New Directions for Reconstructing History Education:
History Curriculum Which Does Not Teach History

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Abstract
This paper addresses new directions in the teaching of history, “A History Curriculum Which Does Not Teach History”. This concept is the fundamental principle of history education in the 21st century. This principle has two meanings. The first is “not teaching history, but teaching by history”. The second is that “teachers do not teach, but students learn”. These two concepts will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

1. Teaching by History
Why do we teach by history, not teach history? This paper explores reasons for not teaching history. Furthermore, it explains the importance and methods of teaching by history.

1.1. Reasons for Not Teaching History
One of the reasons teachers would do better not to teach history is that it is taught in public schools. How history is taught in the home or at supplementary private schools is a different matter. However, certain considerations are necessary when history is taught in public schools. These considerations relate to the nature of history education and to the role of public education. People throughout the world have been taught their own country’s history through public education during the establishment of their modern nations. This is because nations have sought evidence of the justice of their own countries and have attempted to instill in citizens an awareness of citizenship and patriotism through an understanding of their own history. In other words, history has been used as a means of creating patriotic citizens.

Teaching history is also connected with values. When we teach history, we must select knowledge from numerous historical sources and put it
together. Values must be involved in this process. For instance, if *shinōkōshō* (socio-ethical rank of warrior-rulers, peasants, artisans, and merchants) is explained in the teaching of Edo history, then negative images of the *hōken* (decentralized or "feudal" political system) will be established. On the other hand, if *shinden-kaihatsu* (development of new rice fields), industrialization, and urban prosperity are explained, then positive images of the Edo Period are established in order to prepare for the modern day Japan.

Yamasaki (1997) said that "Understanding of history is science only regarding to the process of persuasion of history. The description of conclusion is literature or a declaration of researchers' beliefs". According to this statement, literature and religion are related to personal spiritual activity and should not be regulated by nation and society. If people were forced to do so, history education would become an education of ideology. Thus teachers should not teach history in order to base it solely on academic or scientific facts.

Furthermore, not teaching history can be suited for public education in the 21st century. Based on movements in advanced nations in the past ten years, cultural values will be diversified and economic deregulation will continue. As the multiplicity of cultural values goes on, a sense of being a member of the international community, as well as that of a global citizen, will be needed. Then history education which teaches from only one point of view will have failed. Also as educational deregulation continues, school curricula must be reconsidered. At this time, history education, which only schools can provide, is strongly needed. However, this history education does not mean teaching history which is structured by definite values.

1.2. The Meaning and Significance of Teaching by History (teaching method)

What does "teaching by history" mean? How can we teach by history? In fact, this is a concern within the entire domain of social studies, including history. For instance, regional studies, which are for third and fourth graders, should be taught by region. It should not be done by teaching region. In other words, teachers should not teach specific features of the region. Teachers should teach its general structure or functions. This is because teaching the generality of social studies, such as teaching social systems can be done only in a school. Students will naturally learn public services of their region even though teachers do not teach this material in social studies class. However, students will not understand universal principles and rules of this material without being taught them in social studies class. Specific knowledge cannot be applied to other fields and can become old-fashioned as time goes on. Yet general knowledge can be applied to other fields, and it has high interpretability.
Needless to say, the latter is better.

How does one teach history? There are two methods. The first is to understand and interpret current society and future events from past history. For example, one of the current issues is that of Japanese children left behind in China after World War II and who were looking for their relatives. Why were Japanese children left behind in China? Why could they not return to Japan until the 1980s? In order to understand the context and cause of this issue, teachers should teach Japanese history, politics, and economics of the Showa Period as it relates to world affairs, such as the China-Japan War and World War II.

The second method is to consider present society by exploring past human activities. *Tsuchi ikkii* ("solidarities of the locale" in the Muromach Period), during which peasants demanded debt cancellations and reductions, can be provided as an example. It differs from *Hyakushō ikki* ("peasant's revolt" in the Edo Period) in terms of *tokusei* ("acts of virtuous rule"). How could peasants demand debt cancellations and reductions when they had been borrowing money from *kōrigashi* (loan sharks)? Students will not understand this issue if they are taught a stereotypical people's view of history. Additionally, they will not be able to investigate current human activity in a reflective manner. In order to help students to understand the justice of the peasants' claims, purchase and sales customs which differed from the current system should be taught. In this way, students also understand that their point of view, considered as common sense, is a historical view, not an absolute one.

2. Students' Studying

Why do we make a point of students' learning rather than teachers' teaching? What does it mean that students learn history? Let's think about the meaning of students' autonomous learning and their study methods.

2.1. The Meaning of Students' Autonomous Studying

'Study by yourself rather than be taught' is an important approach to the study of history. Up to this day "learn" tends to indicate study what teachers say or memorize the content of textbooks. In other words, rote learning has been the central method of "learning". What this paper suggests is to convert from "learn" to "study", which aims at autonomously acquiring advanced knowledge.

