

THE 5TH CURRICULUM: IN SEARCH OF A COMPREHENSIVE MODEL

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Introduction

This paper will define the “5th Curriculum” model developed by Dr. Renee Cambiano and Dr. Carl Farinelli (2013) and implemented in graduate courses of 4-year institution of higher learning addressing curriculum development and improvement. The 5th Curriculum stems from a shared community vision for the school and on the innate wisdom of cross-cultural and cross-generational values that stretch beyond the changing oscillations of educational theory. The 5th curriculum focuses on real life, group success, and the learning that lasts beyond this year’s short-term individual tests.

This paper will elicit discussion about how the 5th Curriculum is incorporated into a life-long, integrated approach to learning. Five key areas ranging from the Intended, Planned, Taught, Tested, and Used (life-long) curricula are the framework for conceptualization of the model. Discussion and creative interactions among educators, scholars, and other stakeholders about what each of these curricula are, should be, how they might overlap, and if other curricula either fit within the parameters of these five curricula or should be added to help reach the goal of a more comprehensive curriculum model.

A caveat to our conceptual premise emerges from attempts to present curricula, as with many complex ideas as different types, or steps in a process, or independent structures and perhaps culturally influenced limitations. To better understand this, one simply needs to look at some of the many warnings that have been given regarding attempts to look at, define, or measure any object or process through simplistic or culturally slanted lenses. For example, in 1798, Wordsworth warned in his poem, “The Tables Turned,”

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;

Our meddling intellect

Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:-

We murder to dissect (Wordsworth).

In attempts to modernize our curricula offerings important to realize is that interdependence of learning requires a wholistic approach. The 5th Curriculum explores the possibility that an alternative to how we learn involves an integrated, interdependent process. As Wordsworth states, Nature is balanced. Current curricula models meddle with the natural way of learning. Rather than dissecting into individual parts the 5th Curriculum takes a multidisciplinary approach to curriculum and instruction; involving convergent thinking which by definition follows a set of logical steps to arrive at a solution.

Today, we are given similar warnings from popular culture to scholarly writings. First, an example of the former: in *E. T. the Extra-Terrestrial*, which TV Guide calls “one of the most popular movies ever made,” where a lovable visitor from another planet is stranded on earth and “children must save him from some government types who are trying to capture and study him” (movies.tvguide.com). A broad example of the latter would be the following textbook definition of poststructuralism: a “variation of postmodernism is poststructuralism, the rejection of modernity’s structuralist view of the world” (Marsh, p. 133).

The German philosopher, Immanuel Kant explains the limitations of one's perceptual representation of the physical world since one's perception of all things that are supposedly outside one's thought is determined by interpretations through the senses. These sensual interpretations are objects as they seem to the mind of the perceiver. It is usually taken for granted that the sensual pictures in one's mind are related to a thing outside the mind which has an essence unto itself. The object in itself Kant calls a noumenon, but a noumenon is purely speculative to the human mind. Kant tells us that the essence of a thing itself can never be known by the intellect. Only a phenomenon, one's perception of an object, is positive. When an impression appears in the mind which is supposedly connected to a noumenon, the impression itself is a phenomenon. The intellect is aware of the phenomenon alone. Whatever one says about an object is a well summarized but limited observation. So only the abstraction of thought is real (Kant). So why try to take the complex tapestry of any noumenon and try to define or arrange its pieces into simplified types or structures?

The same sort of subject-object dilemma exists for our graduate scholars as they study many theories and models that attempt to divide complex processes or ideas into simplified steps or parts, even if this is meant to facilitate understanding. Examples of processes that are often simplified into a few steps include problem solving methodologies, learning styles, multiple intelligences, levels of moral development, a taxonomy of learning, etc. As in these and many other models, definitions might help us to understand different pieces of a puzzle. But what if we are talking about a tapestry instead of a puzzle?

With this question in mind, we will cautiously continue discussing the five curricula with the realization that perhaps the end product will be a vision that allows us to look at these curricula both as separated pieces (for the sake of definition) and as an integrated whole (for the sake of wholeness and utility). Further, with the above caveat having been given, including several versions of the warning from different times and different cultures, perhaps we can better appreciate past and present aversion to dissection, analysis, and structural definition. The reader might choose to skip the following definitions of the first four curricula in order to focus on the fifth curriculum, for it is the fifth curriculum that we propose as a way to embrace all five curricula into an interrelated whole, and which we hope demonstrates a more holistic and integrated view of all five curricula. Therefore, if one is to heed these warnings against trying to analyze, measure, define, or describe, and actually skip over the next few sections to the section on the fifth curriculum (and the related sections that follow), she/he would find the five curricula described as an interrelated whole. Then one might view learning itself as a holistic process used over a lifetime rather than in short, measured pieces, chopped up into segmented, and often high-stakes measurements.

