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Recontextualizing Geography Curriculum : Society, Student and Discipline of Geography

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This paper focuses on recontextualizing geography curriculum, i.e. examining recent changing aspects in three geography curriculum locators-society, student and discipline of geography-and searching future directions of geography curriculum in light of such changes. For conciliation and reflection of changing aspects of each locators, this paper dealt with social issues and societal changes in terms of locator of society, increased concern to student and development of cognitive science in terms of students, and challanging views on science and the meaning of epistemological changes in geography in terms of discipline. As a result, three future directions in geography curriculum are searched: issue-based geography curriculum, thinking geography curriculum, geography curriculum toward equity and accessbility.

Key Words: society-student-discipline as curriculum locator, constructivism, views on science, issue-based geography curriculum, thinking geography curriculum.

1. Introduction

Recent emerging perspectives in educational reform call for the serious examination of (a) the philosophical foundation of modern science and technology, (b) the sociology of knowledge, (c) the cognitive science, (d) the culture of today's schools (Hurd, 1984, p. 414). It is due to the social demand for reconstruction of knowledge in the light of social and philosophical changes which are engendered by the strong influence of the science and technology on everyday life, and the fact that accepting new culture resulted from these changes appeares as major concern in school and society.

By the impact of these changes, school geography is certainly moving from fact-laden and discipline-bounded one into new one with different emphasis on society and student. Particularly factors which affect surrounding eductional and social systems are motivating these changes, and raising new questions on pre-existing conditions in school geography. It is inevitable that geography education, including geography curriculum, should be re-examined continu-

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ously because geography subject is also a social and historical product rather than one thing independent of society. In this point, Hirst (1974, p. 133) argued that pre-existing subjects were decided as a subject by lots of historical and soicietal factors.

The purpose of this paper is to recontextualize geography curriculum in order to gear it into new challenges which are caused by changes in educational environments related to geography education, namely to examine challenging aspects in geography curriculum locators which will guide directions. For this, the author tried to find out curriculum locator which facilitate illuminating structural changes in geography curriculum, to examine recent changing aspects in these curriculum locators, and to seek future direction of geography curriculum in the light of such challenge.

2. Structuring the Framework for Recontextualizing Geography Curriculum

Although the gap between the discipline of geography and school geography was, up to now, the major issues in geographical education, the gap between school geography and social concern, and the gap between school geography and students' concern or student 'private geography' are also coming out as major issues. It is demanding the shift of emphasis in geographical education, for example, from knowledge-oriented school geography in "the academic subject curriculum" toward student-centered school geography by curriculum theories which stress the role of society and the state in schooling.

In addition, the present century has been regarded as the "century of the child", in which special attention in teaching has been paid to children's own needs and opportunities. Futhermore, the importance of social background have increased to the extent that the curriculum is often regarded as a link between the internal workings of the schools and the surrounding society.

Certainly, the learner's aspect and the society's aspect are getting as much crucial as the discipline's aspects in curriculum decision. It is necessary to consider all these aspects which are influencing school curriculum in order to develop sound geography education as one part of "subject education". It will lead to recognizing critically the role and value of geography subject among vairous subjects in school curriculum.

Tyler (1949) suggested learner, society ouside school, and subject as resources for educational objective which come to the starting point in developing curriculum. Since Tyler, the commonly quoted determinants of curriculum are subject matter, the student and the surrounding society. It was believed that differences of curriculum in forms and contents arise from the weight attached to these factors.

This idea can be traced to Dewey (1943, p. 4) who argued that the fundamental components in educational process are children, social aims and subject which facilitates the former two components. Therefore, these three can be utilized as curriculum locators, macro indices to define the nature of curriculim to be developed, to evaluate what kind of change has been obtained in curriculum development, and to search directions for futher curriculum.

