

The eight

curricula

BY Daniel Schugurensky

Introduction

Although multicultural education can be conceptualized in many different ways, it generally aims at enabling students from diverse cultures to learn how to transcend their cultural borders and engage in dialogue and action with people who differ from them in significant ways. Its more progressive versions also promote ideals of equity, social justice, social transformation, and active citizenship (Banks 1991; Gorski 2000). In this sense, multicultural education is closely related to approaches such as citizenship education, education for conflict resolution, global education, peace education, human rights education, anti-racist education, intercultural education, transformative learning, critical pedagogy, and multidimensional citizenship education (Ichilov 1998; Kymlicka 1995; Mezirow 2000; Parker et al. 2000; Selby 2002; Toh & Cawagas 2001).

In contrast to the traditional civics curriculum that focuses on the passive acquisition of the procedural and legal aspects of political institutions, and from the character development emphasis of moral education approaches, multicultural

education and related approaches encompass a much wider and holistic perspective that emphasizes value clarification, intercultural dialogue, and active participation.

In the United States, multicultural education began to take off after the "No One American" statement released by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education in 1972. Since then, much controversy has been generated by multicultural education, garnering supporters and detractors inside and outside educational institutions. Supporters of multicultural education argue that it promotes cultural diversity and global tolerance (the ideal of 'e pluribus unum'), and overcomes the shortcomings and the elitism of the traditional Eurocentric curriculum. They also contend that a multicultural curriculum is essential to the survival of democratic political systems in increasingly pluralistic societies, as it instills among learners mutual respect, understanding, and tolerance by recognizing commonalities among all peoples while appreciating human differences (Shor 1987; Banks 1994).

Its detractors, instead, claim that multicultural education is divisive because it enforces ethnic quotas in the curriculum, it hinders assimilation efforts, and it creates unnecessary antagonism among different groups. They also accuse multicultural education of eroding the traditional canon of the disciplines, diminishing the quality of a good liberal education, and confusing immutable traits like race and national origins with learned attributes

like culture (Bloom 1994; Bernstein 1994; D'Souza 1991; Grant 1994; Chavez 1994).

Despite the obvious disagreements between advocates and detractors of multicultural citizenship education, they tend to have one element in common. More often than not, their analyses tend to focus on the philosophical, political, and pedagogical dimensions of the prescribed curriculum, ranging from debates about the weight assigned to particular topics to the expected outcomes of a particular program of study. I would like to suggest that a comprehensive analysis of multicultural citizenship education programs can be assisted by an exploration of a variety of curricula that interact simultaneously.

The term curriculum is referred to in the dictionary as the courses offered by an educational institution, a set of courses constituting an area of specialization, or a specific course or program. Because the word has kept its original Latin form, it suggests to the general public something of a highly technical and obscure nature, whose meaning is only accessible to experts (e.g., curriculum developers). In more vernacular terms, the curriculum can be understood as what is taught, what is learned, how it is taught, and how it is learned.

Hence, as the sociology of curriculum has suggested, the study of any curriculum does not consist only of a straightforward analysis of the prescribed content, but of a more complex process that takes into consideration the nature and impact of different curricula. Among these several cur-

Daniel Schugurensky is a professor in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

of multicultural citizenship education

ricula, there are eight that demand the particular attention of researchers in the field of multicultural and citizenship education:¹

- (1) the prescribed (or intended) curriculum;
- (2) the taught curriculum;
- (3) the tested curriculum;
- (4) the reported curriculum;
- (5) the hidden curriculum;
- (6) the missing curriculum;
- (7) the external curriculum; and
- (8) the learned curriculum.

The Eight Curricula

(1) The Prescribed Curriculum

The prescribed (also known as the intended or the official curriculum) is what appears in official documents. It usually includes the content and the methods of a course, the goals, and the time allocated to achieve those goals and cover those contents. In the case of state-regulated programs, its philosophical-pedagogical orientation usually depends on the philosophical and pedagogical orientations of the government in power in charge of the educational system in that particular jurisdiction.