However, for those who prefer a structural approach that attempts to separate or dissect this interrelated whole into more easily understood parts, the following definitions will be provided. These definitions are taken from an earlier paper, written by Dr. Renee Cambiano and Dr. Carl Farinelli and presented in January of this year at the Hawaii International Conference on Education and will have some added comments from graduate teacher scholars in our program who have used the five curricula models to assist them in their study of curriculum development and improvement.

The Intended Curriculum

The intended curriculum is that which comes from the intentions of the teacher and outside influences before the teacher writes the lesson plan. It should be noted at this point that a majority of our discussions with educators in this project has been mostly limited to teachers from the northeastern region of Oklahoma who have returned to work on their masters degrees in the Masters of Teaching, Masters of School Administration, and other graduate education programs that either require the Fundamentals of Curriculum Development I course or allow it as an elective. Most of the comments about the intended curriculum from this group have focused on elements mandated by the local school boards and the state board of education.

One graduate scholar in our program posted the following interpretation of the term “Intended Curriculum” which is a good representation of definitions given by her fellow scholars in the graduate curriculum development class:

I view the intended curriculum as the information/material that comes from a ‘higher up source,’ such as the federal government, the state department of education, or a local school board. This typically includes a list of standards for each grade level, a scope and sequence chart, or a pacing guide. I feel like the second type, the planned curriculum, gives the teacher a little more control. Typically used with the intended curriculum in mind, the teacher decides on specific lesson plans. The teacher may choose to incorporate more skills than those listed in the intended curriculum, or spend varying amounts of time on different skills (Halpain-Bowman).

Another graduate scholar’s comments were similar but with some variation:

The intended curriculum includes the prescribed standards which the school district follows. For instance, in Oklahoma, we have prescribed to the PASS objectives until the Common Core was introduced, and then abolished. Under direction of my current administrators, teachers were told to align our teaching objectives with PASS until further notice this year (Dunlap-Dennis).

The Planned Curricula

We define the planned curriculum as that which the teacher actually writes regardless of the proportion of outside influence from evaluators, administrators, agencies, or other entities that influence the teacher’s actual plan. Even though the Intended and the Planned Curriculum probably do overlap, they were placed into two separate categories for several reasons.

First, teachers can vary greatly in the degree that they allow the intentions of outside agencies and individuals to influence their plans. How much this outside influence affects the teacher’s actual plans can vary according to the teacher’s personality, the amount of influence extending from school administration on the balance of teacher autonomy, and outside regulation of curriculum and instruction. Other outside influences include the differences in the district level of management over instruction, differences in state agency interaction with schools and regulation of instruction, the time of year in relation to various types of observation, evaluation, testing, etc. As one can see, this list is already becoming long but is by no means exhaustive. Just this one factor, the factor of how many outside influences actually do influence teacher planning versus the amount of autonomy that the teacher has over her/his planning would be an area ripe for research.

Another way this question could be viewed is how much connection or continuity versus the disconnection or discontinuity exists between all five curricula that we have defined. Hopefully, as more information is gathered and analyzed, this question can be better addressed.

One graduate scholar had these positive comments to say about collaboration in curriculum planning among teachers in her department:

The planned curriculum includes the curriculum that is developed within local schools. The department in which I teach is the English department and we gather every year to review our course outline, instructional materials on hand, materials we may purchase and add, and coordinate our curriculum so that there is a smooth transition from one grade to the next, still adhering to the intended curriculum (Halpain-Bowman).

The Delivered or Taught Curriculum

The taught curriculum is what actually occurs in the classroom, or more broadly, what happens during the teaching of the lesson whether in a class, online, field-based, or other setting. What is not so easily defined and could vary greatly is how much of the intended and/or planned curricula are actually in the taught curriculum. One might ask how much does this vary according to many factors such as, “Who is in the delivery setting?” “What time of year does the lesson occur?” “Is this lesson taught near to the coming of state or other high-stakes testing?”

Another perspective would be to ask about the learning as well as the teaching, such as: “How much is taught and how much is actually learned by various students?” Obviously, either of these can vary greatly. Of course this is where the five curricula can overlap.

A graduate scholar had this to say about the taught curriculum:

There is listed TLE lesson plan criteria for the district. TLE is the new teacher evaluation program. This evaluation procedure will most likely be tied to teacher pay and advancement. <http://ok.gov/sde/tle> (Wood).

