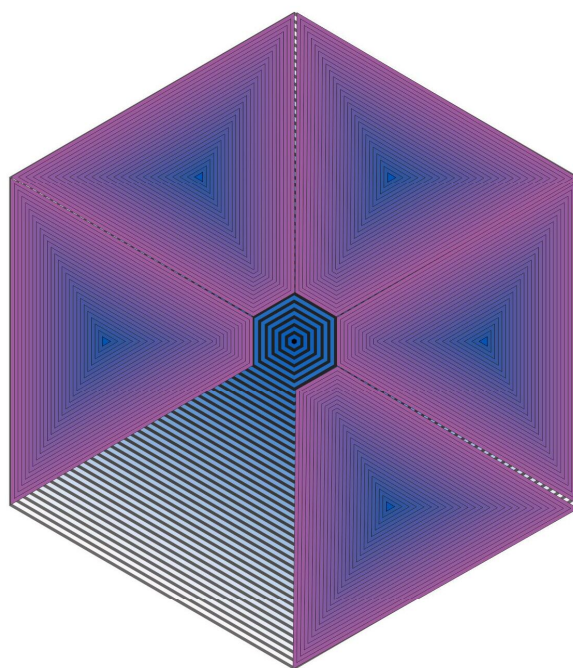


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HUMAN AND SOCIETY EDUCATION: INTERACTION OF TWO SYSTEMS

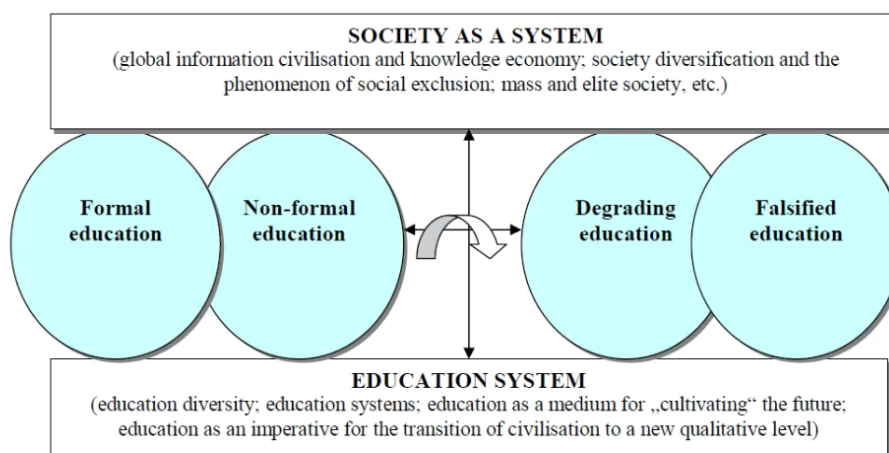
Vincentas Lamanauskas

Vilnius University, Lithuania

E-mail: vincentas.lamanauskas@sa.vu.lt

The universal position is that education is the most important element of the social system, designed to develop human capital and form ideas, ideals, and worldviews. It is also fully understandable that the interaction between education and society is two-way and multifaceted (Figure 1). Education influences the development of society, forms human capital, ensures socialisation and cultural development. At the same time, society determines the direction and goals of education and influences its quality and accessibility. Society and education are two interconnected systems that interact and influence each other. Education performs an important social function in society, determines social mobility, helps maintain cultural continuity, and, of course, is an important factor in economic development. Moreover, education can increase political awareness and promote active participation of citizens in political processes. Well-educated individuals often better understand political systems, their rights and duties, which can contribute to strengthening democracy. In this case, we want to emphasise the word “can” because it works differently in different societies. It is more than obvious that the interaction is dynamic and can change depending on historical, cultural, economic, and political conditions. Society and education constantly influence each other, shaping a common social reality. Each country formulates its own educational priorities. The priority of some countries is to maintain and develop the level of science and technology; for developing countries, the “vital” issue is raising the level of literacy; for aggressive countries (e.g., Russia, North Korea, etc.), the most important thing is educational indoctrination, the militaristic nature of education.

