a range of experiences it will have the effect of aligning their development, accelerating it in some children, whilst holding it back to a degree in others. Another key generative principle of Waldorf education (Rawson, 2020) is the importance of learning in an inclusive heterogenous group of children and young people as a long-term learning community (students stay in the same class for 12 years, regardless of their academic interests and capabilities). A study of Waldorf students at the end of their school career that looked at their lived experiences of school-related learning situations in relation to their development as persons, showed that the class community itself was experienced as a highly significant site for their development as persons (Rawson, 2019).

Therefore the curriculum is a construct that broadly aligns with major developmental process such as bodily growth and maturity such as second dentition and puberty and the lived experiences the children and young people have of these bodily and psychological transformations. It also takes account of extrinsic circumstances, such as the changing social, cultural and economic environment, like modern urban living, the digital revolution and brute factors (Billet, 2009), such as war, famine, poverty, injury etc., as well as expectations of socialization and qualification. The core aim of curriculum is therefore, as already noted, the development of the whole person. In order to provide a structure for the shaping of development, ideal-types are constructed that outline possible content and teaching methods in sequences that comprise a spiral curriculum, in which key concepts are regularly re-visited, thus expand understanding. An ideal type, in Weber's (1949) sense of a concept that can be used to understand social action, allows us to interpret and understand complex social reality and the meaning people give to their actions. As Crotty (1998, 70) explains the ideal type in research is a heuristic tools that can be used to construct the best fitting account for the data in a given situation. It is not ideal in the moral sense, nor is it a statistical average, but an idea constructed to make sense of multiple factors for a specific purpose, such as comparing similar cases and as a bridge between idiographic and nomothetic aspects. The ideal type is particularly useful for theoretical comparisons (Serpa, 2018) and as a hypothetico-deductive method (Tariq, 2015). Applying the construct of ideal-type to an existing curriculum- as Zech (2016) does - implies identifying the common meaning linking the various discrete parts, and thus assumes that these elements were meaningfully brought together in the first place, either by Steiner or by the tradition of Waldorf practice, or probably, both. Curriculum is not merely a practical sequence of activities that have to be organized, but rather a meaningful and meaning-making whole.

If we apply the notion of ideal-type to curriculum development, we do more than merely analysing meaning in an existing body of content and methods. It means selecting new material and methods that are coherent, that hang together (to use Weber's term) meaningfully, in response to an interpretation of new pedagogical needs and new conditions. Merely conforming to an existing, static, traditional ideal-type is quite a different activity, one suggesting that the ideal-type is in fact *ideal*, that is, an essentialized entity. However if we take a dynamic, historical (i.e. evolving over time) and situated view of ideal-types,

curriculum comprises ideal-types that takes account of all the salient specific and general factors and blends them into an intentional structure, broken down class by class but linked both horizontally (i.e. all the subjects and themes in a given year across all the subjects), horizontally in the sequential development of subjects through the grades from 1 to 12 and in the spiral movement of developing, expanding and deepening understandings of key concepts. This construct then provides a trajectory for the development of persons. Published curricula can only offer guidelines; choices and emphases have to be made at school level on an ongoing basis using an ideal-types as conceptual orientation.

To summarize, curriculum in a Waldorf school, following Brandsby and Rawson (2020) refers to what is taught, how it is taught and why and is based on developmental tasks that take account of and integrate:

- age-sensitive ideal-types of content structured within a horizontal (across subjects in the same year), vertical (progressions within subject and skills sets over the whole school career) and spiral (expanding recurrence of key concepts over whole school career) framework,
- developmental perspectives,
- interpretations of current learning conditions and external expectations,
- individual learning differences,
- national/statutory curriculum requirements (where relevant),
- appropriate and inclusive learning methods,
- local cultural diversity and global perspectives.

Maintaining the dynamic balance between these factors requires ongoing evaluation and practitioner research. It was Steiner's belief (1996) that only practicing educators working in a collegial way can judge which curriculum contents and teaching methods are appropriate as long as these teachers also base their judgements on their holistic understandings of the students' learning and development using what Rawson (2020) refers to as the generative principles as heuristic models. The inclusion here of the last two aspects, inclusion and local/global perspective that have not been discussed here, points to other work in press.

Conclusion

Given the changing requirements on curriculum because of the changing social context, curriculum has to grow and evolve. The direction of this growth is unpredictable but those closest to the process have the best view, namely practitioners. Rather than seeking to predict what skills and knowledge the economy needs in the future in very generalized terms across whole countries or even transnationally, curriculum is best developed locally, based on ongoing practitioner research. What would support this process enormously would be research into learning processes, changing economic and social needs and aspects of macro-level developments, which is not something that practitioners are in a position to do, but is the task of higher education. This would provide practitioners with data and trends to take

into account, just as science provides us with knowledge about ecology, resources and climate change so that decisions can be made at a local level, so too education would benefit from access to the best possible knowledge about macro-social and economic trends and ecological developments. Instead of government bureaucrats specifying curricula and setting standards, the state would ensure equal access to high quality education for all (and one would hope to equally funded educational alternatives), would regulate minimum standards for qualifications and facilities. Just as science and research should serve society as a whole and not be driven by economic forces, so too should education. These ideas are part of Steiner's (1985) idea for a restructuring of society to serve the common good. Rather than the state or the economy determining what children and young people should learn and become, it should put this in the hands of educators and the universities and facilitate a dialogue between them and representative of the economy. This would break the vicious circle of trying to reproduce the existing social order, which by any objective judgement is not serving the common good very effectively at present, and open up the system to what is emerging. It would be a risk, as Biesta (2913) has suggested, and would take an act of faith in the potential of the next generation, who, if allowed to develop their potential, may not do any worse and may in fact do better than the current occupants of political power and civil society.

The solution outlined in this paper is to see curriculum as the entire educational approach pegged to generative principles based on a holistic pedagogical anthropology- so holistic it takes the spiritual dimension into account- and uses these to generate curriculum practice locally taking all the relevant micro and macro, intrinsic and external factors into account. This process is not a license to do anything because it is moderated by peer-review and based on appropriate research.

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