The Tested Curriculum

One example of the aforementioned overlap between the five curricula is evaluation, formative and summative, which is usually accomplished in many ways. If we view evaluation as a separate, isolated type of curriculum, then we would certainly miss how it should be a part of all the curricula. For, example, in all steps of curriculum development, formative evaluation is necessary to insure the success of the curriculum process.

However, it is the focusing on standardized testing in education that has been very controversial. In an interview in the December, 1982 issue of *Educational Leadership*, Ron Edmonds was asked about the last of his five characteristics of effective schools, “close monitoring with standardized tests.” His reply was:

I acknowledge that available standardized tests do not adequately measure the appropriate ends of education. However, I also argue that it is important for students to learn minimum academic skills as a prerequisite to successful access to the next level of schooling.... Despite all the limitations of standardized test, I would argue as forcefully as I can that they are – at this moment – the most realistic, accurate, and equitable basis for portraying individual pupil progress (Edmonds, p. 14).

If too much focus is on high-stakes standardized testing, could instruction and learning be different than when evaluation is done in a variety of ways? Further, could such a variety of methods of evaluation be weighed fairly, equitably considered as authentic and only part of the whole reflection of the learning of the child? For example, one might ask if group success is used as much as individual work in assessing the success of students, teachers, and schools. How much might this vary in different cultural settings where students are taught to help each other more than compete against each other? Further, who is more likely to do better in a test-driven curriculum, a student who has been raised in a culture that places an extremely high value on individual excellence, short-term rewards, and competition or a student who comes from a community, family, or tribal-based culture that places more value on group recognition, life-long success, and cooperation?

The five curricula model agrees that the tested curriculum can provide some valuable data. However, to avoid the reductionist curriculum that can result when the curriculum is data driven, a fifth curriculum must be defined, understood, respected, and balanced with the tested curriculum.

The Fifth Curriculum

The fifth curriculum covers the lifelong learning that a student will use in life including knowledge, life skills, and values; some of which the student learns anew and some that the student clarifies and actuates from her or his own culture and through cross-cultural and cross-generational linkages. In this way, the fifth curriculum includes both modern ideas, information, and practices as well as generational and cross-cultural ideas, information, and practices. It can use the valuable ideas that short term data can provide, such as how much an individual learned in a day, a week, a semester, a year, etc. However, it also values learning that might come in uneven cycles, things that count but are not easily counted, and uses wisdom to discern which things might temporarily generate positive data but could lead to negative consequences in the long run.

One discussion that will need to take place in any setting that is considering the fifth curriculum model is the cultural fit or appropriateness of the model. To determine this fit, many questions might need to be asked about the educational cultural beliefs of a community (or country). Some of these questions are:

1. Is the same quality of education valued for all students, regardless of background?
2. Can learners have a second chance to all levels of education, even if they go through a slow achievement cycle of intellectual growth?
3. Is there a belief that some things of value might be hard or even impossible to quantify?
4. Are all students' learning styles or types of intelligence valued within the overall community?
5. Are schools viewed more as factories or communities?

The Factory Model of the School

The factory model of the school focuses on production of individual student data derived from a year or less of measurable individual student achievement. The factory model has led to schools which focus on the 1st curriculum (the intended curriculum), the 2nd curriculum (the planned curriculum), the 3rd curriculum (the taught curriculum), and the 4th curriculum (the tested curriculum), but often ignore the 5th curriculum including its focus on group participation, group leadership, and cross-cultural/cross-generational values. The allegory of the "DDT Delimma" will be discussed where temporary abundance of crop yields blinded us to the long term wisdom of protecting future generations. Further, an unbalanced focus on short-term numbers causes educators to ignore students who come from strong, honor-based cultures that often value group success over individual success. In this type of situation, educators might not recognize the value of a student who will go back and help a fellow student, purposely not answer questions, or even score low rather than discourage a friend, family member, tribal member, etc.

At this point, it would be helpful to further discuss an analogy that we call the "DDT Dilemma" which describes an historical example of the danger that can be presented when we choose to make changes that give a short-term gain but fail to consider the effect of the decision on several generations.

