Dr Bogomir Novak  
Educational Research Institute  
Gerbičeva 62  
1000 Ljubljana  
Slovenia

The criticism of philosophy syllabus of the Slovene upper secondary school


Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to evaluate, from the perspective of the upper secondary school curriculum, the development of philosophy syllabus from content-oriented in the year 1991 towards process-oriented in 1998 and 2005. The overall objective of the philosophy syllabus is to encourage pupils to ask their own questions and to analyse philosophical texts in order to promote creative and critical thinking. The current syllabus is the most comprehensive since it is broken down to general and specific objectives according to modules A, B and C. It also contains teachers' instructions. It has kept the number of hours and its constructivist didactical basis. The whole philosophy syllabus offers a systematic approach to philosophy and an overview of philosophical disciplines (epistemology, anthropology, ethics, aesthetics and metaphysic). Thus the previously cumbersome historical approach to teaching philosophy has been readjusted.

The paper argues that philosophy teachers should consider in their teaching both special didactics for philosophy and the philosophy of teaching. This means that they should ask their pupils questions in various ways, such as Socrates-Plato way, Kant way, Hegel way and Heidegger way. Thus they would motivate pupils to learn as if they were trying to resolve the world problems. The paper favours questioning in accordance to B. McCarthy's 4mat model. This model provides for an efficient interpersonal communication and encourages pupils to ask questions.

1. What type of syllabus would suit best to teaching philosophy?

This paper constitutes a further reading to the evaluation study “Evaluation of the upper secondary education from the perspectives of the extensiveness of the curriculum, inclusion of the cross-curriculum knowledge, and representativeness of the curriculum goals”. That study compared changes that occurred in the curricula between 1991 and 1998 and analysed the 2005 philosophy syllabus.

The 1996—1999 curricular reform revised the content and the teaching methods. Syllabi contain formal suggestions and thus guide teachers towards transformational teaching. So teachers encourage pupils to act independently and use all their senses. In this way pupils make use of their higher psychical and mental functions.
The 1998 curriculum introduces the focus on the process. Thus it rectifies the weakness of the content-oriented curriculum. Curricula organised according to subject matter are most common in traditional schools (M. Ben-Perez & F. M. Connelly 1991, 158). They focus on handing down a content which is a fragment of science (for example biology, physics, literature or philosophy). Thus pupils get familiar with some facts and principles. The purpose of addressing these contents is to get to know some scientific findings. By using problemsolving approach pupils get a hands-on experience with principles. The same formula applies to philosophy: one has to distinguish between abstract facts on the one hand and problems and their various ways to solve them on the other.

There are many definitions of a curriculum. But there is a common denominator to all of them. Curricula have also undergone transformation from a content-based to a process-integrated and an integrative one. A process-oriented curriculum is typified by the following.

1. Teachers know how to think critically in any school situation.
2. Teachers understand their role and other people's expectations. They also know which principles they pursue in any given situation.
3. The principles guide them in promoting an exchange of opinion between and with other parties involved. After the dialogue they seek to reflect upon the situation and learn some lessons.
4. They continually evaluate the process and results.

The integrated curriculum typically considers science is something uniform that is governed by universal laws, conceptual structures and processes of demand. The similarities are stronger than differences between scientific disciplines (Blum 1991, 163). The integration is built on epistemological and methodological arguments. Curricula are hence focused on scientific disciplines. The way they organise the contents mirrors the structure and the content of a given scientific discipline. The integrative approach to teaching can only be justified by psychology of learning, educational science and didactics.

Some consider the integrated approach to be suitable only for teaching natural science and social science in primary school. I would say this approach is perfectly valid for teaching philosophy to pupils both in primary and upper secondary school. The reason is that philosophy used to be considered the mother of all science up to the beginning of the 20th century. Today philosophy makes sure that science makes sense. In the 20th century there was a development of new philosophical branches, such as philosophy of culture, the theory of knowledge (epistemology), philosophy of linguistics, philosophy of arts. Secondly, the integrated curriculum may inspire pupils since integration provides for confrontation of problems. In this way classes become more interesting. So far, though, teaching in upper secondary schools has not been organised in an interdisciplinary fashion. That is why teachers are not accustomed to team work in their preparations for classes or to team teaching. Therefore, it is up to each teacher of philosophy to determine to what extent they can follow the curriculum in its suggestion to point out links with psychology, the Slovene language, sociology and some other subjects.

