

HYVÄ, TASAPAINOINEN JA SIVISTYNYT IHMINEN

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**INVESTIGATING THE FINNISH UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL'S
EDUCATIONAL TASK WITH A MINDSET OF PEDAGOGICAL PHILOSOPHY**

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus pyrkii esittämään vuoden 2019 lukion opetussuunnitelman kasvatustehtävän, toisin sanoen sen, mitä lukio pyrkii Suomessa opettamaan oppiaineiden opetussuunnitelmaan kirjattujen oppisisältöjen lisäksi. Sen lisäksi tämä tutkimus tutkii, miten pedagogisen filosofian prosessi pedagogisena lähestymistapana pystyy integroimaan lukion kasvatustehtävän sen opetustehtävään. Tutkimusaihe on tärkeä ensinnäkin lukiolaisten hyvinvoinnin näkökulmasta. Lukiolaisten hyvinvointi on laskenut selkeästi muun muassa hyvinvointia mittaavien lukiobarometrien mukaan. Toiseksi, tutkimusaiheen tärkeyden voi perustella kansallisella sekä globaalilla tarpeella ihmisistä, jotka tuntevat itsensä paremmin ja jotka osaavat toimia empaattisemmin, luovemmin ja itseään kehittäen. Tilanne Suomessa ja maailmalla on kenties epävakampi kuin vuosikymmeniin ja erinäisten konfliktien ratkaisemiseksi tarvitaan ihmislähtöistä osaamista, lukion opetussuunnitelman mukaan, sydämen sivistystä.</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus nojautuu pääosin Matthew Lipmanin sekä Tuukka Tomperin työhön pedagogisen filosofian saralla. Lipman aloitti jo 70-luvulla lasten kanssa filosofoimisen tavoitteenaan kehittää ajattelutaitoja ja edistää itsetuntemusta. Filosofoiminen sekä hänen ohjelmansa Philosophy for Children (P4C) on sittemmin levinnyt laajalle ja Tomperi on työskennellytkin Lipmanin työn Suomen koulujärjestelmään sovittamisen parissa. Tomperi tutki väitöskirjassaan filosofian roolia ja luonnetta oppiaineena Suomessa sekä pedagogisen filosofian ydinolemusta ja pedagogista oikeutusta.</p> <p>Tutkimus esittää lukion kasvatustehtävän kuviona, joka rakentuu teoriasta kohti käytäntöä. Tutkimus käyttää samankaltaista pedagogisen filosofian prosessista luotua kaavioita esittämään yhtäläisyyksiä pedagogisen filosofian prosessin ja lukion kasvatustehtävän välillä, sekä osoittamaan pedagogisen filosofian prosessista luonnollisesti nousevat oppisisällöt (muun muassa kriittinen, itse-reflektiivinen ja empaattinen ajattelu) ja kuinka ne linjautuvat opetussuunnitelman kasvatustehtävän tavoitteiden kanssa. Tulokset näyttävät pedagogisen filosofian prosessin olevan potentiaalinen pedagoginen ratkaisu toteuttamaan kasvatustehtävän ja opetustehtävän integraatiota käytännössä.</p> <p>Jatkotutkimusta tarvitaan opetussuunnitelman kasvatustehtävän ja opetustehtävän integraation saralla, sekä lasten kanssa filosofoimisen potentiaalinen saralla nimenomaan suomalaisessa kontekstissa, vaikkakin uutta materiaalia on syntynyt 2010-luvulta lähtien enemmän.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

"I believe that education is a process of living and not a preparation for future living."
(Dewey, 1897: 78).

The purpose of school has been debated over since the times of the birth of the schooling system. This study looks at this question from the point of view of the Finnish Upper Secondary School, in other words, the study inspects what kind of a rationale does the National Core Curriculum provide for its existence. Thereafter, the study investigates how this educational ideal can be integrated into the subject matter teaching in the Finnish Upper Secondary School. As the new generations spend a considerable time of their lives in school, the school environment inescapably moulds the students' identities and thus their views on life. It turns out, then, that both problems, first being the purpose of school and the other its implementation into practice, are crucial to the welfare of the individual and therefore to the collective alike. As Peperzak (2012: 58) puts it, "Education is the basic activity through which civilisations assure their continuation."

Our modern world is characterised by an unprecedented rate of change. This is noted by Todericiu et al. (2013) as well as by the Finnish Upper Secondary School National Core Curriculum (Opetushallitus, 2013: 415; Opetushallitus, 2019: 10, 62) as one of the greatest challenges of our time. This is because change brings with it unpredictability which, when mentally unprocessed, leads to mental pathology (Yuanyuan et al., 2020). Our time is therefore characterised by a rise of stress and anxiety, prominent especially among adolescents and young adults (Covington, 2021). Examples of this can be found in the declining welfare of the Finnish school students (Lukiolaisbarometri 2019, 2022; KOTT-research 2000-2021).

The antidote for this anxiety is found within the individual experience, along the lines of Jung (1973: 33): "Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes". This means that the problem of change is essentially, like any psychological dilemma, a problem of identity. In other words, one must have an understanding of the anxious entity before the anxiety itself can be properly understood. The individual experience required is then an experience of the self, a sense of agency and alignment of the within with the without. And even though this experience cannot be handed over to students to be experienced, it can be pointed at. And even

though there are many ways to reflect upon one's identity, one activity operates in them all. That is the facility of thought.

Schools play a fascinating role in teaching thinking. Having undergone great perspective shifts throughout history, teaching thinking nowadays seems to recognise an active, questioning and self-reflective student as its goal (Crawford et al., 2005: 1). The Finnish Upper Secondary School Core Curriculum adds to this a personal perspective, since it acknowledges self-knowledge as a fundamental basis of a student who can act appropriately in the world and describes thinking skills as a means of attaining this self-knowledge. Further examples of teaching thinking in schools are for example Matthew Lipman's program Philosophy for Children (P4C) and *The Thinking Classroom* by Crawford et. al. It seems therefore that the modern schooling world recognises curious, creative and self-reflective thinking as a fundamental basis of the process of learning, and that what is to be learned is the self and its relationship to the environment.

However, as Crawford points out, teachers face challenges of over-packed curricula, of time and of overpopulated classes (2005: xi). Other, more acute matters demand attention and resources, and the point of the whole endeavour of education is forgotten. Therefore, as it falls on the shoulders of the teacher to remind their students of the fundamental goal of their school work, more research is required to help teachers establish a stronger teaching practice, one that would strengthen the students' identities and thus root them in the human condition to weather the strong winds of change. Furthermore, teachers naturally need more education about the modern challenges faced by the new generations, and this education should be integrated in teacher training in the universities as well. Teachers are poorly equipped to manage the troubles of their students if they have to deduct everything by themselves amidst the school work. The integration of the self-knowledge perspective to the informational teaching does not happen naturally by itself. It requires trial and error, and the more help teachers get, the less errors we are going to make.

The structure of the thesis is then as follows. The background section consists of a definition of learning, underlining facilities that naturally rise in a child but are often suppressed when that child enters the schooling system. Thereafter, the learning environments of home and school are compared to explain some of the suppressions. Next, a theoretical framework is given presenting pedagogical philosophy starting from its roots with Dewey at the end of the 1800's and arriving at Lipman's and Tomperi's work. Here the study presents and explains the process of pedagogical philosophy as it is defined in the context of this thesis. Thereafter, the research questions are presented and reasons are given for the choices made. Data and methods are presented next, and they display the thesis's data and the methodology with which this data has been scrutinised. The results of the analysis conducted on the National Core Curriculum are presented then after Data and

Methods, answering the first research question. The operationalisation of the educational task through the process of pedagogical philosophy is presented next. This part answers the second research question. Finally, the discussion chapter ponders the significance and utility of the results gained and proposes further research.

2 BACKGROUND

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part of this chapter describes the human learning process. It discusses the elements of this process and how philosophical thinking seems to emerge as a natural part of it. Furthermore, it presents challenges that restrain this process as well as some theoretical answers for these challenges. The second part takes one of these challenges, the learning environment, and lays out the key differences between an outside school setting and a classroom setting. With this understanding of the differences between the two, the factors restricting learning in the classroom are presented. The third part of the chapter lays out the theoretical framework for the process of pedagogical philosophy. The chapter describes the theoretical ideas underlying this process, the structure of its method and explains its key concepts. Some research data about pedagogical philosophy is also presented from schools around the world.

2.1 Learning

This chapter attempts to show human learning as growth, not unlike the growth of a tree or a flower, in order to understand how the schooling system should support this natural process. It shows the natural emergence of philosophical thinking as a part of this process and that in learning such critical forces as curiosity, imagination, creativity and motivation form growth's roots, stem and foliage.

Learning is what human beings do, it is what we are. Existence is being in a relationship with the world and integrating oneself with the constant flow of experience. Learning is as natural to a human being as rooting to the ground for a willow or turning towards the sun for a dandelion. Thinking, the process of verbalising what is going on, is a crucial part of making sense of the totality of this experience, and thus a crucial part of learning. Thinking itself should therefore, in order to keep up with the living ever-changing world, be practised like a carpenter has to practise using their tools in order to be able to work at all. This is how this study conceptualises learning, as the process of experiencing life from the unique perspective of the self, and thinking, as translating this experience into symbols and by doing so making sense of it.

Philosophy is seen in this study as a subcategory of thinking. 'Philosophia' meaning 'the love of wisdom' in Greek is a word used for the rational examination of reality and of the human experience therein (Department of Philosophy, 2023). Having such a vast field of definition, a philosophical realm of thinking may therefore be entered through any question thought up in words and followed by a rational examination of this question. Wisdom, or understanding, is sought through

quality thinking that is characterised by reason and logic; arguments must offer logical evidence for a certain conclusion to be true. Reason can be defined as rationality combined with proper judgement (Lipman, 2003: 22), logic as a method of argued validity, of telling valid reasoning from the invalid (Knachel, 2020: 6). Having the human experience as its subject of inquiry, everything can become a matter of scrutiny – also the means of the scrutiny themselves. Philosophical thinking is therefore self-reflective, self-reforming in nature. This self-reflectiveness is deeply linked to the process of learning. Learning is always a porous process; the external is internalised, understood, through continuous flow of conscious experience (Huotilainen, 2019). Also the opposite is true; the internal is externalised as perceiving and acting as the individual interprets the world around them through conceptions of the world.