Cirrincione and Decaroli (1977, p. 47-49) followed the Tyler and Taba's idea in geography curriculum, considering student, society and subject as a starting point in developing objective model of geography curriculum. Contending that an appropriate conceptual frame permits generating questions which can aid geography researcher and curriculum developer in identifying the problems, they used Tyler-Taba model as a basic conceptual framework, which has three stages: goal formation stage, goal implementation stage, and goal achievement

stage. They considered the first stage as a starting and most important point because it is related to the determination of the ultimate purpose of the curriculum, through asking why, and for what education occurs in society, tackling the problems of society, responding to the needs and interests of the learners, and finally mastering a body of knowledge. In this very stage, society, student and subject are considered as crucial determinants.

Consequently, these three can be regarded as useful curriculum locators for examining educational and social changes for curriculum development and planning. In geography curriculum, these three components can be translated into student, society and discipline of geography. Therefore, to recontextualize geography curriculum means examining changes in terms of the three curriculum locators, which will guide the direction of future geography curriculum, and desirable relationship between locators. This will be the first work in geography curriculum planning and development which facilitates reshaping school geography.

From the idea discussed above, curriculum locators in geography curriculum — society, student, and discipline of geography (S-S-D) — can be presented as Figure 1.

In terms of this framework, as Cirrincione and Decaroli contended, HSGP can be evaluated as too much inclined to academic discipline, although it was entitled the "Geography of Urban Age" that gained the widest acceptancy, and although Stoltman (1982, p. 285) saw it as a response to the social issue surrounding urbanization in the United States. Because HSGP is based on the developer's perception of the structure of the discipline.

To meet contemporary educational challenges, reflecting the three components together is needed. The geographer who engages in curriculum development must consider thoughtfully, in advance, contributions which geography can make to the needs of society and to the needs of students, while maintaining the rigor necessary for the development of the sound geographic inquriy skills, concepts, and insights at the same time (Cirrincione and Decaroli, 1977, p. 49). In this point, Clyde Kohn (1966) earlier called for a balanced approach to developing a geography curriculum. Pattison (1962) also indicated that the point of view of the discipline is only one aspect of geography curriculum in the public school.

However, to achieve a balance between the three curriculum locators, more detailed framework will be needed. For detailed research on geography curriculum, more attention must be paid to S-S-D as well as

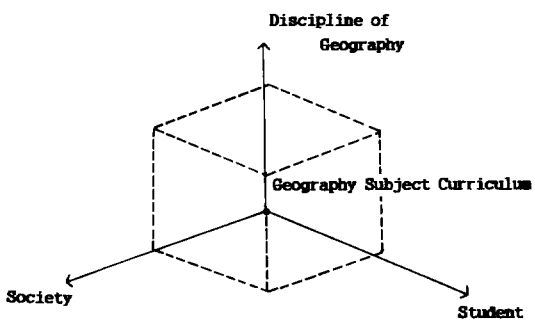

Figure 1. Locators in geography curriculum.

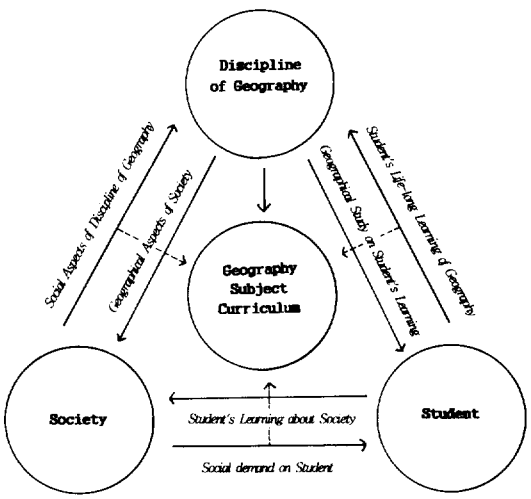

Figure 2. Locators and the interface between locators in geography curriculum.

interfaces between S-S-D (Figure 2). It will make it possible to extend perspective on geography curriculum. These interfaces will be touched along with locators, although not fully discussed in this paper.