Philosophy because of its auto-reflexive character lends itself perfectly to an integrative teaching. Otherwise the danger is that pupils will fall in the trap and will not recognise links that exist between some partial questions. Teachers may combine various general didactical theories and philosophy of teaching philosophy. Majority of philosophy teachers though is not aware of their philosophy of teaching and does not develop it in terms of a meta-teaching theory. In the past, the great philosophers, such as Plato, Aristotle, Hegel and Heidegger
taught their philosophy in the same way they were creating it. They differed in their rudimentary general didactics on teaching philosophy in exactly the same way they diverged in their philosophies. It is easiest to observe how philosophy is born in an educational process in **Plato's Socrates** and their famous questions and answers session.

In the 1991, 1998 and 2005 syllabi, philosophy of education is not mentioned. Most teachers are probably aware of it only implicitly. Recently didactics of philosophy has been developed which makes it easier to teach the prescriptive syllabus.

On principle, philosophy is an open type of science but in school it is presented as a closed set of reflected knowledge. This is mirrored in the open curriculum with integrative characteristics to reflect self-evaluation method of teachers' teaching. The integrative features are present as far as different scientific disciplines are brought together. These disciplines are otherwise taught as separate subjects. Within curriculum there is room for expressing emotions, imagination, searching thinking and creativity. The integrated curriculum as such has not yet taken off in Slovenia. The situation in theory is not that bad since the existing curriculum already offers content-, process- and objective-based approach. But in practice, the content-based approach is favoured. That is why a new reform of upper secondary school could be imminent.

2. Philosophy syllabus development in Slovenia

The 1991, 1998 and 2005 philosophy syllabi provide for the same number of hours of philosophy per school year and offer three modules, namely A, B and C. First syllabi simply listed topics and objectives. Now they are a complex study. The 1991 syllabus divided the content in three parts, namely (1) Introduction, (2) Man – realisation – world and (3) Optional topics. The 1991 syllabus listed five general objectives in order to raise awareness in pupils of the field of study of philosophy and philosophical way of thinking; to develop independent and critical thinking, conceptual analysis, achieve consistent and coherent use of language, make pupils aware of philosophical problems of the past, and present the most important philosophical trends.

The 1991 syllabus did not offer didactical recommendations or recommended teaching methods. Interdisciplinary links were not defined nor was testing and evaluation of knowledge. It did however have material and staff requirements for implementation. The 1991 curriculum provided for philosophy to be taught in 70 hours in the 4th year of a general upper secondary school. Further 70 hours were allocated for those who chose to take a philosophy Matura exam. The structural elements of the 1991 syllabus were: (1) objectives, (2) contents, (3) conditions for implementing the syllabus (staff and material).

As stated above, the 1991 syllabus divided the content in three parts. The subsequent syllabi have favoured modular approach. The module A is aimed at general and professional upper secondary schools (70 hours), the module B is geared at classical upper secondary schools (105 hours) and module C which is a special module for those who choose to take the Matura school-leaving exam (210 hours). The module A is broken down to four sets, namely (1) what philosophy is; (2) what I can know; (3) what I can do and (4) an optional topic.

The 1998 syllabus contains (1) definition of the subject matter, (2) a catalogue of knowledge for the subject matter comprising general and operational objectives of the subject matter, (3) special didactical recommendations and interdisciplinary links, (4) obligatory ways of testing
and assessing knowledge and (5) references. The 1998 curriculum provides for philosophy to be taught either in the 3rd or 4th year in 70 hours. Module C offers 210 hours of philosophy as part of preparations for the Matura exam. The 1998 philosophy syllabus contains general and operational (special) objectives of the subject matter. General objectives encourage pupils to think and assess independently, to think about fundamental issues related to the human being and the world, to critically reflect on the basis of experience, to be aware of subjective and ideological prejudices, to engage in a tolerant dialogue on the basis of rational arguments, to understand how basic philosophical notions interrelate with basic notions in other sciences, religions and arts and to help pupils choose a direction for their life. Objectives added in comparison to the 1991 syllabus create an impression that philosophy is related to every day life.