Learning is conscious interaction with the world. The natural tendency of a human being to grow both physically and mentally is manifested in the faculty of curiosity. This study sees curiosity as a vital force that from birth governs a child's perceptions and acts as a radar for the unknown, for questions unanswered (Manguel, 2015: 1-30). The self-reflective expedition begins around the age of 2-3 years as the child starts to separate himself from the rest of the world regarding other people as others (Rochat, 2003: 718-719). Eventually, if curiosity is properly cultivated, the thinking processes themselves are brought under the curious magnifying glass and altered where alteration is thought to be required. Naturally, this practice eventually leads to the question *Who am I?* in relation to everything that is going on around me (Manguel 2015: 127-146) and thus underlines the highly personal nature of the whole endeavour of learning, of growth.

Self-knowledge can be seen to consist of four parts, according to a self-knowledge technique known as the Johari window: (1) information known to all, (2) information known only to self, (3) information known to others but not the self and (4) information unknown to all (Luft, 1969; Osmanoglu, 2019: 77). From this have been derived the notions of (1) the known knowns, (2) the unknown knowns, (3) the known unknowns and (4) the unknown unknowns (Rumsfeld, 2002). The last category in particular, then, can be seen as the dimension that necessitates imagination and creativity, especially what Vartanian et al. call exploratory and transformational creativity (2013: 6-7). The unknown unknowns have to be first imagined into being before they can be internalised as knowledge of the self. In other words, the unknown unknowns can be seen as dimensions of being one has not yet found, but where they could expand their understanding. To become, then, what the National Core Curriculum aims for, this study sees that transformational creativity should be among the kinds of creativity that are taught in Upper Secondary Schools because self-knowledge is a result of curious and imaginative attention towards the flow of experience.

Making the unknown known is no simple task. In reality, the learning curve manifests as an "error-ridden process" (Peterson, 2020). This is in part because the encountered world of potential is not a neutral one, but one that arouses emotions, goals, hopes and passions according to our value-structures. This is depicted in psychology as motivation (Salmela-Aro, 2017). Therefore, motivation can be seen as the why of things, as in Nietzsche's insight "If you have your why? for life, then you can get along with almost any how" (Nietzsche, 1889, #12). According to Salo et al. (2018) the most prominent of motivational theories at the moment is the *self-determination theory* by Ryan and Deci. Vasalampi (2017) summarises the theory as having as its basic assumption that a human being is active, motivating and self-governing by nature. A human being has an inclination to set goals, solve surrounding problems and attach experience as a part of his self-image. She continues that the social environment plays a crucial role in either nourishing motivation or starving it. Therefore, as a child learns through play, an open-ended and self-regenerative situation chosen and experienced by the child himself (Pound, 2008: 73-74), he is motivated by the process itself and not by some end-goal in mind. This is similar to the nature of philosophical inquiry; experience of the world presents itself as problematic, and a human being is inclined to solve those self-encountered problems and feel intrinsically motivated by every step of the process (Tomperi, 2017: 103-104).

2.2 The learning environment

In order to understand learning and therefore teaching, we need to understand how the learning environments inside the school and outside the school differ.

As we know, outside the school, environments are different for every individual, even for siblings (Leary, 2019). Yet, the basic universal characteristic is that for a child the outside school environment is thoroughly problematic and thought-provoking (Lipman 2003: 24-25; Boisvert, 1998: 96). It is this constant mystery of the changing days that eventually, with the help of other people, brings forth natural and spontaneous growth. The solving of problems, such as hunger and thirst, or a lack of a certain toy, is done in an active way because the child needs to react by solving these problems experimentally (Boisvert, 1998: 96). It is in this way that the environment draws the language out from a child as they tap into the life of the home community needing to cooperate with others (Lipman, 2003: 13).

However, the environment of learning changes dramatically when the schooling system is entered. The basic problems are, from the perspective of natural learning, as follows. As Lipman points out (2003: 24-25), the unstructured world changes into the structured schedule of the school day, and the language used is

declarative and without an experience-based context, instead of having a sense of mystery and demanding deduction from the learner. Therefore, the active agency of the child is transformed towards passive receiving. When the learning process is made similar to everyone and learning itself gets measured, evaluated and graded, the intrinsic value shifts towards the external (Wentzel, 2016: 258); one studies less for the wonder of learning and more for the image of oneself as a learner. This combined with the information-based curricula, where great amounts of informational knowledge needs to be memorised without a clear reason, leads to and has led to a decline in the sense of purpose experienced by students in the schooling system.

Peers also offer a new kind of a situation for the learner. Even though learning is highly social in the home environment, it changes when the learner is put in a classroom with people from the same age group having similar aims. As Ladd points out (2012: 79), in addition to studying learning strategies, the subject matter and exam performance, the learner needs to learn about relationships, build social identities and pay attention to others' performance. A new dimension of awareness steps into play as social status needs to be constantly mapped in order for it to be maintained. Ladd continues that positive peer relationships have a positive effect on experiences about emotional wellbeing, beliefs about the self, and values for prosocial interaction. Therefore, peers change the learning environment also subconsciously, varying on how important the individual feels social relationships to be. In other words, the peer dimension is present in all the choices the learner makes within the school setting, and therefore peers and peer relationships can have a strong effect on the learning environment.

This thesis suggests that we do not need to bring home environments into the school, but rather create a classroom practice that follows the key features of natural learning and realises them in a school setting. The comparison of settings reveals some aspects that facilitate learning more strongly at home, and these are the prospects that should be examined more within the classroom.

2.3 Pedagogical philosophy

As argued above, it is in human nature to think philosophically, that is, in a curious, creative, non-judgemental, quality and self-reflective way that searches for meaning, a sense of purpose for everything there is. We live in a world that is experienced as problematic, since a living creature needs to fulfil basic needs for survival. This problematic nature of the relationship of the world and ourselves draws thinking from the human brain, not unlike rain makes even the bed of Death Valley bloom. Indeed, according to Dewey, "the origin of thinking is some perplexity, confusion or

doubt" (1933: 12). Therefore, if we see thinking as the bridge between our experience and understanding it, it seems clear that learning to think in the best way possible would be a natural antidote for the stress, anxiety and meaninglessness that originate from the problematic nature of our existence. Answering to this need to learn to think, this chapter lays out the development of pedagogical philosophy, starting from John Dewey's ideas about the nature of ideal education and ending in Tuukka Tomperi's work on the justification of pedagogical philosophy as a way to realise our curricular demands.

Dewey (1897: 78) laid out an argument for education being an end in itself, "a process of living and not preparation for future living". He has been credited for his cross-curricular project-approach (Pound, 2005), a practice that saw the experiences of the students as originators of subject matter. Tomperi adds that Dewey saw subjects as resources to tackle present problems of the world, and this practice as strengthening the democratic disposition of education (2017: 28-29). Dewey was a psychologist and a philosopher, the characteristics of which coexisted in his work as he figured out the ideal form of education (Lipman, 2003: 48-49). Lipman continues that Dewey, as a pragmatist, thought that the meaning of thinking is to be found in the actions that follow those lines of thought, and that the method of scientific inquiry, objective and reflective, should be implemented into education. In summary, Dewey was a pioneer of teaching critical thinking in education and a great deal of today's pedagogy is inspired by his work (Pound, 2005; Boisvert, 1998: 158-159).

As Dewey laid a basis for combining the thought-methods of scientific inquiry with an educational setting, Matthew Lipman developed this idea further. The aim of Lipman, in essence, was to create a teaching method that would strengthen the students' thinking skills and skills of dialogue (Heinonen, 2012: 4-6). This aim was realised as a practice that is called Philosophy for Children, or P4C in short. In Deweyan spirit, it has as its subject matter the problems of the students and as its methods philosophical inquiry and dialogue (Tomperi 2017: 218-219). These methods form "a community of inquiry" as Lipman calls it, which is characterised by "inclusiveness, participation, shared cognition, face-to-face relationships, the quest for meaning" and so forth (Lipman, 2003: 114-115). Tomperi separates Lipman from Dewey as not having the idea that quality thinking could be encapsulated in any algorithm or problem solving process imitating scientific thinking (Tomperi 2017: 229). Rather, Lipman himself points out, the individual being between scientific and democratic thinking, philosophical thinking would be the way to teach quality thinking for the youth (Lipman, 2003: 47-51). Lipman's ideas about implementing philosophical thinking in education have had a renewing effect on schooling systems around the world and they are the most known form of philosophising with children around the world (Heinonen, 2012: 4; Tomperi & Juuso, 2014: 95).

Tomperi's doctoral dissertation (2017) is in two parts. The first discusses the role of philosophy as a school subject and the second philosophy as a form of

education that permeates all subjects as a practice of interaction. This study focuses on the latter. The permeating practice is called *pedagogical philosophy*. Tomperi describes it as concretising the connection of philosophy and education, being *personally meaningful thinking* (2017: 235, 238, italics by the author). Construed as an educational realisation of the possibilities of being, he states that the deepest justification of pedagogical philosophy does not lie in education, teaching of ethics, supporting democracy, learning thinking skills, or in any singular claim but *in the processes of making the experiences of life and of growth meaningful with maintaining and forwarding to the new generations the practices of critical-reflective thinking* (2017: 238, italics by the author). The core value of pedagogical philosophy is thus autonomy, a sense of personal agency, existential growth into what it is to be a human being both universally and personally.