3. Changing Aspects in Curriculum Locators of Geography Curriculum

1) Challenging Aspects in Locator of Society

(1) Structural Changes in Society and Geography Education.

Contemporary world is now being characterized by science and technology centered society, information society with internationalization, localization and globalization. In this trend, the distinctions between science and technology are rapidly disappearing (Kranzberg, 1992, p. 235) as the conception of the theory-oriented science and the practice-oriented technology become increasingly interwoven.

As a result, science and technology are getting inherent part of social millieu and very human activities. In other words, technology and science has become one of the most basics of human cultural characteristics, playing a major role in shaping our world. the rapid change of technology is formidably exercising impact on society and human life, positively and negatively.

These changes are asking geography curriculum to pay more attention to the impact of sicence and technology. Uncontrolled development of new technology will be social issues, asking new efforts for geography to scrutinize impact of technology on society, discipline and education.

(2) Social Issues and Geography Education

The social problems and issues of our time such as deforestation, energy problems, resources problems, acid rain and pollution are so pervasive and inextricably interconnected with science and technology as well as discipilne, from minor everyday items to matters of concern for human survival.

The urgent need for citizens to contribute in a responsible manner to their solution is recognized much more strongly than ever before. Therefore they should and may well serve for focal points for school cirriculum (Rubba, 1990, p. 201 ; Kranzberg, 1991, p. 234).

This recognition that every member of society has a stake in the solution of societal problems leads to promotion of geography curriculum to find appropriate means to prepare school students for citizenship. Geography curriculum should be toward social issues and its solution which demands decision-making and problem-solving abilities.

On the other hand, this leads to the recognition of geography education in terms of how geography as subject has been seen in student's schooling and socialization process. Geography subject can not help receiving social evaluation in terms of what meaning it give to students and how students obtain and utilize geographical knowledge through their lives for solving and studying social problems and issues.

By the increased importance of social millieu in learning process, curriculum is often regarded as a link between the internal workings of the schools and the surrounding society. Geography curriculum is also a link between school and society. As a result, one of the tasks of geography education is to pull out the compromise between the social purpose of schooling and academic value of the discipline of geography.

2) Challenging Aspects in Locators of Student

(1) Socialization and Student's Needs.

In terms of socialization, emerging foci are personal needs of student on one hand, and concept and process skills that are useful in the daily live of students on the other hand. To have students obtain personally relevant knowledge about society, it is

needed to deal with students in their own environment and with their own frames of reference. And then, it needs to move into the world of application, the world where students make their connection to the world and to the traditional discipline (Yager, 1990, pp. 198-199). In other words, It is needed to start with the whole of society of the community from which student come, and next to move into the application and connection domain-the one closest to student and the one closest to problems that students can see and which they can identify.

(2) Changes in Views on Student, Views on Science, and Cognitive Science

The linking of the development of scientific knowledge and skills with problem-solving, collective social decision-making, aesthetic awareness, history, philosophy, ethics and communication skills are improving the possibility of replacing the dominant fact-laden pedagogy with a pedagogy based on the results of educational research (McFaden, 1991, p. 464). Theoretical background for this is closely connected with the epistemological changes. After the dwindling of positivist's fixed, authodoxic epistemology, the historical development of scientific thought and learner's cognitive process of progressively changing conceptual schemes received more attention in teaching (particularly science teaching) because a learner's epistemological framework is a factor toward effecting changes in knowledge representation, like the scientist' s theory effecting process.

Harmonized with changes in views on science, most promising and influential model in cognitive science which changed the research foci in education is constructivism. It lays emphasis on the learner, viewing that learning is an active process occuring within and influenced by the learner as much as by the instructor and the school (Yager, 1991, p. 53).

After the collapse of the faith in existence of objective scientific knowledge and possibility of communicating that knowledge by means of language have traditionally been taken for granted by educators, a different view of knowledge has emerged since Kuhn's "the structure of scientific revolution" (von Glaserfeld, 1989, pp. 121-122; Yager, 1991, p. 53).