In most countries, the prescribed curriculum is frequently translated into textbooks and other materials approved by the Ministry of Education or its equivalent. From a researcher's perspective, two key

questions can be raised in the analysis of a prescribed curriculum: (a) "what knowledge is of the most worth?" and (b) "whose knowledge is of the most worth?" (Apple 1993). Obviously, in any society there is a selection process in which the official curriculum is developed and approved. This process could be more or less democratic, and the results could vary in quality and pedagogical merit. However, an analytical focus on this initial stage of the educational process could underestimate the distance that often exists between the prescribed curriculum and the learned curriculum.

(2) The Taught Curriculum

The taught curriculum is what teachers actually do in their courses once they close the door of their classrooms. For different reasons, more often than not there is a gap in quantity and quality between the prescribed and the taught curriculum, which is known in the educational jargon as the mismatch between curriculum design and curriculum implementation, and in the sociological jargon as the "relative autonomy" of agency (teachers) vis-à-vis structural constraints. In terms of quantity, frequently the gap is simply the unintended outcome of an inadequate time allocation, in the sense that the expectations about the content that learners are supposed to cover are unrealistic given the length of the course.

In multicultural citizenship education, this situation of insufficient time to cover the curriculum is sometimes compounded

by the fact that in addition to the textbook content teachers are asked to use the "teachable moment" of current political events (e.g., federal, provincial, and municipal elections; racial, ethnic, or sexist incidents reported in the media; national debates on multiculturalism, etc.), and all within the same time frame. Discussing a high school civics course in Ontario, Canada, that has a duration of nine weeks, John Myers (1999) reports that he could not find even one teacher who had finished teaching the prescribed curriculum of the course.

Even if the quantity of curriculum content is covered (because the time allocated is appropriate for the amount of content, or because the teacher simply manages to get through it), discrepancies in quality between the prescribed and the taught curriculum still remain. This is so because teachers' background, professional training, ideological outlook, and familiarity with the topic may vary. In the case of Ontario, Canada, for instance, many civics teachers have no training or background in this area. While the prescribed curriculum may be universally implemented, a wide variation may exist at the level of implementation between the taught curriculum of these teachers and the taught curriculum of teachers with a more solid background in social sciences.

In other cases, the gap between the prescribed and the taught curriculum could be the product of an individual teacher's personal approach to the topic

or political positions. In my own experience as a secondary school student in a country ruled by a repressive military regime, a few progressive teachers dared to deviate from an official curriculum that was based on promoting blind patriotism and obedience to authority, and also—ironically, because this was a regime that overthrew a democratically elected government—adherence to the rule of law and to democratic institutions. In these cases, the degree of deviation between what is prescribed and what is taught is highly dependant on the relative autonomy of teachers (and the control mechanisms available by authorities) and the risks involved in those actions (in those days, for instance, the price for deviating from the official civics curriculum ranged from admonition to suspension to jail to torture to death).

(3) The Tested Curriculum

The tested curriculum refers to that portion of the curriculum that is evaluated. Since it is impossible to evaluate all learning that occurred during a course, the tested curriculum is frequently a representative sample of the prescribed curriculum. The tested curriculum is usually expressed in a test, which can be written or oral, standardized or diversified, multiple-choice or open-ended. Because today the test tends to be at the center of the educational process, it is important to reconsider the distinctions and the connections between instruction, assessment and evaluation. As Myers (1999) remarks, “anyone can design a multiple choice test to trip people up on names, dates, and bits of trivial information, but what do they really tell us about a student’s ability to be an informed, purposeful, and active citizen?”

A typical pedagogical impact of the increasing emphasis on the tested curriculum is that teachers feel compelled to teach to the test, and learners feel compelled to study only what is going to be tested. If this is detrimental to the learning process in most disciplines, it is particularly damaging for multicultural studies. There is only so much a test can capture, especially when the goals of the prescribed curriculum are as broad and long-term as the development of an informed, purposeful, and active multicultural citizenship.

Particularly difficult to capture in a test are the affective goals pursued by a multicultural and citizenship education curriculum such as tolerance, respect, and neighborliness, or attitudinal changes regarding sexism, racism, homophobia, and

the like. In the affective domain, the problem not only lies in the technical difficulties inherent in designing a test that captures emotions, feelings, and attitudes. Even if this is overcome, and a reasonably good test is designed, it is plausible to suggest that test may not reflect real attitudinal changes, as students can still “pretend” an attitudinal change in order to pass the test.