The process of pedagogical philosophy is presented in Figure 1 below. It has as its basis Tomperi's dissertation *Filosofianopetus ja pedagoginen filosofia – filosofia oppiaineena ja kasvatuksena* (2017) and Lipman's *Thinking in Education* (2003), and it is therefore presented in the Analysis-section as well for presenting connections with the Finnish Upper Secondary School National Core Curriculum. Tomperi's dissertation was chosen because of its extent on the matter of pedagogical philosophy and because of a personal interest since it is the first such work on pedagogical philosophy in Finland, and has thus as its basis the Finnish school system. Lipman's work was chosen because for example Tomperi mentions him as a pioneer of philosophising with children (Tomperi, 2017: 11). Figure 1 shows the theoretical basis of pedagogical philosophy at the top and advances towards practice at the bottom. The six theoretical axioms are further explained in this chapter, whereas the Analysis-section links them and the classroom practice with the educational task of the The Finnish Upper Secondary School National Core Curriculum.

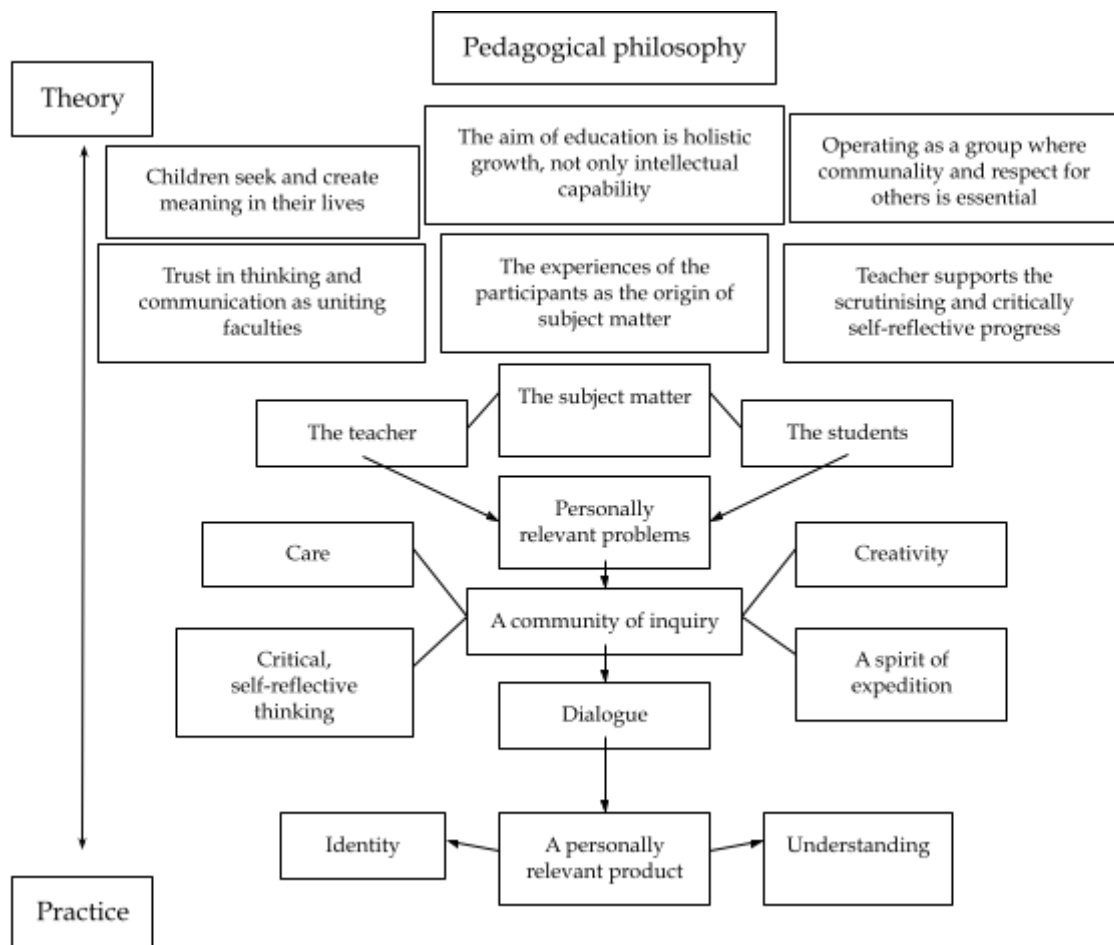


FIGURE 1 - The process of pedagogical philosophy

The six theoretical axioms found at the top of Figure 1 are summarised versions of Tomperi's principles that he writes all pedagogical philosophy practices share (234-235). The unabridged axioms are listed below.

- (1) Conception of the human condition that respects the disposition of children who already at an early age begin to seek and create meaning in their lives.
- 2) An outlook on education where the goal of teaching is not only informational and intellectual capability but a holistic growth that takes into consideration also the ethical, socio-emotional, and aesthetic dimensions.
- 3) Trust in the possibilities of thinking and communication as uniting human beings for which reason thinking and communicating are worth practising.
- 4) Having as the origination and basis of teaching and as the target of philosophical discussion the experiences and questions of the participants.
- 5) A scrutinising and critically self-reflective progression that is guided and supported by the teacher by aiming for pedagogical tactfulness.
- 6) Operating as a group in which the maintaining of communal practices and meanings, and the respecting of others are essential.

The core of the practical classroom work in the process of pedagogical philosophy is the *community of inquiry*. As shown in Figure 1, the community of inquiry uses personally relevant problems as subject matter and dialogue as its method of learning from these problems. The process aims at a personally relevant product, as Lipman calls it, at a some kind of a conclusion however indefinite (2003: 83). The personally relevant problems compose the subject matter and are drawn by the teacher and the students from the curriculum-necessitated subject matter. In other words, the texts, the vocabularies and the tasks are interpreted in such a way that touches the life-experience of the participants of the class (Tomperi, 2017: 235; Lipman, 2003: 118-119). The community of inquiry could be called an atmosphere of the classroom as much as it could be called a method of the classroom. In other words, it includes the will to act as well as the action itself (Lipman, 2003: 114). The will, or the ethos, consists of four basic elements which are discussed next, after which the elements of dialogue are discussed.

The *care* element describes the compassionate spirit of the endeavour of the community of inquiry as well as the careful examination of information (Lipman, 2003: 262-265). Therefore, Lipman continues, a caring thinker searches continually for a balance between everyone being existentially equal, or simply beyond comparison, and the fact that it is in human nature to differentiate, analyse and criticise. It could be said that the compassion element keeps the dialogue of the classroom together and that the meticulous scrutiny element keeps it moving onwards. Both are mandatory for there to be any real success at all; if the compassionate is missing the dialogue turns into an argument, a win-or-lose situation, and if the meticulous element is missing, there is no tension for the dialogue to reveal anything of importance. The dialogue process should be an end in itself, part of the subject matter, and so the end and its means are one and the same (Tomperi, 2017: 238).

The *creativity* element is exemplified by Lipman (2003: 273-275) with a list of twelve values that are found in creative thinking. Together they form one frame within which creative thinking can be conceptualised. (1) Originality, thinking that seems to stem from the person themselves. (2) Productivity, a quality in thinking that seeks to produce results in problematic situations. (3) Imagination, thinking that operates in the realm of possibility, creating new worlds or roads to them. (4) Independence, a creative thinker thinks freely, namely despite the common ways of thinking or despite social pressure to think otherwise. An independent thinker thinks for the sake of thinking itself, so therefore thinking becomes expeditious, a sort of play. (5) Experimentation, a quality which underlines that creative thinking is hypothesis-based and therefore not governed by some certain rules of thought. The hypotheses need not be fully shaped, just enough to create a frame within which to experiment. (6) Holism, a quality in thinking that aims at construing a whole of available parts. This quality is linked with the productivity aspect in that the whole

is more useful than an individual part. (7) Expression, an element of creative thinking that points to the process of expressing the character of both the thinker and the object of thought. In other words, creative thinking is original but objective truth-revealing at the same time. (8) Self-transcendence, a quality of creative thinking where the thinker seeks to surpass the previous stage of thought. The thinker wants to develop their thinking. (9) Surprise, an aspect of creative thinking which is connected with originality so that it adds to originality wonder and astonishment. It turns thinking into play, not trivial but sincere in nature. (10) Generativity, a quality of creative thinking that points to the fact that creativity can inspire creativity in others as well. The teacher has an important role in guiding the students' creativity so that they get in touch with it personally. Otherwise creativity, if left without personal connection, can discourage the students' creativity. (11) Maieuticity, a will for good in creative thinking. Creative thinking seeks to solve problems, not create them. (12) Inventiveness, a quality of creative thinking that offers many alternatives, having multiple strategies in dealing with a problem.

The *critical, self reflective thinking* element underlines the active and personal nature of the learning experience and of thinking. Tomperi describes criticality as a questioning, problematizing mindset of open curiosity, where the person does not ultimately attempt to secure their own position but seeks the truth in an emancipatory spirit (Tomperi, 2017: 226). Lipman compliments Tomperi's definition with a practicality as he writes that criticality is thinking put to action (2003: 211). He continues that if thinking is deemed critical, it aims to develop the object of thinking. It is therefore practical, pointing towards action. This action is a judgement at minimum, or a judgement put into practice at maximum (ibid. 211). A judgement is a product of critical thinking and means a conclusion, for example the action of ending a relationship that, after careful consideration, carried more suffering with it than it did joy. Criticality also means reflectiveness, which is to say that critical thinking examines the object of thinking but also the thinking process itself. It is according to Dewey "*active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends*" (1933: 119, italics by the author). For example, a teacher talks about the characteristics of archetypal heroes but then asks on what assumptions our thinking rests upon when heroism is considered. The teacher guides the students' thinking towards the structures of thinking alongside with its object. Lastly, as the reflective aspect already hints, thinking within the community of inquiry is targeted primarily towards the self. Tomperi continues on Dewey's point on reflectiveness that self-reflectiveness happens when this process of reflection is aimed at one's own thought processes (2017: 227). As the curriculum suggests, the better the self is known, the better the actions it produces (Opetushallitus, 2019: 16-17).