This view differs from the old one in that it deliberately objects to the notion that knowledge could or should be a representation of and observer-independent world-in itself and replaces it with demand that conceptual constructs we call (Glaserfeld, 1989, p. 122). This means that concerns in knowledge is moving from objective one to construction of knowledge, construction of the individual's subjective reality. Studies such as understanding how knowledge restructuring occurs, when and under what environment conceptual change come and the development and acquisition of an individual's knowledge of the world has received much attention. This kind of views based on constructivism have exercised deep, overt and covert influences on educational research and cognitive science.

(3) Contructivism and Learning Theory

Constructivism has distinctive view on knowledge, accompained by different epistemological paradigm. In constructivism, knowledge refers to "conceptual structures that make epistemic agents, given the range of present experience within their tradition of thought and language viable" (von Glaserfeld, 1989, p. 124). Von Glaserfeld (1989), tracing the roots of constructivism via Piaget to Vico, argues that the human knower can know only what the human knower has constructed because epistemic agents can know nothing but the cognitive structures they themselves construct or have put together, and human knower knows how and of what he bas created (In this point, creativity and constructivism can be

closely connected togther).

According to von Glaserfeld (1989. pp. 124-125), characteristic views in constructivism are as follows; first, the word 'knowledge' refers to a commodity that is radically different form the objective representation of an observer-independent world which the mainstream of the western philosophical tradition (particularly positivism) has been looking for. Constructivism reject the notion of the objective and absolute knowledge which is separated from the knower's action and experience. Analyzing Piaget's position toward knowledge, von Glaserfeld contends that knowledge never (and can never be) a 'representation of the real world. Instead, it is the collection of conceptual structures that turn out to be adapted or 'viable' within the knowing subject's range of experience. In this point, constructivism has different perspective that cognition must be considered an adaptive function, not just a correspondence to truth. In this, the key concept in constructivism's view on knowldege is the concept of 'adaption' which refers to a state of organism or species that is characterized by their ability to survive in a given environment. This adaptedness means the condition of fit or viability within external and internal constraint. Eventually, to constructivist, knowledge refers to conceptual structures that epistemic agents consider viable (Yager, 1991, p. 54).

Secondly, constructivism seeks to substitute 'viablity' in experiential world for correspondence with ontological reality, rejecting a conception of truth which is a forever unattainable ontological test (von Glaserfeld, 1989, p. 129-135). Instead of presupposing that knowledge has to be a 'representation' of what exists, it put knowledge as a mapping of what, in the light of human experience, turns out to feasible. In the long run, the fact that scientific knowledge enables us to cope does not justify the belief that scientific knowledge provides a picture of the world that corresponds to an absolute reality.

Through this process, constructivism has distinctive view on the conception of truth. Contending that we can not have a previledged correct description of truth from an external perspective because we know only through our experiences, it accepts the elusiveness of truth more actively. To constructivist such as von Glaserfeld, knowledge can not and need not be 'true in the sense that it matches ontological reality, it only has to be "viable" in the sense that it fits within the experiential constraints that limits the cognizing organism's possibilities of acting and thinking. (However, constructivism admit the intuition, social interaction when it deals with the concept of 'viability.')

Wheatly (1991, p. 10) paraphases this argument:

> "From a constructivist perspective, knowledge orginates in the learner's activity performed on subjects. But objects do not lie around ready made in the world but are mental constructs. We reason with scientific objects which are our constructions···a constructivist believes that knowledge is not disembodied but is intimately related to the action and experience of a learner-it is always contextual and never separated from the knower. To know is to act: To know is to understand in a certain manner, a manner which can be shared by others who join with you to form a community of understanding"

From the two characteristics mentioned above, it can be said that constructivism is more deeply engaged into learning theory. Its main concept is 'viability' of knowing, tied to the concept of equilibrium which was developed by Piaget and in the theory of evolution.