The 1998 syllabus recommends dialogue, reading philosophical texts and writing about them. Furthermore, it spells out interdisciplinary links with lessons in literature, history, sociology, psychology, mathematics and methodology of social sciences. Moreover, ways of testing and assessing are defined and the difficulty of marking is brought to the fore. Therefore a teacher should not be limited to the use of traditional ways of testing and assessing but should rather employ some authentic methods (e.g. homework, philosophical journals, and participation in classes). In addition to familiarisation with the topics and understanding it, the teacher should make pupils write essays (e.g. to use analysis, synthesis).

As shown in the table below, syllabi for psychology, sociology and philosophy kept the same number of hours per school year. The same goes for 2005.

*Table – The 1991 and 1998 syllabi for general upper secondary school*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>The total of hours in 1991</th>
<th>Additional hours in order to prepare for the Matura exam</th>
<th>The total of hours in 1998</th>
<th>The Matura exam standard in 1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As stated above, the 2005 philosophy syllabus is quite a complex study. Not surprisingly it has the biggest number of headings. Heading 1 is the definition of the scope of philosophy. Heading 2 breaks down the subject according to modules A, B and C. Heading 3 contains special didactical recommendations and interdisciplinary links. Heading 4 spells out the compulsory methods of assessment and evaluation. Heading 5 specifies the knowledge teachers must have in order to teach. Heading 6 includes implementing rules and standards. Heading 7 comprises the catalogue of knowledge broken down according to modules. Finally, the heading 8 lists references for pupils and teachers. In the way the syllabus is specific it may serve as a teachers’ guide in preparation for classes.

The key issue of any philosophy syllabus is how it makes pupils ask questions and learn what philosophy is. An integrative syllabus seems to lend itself best since philosophy is a complex set of knowledge to be taught in an integrative fashion. On the other hand, communicational or dialogical didactics would be best placed to do it. Philosophy comprises special disciplines,
e.g. philosophy of linguistics, of psychology, epistemology, philosophy of culture, philosophy of education.

It is impossible to compare the quality of syllabi/curricula in different states. This is because philosophy is not taught to pupils of the same age group in all countries (in some countries pupils are as young as 12, in others as old as 19). Furthermore, philosophy is taught at different school types, in various curricular concepts (some curricula are teacher-oriented, others are pupil-oriented), in different cultural contexts (in some schools, there is no room for religion and in others it has a preponderant role).

In the UK, the Briston upper secondary school philosophy syllabus objective is to encourage young people to ask questions about the world and to think critically. The main point is to ask "why". The Briston syllabus is focused on ethical problems (the issue of good and evil) and the issues related to the philosophy of religion.

Upper secondary school studies in Finland are voluntary and are not marked. It takes two to four years to graduate, normally three. Pupils have to take at least 75 courses to graduate. One course consists of 38 lessons. Upper secondary school studies consist of compulsory, advanced and applied courses. In Vaala Upper Secondary School the school year is divided into six periods. After matriculation exam pupils are able to apply to universities and polytechnics. Course Philosophy has 3 parts: 1. Compulsory FI1 Introduction to philosophical way of thinking – 2. Advanced, FI2 Philosophical ethics, FI3 Philosophy of knowledge and reality, FI4 Social philosophy, 3. - Applied - Recapitulation course.

3 Objectives and tasks of philosophy classes according to the philosophy syllabus

To determine the tasks that philosophy classes perform and the objectives they achieve, we first have to look at the general objectives pursued by upper secondary schools. General upper secondary schools offer pupils (aged 15-18) four years of general education aimed at upgrading and extending the knowledge gained during compulsory education. The primary tasks of general upper secondary schools are:
- to give pupils the knowledge and skills in accordance with international quality education standards that they need to continue their education at universities or other institutions of tertiary education;
- to develop critical judgement and responsibility; to foster responsibility towards themselves and towards other people and the environment; to develop general cultural and civilisation values;
- to prepare them for active citizenship;
- to encourage creativity and to develop the ability of artistic expression and the perception of artistic work; and
- to support decisions concerning further education and professional careers.