The *expeditious spirit* element hints of the greatest feat of science to mankind: objectivity, which is to say that no definite boundaries of what shall be found should

be set around the quest for truth. Only openness of mind makes it possible to follow one's investigation to where it leads, and the same is true with proper dialogue. Lipman points out (2003: 85) that inquiry is situational, meaning that only when a situation is cut from the totality of reality, is there possibility for deciding between relevance and irrelevance. Therefore, so that the openness of mind would not leave the community of inquiry chasing every butterfly that arises from the field of flowers, or to chase none at all, the teacher needs to set a perimeter, a frame within which the community will operate. This framing automatically produces evaluations of relevance from behalf of the students since the frame also provides the situation with a goal. And only after finding relevance within the selected frame is it possible to follow the dialogue where it will go, in the very same way as an explorer arriving to a new island does not know what they shall find but decides, as their frame, to begin by investing the plants instead of insects or fauna. The expeditious spirit in other words means oriented spontaneity, and is therefore a surprising endeavour which in turn is its motivating force.

Lipman defines *dialogue* as a situation where the participants explore, research together; statements are put forth to create tension, to reveal new sides of the problem at hand (Lipman, 2003: 106-110). He continues by quoting Buber that dialogue is opposed to monologue because monologue serves only the speaker, it is different from debate in which the other is treated as a position rather than a person, it is different from conversation in which the participants aspire to impress the other(s), it is different from friendly chatting in which the participants consider themselves legitimate and the other(s) as questionable, and it is different from lovers' talk in which each participant is enjoying their private and pleasant experience (Lipman, 2003: 111). He continues by adding to Buber's definition the requirement of logic. In Lipman's words "one must use reason to be able to follow what happens in a dialogue." Dialogue in the community of inquiry is thus a situation where the classroom shares a problem and hence a beginning point and a goal, but arrives at the situation from unique, personal settings. Tomperi argues that when the student is immersed into contemplating the problems on a personal level are they able to simultaneously experience the existential connection of dialogue with others and to create a relationship with the traditions of human existence itself (Tomperi, 2017: 237). Therefore, dialogue in a community of inquiry is personal and communal at the same time. The dialogical setting then aims at *a personally relevant product*, some form of understanding. It can be material, as in a produced piece of text, or immaterial, as an experience of development. It does not need to be thorough or all-encompassing, as Lipman points out (2003: 83). Because this product is personal, it becomes a part of the student's identity.

These principles of the community of inquiry and of dialogue thereof can be pointed out to the students to lead to development of the students' comprehensive abilities (Opetushallitus, 2019: 60) or skills such as (1) arguing, (2) sensitivity to

wonder, question the 'given' and to demand justification (3) identifying, adapting and forming the principles and criteria which define our judgement and based on which we make decisions (4) categorising matters so that their complexity unfolds (5) identifying relationships (cause-effect, means-ends, part-whole etc.) (6) moral imagination to build one's own morals by contemplating other perspectives and worldviews (7) intellectual honesty and listening to others (Juuso, 2008: 107).

Pedagogical philosophy should not be seen as a method that is a means to an end, as something that can be deployed when the need arises, but rather an *attitude, aspiration, readiness and practice* (Tomperi, 2017: 232, italics by the author). Therefore, Tomperi does not define a step-by-step practice since the point of philosophising is that the learning situation, the teacher and the students, creates the practice (ibid. 237). The essential thing, he continues, is to see that questions posed by the students or the teacher are not merely theoretically or institutionally philosophical; they are, if thought deeper, existentially *questions that are personal from the point of view of growth and education*, and that no answer given outside the student can affect them like the process of thinking about the question by themselves. Therefore, the perspective on the subject matter must be personal, otherwise there is no reflection between the individual and the matter at hand.

Therefore, Tomperi summarises, pedagogical philosophy can reach towards deweyan ideals. Firstly, the school moves towards a firm unity of aims, subject matter and practice, and secondly, a natural correspondence of the practices and interests between the school and the world arises (2017: 238). As the point of being in school is shifted to the practice of self-reflection through a personal and cooperative classroom practice, both curricular demands, the informational and the educational, can be achieved. Furthermore, studying is not done because of those demands but with them; they are the curricular frame within which the community of inquiry operates. And because there is a curricular frame, even though the expeditional dialogue does not have a fixed endpoint, it still serves the curriculum with the pedagogical tactfulness of the teacher. The spirit of the whole endeavour is summarised by Dewey as the democratic way of living, having diversity as a possibility of enriching life experience, learning and friendship (Tomperi, 2017: 256-257).

At the present moment, pedagogical philosophy has been studied for 40 years. Both case studies and longitudinal studies have been conducted. Studies have shown positive correlation between philosophising and reading skills, mathematical skills, cognitive processing and ethical and socioemotional readiness (Tomperi, 2016: 83-84). Studies with similar results have been conducted around the world, not only in the West, and therefore it implies that the effects of pedagogical philosophy in the classroom are universal for a learning human being.

3 DATA & METHODS

The core fascination for this thesis was to study how the national curricula define the purpose of school in Finland, and how this purpose could be integrated into subject matter-teaching. In other words, I wanted to find out what students should study *for* according to the official documents, and *how* it can be turned into practice. Upper Secondary School was chosen because of personal teaching experience there and because of a wish to teach mainly there in the future. Furthermore, as an inexperienced teacher, I find the maturity of Upper Secondary School students beneficial for practising teaching with pedagogical philosophy. The research question has two parts, and thus the thesis has two aims, which is due to my fascination in not theory alone but in practice likewise. The research questions are:

1. How does the Finnish National Upper Secondary School Core Curriculum define its educational task?
2. How can the process of pedagogical philosophy operationalise the educational task of Finnish Upper Secondary School?

This chapter describes the data and the methods used to analyse it. A rationale is given on the reasons for the selected data as well as for the methods of analysis. The data being a National Core Curriculum, it is not used in its entirety, and therefore justification is presented for the process of data reduction as well. Finally, the possible impacts of the choices made on the validity of this thesis are discussed.

This study is a qualitative study. It uses thematic content analysis to analyse the 2019 Finnish National Upper Secondary School Core Curriculum in order to understand how it defines the educational task, namely the educational task, of Upper Secondary School in Finland. The analysis therefore inspects the curriculum's justification for its existence, namely its purpose, value basis and the division into abilities that should bring about the sought outcome.

3.1 Data

This study uses the Finnish National Upper Secondary School Core Curriculum as its data. As mentioned above, the core fascination for the thesis was to find out the purpose of schooling in Finland, as explained in the curricula. Upper Secondary School was chosen because of personal interest. This personal interest stems from the aforementioned fact that Upper Secondary School students in Finland are normally

16-19 years old, and have therefore more mature readiness for dialogue demanding abstract thought. Furthermore, the curricula of Upper Secondary School in Finland are perhaps the most intensive subject matter-wise of the school stages because of The Matriculation Examination. Also, in Upper Secondary Schools the welfare of the students is declining rather rapidly. There is therefore an alarming need to integrate aspects into teaching which would naturally counter this decline in holistic welfare (see Introduction for sources).

The national core curricula are created as a common basis for all schools in Finland to strengthen equality of education along with ensuring consistency between schools (Opetushallitus: <https://www.oph.fi/fi/koulutus-ja-tutkinnot/perusopetuksen-opetussuunnitelman-ydinasiat>). Therefore, the government establishes the common national aims of teaching in Finland (Perusopetuslaki). However, even though the National Core Curricula define the overall demands of teaching, they offer a lot of freedom to teachers due to their inexplicit nature. It has been argued that indeed this autonomy, along with research-based teacher education, are the fundamental reasons for the high quality of teachers in Finland (e.g. Salo in Vantaan Sanomat, 2017 <https://www.vantaansanomat.fi/paikalliset/1514463>).

The Finnish National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary School as a whole is divided into six parts which are respectively (1) *Compiling the curriculum and its contents*, (2) *The task and value basis of Upper Secondary School*, (3) *Operationalisation of teaching*, (4) *Student counselling and support*, (5) *Evaluation of the student's learning and know-how*, and (6) *The learning aims and the fundamental contents of teaching*. The latest version of the curriculum was compiled in 2019 and was put into practice in 2021. The greatest changes to previous versions are modules that replaced courses, and the comprehensive abilities that help realise the educational task of the Upper Secondary School. The most important change regarding this study is, therefore, the comprehensive abilities because they define the characteristics of the good, balanced and civilised person, which in turn crystallises the educational justification for the existence of Finnish Upper Secondary School.

3.2 Thematic content analysis

Thematic content analysis is a method of analysis that classifies codes, parts of data that share desired qualities, from qualitative material, groups these codes into themes and with those themes presents the data in a descriptive way (Anderson, 2007: 1; Vuori, Tietoarkisto). Vuori continues that the analysis may be theory-driven, data-driven or a mixture of both. Theory-driven thematic content analysis works

from a standpoint of a chosen theory, and chooses codes from the data that are relevant for this theory. Data-driven thematic content analysis, on the other hand, is an open inquiry of the data from the standpoint of the research questions, unaffected by theoretical frameworks. It operates solely from the fascination of the researcher. This is somewhat similar to Krippendorff's (2019: 14.1.1) Text-driven content analysis, where a body of text sparks the interest of the researcher to study a certain topic. The difference is, however, that the research questions are formed only during a thorough reading of the data, not before.

This study uses data-driven thematic content analysis to analyse the Finnish National Upper Secondary School Core Curriculum from the basis of the first research question. The second research question is answered with the results of the analysis from the first research question.

These research questions had their content before I started to read the data, but they were not in their final form. I had glanced through the Curriculum and Tomperi's work before however, so the formation of the research questions might in reality have been a mixture of originating from outside the data and originating from reading the data. The natural choice for the method of analysis for this thesis was therefore the data-driven thematic content analysis because both research questions formed a clear frame for the reduction of the data.