However, what makes knowing viable? von Glaserfeld (1989, p. 128), using Piaget's theory, argues that what makes knowing viable is the "scheme and new construction of a scheme" which entails assimilation, accommodation, perturbation. According to

him, the condition of knowing and learning from Piaget's work can be summarized as follows;

> "Cognitive change and learning take place when a scheme, instead of producing the expected result, leads to perturbation, and perturbation, in turn, leads to accommodation that established a new equilibrium." (von Glaserfeld, 1989, p. 128)

Hence, to constructivist, learning and the knowledge this scheme creates are explicitly instrumental two fold (von Glaserfeld, 1989, p. 128); on the sensory-motor level, action scheme is utilitarian in helping organisms to achieve goals in their interaction with their experiential world; on the level of reflective abstraction, operative scheme is epistemic in helping organisms achieve a coherent conceptual networks that reflects the paths of acting as well as thinking which, at the organism's present point of experience, have turned out to be viable.

Constructivist also contends that more attention should be paid to the role of communication and language to engender understanding, because language users must individually construct the meaning through words, phrases, texts. In addition, conceptual discrepancies generate pertubation through linguistic interactions (von Glaserfeld, 1989, p. 134).

Consequently, from the constructivst perspective, 'learning' is the product of self-organization and 'reorganization' (Yager, 1991, p. 55), how the rational mind organizes experience and how to design a model of this process. Therefore, knowledge is never acquired passively, because novelty can not be handled except through assimilation to a cognitive structure the experiencing subject already has.

This provides important implications to instruction, such as how can the teacher generates a pertubation to enliven student's experience, what is the best instructional methods in terms of this idea? Because the most frequent source of pertubation for developing cognitive subject is the interaction with others (von Glaserfeld, 1989, p. 136), the child must put certain thing into the objects of interaction in order to develop relatively reliable schemes. This is why group learning is promoted in constructivist classroom and why thinking is more important than knowledge itself and skills.

Along with the notion that learners are perceived as active agents in the process of constructing meaning, constructivist instruction is characterized by continuing restructuring, modification, and adaptation of knowledge claims as well as investigative methods and aims (Duschl and Gitomer, 1991, p. 846).

3) Challenging Aspects in Locators of Discipline

Discipline is restructuring itself continuously. The constant gap between the discipline of geography and school geography is natural and in turn, this gap is asking restructuring and re-evlauation of contents and structure of geography education. Such kind of gaps are deeply connected with recent re-examination of changes in philosophical (epistemological) background of scientific research.

Particularly, the argument that each discipline or researcher are independent of social context or conventions are severely being challenged. Disciplines or science is now viewed not so much as an end product of process or orthodoxic form as social knowledge. Emphasizing the importance of social context of discipline or science is a kind of stimulus for the shift from the prevailing view of the nature of science, an authoritarian view in which scientific kno-wledge is regarded as absloute truth and as a final form, to a more flexible one. Rigden (1983, pp. 613-617) argues that great science, the advancement of fundamental new insight, is more akin to great art than a mechanical routine, and great science can neither be

predicted or programmed.

Eventually great science or the nature of discipline is an intensively human activity that brings to the forefront the scientist's or schloar's subjectivity. The endless quest for the ultimate goal of science or discipline is the driving force of science or discipline.

In contemporary human geography, one of the most obvious characteristics is its diversity of approach from positivist to marxist (Cloke *et al.*, 1991, p. 1), particularly of research methodologies combined with epistemological diversity and a broad sweep of topics of investigations. Along with changing methodologies, geographical knowledge is also changing as the product of doing geography, not as a fixed or final form. If possible, orthodoxic views on geographical knowledge and forcing such veiws should be avoided for more flexible interpretation.

With epistemological change, recent geography tends to stress its focus on social life rather than traditional topics as contemporary disciplines are deeply connected with everyday life.

4. Directions for Future Geography Curriculum

As a result of examining changing aspects in geography curriculum locators, the following three future directions for geography curriculum can be extracted (Figure 3).