Although students take action autonomously, this does not mean that they are motivated by classroom activities. Even if the activities are enjoyable, they may respond in a superficial manner. However, it does not indicate they have
studied. Autonomous studying means they think for themselves. Whether they take action or not is not the issue.

Moreover, a new concept of scholastic ability is related to students’ autonomous studying. It is essentially aimed at encouraging independent thinking. But in reality, it is received as mere autonomous action. As a result, qualitative discussions of factual knowledge and understanding have been dealt with superficially, with the result that doing research and expressing one's own opinion are accepted, though the research is about common knowledge.

In order to encourage students' thinking, it is necessary to set up “good questions” which should be worthy of consideration. Additionally, a case study or data are necessary during the inquiring process that allows students to verify their own hypotheses. Thus, initiative on the part of teachers is crucial. We must not escape to the word “support”.

2.2. A Method for Interpreting Interpretations of History

One of the reasons this paper emphasizes students’ autonomous study of history rather than teachers’ teaching of the subject is that a historical description is an interpretation. If the goal is to solve a mathematical calculation, teachers can provide a formula so that children can solve the problem efficiently. Likewise it is important that teachers show students how to make a history map and/or read chronological tables. However, a variety of interpretations is possible to understand meanings and causal relationships of a historical event, as well as to understand a social system and cultural structure. This is because the personal value involves historical interpretation. Hence a student’s historical interpretation will be disturbed if teachers provide their own explanation. Needless to say, thoughtful teachers will explain that their opinion is one of many historical interpretations. And they will explain why they selected it. In addition, they will offer other interpretations. To do so, however, it is crucial to give evidence to support each interpretation.

In this case, teachers provide materials to help students to think autonomously. Teachers should let students interpret for themselves from the beginning. Then let them form a hypothesis from their interpretation. This can lead to a lively debate in class. Students will form a variety of interpretations for a historical event based on their experiences and interests. It is important for teachers to provide opportunities for students to share their interpretations with each other in class so that students will realize there are various interpretations of history. Furthermore, students will eagerly gather evidence to support their hypotheses to debate in the classroom. In order to refute other students’ hypotheses, they must look for counterevidence. This is
the process of interpreting history critically, and students’ historical knowledge is developed through this interpreting processes. This is what is meant by “a method for interpreting interpretations of history”.

3. To Shift From Development of Teaching Materials to Curriculum Development

“History Curriculum Which Does Not Teach History” means a history lesson in which students discover social perspectives as well as critically examine as a case study the interpretation of history through historical events. This study method is called “A method for interpreting interpretations of history”. How can teachers organize this type of history lesson which encourages students’ to form their own interpretations of history?

First of all, teachers need to shift from developing teaching materials to developing curricula. In other words, they need to think from a different perspective, from “how to teach” to “what content to teach”. Until now, many teachers have presumed to teach a certain amount of content from textbooks. They have selected and organized teaching materials in terms of how they can deepen students’ understanding. Thus, they have not thought carefully about educational goals and contents. They have relied on courses of study and textbooks “why teach a particular aspect and content of history (“what to teach”). They have devoted themselves to developing teaching methods (“how to teach”) and techniques. One of the reasons for this phenomenon can be that the course of study has legal binding force. Another can be the excessively competitive examinations. But above all, teachers’ attitudes are the biggest problem. What does it mean that teachers are not responsible or teachers cannot be responsible for educational goals and contents?

For instance, in order to illustrate the essence of “The Emperor System” (Japan is governed by the Emperor), teachers tell amusing narrative stories to students during the war just because it is written in the textbook. These teachers can be considered the same as those who don’t take responsibility for goals (the purpose of education) and contents (what to teach). Both of them pay attention to how to make students focus on the lesson or how to motivate them for the activity. Thus, what to teach is of secondary importance. Even though what teachers have taught may raise issues later on, they think it is not their concern. Teachers think the nation or textbook writers are in charge of the teaching contents.

What does teacher’s specialty mean? The most important factor in teaching is to actively develop curricula or to organize lessons and to be responsible for the contents. Although the framework of teaching contents complies with the course of study, an educational curriculum which helps
students' understanding should be developed by teachers, such as preparing resources and case studies. In other words, teachers should be producers of history interpretation within the educational curriculum. They should not be consumers of the study of history. To be producers of history interpretation means to engage in curriculum development, not merely the development of teaching materials.

4. A Significance and A Method of Experimental Curriculum Development

Second, it is also important for teachers to understand the significance and meaning of development of an experimental curriculum and a method for development of an experimental curriculum and to put it into practice.

4.1. A Classification for Curriculum Development

Curriculum development can be divided into three classes: ① dogmatic (a priori) curriculum development, ② empirical curriculum development, ③ experimental curriculum development. Each characteristic will be explained in the following paragraph, and the significance and meaning of experimental curriculum development will be clarified as well.