The analysis began with a thorough reading of the data. As mentioned, the first research question determined what parts of the curriculum were relevant for this study. The first reading of the curriculum formed a body of text that, rather simply, had connections with the educational ideal. This coding process was conducted reading the National Curriculum through two times, the second focusing on parts that were not chosen as relevant data, and thus making corrections to the first reading. The third reading began to organise the chosen data into a hierarchy; the educational ideal had a philosophical basis on top of which it was built, advancing from abstraction towards practice. This theming is presented in Figure 2. Figure 3 is there as an overview of the comprehensive abilities for the reader. It is a result of analysing the explanations of the comprehensive abilities from the curriculum and attempting to bring forth their fundamental content.

After having analysed the data, it was possible to look at the process of pedagogical philosophy and see what possibilities it had in integrating the educational task of Upper Secondary School into its subject matter teaching. This was done by going through Figure 1 in detail and drawing connections from there to the curriculum.

The data-driven thematic content analysis meant that the reading of the data was wholly affected by the research questions. The choices made are therefore subjective, meaning that another study may choose slightly or greatly different parts of the data as relevant, and ignore parts chosen here as irrelevant. But like Krippendorff suggests (2019: 13.1), being aware of the subjectivity of interpreting a

language, the researcher begins to read the text in alternative voices and achieves hopefully a more objective understanding. Having done this to the best of my abilities, the choices made here are well-justified and reproducible, and therefore produce results that are as valid as I could make them.

4 RESULTS

The first part of this chapter displays the results of the analysis of the National Upper Secondary School Core Curriculum for the ideal of the *good, balanced and civilised person*, i. e., for its educational task. The chapter describes the findings beginning in theory and moving towards practice. This is summarised and visualised in Figure 2. Figure 3 illustrates the comprehensive abilities followed by a more detailed characterisation of them because of their important role as a bridge between theory and practice. Lastly, the chapter presents how the process of pedagogical philosophy can integrate the educational task of Upper Secondary School into its teaching task.

4.1 Curriculum analysis

This chapter lays out the educational task of Upper Secondary School in Finland. Figure 2 shows the educational task from its theoretical and philosophical basis into its practical aspirations. Figure 2 is also presented in this manner in the text below, namely from its theoretical basis towards practice. Figure 3 presents the abbreviated version of the *comprehensive abilities*. They are then discussed in more detail because, as the curriculum states, they act as integrative elements in the curriculum creating common aims for all subjects (Opetushallitus, 2019; 60). Furthermore, the aims of the comprehensive abilities in the foreign language classroom are presented.

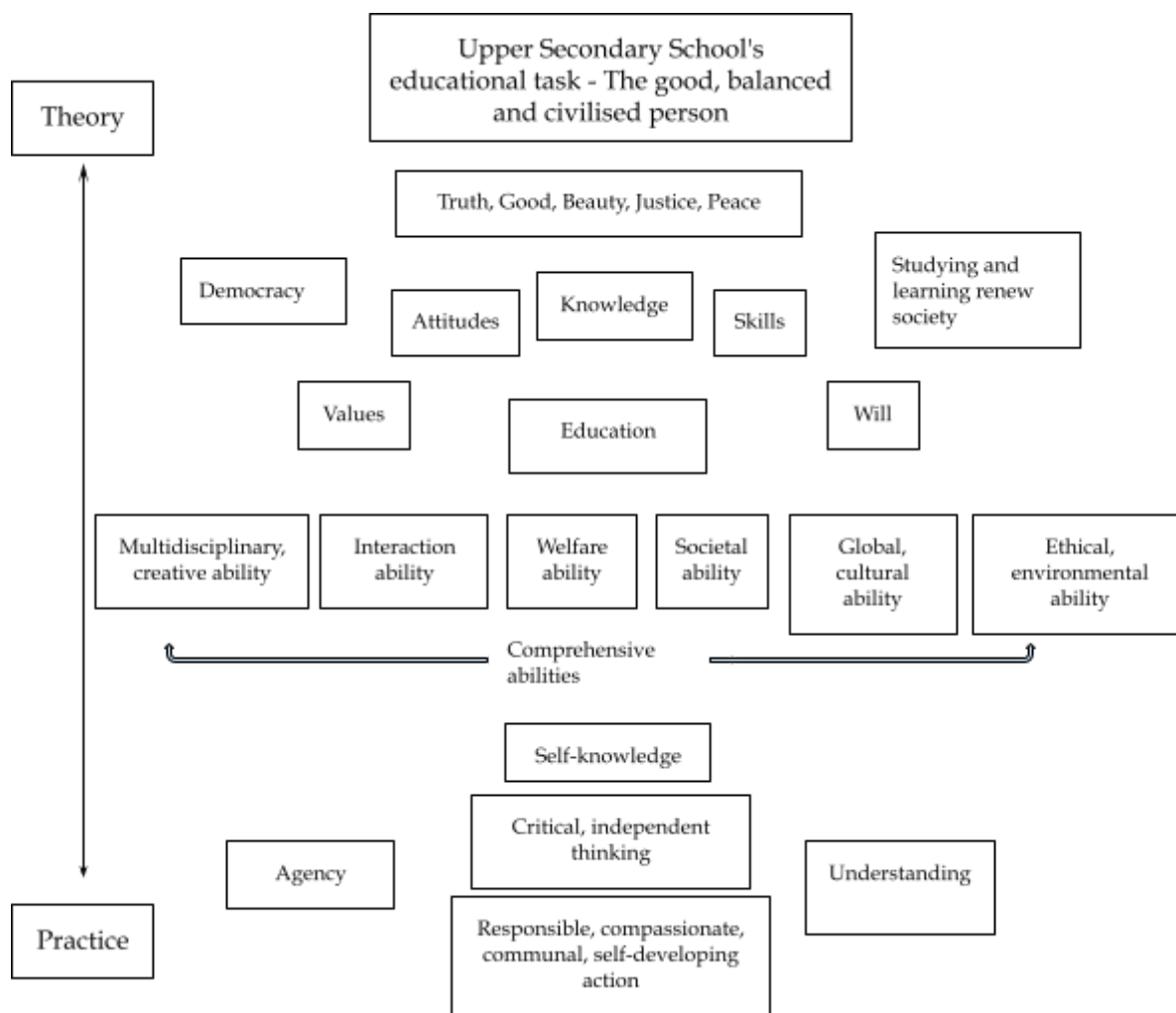


FIGURE 2 - A summary of the Finnish National Upper Secondary School Curriculum's educational ideal

Figure 2 is the result of thematic content analysis conducted on the Finnish Upper Secondary School National Core Curriculum with the first research question in mind. In other words, the analysis was done to gather pieces of the curriculum's educational aim and to put those pieces together to form a coherent picture of what the curriculum states to be the educational basis of Upper Secondary School education in Finland.

At the top of Figure 2 is the curriculum's formulation of its educational aim, namely *a good, balanced and civilised person* (Opetushallitus, 2019: 11, 60). In other words, this is the kind of person Upper Secondary School in Finland aspires to develop. This aspiration transforms into practice as *responsible, compassionate, communal and self-developing action* (Opetushallitus, 2019: 16), as found at the bottom part of Figure 2. This chapter now continues as how the philosophical basis transforms into practice according to the curriculum.

Truth, goodness and beauty, the transcendentals, have been used for a philosophical foundation of being both in the East and in the West (Cohen & Reeve,

2021; Tang, 1991: 3-22). They are thought to be universal concepts to all human beings thus representing a basis for the human condition. Justice and peace link the value basis of Upper Secondary School to democracy's ideals of changing the world in a just and peaceful manner (Opetushallitus, 2019: 16, 17, 63, 64). Justice and peace have been added explicitly to the new curriculum's value basis even though they have been there implicitly before (Opetushallitus, 2003-2019). These ideals form the theoretical foundation for the human condition which the student is to study (Opetushallitus, 2019: 17).

Education (*yleissivistys*) is described in the curriculum as the values, knowledge, skills, attitudes and will, with which individuals capable of critical, independent thinking are able to act responsibly, compassionately, communally and in a self-developing manner (Opetushallitus, 2019: 16). It, in other words, depicts the basis of proper action as being quality thinking combined with a technical understanding (*knowledge and skills*) and a philosophical understanding (*values, attitudes and will*) of the human condition. The justification of education is the fact that education and learning renew society (Opetushallitus, 2019: 16).

The conception of education (*yleissivistys*) involves both functions of Upper Secondary School, the teaching function (*the subject-specific syllabi*) and the educational function (*the comprehensive abilities*) (Opetushallitus, 2019: 16, 60-61). The teaching function can be described as the technical subject matter about the subjects themselves, and the educational function as the subject matter of the human condition, noting that the two constantly overlap. The curriculum states that the basis of Upper Secondary School expertise is formed by the subject-specific syllabi, the teaching function, and that the educational function is to support and deepen it (Opetushallitus, 2019: 60-61). Therefore, the educational function is operationalised as the comprehensive abilities, designed to be the uniting subject matter through all subjects (Opetushallitus, 2019: 60). Expertise of these abilities form the *good, balanced and civilised person*, in other words it realises the practical aim of the educational function of the Upper Secondary education.

These comprehensive abilities are discussed in more detail below, but it is worth mentioning that they are based on three areas: (1) on the value basis described above, (2) on the conception of learning described in the curriculum and (3) on the working culture of an Upper Secondary School (Opetushallitus, 2019: 61). The curricular conception of learning sees the student as an active agent who learns both individually and socially, and is given constructive feedback in the process of creatively interpreting, analysing and evaluating data based on their prior knowledge and experience. The curriculum continues that when the student becomes more aware of their learning processes and thinking skills, they can act gradually more in an independent manner (Opetushallitus, 2019: 18-19). The working culture then is the practical realisation of Upper Secondary School's teaching and educational task (Opetushallitus, 2019: 20-23) meaning the concrete

actions the school makes on the basis of the curriculum. The comprehensive abilities are dealt into six areas, each of which is presented here as together they form a more practical depiction of the educational ideal.