1) Toward Issue-based Geography Curriculum

Geography focuses upon societal issues and problems in homes, schools, and communities as well as the more global problems that should concern all human kind, because geography itself is concerned with using human and natural resources in identifying and resolving local and global issues. As Hart (1985, p. iv) argued, in most respects, it is people, and the decision they make that are the center of the active geography of everyday life.

However, it should be underscored that understanding of concepts which were developed by geography is fundamental to resolving issues. The consolidation of the development of geographical knowledge

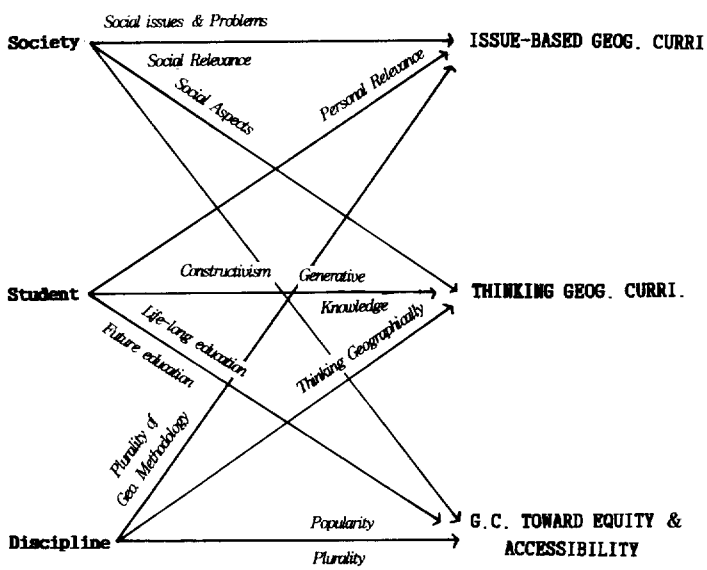

Figure 3. Future directions for geography curriculum.

and skills with problem-solving, decision-making, and aesthetic awareness will improve the possibility of overcoming dominant fact-recall geography. In issue-based geography curriculum, understanding of issues and application of geographical viewpoints into issues is crucial in the sense that issues are playing important role to relate them directly with all peoples in their everyday life.

After all, there are two rationals for issue approach in geographical education; First, there are many significant geographical issues that affect our daily life. Modern communication and information technology enhance our awareness of these issues. This is major ways in which ordinary citizens intersect with geography, and for student and enlightened citizenery.

Secondly, learning issues which are related to student's real life can be deeply connected with internal motivation and external stimulus. For meaningful learning, the strong match between internal motivation and external stimulus makes it possible to reflect changes in contents socially and to prevent obsoleteness of contents.

As result, issue-based geograhpy curriculum provides three advantages, i.e., internal motivation, external stimulus, and reality, which will gurantee the personal and social relevance at the same time.

2) Toward Thinking Geography Curiculum

In aspect of locator of student, constructivsim can serve as strong supporter for thinking geography curriculum. One of the central problems in today's education is how to help student get strated in developing themselves their base of generative knowledge (Resnick and Klopfer, p. 5), so they can learn easily and independently later on. For so-called structure of knowledge, i.e., key concept and organizing knowledge to become generative, they have to be pulled out to student over and over again as ways to link, interpret, and explain new information, namely ways to think. The aims of contemporary education is not to produce students who master skills and knolwdge simply, rather to produce able thinker over basic literacy. Therefore, geographical learning is not so much an accumulation of pieces of knowledge and bits of skills as thinking geographically.

3) Geography Curriculum toward Equity and Accessibility.

The reality that all student who are sitting in geography classroom will not be a geography specialist explains why the principal objective of geography education should be broadened, added on the objective which reflects the nature of discipline of geography. What is needed is to let students have geographical study method (or inquiry) and geographical viewpoints and perspective for their everyday life and future. The most important task is to present accurately the nature of geographic inquiry as a rational enterprise to student; precollegiate geographical education should address not only what is known in geograhpy (or geographical knowledge) but also how geography has come to arrive at such knowledge.