There is a Native American wisdom that teaches that we should be careful before making a decision or change to consider the effect of the decision on several generations:

The '7th generation' principle taught by Native Americans says that in every decision, be it personal, governmental or corporate, we must consider how it will affect our descendants seven generations into the future. So that the pristine sky, field and mountains in this photo will still be here for them to enjoy. A generation is generally considered to be 25 years, so that's 175 years. It is clearly not embraced by most governments and corporations in the world today. I mean, when was the last time any of us thought about who's coming along seven generations from now? (Larkin)

This wisdom is often at odds with modern data-driven decision making, where often only consider short-term numbers that indicate a numeric gain over a time element almost always representing data for less than a single generation, and most often data for a year or less in length. However, no one balanced this data on the short term

gains with the ancient wisdom that says to consider the effect of these chemicals on several generations in the future. In some cases, animals were affected by DDT in different ways. In other examples, certain illnesses began to show up in animals and even in humans.

As long ago as 1855, Chief Seathl (Seattle) had a vision based on ancient wisdom of what the consequences of such unbalanced decision making could be. In a letter to President Franklin Pierce, Chief Seathl gives an uncanny prediction of the consequences of such unbalanced decision making:

The whites too shall pass--perhaps sooner than other tribes. Continue to contaminate your bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own waste. When the buffalo are all slaughtered, the wild horses all tamed, the secret corners of the forest heavy with the scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills blotted by talking wires, where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle? Gone” (Seathl, p. 107-109).

Can we draw similar parallels to other examples of decision making that have been based on data alone without regard to the aforementioned wisdom that we should consider long-term consequences? Is the Wall Street debacle another example? How many others come to mind? Could there be a parallel example in education when there is unbalanced focus on data-driven decision making; the measuring of student success by standardized tests, the evaluation of teacher effectiveness, and even school success based on these tests?

The parallel in education is the modern concept that emerged in some areas that standardized testing was an essential element for leading to more effective schools. Certainly there are other parallels of the advent of using data for improving production that go well beyond the scope of this paper. However, it should be mentioned that students often speak of the need for schools to provide an educated populace for any nation to have a strong military and industrial base to be safe in today’s world. From this focus, it is easy to see how the industrial and military needs of a country can sometimes effect educational priorities. For example, in the United States in the 1950s, there was a change in focus on math and science in US educational curricula after the Russians successfully launched Sputnik (Glatthorn).

Later, during the 80s, when oil was short, and multinational corporations were competing abroad, *A Nation at Risk* was published using military and sports metaphors and numbers from test scores to show how the US was losing in the global educational competition. Many non-educators: politicians, business leaders, and military leaders sought to tell educators how they were not measuring up. They turned their business, military, data-centered perspective to the schools and began to look for a way to scientifically measure the success of schools and scientifically manage schools. Test scores were data that served this urge to measure and have scientific control over the quality of education (Glatthorn).

Unfortunately, indications have been around since the beginning of this push toward data-driven educational decision making, including school assessment, teacher assessment, and curriculum decision making, that such reliance on data-driven decision making is often counterproductive and sometimes even harmful. Most recently, in Briefing Paper #278, *Problems with the Use of Student Test Scores to Evaluate Teachers* published in August of 2010 and co-authored by scholars convened by the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, DC, the following “potential consequences of the inappropriate use of test-based teacher evaluation” were cited:

1. Research shows that an excessive focus on basic math and reading scores can lead to a narrowing and over-simplifying curriculum to only the subjects and formats that are tested, reducing the attention to science, history, the arts, civics, and foreign language as well as to writing, research, and more complex problem-solving tasks.
2. Tying teacher evaluation and sanctions to test score results can discourage teachers from wanting to work in schools with the neediest students...
3. Individual teacher rewards based on comparative student test results can also create disincentives for teacher collaboration. Better schools are collaborative institutions where teachers work across classroom and grade-level boundaries toward the common goal of education for all children to their maximum potential.
4. Adopting an invalid teacher evaluation system and tying it to rewards and sanctions is likely to lead to inaccurate personnel decisions and to demoralized teachers, causing talented teachers to avoid high-needs students and schools, or to leave the profession entirely, and discourage potentially talented teachers to avoid entering it (EPI, p. 4).

As one can see, some of these negative consequences affect all teachers and students, regardless of cultural background, but some have the most severe negative consequences on high-needs students. The warnings of the negative effects of the test-centered movement in education goes back many years. As early as 1965, Millman and his associates were warning of the great gulf that existed between cultures in what Millman terms “test wiseness” (pp. 707-26). In an interview with Elizabeth M. Mimms for the summer 1988 issue of *Breakthrough*, the newsletter for the University of Michigan School of Education, Dr. Irving McPhail made the following statement about standardized testing of African American students:

College admission exams, employment exams, exams for promotion – the whole range of testing in American society – has victimized Black students, I’m not talking about Black students who can’t read and write; I’m talking about good Black students. Objective, multiple-choice kinds of test are cognitively inappropriate activities for Black students.... Black students and other minority students... are victimized, literally victimized, by the standardized testing industry in America” (Mimms, p. 4).