The bottom part of Figure 2 shows how the understanding of comprehensive abilities flows into practical skills and characteristics which are *self-knowledge, critical, independent thinking, agency, understanding* and *responsible, compassionate, communal, self-developing action*. In other words, the comprehensive abilities are different parts of the students' characteristics, and by studying them the students get to know themselves. This knowledge then transforms into a stronger sense of personal identity (Opetushallitus, 2019: 62) which is a constant aim throughout the curriculum (Opetushallitus, 2019: 16, 18-19, 21, 58, 62). Agency means the readiness and ability to act intentionally and independently (Tieteen termipankki 18.9.2023: Kasvatustieteet:toimijuus.) and follows from self-knowledge. Similarly, critical and independent thinking and understanding result from self-knowledge and all three are present and aimed at during Upper Secondary School studies (Opetushallitus, 2019: 16-17, 20, 61).

Next, the result of the analysis on the comprehensive abilities is laid out. Their core meanings are summarised in Figure 3 so as to give an overview on the abilities that Upper Secondary School in Finland aims to teach through all subjects.

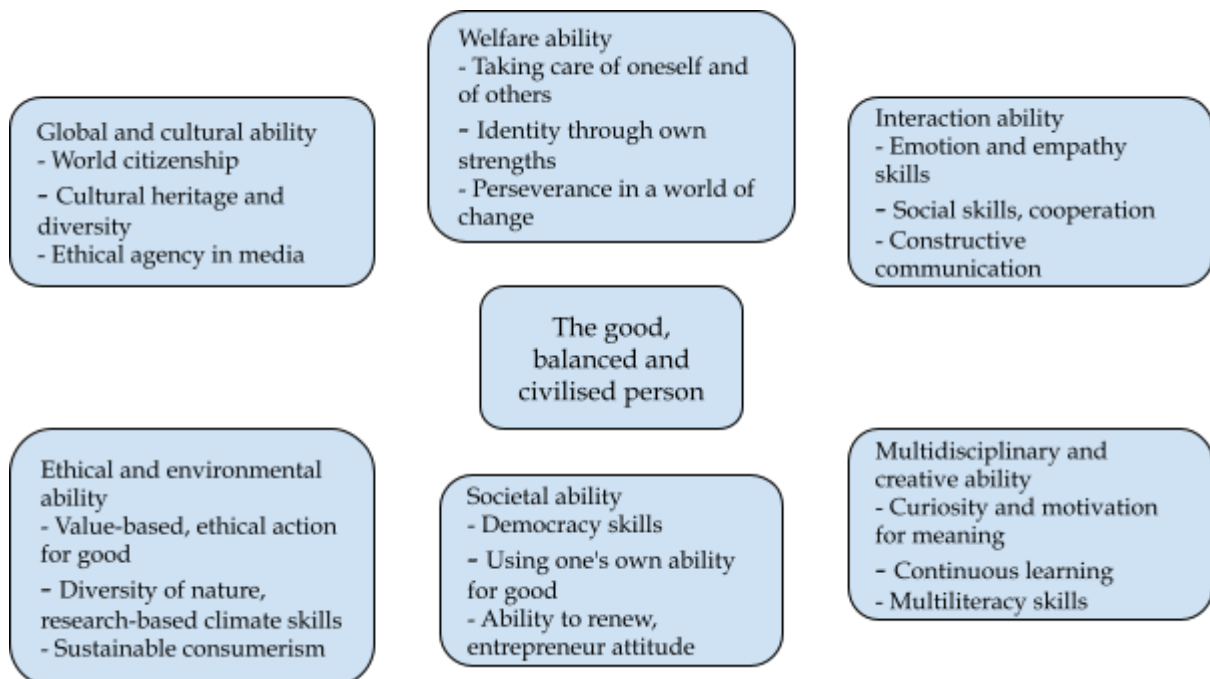


FIGURE 3. Comprehensive abilities, abbreviated (Opetushallitus, 2019: 60).

Global and cultural ability points to an understanding of oneself as part of the global community, that is, of humanity (Opetushallitus, 2019: 64-65). Internationality is

written in the General Upper Secondary Schools Act (Lukiolaki 714/2018, 13 § 3 mom.) and it is a clear orientational aim with world citizenship for the Finnish Upper Secondary School (Opetushallitus, 2019: i.a. 26, 65). International orienting is done mostly, according to the curriculum (2019: 65), through culturally and linguistically diverse networks, media and source material, and therefore requires ethical agency in global media. This ability also includes knowledge of the Finnish, European and global cultural heritage with an understanding of cultural diversity. This knowledge integrates with the subject matter teaching of foreign languages so that the global and cultural ability strengthens the student's curiosity, motivation and skill to act in environments that are diverse both culturally and linguistically (Opetushallitus, 2019: 176).

Welfare ability aims according to the curriculum at a holistic welfare of the student. Taking care of oneself and others in an active way is realised as beginning from the personal level. The student builds their identity by recognising their strengths and weaknesses, and through this deepening self-knowledge the student can endure uncertainty better, and thus becomes more resilient and trusting for the future. Holistic welfare consists of physical, mental and social dimensions of performance and health. Sufficient physical activity and sleep, breaks during the school days and healthy food are mentioned as parts of the physical dimension. The mental dimension is represented by for example personally meaningful culture, responsible use of technology and ethics. Lastly, the social dimension is exemplified by activity towards the welfare and safety of self and others. The student's readiness to identify and to act against exhaustion, bullying and harassment is to be strengthened. The student also familiarises themselves with societal, cultural and global means of furthering the welfare of communities and ecosystems (Opetushallitus, 2019: 62).

Interaction ability aims at the student being able to communicate in a constructive way, that is by listening, respecting and anticipating others' emotions, views and their expression in a compassionate way. The curriculum sees compassion as the basis of good interaction because compassion makes possible the experience of meaningfulness. Constructive communication is learned by developing awareness of one's own emotions, by recognising, handling and eventually regulating them. The global sense of purpose and importance for good interaction is formed through an understanding of the role of constructive communication and intercultural familiarisation in the processes of sustainable future, democracy and peace. Lingual awareness and multiliteracy skills are also parts of constructive communication (Opetushallitus, 2019: 62). In the curriculum's foreign languages section, welfare and interaction abilities are grouped and are taught by examining such matters as empathy, good manners and constructive interaction, and how these realise as an understanding of otherness. Furthermore, this understanding then makes it possible

to build shared understanding in situations where there is none due to lingual or cultural reasons (Opetushallitus, 2019: 175).

Multidisciplinary and creative ability supports the consideration of values beneath the student's thinking, views and action from ethical, aesthetic and ecological perspectives. Different methods of acquiring and presenting information are to be familiarised with for the student to be able to strengthen their ability to evaluate the reliability of said information. Multiliteracy skills are based on a comprehensive view of text as a medium, and are deepened in a purposeful manner. Upper Secondary School studies strengthen the student's curiosity and skill to find, interpret and to produce texts varying in their difficulty, point of view and context. The student is to study possibilities to solve complex problems regarding a sustainable future (Opetushallitus, 2019: 63). In foreign languages, multidisciplinary and creative abilities come into practice in cross-subject projects where foreign languages are used to discuss, ask questions and solve problems with others in situations that test the boundaries of the students' skills. The curriculum continues that at the same time established conventions can be questioned, and new and creative perspectives can be looked for (Opetushallitus, 2019: 175).

Societal ability has as its basis the student's diverse experiences of agency, influencing and work as well as reflection upon those experiences. Upper Secondary School studies are to deepen the student's understanding of their role, responsibility and possibilities in supporting the diverse realisation of democracy. With the spirit of *societal ability* the student internalises an attitude of entrepreneurship and personal renewal in different areas of life. This includes planning the future with an open mind, argumented risk-taking and enduring uncertainty, frustration and failure. The student learns to understand and appreciate the principles and structures of a society that is based on democracy, justice and equality. They are encouraged to take part and to take initiative in societal questions (Opetushallitus, 2019: 63-64). Foreign languages offer according to the curriculum lingual and cultural readiness for actively participating in the society and in the international world. At the same time connections are made into democracy education and perspectives on equality (Opetushallitus, 2019: 175).

Ethical and environmental ability enables the student to plan their actions from the point of view of ethics and responsibility. The student is to learn basic principles of the ecological, economical, social and cultural dimensions of sustainable life, and of their interdependencies. Experiences of care towards people and nature strengthen the validity of good everyday actions. The student is to get possibilities to observe, plan, investigate and evaluate actions that aim to shift climate change and the diversity of nature into a more sustainable direction. These observations are reflected upon from the point of view of societal change, and structures that promote or obstruct positive change are identified (Opetushallitus, 2019: 64). Ethical and environmental ability realises in foreign languages as getting to know global issues

about climate such as climate change, biodiversity and unsustainable consumption habits. The students strengthen their problem solving skills and look for contacts to work on these issues. Furthermore, the significance of attitudes and values is discussed and a sense of responsibility developed during Upper Secondary School studies (Opetushallitus, 2019: 176).

As the point of the education (*yleissivistys*) task of Upper Secondary School is to educate people who can act well in the world, the comprehensive abilities concretise the good actor. By learning about this ideal of the good actor, the student gains agency over themselves resulting in a positively growing learning cycle. As identity is strengthened and becomes clearer, the student becomes more and more able to orient themselves in the world by aiming at their personal goals more distinctively. This is not unlike an apprentice carpenter who slowly learns to work their tools and thus gets more and more motivated as they can carve more sophisticated pieces, and thus learns more and more in the accelerating process of mastery. The tool that the schooling system hones towards mastery is then the self, the individual, and since every individual is unique beyond comparison, the classroom practice that guides the learner towards this mastery has to be personal likewise. Even though the subject matter itself is the same to all, it has to be presented in a way that touches the individual experience and grows into an internal curiosity making everything part of the mystery of being a human being.