The goals of geographical education is not merely to increase geographic requirements, but to increase students ability to use geography as science in their lives. We can't teach everything which looks like valuable in geography, but we should instill in students the desire and capability to keep questioning geographically throughout-and for-their lives. To create a geographically literate populace, what is needed is to re-think geography curriculum, including reflection on aims, social demand and discipline.

On the other hand, what strategies are needed is to increase accessbility to geographic knowledge, to develop geographic knowledge grounded in the settings of social and personal relevance. Geography education is neither a mere trasmission of

geogrpahical knowledge nor secondary activity in whole school curriculum. Geography has originally much more advantages to develop interdisciplinary approach to learning society and learning about people and nature, because geography provides a potentially powerful vehicle for dealing with the study of society, nature and place since Vidal (Lee, 1983, p. 108).

5. Conclusion

Throughout above discussion, it was underscored the views on geographical education that geographical education, as a part of education, can't avoid the impact of social change and social evaluation because the practicing geography education is a social behavior to socialize and impower young ages toward a certain aims. Hence, geographical education itself is at once a product of society and a producer of society. In order to give students an understanding of society and the social function of geography as a discipline, geography should be learned in a cultural, historical and philosophical context.

However, geography educator is always required to be armed with not only content knowledge and process skills which comes from discipline of geography, but also deeper understanding of how geography is both unique and similar to other disciplines. Above all, geography education should emulate the action of geographer by demonstrations how one actually engages in the process of geographic inquiry.

In this paper, the author tried to recontextualize geography curriculum in the light of changes in curriculum locators for geography education such as society, student and discipline of geography. For conciliation and reflection of challenging aspects of each locator, several themes were tackled such as increased social issues and societal changes in terms of society, increased concern to student and development of cognitive science in terms of students, and views on science and the meaning of epistemological changes in geography in terms of discipline. After that three future directions for geography curriculum were extracted: issue-based geography curriculum, thinking geography curriculum, geography curriculum toward equity and accessbility.

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地理 敎育課程의 再脈絡化

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본 논문에서는 우선 地理敎育課程의 개발 및 계획의 방향을 설정하는데 결정적인 영향을 미치는 거시적 지표들 즉 교육과정 locator를 찾아 지리교육과정을 맥락화할 수 있는 틀을 구축한 다음, locator들의 변화된 양상들을 고려함으로써 지리교육과정의 재맥락화 즉 미래의 방향 탐색을 시도해보았다. 이를 위해 Dewey, Tyler, Cirricione & Decarolie로 이어온 교육과정구성에 대한 아이디어 즉 교육과정의 전반적 성격을 규정지우고 교육과정의 변화를 가늠하는데 유용한 거시적 지표로서 학생, 사회, 교과(subject)를 사용한다는 아이디어를 근거로 하여, 이 세가지 요인들을 地理敎育課程이라는 敎科敎育課程의 측면에서 보아 학생, 사회, 지리학으로 재정리하여 지리교육과정의 좌표(locator)로 활용하였다.

먼저 지리 교육과정의 좌표들에서 나타난 변화의 양상들을 정리하면 다음과 같다.

첫째, 교육과정 좌표로서 사회와 관련된 변화의 양상이다. 국제화 및 세계화, 정보화, 과학화는 한편으로 현대인의 일상생활에 과학과 기술이 보다 강력한 영향을 미치는 사회를, 다른 한편으로 에너지문제, 환경문제, 인구문제등의 인류사회의 문제가 특정 지역의 문제이자 세계의 문제로 등장하는 사회를 등장시켰다. 이러한 변화는 사회적 변화에서 야기되는 문제 및 쟁점들을 사회와 학생 그리고 학문을 즉각적으로 연결시켜, 학문의 관심이자 사회적 관심으로서 연구되고 학습되어질 것을 요구하고 있다.