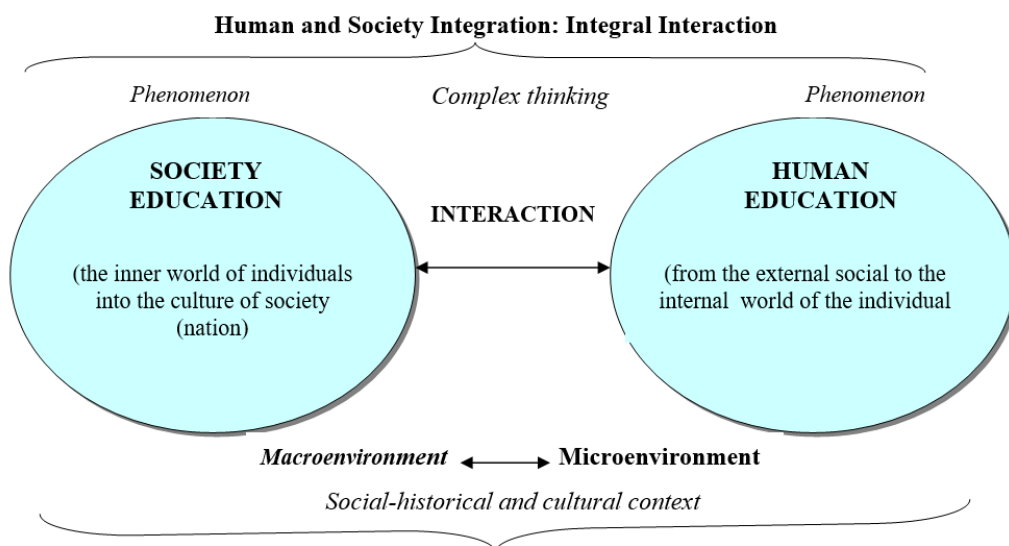
Figure 1
Two Systems (Non) Integral Interaction



It seems as if we are accustomed to think that such interaction is only positive. However, there is always another side, a negative one. It looks as if we realise that the real result of the education system is a fully educated person. And what does being fully educated mean? What is the content of such education? What is its expression in society? After all, these systems often contradict each other, intersect, operate side by side, complement each other, or not. Often, we do not even know what essential factors determine one or another nature of the interaction of these systems. Finally, which systems (institutional or non-institutional) have the greatest impact on the personality? In today's world, there is quite a lot of social inequality and segregation. This is one of the essential negative effects of the interaction of systems. This not only can create but actually creates "a vicious circle", when social inequality is transmitted from generation to generation. Ideological indoctrination is even more pronounced when used as a tool of ideological indoctrination. For example, in authoritarian states (e.g., Russia), education is used to propagate government narratives, suppress critical thinking, and form loyal citizens. For example, a lot of militaristic initiatives have been implemented in Russian schools (Alava, 2025). The consequences of such a position are extremely obvious – individual freedom is restricted, any creativity is suppressed, society is degrading in a certain sense. Today we clearly observe this in the education of Russia, Belarus, and other countries. In this context, another phenomenon is revealed, which is the falsification of education (Lamanauskas, 2007, 2024). Education falsification today manifests itself in various ways. However, there is practically no data directly related to the falsification of the education system, and this could be a rather important field for detailed research. The phenomenon of falsification is becoming more and more interesting and relevant. This phenomenon is related to all educational areas. Such important areas as quality of education, management and funding of education, recognition of qualifications, etc. are often susceptible to falsification (Lamanauskas, 2011a).

Thus, the interaction between society and education can be both very useful and effective, however, it can also have extremely negative and long-term consequences, if it is not properly managed, or if a system is dysfunctional. We often say that by transforming education, we change the world. And it's like we automatically perceive it as a positive. However, according to Hegel, the school is a mirror of a specific era. And if so, then that mirror reflects both sides. The 21st century is called in many different ways: it is the age of super technologies, post-industrial economies, ecology, tolerance and consensus, pluralism, feminism, education, etc. However, only a quarter of this century is already history. Can we predict what it will really be like? It is doubtful. Education at school has always been and will be dependent on the living conditions of society, the mode of production, scientific and philosophical thought determining the thinking style of that society, which directly affects and shapes teachers and students' practical activities and their thinking style (Vaitkevičius, 1988). In other words, education cannot be separated from the life of society because it both reflects the state of society and shapes it (Figure 2).