4.2 Pedagogical philosophy as an operationalisation of the curriculum's educational task

This chapter examines how pedagogical philosophy as a pedagogical approach can realise Finnish Upper Secondary School's educational task. In other words, this chapter illustrates the process of pedagogical philosophy and examines what possibilities it has in integrating the educational task of Finnish Upper Secondary School with its teaching task. It does so by going through the six philosophical axioms of Figure and connecting them and the rest of the process of pedagogical philosophy with the educational task of the curriculum. Figure 1 presents the process of pedagogical philosophy from its theoretical axioms at the top to its practical realisations at the bottom. As pedagogical philosophy is not a method but rather *an attitude, aspiration, readiness and practice* (Tomperi, 2017: 232, italics by the author), this operationalisation is not meant to be a methodological handbook. It is rather a description of a pedagogical mindset with practical examples. As will be shown, the reality of philosophising with students is always situation-originated, an end in itself, and cannot therefore be put into a universal methodology.

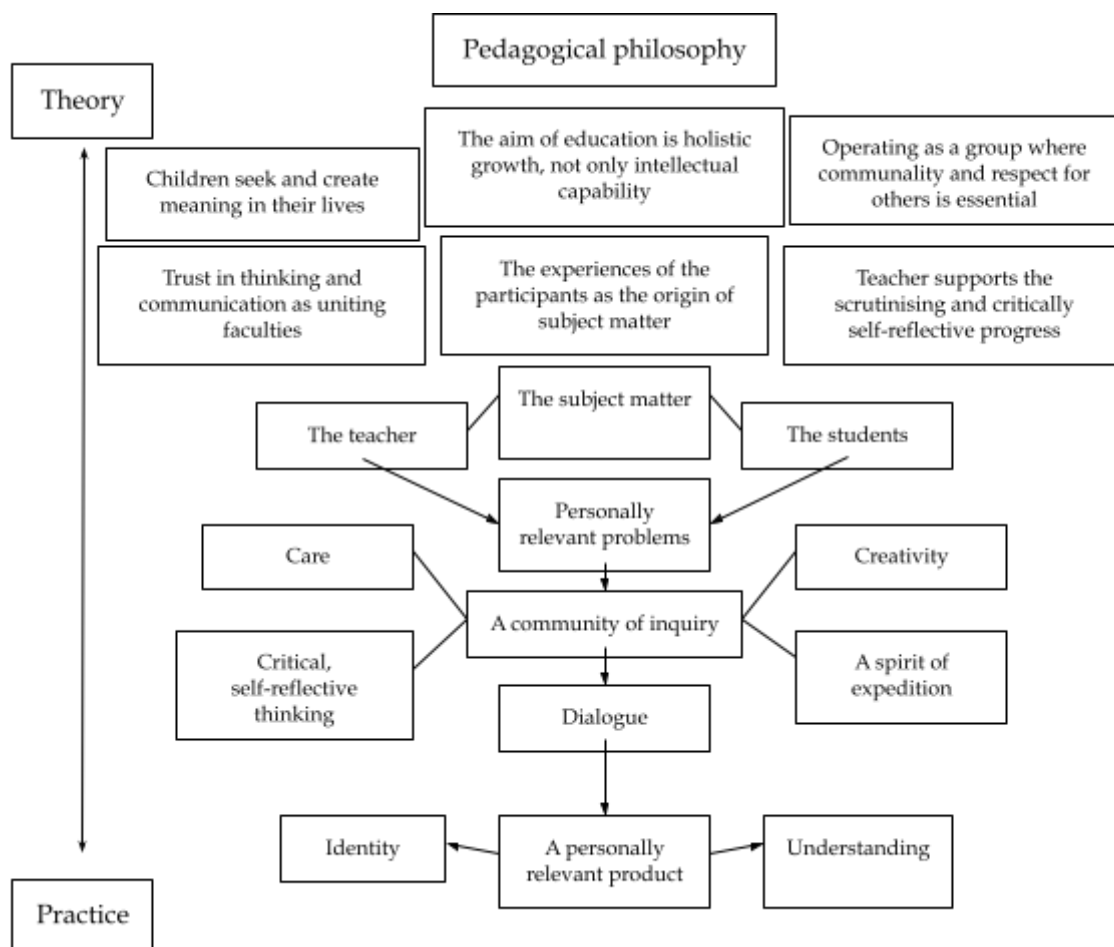


FIGURE 1 - The process of pedagogical philosophy

Children seek and create meaning in their lives. Pedagogical philosophy can be called "personally meaningful thinking" (Tomperi, 2017: 235). The curriculum speaks of "meaningful learning experiences" (Opetushallitus, 2019: 20), "meaningful life" (ibid. 25), "meaningful culture" (ibid. 62), "the experience of meaning" (ibid. 62), "meaningful subject-matter and methods" (ibid. 66). The experience of meaning is personal, and to develop meaning in a school setting means enabling situations that are personally meaningful to students. Therefore, Figure 1 shows that pedagogical philosophy attempts to transform whatever subject-matter into personally relevant problems (Lipman, 2003: 105; Tomperi, 2017: 235, 237). Park offers a useful division of meaning into two categories, namely global meaning and situational meaning (Park, 2013: 40-41). Global meaning is sensed when an individual's relationship with a particular goal is improved. These goals can be connected to for example relationships, work, religion, knowledge, and achievement. Situational meaning on the other hand is derived from the process of making sense of discrepant singular situations, for example that of realising the reasoning behind a stranger honking a horn. Park's conception of global and situational meaning can be generalised then so that meaning is a sense of alignment of a person's aims with reality. As Figure 1

shows, the subject matter in the form of personally relevant problems is then handled in a community of inquiry. As pointed out in the Background-section, a community of inquiry uses quality dialogue (Lipman, 2003: 111-113) to learn about these problems ending up in a personally relevant product (ibid. 102). This personally relevant product is inherently meaningful because it stems from a meaningful problem. Furthermore, Tomperi continues this idea by stating that the justification for pedagogical philosophy is to make the experience of life and growth meaningful (Tomperi, 2017: 238). Therefore, the process of pedagogical philosophy seems to be able to enable the aforementioned alignment of aims and reality on a personal level within the immediate environment, and realise the curriculum's aims for meaningful studying.

The aim of education is holistic growth, not only intellectual capability. The knowledge of the comprehensive abilities of Upper Secondary School education aims at the *good, balanced and civilised person* (Opetushallitus, 2019: 60, italics added). Furthermore, they include areas such as "growing to be a good person" and "building a sustainable future" (ibid. 61) and form a wholesome picture of the abilities which a human being needs to live a good life. Therefore, it is exactly the educational task of Upper Secondary School in Finland that recognises the fact that intellectual capability needs all other areas of growth by its side to flourish. Pointing at holistic growth, Tomperi mentions ethical, socioemotional and aesthetical dimensions of the individual (2017: 234). Likewise, the curriculum defines ethical capability as one of the comprehensive abilities (Opetushallitus, 2019: 64), talks about socioemotional abilities for example in the interaction abilities (ibid. 62-63), and includes the aesthetic dimension of a human being for example in creative abilities (ibid. 63). The community of inquiry, then, has such elements as care, creativity, critical and self-reflective thinking, and a spirit of expedition, which all hints, like Tomperi puts it, that the process of pedagogical philosophy deals with problems that pervade through the boundaries of school subjects (2017: 239). Therefore, by having the process itself as subject matter, pedagogical philosophy seems to be able to answer the curriculum's aims for realising the teaching of the comprehensive abilities throughout the subjects.

Operating as a group where respect for others is essential. "The basis of Upper Secondary School education is respect for life and of human rights along with the inviolability of human dignity" (Opetushallitus, 2019: 17). Other mentions in the curriculum about respect are for example that "Upper Secondary School teaching respects individuality" (ibid. 22), "the student is guided to respect everyone's right to their own language and culture" (ibid. 41), and that "Upper Secondary School education encourages the student to act towards a world that is more respecting" (ibid. 58). To respect something means to acknowledge the importance of the target of respect (Cambridge Dictionary, read 24.09.2023). Respect in the classroom thus originates from the recognition that other people are important to one's own

learning. Lipman writes that in a community of inquiry the students realise that even though learning is personal they can learn from other students' experiences (2003: 113). This is the experience that acts as a basis for mutual respect in a classroom. And as the process of pedagogical philosophy uses the process itself as subject matter (Tomperi, 2017: 235), it seems possible to guide the students to this basic experience for mutual respect within the dialogue of the community of inquiry.

Trust in thinking and communication as uniting faculties. The curriculum speaks of unity in the following ways. Participation, agency and a sense of community are emphasised in all Upper Secondary School activity (Opetushallitus, 2019: 17). Participation, cooperation, a sense of community, and diversity are emphasised in the working culture of Upper Secondary School (ibid. 10). The way of action the curriculum aspires for is "responsible, empathic, communal and self-developing" (ibid. 16). Learning happens in interaction between other students, teachers, experts and other communities in different environments (ibid. 18). The building up of a learning community requires everyone to participate in the creation of a caring atmosphere (ibid. 21). In summary, communality and cooperation is emphasised strongly in the curriculum on the side of strengthening the individual identity. The fact that this cooperation would be based on trust in thinking and communication is not written out as such in the curriculum, however, it seems safe to presume that communication underlies all cooperation as thinking underlies all communication. Lipman defines *inclusiveness, participation, shared cognition, face-to-face relationships* and *feelings of social solidarity* among others as characteristics of the community of inquiry (2003: 114-115). In other words, these are the building blocks of the atmosphere of caring the curriculum mentions. Therefore, the process of pedagogical philosophy seems able to contribute to the communality and unity of the classroom and of the school.