Each syllabus reflects specifically general objectives of the upper secondary school. That is why even authors of the philosophy syllabus think that philosophy has to echo objectives of the upper secondary school, in particular critical reflection on the experience, knowledge and action. That is why philosophy has developed a method that builds on conceptual analysis and rational argumentation. The purpose of classes is to foster critical philosophical thinking. This means to foster responsibility for oneself, for others and for the whole globalised world.

Philosophy classes fulfil objectives of the upper secondary school, namely the interest in theories. Theories help to shape one's own view on the world. Other objectives include
promoting development in all areas of a personality (i.e. the balance between the physical, the cognitive, the emotional, the social, the moral and the aesthetic development) and the development of a personality as a whole. This is achieved through presentation and resolution of problems from all fields of philosophy (i.e. ontology or metaphysics, cognitive theory, anthropology, ethics and aesthetics).

Pupils enter philosophy by looking for its sources, its intent (in Greek *telos*) and trying to discover its world through its language (*Tonkli Komel, 2005*). To speak about philosophy is to philosophy. Every great philosopher has asked from philosophy to help him in understanding and explaining the world. No syllabus can include all these questions and tasks. It is irrelevant if the syllabus is meant for the 3rd or the 4th year of the upper secondary school. What is expected from philosophy is sometimes apparent from its definition. Thus Kant wanted to "introduce some order in the cognitive theory", Hegel wanted to catch the spirit of time in thoughts, Marx wanted to grasp that proletariat, i.e. the revolutionary class, is a philosophical category. Generally speaking, the task of philosophy classes would be to foster and to cherish philosophical culture which complements cultural philosophy (*Waldenfels*).

The process- and objective-oriented philosophy syllabus seems to offer adequate orientation to philosophizing reflection. To foster philosophy in pupils would in this sense be a means to transforming the subject matters pupils have learnt. Undoubtedly, philosophy itself should get rid of numerous historical facts on philosophers and of dogmatic insistence on their positions. This statement is a necessary, though negatively formulated, requirement for the freedom of thinking. The second requirement is the principle "less is more" or "not everything about everything but rather everything about one" (in Ancient Greek *hen pan kai*, in Latin *non multa sed multum*). Criticism of syllabi makes sense, especially considering the evaluation of how syllabi are put into practice in classes.

### 3.1. Asking questions – a constant in philosophy classes

If philosophy is just one of the many classes a pupil attends, then it is perceived superficially and the lessons get stored only in short term memory. In philosophy we ask questions in order to shape concepts. The words are the trigger and the meaning of words is looked for. Usually philosophy teachers do not think twice how they put questions (see *Šimenc (2007)*) and do not bear the objectives and tasks of philosophy in mind. It is essential to distinguish between good and bad (uninspiring) questions. Teachers do not pay enough attention to questions asked by great philosophers. Teachers should make sure that their questions are not tautologies that enclose already a ready-made answer. On the contrary! Questions should be like *koans*, zen-type intrigues or Ancient Greek *apories*, i.e. embarrassing questions that sober pupils up.

Bernice McCarthy's 4-mat system places individual learning and behaviour preferences into one of four categories according to questions they ask.

1. *Why?* (35% of people)
   They learn by seeking meaning. They live their life as it is . . . and then compare it with reality and identify the differences.

2. *What?* (22% of people)
   They learn by thinking ideas through. They seek facts and need to know what the experts think. They have an idea and then reflect on it. A "What?" person will ask "What are the facts?" Typical Leader's Role is Teacher.

3. *How?* (18% of people)
They learn by testing theories. They start with an idea and then test it. They need to know how things work and they seek usability. A "How?" person will ask "How does this work?" Typical Leader's person will ask "How can I use this?" Typical Leader's Role is Motivator. Role is Coach.

4. So What? (25% of people)

They learn by trial and error and seek hidden possibilities. They reflect on it and engage in self discovery. A "So What?" person will ask "Where can I apply it?"

Typical Leader's Role is Colleague in Discovery.

This is 'Integral Leadership programme' that explores successful communication with each of the four types in the context of problem-solving, training, presentations and meetings. This model allows various role plays. It opens up for pupils different angles of the same problem. Thus pupils discover different types of learning. Undoubtedly every one has their favourite question.