First, dogmatic (a priori) curriculum development is a method to derive concrete educational contents from a hypothesized systematic theory. There are many theories to understand how students shape their social cognitions, as shaping social cognition reflects differences of scientific views, developmental views, and epistemology. These theories should be inter-subjectively verified by facts in the lesson. But it is not easy for teachers to observe students' development and change in cognition objectively.

For this reason, teachers form a systematic theory based on their philosophy and values. Then they try to plan lessons based on it. For instance, teachers develop curricula based on their dogmatic historical perspective, such as thinking a small number of heroes or nameless people have controlled history. Additionally those who think students' ideas and opinions are absolute and who plan lessons from a problem solving approach serve as a further example. Second, an empirical curriculum development is a method for creating an curriculum experientially and individually to encourage students' active inquiry through lessons. Its method varies but putting priority on practice rather than on theory is a common feature. Needless to say, lessons do not always proceed as planned. The more theory is systematized or the more faithful to the theory teachers are, the more lessons do not come out well, as theory differs from practice.

When teachers teach a concept and a law of social sciences in history
class, they tend to inculcate this information in their students. On the other hand, when teachers go along with students' active inquiry, students may not attain scientific cognition. In order to solve these issues, an empirical curriculum development has been developed. First, teachers give lessons. Then they theorize lesson plans based on the successful lessons as a case study. As personal values and students' needs diversify, teacher expectation for this type of curriculum development rises.

The third classification is experimental curriculum development. All teachers have their own teaching theory whether they realize it or not. Experimental curriculum development is a method to analyze lesson plans and teaching theory itself based on each teacher's teaching theory and his or her actual lessons. In other words, experimental curriculum development is to test the teaching theory by using lessons as experiments.

According to dogmatic (a priori) curriculum development, lessons are made based on systematic theories, but the logic of the relationship between theories and actual lessons is not clear. Whether a systematic theory is valid or not is not being tested. In addition, empirical curriculum development also has weaknesses. According to this curriculum development, theories depend on actual lessons. This is because actual lessons take priority, and reasoning is reached inductively through experienced lessons. Furthermore, causal relationships between theories and practice cannot be tested. For instance, whether outstanding lessons are accomplished due to theories or not cannot be clarified.

In contrast, experimental curriculum development makes possible the testing of theories inter-subjectively through actual lessons. This is because teachers give lessons by showing detailed lesson plans in an experimental curriculum. For this reason, experimental curriculum development is a must for "A method for interpreting interpretations of history".

4.2. A Method for Experimental Curriculum Development

How can teachers actually make lesson plans? Following is a general procedure and things to keep in mind.

| I. To select theories corresponding to the subject, such as historical theory and theory of social studies |
| II. To reorganize the selected theories to fit the educational curriculum |
| 1) To systematize the theories from an academic stand point |
| 2) To test the theories by using or not using case studies |
| 3) To examine the theories based on a theory of inquiry |
4) To provide a thesis and structure the theories as educational curricula. To develop teaching units in order that students can critically interpret the contents.

To select theories (Step 1)

History theory is classified by three types in terms of abstraction level or range of use: universal theory, middle range theory, and particular theory. For instance, modernization is a universal theory. Abolition of feudal domains and establishment of prefectures and Land-Tax-Reform are particular theories, and Japanese modernization is a middle range theory. Moreover, history theory is divided into two groups according to consideration and description of the subject: theory of incident history and theory of structural history. Theory of incident history focuses on a one-time occurrence and a personal act such as a political event and explains it diachronically, for instance a riot or a war. On the other hand, theory of structural history focuses on continuous factors and collective acts such as political and social systems, and explains them synchronically. Theory of structural history with middle range is advisable for history interpretation as a curriculum.

To improve theories (Step 2)

First, referring to the latest available studies relevant to the field is needed for systematizing theory. Second, structuring theories along with researchers’ theories should be achieved. But these theories, which serve as an academic framework, do not always fit an educational curriculum without modifications. Theories which lack appropriate case studies and theories which go beyond student inquiry must be excluded. This is because theories should be examined by students through detailed case studies. That is to say, a process of modification should be required to make theories a part of an educational curriculum.

To develop a unit (Step 3)

A unit is composed by following four steps in the method for interpreting interpretation of history.

I. To recognize facts and understand problems
II. To discover and form a hypothesis
III. To test the hypothesis
IV. To apply and expand the hypothesis
The first step is to understand problems through recognizing the facts that are related to the subject. The second step is to discover a hypothesis and form a theory by intuitively expecting answers or analyzing a historical event as a case study. The third step is to test the hypothesis by another historical event as a case study, then to modify the hypothesis. The fourth step is to apply the modified hypothesis to other historical events and expand the theory.

5. Conclusion

Finally, "teacher’s active curriculum development" is the most important factor to accomplish curriculum reformation. In other words, each teacher must attempt to develop more suitable educational contents on a daily classroom basis. Otherwise, reforming the history curriculum will not be attained. Don’t expect others to do this. Take the initiative and be responsible for curriculum development and enhance your competency as you strive to attain greater expertise of specialization.

References
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