The experiences of the participants as the origin of subject matter. The "subject matter" of the educational task of the Upper Secondary School are the comprehensive abilities, as they form the objectives for all Upper Secondary School studies (Opetushallitus, 2019: 60). The abbreviated comprehensive abilities are presented in Figure 3 on page 23 as to give the outline of their contents. The curriculum does not state concrete ways to teach the comprehensive abilities but provides a broad explanation of their contents. For example the *welfare ability* consists of such things as "building one's identity by recognising one's strengths and points of development, and deepening one's expertise from the basis of increased self-knowledge", and "Upper Secondary School studies develop the student's resilience, perseverance and trust in the future" (ibid. 62). The curriculum therefore trusts the teachers to include these themes into the subject-matter teaching. As the learning outcome of the comprehensive abilities is aimed to be personal, in other words that every student would become "the good, balanced and civilised person", the ways in which they are taught must also be personal. This is echoed in Lipman's

writing as he quotes Mead that the teacher's success is dependent mainly on the ability to create the subject matter in terms of the students' experiences (Lipman, 2003: 103-104), and in Tomperi's writing where he states that if the students do not experience the problems handled in the classroom as stemming from their life experience, no individual, collective or cultural reflection is generated (Tomperi, 2017: 237). This is the meaning of the arrows in Figure 1 arriving to the subject matter from both the teacher and the students. Therefore, the process of pedagogical philosophy seems to be able to transform the subject matter into problems that stem from the students' life experiences and thus realise the curricular aim for comprehensive learning in forms of the comprehensive abilities.

Teacher supports the scrutinising and critically self-reflective progress. The curriculum mentions the teacher's role in only a few places in the following ways. "The teacher guides the student in the studying skills of the subject they teach, and helps the student to develop their learning skills" (Opetushallitus, 2019: 27), and "The teachers guide the student in studying learning skills, in carrying responsibility of their own learning and working, and to use studying strategies suited for each subject" (ibid. 30). In Mölsä's study, five classroom teachers described the role of a classroom teacher in the 2010's as having become more comprehensive, in other words having become more fragmented with different kinds of tasks in addition to the teaching task (Mölsä, 2017: 59-62). Furthermore, she writes that the change from the teacher of authority to the teacher who should be the students' friend seems to have taken place in the 1990's and has developed so that in the 2010's the teacher should be both the authority and the friend. In summary, one of the biggest changes has been the shift from a teacher-centred into a student-centred one (ibid. 62-64). The fact that this is so seems self-evident today, and perhaps the question how can the student be cared for in the best possible way is more relevant. The curriculum's answer is to teach the students to act in a certain way which is based upon critical and self-reflective thinking. Lipman quotes Ryle when he lists important qualities of a teacher who can make their students think (2003: 287-288). (1) When having to repeat, the same matter is explained in a different way. (2) An expectation to improve on the matters taught (application, reformation, making conclusions etc.). (3) Not telling but showing what needs to be done. (4) Posing questions to tease the students and then posing questions from their answers. (5) A perseverance to make the students redo tasks over and over again. (6) Leading the students on a half-known path just to leave them to travel the last bit by themselves. (7) Bringing up incorrect solutions and expecting the students to point out their flaws and how they should be developed. (8) An inclination to draw the students' attention to easier problems and use them as a handrail. (9) Deconstructing complex problems into simpler ones so that the students would solve them and combine the solutions. (10) Upon finding a solution, the students are shown problems of the same nature. Lipman points out that a good teacher, in addition to teaching this active problem solving, teaches the

process itself for it to integrate into a way of thinking, into a way to teach oneself. Therefore, the teacher who is familiar with the process of pedagogical philosophy seems able to teach the learning skills the curriculum aims for to their students, because of the fact that the process itself, no matter the subject matter at hand, is self-reflective in nature and aims at the continuation of critical and reflective thinking skills (Tomperi, 2017: 238).

In summary, the process of pedagogical philosophy seems to be able to fulfil the educational task of the Finnish Upper Secondary School. As the basis of the educational task is to teach the students to act well in the world by teaching them self-reflection so that their knowledge of themselves would deepen, they are faced with questions that are philosophical in nature. Tomperi justifies pedagogical philosophy as a pedagogy by writing that philosophy is always present in the school context, in school practice, and in school knowledge as a permeating presuppositions and questions, and as a permanent problem of the connection of experiences, meanings, understanding, existence, language and thinking (Tomperi, 2017: 239). As the Finnish National Upper Secondary School Core Curriculum states, its comprehensive abilities serve an integrative purpose (Opetushallitus, 2019: 60), in other words they act as a subject matter that connects all other subjects. Therefore, it can be stated that the process of pedagogical philosophy and the educational task of the Finnish Upper Secondary School serve a similar aspiration.

5 DISCUSSION

This study looked at the compatibility of the process of pedagogical philosophy as a pedagogical approach with the demands of the Finnish Upper Secondary School National Core Curriculum's educational task. Namely, how the process of pedagogical philosophy could, as a pedagogical approach, operationalise the educational task of Upper Secondary School in Finland and integrate it with its teaching task. This study did this by analysing the National Core Curriculum for its educational task and connecting the findings with the process of pedagogical philosophy.

The thematic content analysis of the curriculum answered the first research question as presenting the core of the curriculum's educational task in a form of Figure 2. The findings were then further presented following Figure 2 from its theoretical findings towards the practical. The second research question was answered by comparing Figure 1, which shows the process of pedagogical philosophy, with Figure 2. This comparison resulted in a look at the possibilities of the operationalisation of the educational task with the process of pedagogical philosophy.

Therefore, the practical implications of this thesis are simply attempts to give a vivid expression of theory, of the spirit of pedagogical philosophy since it is a living, breathing classroom practice. In other words, it does not attempt to answer the question of what should be taught but rather how the 'what' could be taught. In doing this the thesis does not give much pragmatic guidance to the teacher either, rather a frame within which it is possible to combine the informational and the educational subject matter. Pedagogical philosophy draws its ethos from a natural way of being a human. Its core qualities are those that bring the most out of life as well, namely compassion, openness, creativity, curiosity, spontaneity and critical self-reflection.

The analysis on the curriculum provided a clear aspiration for the Finnish Upper Secondary School at the side of its teaching task. This aspiration is a "education of the heart" by quality education, diverse connections to the surrounding world, working culture that encourages communality and participation, and life skills that support welfare and self-knowledge (Opetushallitus, 2019: 11). The good, balanced and civilised person is an individual who can act responsibly, compassionately, communally, and in a self-developing way (ibid. 16, 60). This aspiration is realised as teaching the comprehensive abilities with the subject matter of all subjects. The comprehensive abilities are areas of human welfare and together constitute a practical set of abilities for the aforementioned ideal. Expertise of these abilities lead to a deepened state of self-knowledge which

then creates a basis for critical, individual thinking, and lastly for responsible, compassionate, communal and self-developing action.

The results from answering the second research question pointed strongly at the fact that the process of pedagogical philosophy is able to operate as a pedagogical approach firstly in teaching the comprehensive abilities to the students, and secondly in integrating the educational task of Finnish Upper Secondary School with its teaching task. In other words, through the process of pedagogical philosophy firstly the students' self-knowledge and critical thinking is strengthened, and secondly it becomes possible to transform the subject matter into personally relevant problems. Indeed, the advantage of pedagogical philosophy seems to be its practice of connecting the students' immediate life experiences with the subject matter, and furthermore its deweyan endeavour to show the inseparability of goals, subject matter and methods with the natural correspondence of school and the world outside it (Tomperi, 2017: 238).

The educational task of the Upper Secondary School has the potential of transforming Upper Secondary School studies into studies that are more meaningful to the individual student because of personal relevance, but the question is naturally how can this be done in practice. The results of this study point at a pedagogical solution that integrates the educational task of Upper Secondary School with its teaching task. This integration seems important, even vital, for example because of the declining welfare of the Upper Secondary School students in Finland (Lukiolaisbarometri, 2019, 2022). The results point at the usefulness of pedagogical philosophy as a practice of making the Finnish Upper Secondary School indeed more meaningful to its students and teachers alike because the process transforms the subject matter into personally relevant questions. In other words, it seems that because pedagogical philosophy attempts to connect the student's personal experience of life with the subject matter at hand while teaching dialogical skills, it has the potential of realising the aims of the educational task of the curriculum.

The point of this thesis is to point at a pedagogical practice for anyone wishing to integrate the educational task of the Finnish Upper Secondary School with its teaching task. This study does not suggest that one needs to discard all other pedagogies from the way of pedagogical philosophy; it simply presents pedagogical philosophy as a practice from which one can draw inspiration. The process of pedagogical philosophy may seem comprehensive, and it can be that, but it can also serve both as a theoretical inspiration and a practical toolkit. In other words, the theoretical axioms may provide an orientation for any kind of pedagogical thinking and the ways of transforming subject matter or having a dialogue fit in a multitude of different pedagogies.

The integration of the educational task with the teaching task of the curriculum has been studied very little. This notion is based, however, on a personal search from JYKDOK, the library archives of the University of Jyväskylä and from

Google and Google scholar. Further study is therefore required for both the integration of the curriculum's tasks and for pedagogies that could operationalise the integration in practice. Tomperi writes in the Introduction for Finnish readers of Lipman's *Thinking in Education* that the book has been written with the American school system and policies in mind (Tomperi in Lipman, 2003: 355). Tomperi states, however, that when Lipman visited Finland in 1995 philosophy for children got so much attention that material packages were designed to teach it. These material packages had been out of print for a very long time, but Tomperi continues that new interest in philosophy with children is lifting its head in Finland and new material is being made (ibid. 354). These materials include for example YLE's teacher's guide for philosophising with children (YLE, 2012), Juuso Hannu's book *Ajatteleva koulu - Matthew Lipman ja P4C* (2008), and Riku Väitalo's *The Philosophical Classroom. Balancing educational purposes.* (2018).

To conclude, this study suggests that the educational task of the Finnish Upper Secondary School can be integrated into the subject matter-teaching if the subject matter is interpreted so that it generates questions which touch the immediate life experiences of the students. Furthermore, if these questions are handled within a dialogical classroom, where both personal and communal reflection happens in a caring atmosphere, it is possible to teach the contents of the comprehensive abilities of the curriculum while studying the subject matter of the curriculum's teaching task. Some material for critical and self-reflective teaching has been authored in Finnish and for the Finnish school system, so it is possible to find practical applications for the Finnish Upper Secondary School classroom. This study pointed out that the process of pedagogical philosophy presented here has the potential to meet the curriculum's aspirations, and serves thus as one bridge towards an integrated classroom practice.

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