Philosophy has four types of different questions. A typical meta-physical question is why the world exists. There are two typical substantive questions, namely what the world consists of and what a philosopher has said. A typical methodological question is how we get to know an object or how we can explore it. Finally, two typical meta-cognitive questions are why things are as they are and why we think the way we do. It is a pity that teachers of all subjects do not use all these questions since these questions systematically make use of pupils' all psychical capabilities.

It is positive that teachers of all subject matters are aware of the significance of asking philosophical questions. Certainly, philosophy teachers may profit from using questioning techniques advocated by experts in general didactics. Godinho & Wilson (2008) examine teachers' strategies to ask questions and the ways in which questions incite pupils to ask reflecting and meta-cognitive ones as well as sensible and nonsensical ones. These classifications crystallise the role of teachers' and pupils' questions in a classroom setting. The questions help to grasp the problem, research it, shape a critical stance and a new synthesis, invite other questions, point to the gaps in knowledge etc.

Philosophy deems reflecting and meta-cognitive questions to be very important. Without meta-cognitive questions pupils cannot get to know themselves (in Greek gnote seauthon) nor their learning styles. The process of asking questions may be analysed using B. McCarthy's system. Teachers should first understand in didactics terms the significance of asking questions in the classroom. Philosophy teachers should additionally understand their philosophical significance. This understanding is to be followed by a reflection on what teachers ask, how they ask it in order to make their question clear and on what if they asked it differently. Questions' role is to invite curiosity and wonder (in Greek thamadzein) about the original idea, incite pupils to grasp the problem in its complexity by using methodological steps of analysis, comparison and synthesis. At the end of each class, teachers should self-evaluate methods used to invite pupils' own questions and, if possible, improve their "motivational means". Godinho & Wilson (2008, pp. 29, 30) present a table that helps to do self-evaluation and a check-list for assessment.
Asking questions is self-evident for philosophy since even the most abstract question "what philosophy is" leads to a host of other questions on philosophy's methods to achieve its objectives and fulfill its tasks. According to Heidegger, every question encloses a constant that leads back to the questioner. A correctly understood question unveils more about the questioner than about the subject matter. This brings us to Fichte's conclusion that one has such philosophy as one is. Any teacher knows that a question is closely related to thinking. Thinking, in turn, is related to learning. To ask a question is to explore one's own being and thus to learn. Learning is just a new word for knowing oneself. What Plato considers freeing from slavery, Heidegger considers unveiling of an authentic being. Without being, there would be no questions asked about being (German Sein). Heidegger considers the essence of the question in the question about existence or being in the world (German Da-sein, in der Welt sein). Teachers' role is to encourage pupils to care for their own being in the world.

It is quite difficult to assess what one has learnt in philosophy. The ultimate goal of philosophy classes is for pupils to think independently about philosophical problems. Teachers' preparations should outline how they are going to achieve this goal. The 2005 philosophy syllabus suggests that teachers at first check pupils' understanding of the content learnt (by multiple-choice questions or questions inviting short answers). The syllabus stipulates that teachers are not limited to using standard oral or written examination procedures. Rather, teachers could motivate pupils to do homework, write philosophical diaries, assess their participation in classroom discussions etc. With time teachers start assessing pupils' ability to analyse, synthesise and use the knowledge acquired in classes. Pupils are to understand problems, analyse the suggested solutions, find connection between certain concepts, know how to argue their line of reasoning and use various types of coming to conclusions. An essay lends itself to this purpose perfectly since all types of mental operations are to be used. That is why teachers assess pupils' knowledge of their chosen topic in pupils' essays.

3.2. Criticism of the 2005 philosophy syllabus

Authors of the syllabus are not authors of the philosophy textbook (Nenad Miščević, Franc Klampfer, Boris Vezjak, 2006). The textbook follows the syllabus closely. At the end of the textbook there are some optional topics for those who choose to sit a Matura exam in philosophy or have a philosophy as their hobby horse. Personally, I find the textbook quite informative but there are not enough provocative questions, there is not enough comparison of controversial positions which would provoke cognitive conflicts in pupils' heads. The textbook does not urge you to seek arguments pro and contra. On the upside, there are some opinions given in the margins.