(4) The Reported Curriculum

The reported curriculum is what learners report to know about a particular topic in response to specific questions or tasks designed by educational authorities. This can be understood at the collective level (e.g., the percentage of students in a particular school district who were able to correctly answer certain questions of a test), or at the individual level (e.g., what

**The reported curriculum
may not necessarily
reflect what students
actually know
and believe . . .**

a particular learner reports to know about a particular topic). The reported curriculum may not necessarily reflect what students actually know and believe for two reasons. First, some questions on the test may be poorly designed. Second, as mentioned above, what learners report to know or think about a particular issue is not necessarily what they really know and think, and this is more likely to occur in sensitive areas such as ideological perspectives or sentiments towards other groups.

Students may feel pressured to adapt their answers to what they perceive the teacher or the testers expect from them (what may be the “politically correct” answer in a particular context) instead of expressing their true feelings and knowledge. I remember that in a secondary civics class, during a time of military dictatorship, our teacher “taught” us that that all the problems of the world originated in the writings of the Marx brothers. When we asked her who the Marx brothers were, she

ration than a lesson on collaboration learned in a competitive environment. In short, students may learn more about democratic deliberation and decision-making through participating in a school council than through reading a textbook or listening to a lecture, and can learn more about equity and diversity through classroom dynamics than through normative statements in a textbook.

(6) The Missing Curriculum

The missing or omitted curriculum is what is excluded, deliberately or not, from the course. In a multicultural citizenship course, the content that is missing, the issues that are censored, and the ideas that are silenced, are usually as relevant for the development of informed political subjects and active multicultural citizens as the content that is selected and approved. Although the missing curriculum varies according to context, British researcher Ian Lister reports that the topics usually left out in citizenship courses include trade unions, social movements (especially those challenging the status quo), extra-parliamentary politics, and local politics (Lister 1998). The missing curriculum refers not only to content, but also to analytical approaches (e.g., political economy approaches are usually excluded in social studies courses) and to methods (e.g., avoidance of participatory or democratic methods and practices in the classroom and the school).

The nature and size of the “omitted curriculum” is closely related to the amount of dissent that a society and a government is willing to accept in the prescribed curriculum. Indeed, in most countries, in order to reduce controversy, the curriculum developers focus on the “safe” areas that are largely agreed upon in a given society, and avoid those contentious areas embedded with conflictive interpretations or values. According to Rowe (1995), this model, known as the consensus model, fosters social cohesion and the “compliance” side of civic virtues. It usually takes the form of “patriotic constitutionalism,” with a descriptive approach to public institutions, an idealized account of the abstract principles of democracy, and a portrayal of decision-making that does not recognize power differentials.

This type of prescribed curriculum is usually removed from the dynamic and conflictive reality of the actual political and civic life, and from the complicated interpersonal realm of citizenship. It is not surprising, thus, that in many countries

replied confidently that they were Marx and his brother Engels. Needless to say, on our oral exam, we had to give the answer expected by the teacher, even though we knew from our own readings outside the classroom that she was wrong.

(5) The Hidden Curriculum

The hidden curriculum is what is taught outside the prescribed curriculum; it goes beyond the specific content of the subject matter, and can be expressed in the school environment, in the classroom climate and its furniture arrangement, in the pedagogical methods, in teacher-student interactions, in the student-student interactions, and in many other "invisible" dynamics. Sometimes the hidden curriculum reinforces the prescribed curriculum, sometimes it contradicts it. For instance, the prescribed curriculum may promote a better understanding and value of democracy, but if the teacher (or the school climate) is highly authoritarian the democratic lesson gets distorted.

Similarly, the curriculum content may highlight the importance of participation and dialogue, but if this is taught exclusively through lectures, then the method contradicts the content. Likewise, the prescribed curriculum may claim that in a democracy everyone has equal opportunity, but such message can be contradicted in practice if the teacher interacts differently with students according to their class origin, race, or gender, and has different expectations about their achievement; unfortunately, the available evidence suggests that this happens more often than most people are willing to admit (see, for instance, the now classic works by Rosenthal & Jacobson 1968; Rist 1970, Bowles & Gintis 1976; Willis 1977; Bourdieu 1976; Anyon 1979; Oakes 1985; or Sadker & Sadker 1994). Indeed, while the prescribed curriculum may aim at the development of citizenship, the hidden curriculum may develop leadership among some groups, and followership among the rest (Lister 1995).