둘째, 학생과 관련된 측면에서의 변화를 보면, 특히 사회적인 측면과 맞물려, 내용에 있어서 형평성과 접근성의 향상 특히 개인적, 사회적 유관적합성에 대한 요구가 높아지고 있다. 학습에서는 학습자를 수동적인 교수내용의 수용자로 보지않고 스스로 의미를 구성해나가는 적극적인 행위자로 보는 구성주의(constructivism)는 그동안 교수-학습에 대한 중심적 견해인 전달주의(transmissionism)를 극복하는데 좋은 이론적 배경을 제시하고 있다.

다음으로 학문적 측면의 변화를 보면, 학문연구에 있어서 인식론적 토대의 다양화와 학문과 사회와의 관계가 강조되는 지식사회학의 등장은 학문이나 과학을 고정적이거나 독단적인 최종적 산물로 보지않고 절대적 진리에 도달하기위한 유연한 도구이자 정신활동으로 보게함으로써, 주제 및 연구방법에서 획일성보다 다양성과 창조성이 강조되고 있다. 그리고 연구에 있어서 주제의 다양성을 통해 보다 현실생활에 밀접하게 연결되어야 할 필요성은 학문이나 과학의 사회성에 대한 새로운 인식을 가져다 주고 있다.

이러한 지리교육과정의 좌표의 변화된 측면들을 고려하여, 지리교육과정의 새로운 방향은 다음의 세가지로 모색될 수 있다.

첫째, 爭點中心 地理敎育課程이다. 사회쟁점에 대한 접근은 쟁점의 이해와 문제해결에의 지리적 관점의 활용을 통해 학습내용의 시사성과 사실성을 높힐 수 있다. 이때 문제해결능력을 통해 현대시민의 자질 및 능력을 기를 수 있음은 물론, 다른 한편으로 실제세계 즉 학생의 실생활, 사회, 국가, 세계에서 일어나는 일들과의 관련성을 갖게 함으로써, 내적 동기화와 외적인 자극을 강력하게 결합할 수 있을 것이다. 이는 개인적 유관적합성과 사회적 유관적합성을 동시에 확보하는 데 유리할 것이다.

둘째, 思考中心 地理敎育課程이다. 지리교육은 학생들을 지식 및 기능의 숙달자가 되도록 할 것이 아니라 기본적 문장해독력의 수준을 넘어 능력있는 사고자로 길러내는 것을 목표로 하여야 한다. 이러한 사고자로서 학습자를 보는 관점은 구성주의를 그 이론적 토대로 삼을 수 있다.

셋째, 衡平性과 接近性을 제고하는 地理敎育課程이다. 학생들에게 일생동안 그들의 삶을 통해 그리고 그들의 삶을 위해 지리적으로 질문을 계속 던질 수 있는 능력, 그리고 그렇게 하려는 욕구를 길러주고 주입시켜 줄 수 있는 측면이 중요하게 고려되어야 한다. 보다 유의미하고 창조적인 지리학습은 지리적 지식 그 자체라기보다 학생들의 매일의 생활 및 미래 생활에 대한 지리적 견해와 관점, 그리고 그에 대한 개인적인 지리 연구(탐구)방법을 갖도록 하는 것이다.

결국, 지리교육은 단순히 지리적 지식의 요구량을 증대시키는 것이 아니라 학생들로 하여금 그들의 삶속에서 하나의 과학으로서 지리학을 활용하는 능력을 증대시키도록 함으로써 그 교육적 의미를 회복하는 것이다. 이때 지리교육과정은 지리교육에 영향을 미치는 학생, 사회, 학문의 세가지 측면들을 균형있게 반영하게 될 것이다.

主要語 : 敎育課程 좌표(사회-학생-학문), 科學觀, 구성주의, 爭點中心 地理敎育課程, 思考中心 地理敎育課程

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