Teachers choose one of the following optional topics:
- ontology and metaphysics: relationship between being and essence;
- philosophy of religion: the essence of religion;
- anthropology: a human being as an animal rationale;
- aesthetics: the beauty and the truth in art;
- political philosophy: ethics and politics;
- history of philosophy: some fundamental philosophical positions taken in the history of thinking;
- contemporary ethical problems (the meaning of life, death, suicide, abortion etc.)
Most of these topics are addressed in the second part of the textbook. There is no mention of the fundamentals of logic and reasoning. Pupils may use other sources and not just the textbook. References are listed in the syllabus. Since there is no shortage of literature on these subjects, there is no fear that pupils would not be informed enough.

There are some other good points the syllabus has. Its approach is no longer the one of philosophy's history; still the historical component is considered. There is no European philosophy without the ancient Greek philosophy. It is self-critical. It opens up the ways for pupils to discover themselves (I am here and now) and to think about themselves. Finally, it is flexible. Its key question is the one that other syllabi have posed as well, namely if it fosters in pupils critical and responsible thinking in terms of “catching the time within the thoughts.”

The A module syllabus tackles the following questions: (1) What philosophy is? (5 hours); (2) What I can know? (15 hours); (3) What I shall do? (15 hours); (4) An optional topic (25 hours). The questions (2) and (3) follow the Kant's system of four main philosophical questions. Kant's question "what a human being is" is included in module C. His question on "what I may hope" is present only implicitly in the philosophy of religion and in social philosophy of fairness. Nonetheless, the issue of hope would make an excellent introduction in reflection on the modern environmental problems. Thus it is left to teachers' re-innovation (the as if question, according to McCarthy). Maybe this will be remedied in new syllabi that will have interdisciplinary connections. Meanwhile, the environmental issues are addressed in biology classes.

The latest philosophy syllabus offers only a taste of practical, moral philosophy. However, this is the philosophy that pupils would need most in their lives. It is good, though, that the syllabus is differentiated according to the level of pupils' development. Thus the C module (an independent study, most hours offered) focuses on the in-depth study and research of broader connections.

Most philosophy teachers are not familiar with the principles of holistic learning as developed by transformative educational scientists, such as Kolb, Delors and B. McCarthy. Some philosophy teachers do not like to take the risk to put into practice constructivist didactics on which philosophy syllabus builds. Therefore, it is essential to make distinction between the syllabus itself on the one hand and the teaching (the practical side) on the other since they rarely correspond 100 per cent. It is important to evaluate both in order to enhance the quality.

4. Conclusions

The thesis of this paper is that the current philosophy syllabus is merely a syllabus and does not offer methodology on how to cognate and learn.

The philosophy syllabus is least content-oriented and predominantly process-oriented. It has to become more interdisciplinary and integrative. The current syllabus is based on the four Kant's questions which lend themselves to systematically covering all philosophical disciplines.

The thesis departure point is that philosophy didactics has to be argued philosophically. The reason is not its generality but rather its speciality. Didactics presupposes that the teacher has some philosophical background already as well as that (s)he is familiar with the objectives of teaching philosophy.
Various new didactical approaches lend themselves to process-oriented approach, in particular the constructivist didactics and the communication didactics of dialogue. Philosophy didactics comprises these special kinds of didactics but from a critical perspective. A critical approach is necessary since philosophy is a problem in its own right that philosophy has to solve time and time again. Philosophical didactics requires a teacher to be well-versed and to have an open philosophical mind in order to be a reflecting practitioner. The teacher has to be able to ask various types of questions in order to pursue objectives of philosophy classes and to realize the process-oriented curriculum which defines pupils' thinking procedures. Therefore, it is essential to make distinction between the syllabus itself on the one hand and the teaching (the practical side) on the other since they rarely correspond 100 per cent. It is important to evaluate both in order to enhance the quality.