Although the hidden curriculum tends to be conceived in a negative light (as reinforcing existing inequalities and discriminatory practices), it could be also positive, promoting democracy, tolerance, and even empowering learners. For instance, a democratic classroom environment and a progressive method can better nurture a democratic spirit and democratic values by daily immersion than by memorizing the principles of democracy. A collaborative classroom can promote more collabo-

the civics curriculum is perceived by many students (and even some teachers) as irrelevant and uninteresting. As Rowe (1995: 47) points out:

The methodology adopted by this descriptive model is more likely to be didactic, preoccupied with the acquisition of facts and, as far as learning is concerned, passive. It is, therefore, not very effective in developing the skills necessary to be an effective citizen or fostering important attitudes of respect and tolerance towards those of different persuasions.

At a political level, the consensus model curriculum is the most likely to be adopted for two main reasons: its capacity

**. . . this sanitized
story of social affairs
can easily generate
a feeling of alienation
and disillusionment
among students . . .**

to garner support from political parties and other influential institutions, and the unlikelihood that it will be challenged by parents, advocacy groups, and religious groups. At the level of implementation, this model is also more likely to be adopted than other approaches (particularly value-laden ones) because it is easier to apply by teachers, especially the inexperienced and non-specialists; this is important considering that in many countries multicultural citizenship courses are taught by non-specialist teachers (Rowe 1995; Stradling & Bennett 1981).

While this curriculum is the most likely to be supported and implemented at all levels, it will be so weakened by compromise that it becomes not only irrelevant and ineffective, but also eventually counterproductive. Indeed, this sanitized story of social affairs can easily generate a feeling of alienation and disillusionment among students when they compare notes between the curriculum and real life. As Rowe notes (1995: 48), "the failure of the school to offer students an adequate model of social conflict may lead to confusion where there had been understanding, and

apathy where there might have been commitment."

(7) The External Curriculum

The external curriculum refers to what students learn outside of the classroom (e.g., from other students in the school, and from other sources such as the family, the media, religious leaders, neighbours, friends, etc.) and the different ways in which they mediate whatever they learn in those environments with what they learn in the classroom.

For instance, students may learn from religious leaders, from political activists, or from family members things (positive or negative) that contradict what they learn in class, and it is not clear how each individual student manages to deal with those contradictions. For instance, many important values and attitudes (from racism, homophobia, or xenophobia, to tolerance, openness, and fairness) are strongly internalized in primary socialization (mainly through family interactions) at an early age (Berger & Luckman 1966).

Likewise, in highly authoritarian countries with a sanitized curriculum, and in contested regimes, political socialization tends to occur more in the streets, in social movements, in neighbourhood associations, and in sports clubs than in the school (Mazawi 1998; Emler & Frazer 1999). Often, the analysis of local, national, and international realities that transpire in those interactions is radically different from the prescribed, tested, and taught curricula.

(8) The Learned Curriculum

Finally, the learned curriculum is what actual students really learn from the whole experience at the end of a particular program of study, and this is something that is very difficult to identify with certainty due to the number of variables involved in the process. What students actually learn is not the same as what is prescribed, what is taught, and even what is tested.

How students make sense of the formal and the hidden curriculum, and how this learning is incorporated and negotiated with previous learning and with learning acquired outside of the classroom (e.g., through media, political activism, etc.) is difficult to discern, and even more difficult to generalize because each student has been exposed to different experiences, ideological influences and analytical approaches, and thus is likely to make a different meaning of the same lesson plan.

Moreover, a more accurate appreciation of the real citizenship multicultural learning acquired by the learners is more likely to be found in their future civic, social and political engagement, which is very difficult to predict.

Summary and Conclusions

The analysis of a multicultural education curriculum involves a comprehensive exploration of the interaction among eight curricula: the prescribed (or intended) curriculum; the taught curriculum; the tested curriculum; the hidden curriculum; the missing curriculum; the external curriculum; and the learned curriculum.

Whereas the specifics of this analysis can vary from school to school, and from societal context to societal context, it is clear that a simple discourse analysis of the prescribed curriculum does not tell us what students actually learn and how. Even the responses given to a test are not good indicator of what students have learned or have not learned.