Later, in the Mimms interview, McPhail references the work of Dr. Barbara Shade on African-American thinking styles (Mimms, p. 4).

In their book, *The Native American Almanac: a Portrait of Native America Today*, Hirschfelder and Kreipe de Montaña make a similar comment on the thinking and learning styles of Native American students. They say,

Today, many Indian students are in public schools, which for the most part have remained unresponsive and unable to address their needs... the curriculum lacks a native viewpoint, and non-Indian teachers do not have an orientation toward Indian students. Indian children are at a disadvantage when teachers do not understand cultural differences. Learning styles are affected by a person's culture. Indian children have traditionally been taught first by watching and then doing.... The visual approach is at odds with a school room environment that stresses learning through listening, reading, and writing (Hirschfelder and de Montaña, p. 99).

They go on to state a fundamental reason why Native American students might be culturally at odds with Euro-centric style assessment when they write,

Indian values affect the learning environment as well. The traditional Native American stress on a strong sense of community and on co-operative effort is at odds with the stress in non-Indian culture on individualism and competition. Indian children are often unwilling to show competence in the classroom when they feel that to do so would put them in competition with their fellow students. Indian students often feel more at ease in co-operative, rather than in competitive, situations. The Native American cultural bias toward co-operation places some students at a disadvantage in competitive classroom situations (Hirschfelder and de Montaña, pp. 99-101).

The Community Model of the School

What then is needed is a balance of the short-term information that data usually provides along with the long-term information that cultural wisdom provides when we are making decisions about the education for our communities. The community model, especially communities of diverse cultures, would need to avoid the inappropriate comparison to testing results of mono-cultural nations such as the high-stakes testing cultures. An example of a mono-cultural nation or a high-stakes testing culture would be one where a student is destined to be in a college-prep program or is locked into a vocationally-oriented program based on a high-stakes standardized test. This does not fit the community model, especially where students come from many cultures, where there is a belief that students can change and deserve second (or more) chances.

The Factory Model v. the Community Model of the School

The contrast between the factory model and the community model in education is probably being seen in many places. For example, in public schools in the United States (US), there is still a strong cultural influence from the European roots of the country. In the early American republic, only the rich white male landowners were seen to be fit to lead and vote. Often, only the sons of these rich white landowners received an education. But the US public education system, like the US government, has made a long journey toward a culturally inclusive democracy from its earlier Eurocentric vision as a restricted republic where only a few could lead. Many hard battles were fought, and continue to be fought: a civil war, women's suffrage, a battle against the practices called "Jim Crow," the ending of Indian boarding schools that proclaimed "kill the Indian to save the man" (Pratt), civil rights marches, the legal ending of so-called "separate but equal" schools, the trial of Ponca Chief Standing Bear that recognized a Native American as a human being, and other battles that have helped to get the US to a more inclusive community or democratic vision of government and education (Drake).

The United States provides an example of a country that has gone through so many battles, and is still waging some, in order to reach a country that is more inclusive of many cultures and respects the wisdom of those cultures, trying to listen to such bits of wisdom as mentioned in this paper, the Native American wisdom that teaches that we should be careful before making a decision or change to consider the effect of the decision on several generations. Even though this may often seem to be at odds with modern data-driven decision making, where we only consider yearly test scores as the indicator of students' learning, let us avoid the "DDT Dilemma" in our educational decision making by balancing the good information that data can give with the long term, ancient wisdom of our wonderfully culturally diverse nation.

Toward a Balance of Curricula

On the other hand, the fifth curriculum focuses on long-term success, and lifelong learning and trusts the vision of master teachers. The fifth curriculum seeks a shared community vision for the school, and is based on the wisdom from many generations and many cultures of shared community values that stretch beyond the latest educational fad. The fifth curriculum seeks to use this collective long term wisdom, proven theories of individual and group learning, self actualization, multiple intelligences, cultural diversity, all balanced with meaningful short-term data in order to achieve that which is difficult or impossible to assess with just shortterm data alone. Finally, the fifth curriculum includes a holistic vision so that instead of looking at each of the five curricula as distinct, separate parts, all are part of an integrated and balanced whole. This integrated vision includes a balance of authentic data and the wisdom of many communities used to start a new cycle of intentions that includes the wisdom of master teachers, parents, administrators, and all community members and stakeholders in the school and community. When the long term needs of many communities, including their cultural values, are considered, and the wisdom of master teachers and community elders are used along with useful data, then "DDT delimitas" can be avoided.

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