The paper has established that the 2005 philosophy syllabus is the most comprehensive and detailed one since it has the biggest number of headings. The A, B and C modules are broken down to specific objectives, authors and concepts. Nevertheless, the situation is not ideal. Questionnaires for pupils speak volumes. They have revealed that at the prescriptive level, the syllabus is process-oriented whereas at the practical, i.e. class-giving level, it has largely remained transmissive and content-oriented. Pupils have been quite critical of their teachers, too. While teachers think they introduce learning objectives, pupils say teachers merely announce a topic. Teachers believe that they encourage pupils to be active if they keep their attention. However, teachers prefer to carry out learning activities themselves, such as problem-solving and looking for connections with other concepts. Teachers believe they give pupils feedback when marking pupils' work. As a matter of fact, teachers only give them a mark in a form of a number and do not explain reasons for a mark. It seems as though teachers do not put themselves in pupils' shoes. That is why teachers are convinced they make connections with other topics when they address an issue. But pupils who have come across that topic for the first time in their life can hardly notice all the connections if they are not laid for them plainly. Furthermore, pupils in secondary school have more than one subject to study. So it is hardly surprising that they do not remember exactly what was said the previous year at a certain subject. There are in fact many studies that show how traditional Slovene schools are (see for example Šteh 1999, 2000; Javornik Krečič 2004, 2006).

The philosophy syllabus has undergone some changes since 1991 when it had three parts. The 1998 and 2005 syllabi have divided part two of the 1991 syllabus. Because of this cosmetic change the number of hours and the content covered were not affected. Some new guidelines for teachers have been introduced on learning objectives, didactics and interdisciplinary connections. In order to follow the guidelines, teachers would have to have more professional competence which they do not. Now there are less historical philosophical topics. Rather more emphasis is given to solving philosophical problems in the spirit of a given philosopher. Learning thus starts to equal construction of a reality (through the eyes of a philosopher). In this way the new experience is linked to the old (i.e. knowledge about the philosopher in question) as advocated by Luhmann. Learning is also situation-based and multidimensionally systemic (Marentič-Požarnik, 2004). Results are impossible to predict. One thing is certain, though: teachers who think philosophically and use multi-layered philosophical language inspire even those pupils who have no inner motivation to create philosophy.
Notes

1. For more on various types of curricula, see Ivanuš Grmek, M. (2000; 13-21).

2. Curriculum is systematically organized course of teaching and learning. Some definitions of “curriculum” focus narrowly on the arrangement of subjects over a sequence of grades; others include everything that pupils and teachers do. Curriculum schemes are found in every system of education, but in most countries, especially in continental Europe, Latin America, and many parts of Asia, the word “curriculum” is unfamiliar. Reference is made instead to programmes of study and instruction. (McLean, B., A., 2008)


11. In Slovenia, philosophy is offered as an optional subject to pupils in nine-year primary school. In secondary schools philosophy is taught to pupils in their 4th year. There is a special department of philosophy at the Faculty of Arts. Philosophy is one of the minor subjects in many university programmes.

12. Waldenfels (2006) notices that at the end of the 20th century cultural philosophy made a comeback to schools since social sciences are adamant they are a science about culture. As Aristotle claimed for the soul, culture is nowadays a blanket term for everything.

13. There are many types of criticism (Greek krinein – to distinguish, to judge), namely dogmatic, transcendental, speculative, dialectic, constructive, critical criticism, hermeneutic criticism etc. In a way criticism means criticising the premise of one's opponents.

14. Ancient Greek erothesis, Latin precor, preces, German Frage and English question. Erotetics is a part of logic, devoted to logical analysis of question. See the literature on this topic: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erotetics. Etymology of the word question reveals its
meaning. Old German word Verhoer – perception, has nowadays come to mean a judicial hearing or investigation.

15. For more on the 'Integral leadership' model see: http://www.integralleadership.com/4-mat.htm. Bernice McCarthy drew on the research of Jung, Piaget, Vygotsky, Dewey, Lewin and Kolb to create an instructional system that would progress through the complete learning cycle using strategies that would appeal to all learners.


17. Constructivism is a pluralistic notion. Philosophically, constructivism is more than an objective paradigm since it is closer to relativism. Marentič Požarnik (ed., 2004) in her book makes a distinction between constructivism as used in educational theory and practice on one hand and as used in teachers' training on the other.

References

- Borstner, B. (et al., 2005). Učni načrt za filozofijo. Ljubljana, MŠŠ.
- Miščević, N. (et al., 2006). Filozofija za gimnazije. Ljubljana, MK.

This document was added to the Education-Line database on 04 September 2008