More studies, including ones of what actually happens in the classroom, and also of what happens with multicultural learning outside of the classroom (lifewide learning), can assist us to achieve a better understanding of the real impact of multicultural education curricula.

Note

¹ I want to acknowledge the contributions of John Myers, my colleague at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, for his thinking on the "four curricula" of civics education. In this paper I expanded that model into eight curricula.

References

- Anyon, Jean. (1979). Social class and the hidden curriculum of work. *Journal of Education*, 162, 67-92.
- Apple, Michael. (1993). *Official knowledge. Democratic education in a conservative age*. New York: Routledge.
- Banks, J. (1994). *Multiethnic education. Theory and practice*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Berger, P. & T. Luckmann. (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. New York: Doubleday.
- Bernstein, Richard. (1994). *Dictatorship of virtue: Multiculturalism and the battle for America's future*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Bloom, Harold. (1994). *The Western canon: The books and school of the ages*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. (1976). The forms of capital. In John Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*. New York: Greenwood Press, pp. 241-258.
- Bowles, S. & H. Gintis. (1976). *Schooling in capitalist America: Educational reform and contradictions of economic life*. New York: Basic Books.
- Chavez, Linda. (1994). Demystifying multiculturalism. *National Review*, February 21.
- Dei, George S. (1996). *Anti-racism education: Theory and practice*. Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada: Fernwood.
- D'Souza, Dinesh. (1991). *Illiberal education: The politics of race and sex on campus*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Emler, Nicholas, & Elizabeth Frazer. (1999). Politics: The education effect. *Oxford Review of Education*, March/June.
- Gorski, Paul. (2000). *Defining multicultural education*. McGraw-Hill Multicultural Supersite: <http://www.mhhe.com/socscience/education/multi/define.html>
- Grant, Carl. (1994). Challenging the myths about multicultural education. *Multicultural Education*, 2(2), Winter.
- Ichilov, Orit (Ed.). (1998). *Citizenship and citizenship education in a changing world*. London, UK: Woburn Press.
- Kymlicka, W. (1995). *Multicultural citizenship: A liberal theory of minority rights*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Lister, Ian. (1998). Citizenship and citizenship education in Britain. In Orit Ichilov (ed.), *Citizenship and citizenship education in a changing world*. London, UK: Woburn Press.
- Mazawi, A. (1998). Contested regimes, civic dissent, and the political socialization of children and adolescents: The case of the Palestinian uprising. In O. Ichilov (Ed.), *Citizenship and citizenship education in a changing world*. London, UK: Woburn Press.
- Mezirow, J. et al. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Myers, J. (2000). Contrived or authentic assessment in citizenship education? Taming the beast. Paper presented At Citizenship 2020: Assuming Responsibility For Our Future, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, October, 2000.
- Oakes, J. (1985). *Keeping track. How schools structure inequality*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Parker, Walter, et al. (2000). Making it work: implementing multidimensional citizenship. In J. Cogan & R. Derricott (Eds.), *Citizenship for the 21st century. An international perspective on education*. London, UK: Kogan Page.
- Rist, Ray. (1970). Student social class and teacher expectations: The self-fulfilling prophecy in ghetto education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 40(3), 411-451.
- Rosenthal, R. & L. Jacobson. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
- Rowe, Don (1995). Education for citizenship in Europe. In Gordon Bell (Ed.), *Educating European citizens: Citizenship values and the European dimension*. London, UK: David Fulton Publishers, pp. 46-55.
- Sadker, M. & D. Sadker. (1994). *Failing at fairness: How America's school cheat girls*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Selby, D. (2001). The signature of the whole: Radical interconnectedness and its implications for global and environmental education. In Ed O'Sullivan, A. Morrell, & A. O'Connor (Eds.), *Expanding the boundaries of transformative learning*. New York: Palgrave.
- Shor, Ira (1987). *Culture wars: School and society in the conservative restoration*.
- Stradling, R. & E. Bennett (1981). *Political education in West Germany. A political study of curriculum policy*. London, UK: University of London Curriculum Review Unit.
- Toh, Swee Hin & V. Cawagas. (2001). Compassionate citizenship for weaving a culture of peace. Paper presented at the 4th International Conference on Transformative Learning. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, November 1-4.
- Willis, H. (1977). *Learning to labour: How working class kids get working class jobs*. Farnborough, UK: Saxon House.