Figure 2
Human and Society Education



Another phenomenon is associated with the aforementioned problem of education falsification, namely degrading education (Figure 1). As we have already mentioned, the interaction between society and education is not only complex but also multifaceted, producing negative effects as well. Degrading education is a process when the education system loses its quality, meaning or ability to effectively perform its functions. Today, this phenomenon can manifest itself in various ways, depending on the problems of the country, region, or specific education system. One of the most noticeable results is the declining level of students' achievements. For example, periodically conducted international studies (PISA and/or TIMSS) often reveal that pupils' achievements in mathematics, natural sciences, or general literacy are often insufficient. Many countries are experiencing teacher shortages, particularly in rural or remote regions, or in certain areas (e.g., mathematics, natural sciences). The education system is often too focused on academic performance, insufficient attention is paid to personal development, ethics, and social responsibility. Speaking about the higher science sector, we can also observe plenty of signs of falsifying/degrading education. For example, globalisation has led to a very widespread "McDonaldisation" (Altbach, 2004). First, it should be noticed that when considering the phenomenon of "fast" training, education fails to retain its purpose, and therefore the systems of comprehensive and higher education appear to be just a blur (Lamanauskas, 2011b).

Thus, the international community accepts the idea that more or less the current society is not ready for challenges posed by the 21st century. The activity of being awarded "a rapid" diploma guarantees neither individual nor social progress. Another particularly negative phenomenon is the so-called 'Publish or perish' (POP). This is a term that describes the constant pressure on scientists/researchers to publish quickly and consistently in scientific journals. It is most often associated with employment (job search), promotion, or even job retention, and other conditions. As De Rond and Millier (2005, p. 322) put it, 'the publish or perish principle appears to have become the way of life in academia'. As a result, there is often an "unconventional" struggle for publishing anything and anyhow. And, at the present moment, there is still artificial intelligence which is coming to the rescue. The most real "academic business". Constant communication with authors (edited scientific journals – author's note) confirms that they are very often asked to publish (often alleged scientific works) quickly because it is necessary to do so for promotion, obtaining a position, or for some other reasons.

Let us mention one more negative thing. It can be reasonably stated that in all countries with mass higher education, a network of leading higher education institutions is formed, which is usually limited/small. Such institutions are oriented towards global competitiveness. At the same time, due to the increasing demand, a special segment of low-quality education, otherwise known as pseudo education, is forming in such systems. Moreover, often in such institutions, attention is focused on the alleged needs and interests of students, and/or the ability to pay for studies. It can be said, somewhat hyperbolically, that you just need to register and collect your diploma after a certain period of time. The quality of studies is either masked, or imitated. The state of universities is deteriorating not only due to lack of money, weak student enrolment, lack of communication with the professional community, and brain drain, but also due to incorrect and distorted educational policy. Practically, a mass utilitarian attitude towards education is being formed. As Anderson (2009, p. 358) stated, ‘the fundamental purpose of a university is not to train professionals but to produce cultivate human beings’. But haven’t universities become (or aren’t they becoming) “a factory of diploma”? According to Moore (2020), it is a very wrong attitude that skills can be given unquestioned priority over discipline/ subject knowledge in university studies. Moreover, the benefits of obtaining a higher education diploma are now described almost exclusively in terms of employment.

Thus, it is important to understand that degrading education usually leads to long-term negative consequences for society(s), e.g., increases social inequality and exclusion, diminishes economic opportunities and weakens overall human capital. Finally, the deteriorating quality of education usually affects the most vulnerable segments of society the most, and of course, determines lower participation of citizens in the political process, and their lower understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Moreover, the causes of degrading education are difficult to identify, as are the consequences (Guichard et al., 2015). Human and societal education is a dynamic and interconnected process that influences both the individual person’s development and the structure of society. Education acts as a key mechanism for socialisation and cultural development/expansion, ensuring the transfer of knowledge, and the development of critical thinking. However, it can also be (and is) used for ideological (often militaristic) indoctrination and consolidation of social inequality, depending on the political and economic context.

It is obvious that human and society education is an integral and constantly changing process, which depends on historical and cultural context. Changes in the education system should be based on a systemic approach, aiming not only to reflect the current state of society but also to actively shape its future. Effective human and society education should be based on critical thinking, creativity, and especially value-based education to help form active, conscious, and socially responsible citizens. In any case, man is a living being with a logos (ancient Greeks), a rational, sentient being /animal rationale/ (ancient Romans). So, man was, is, and will be a bipolar system. This is the meaning, goal, subject, object, result, and an evaluation criterion of educational activity. After all, education is always defined over a very long time, never a short one (Nóvoa & Alvim, 2020), on the one hand, and on the other hand, the future of education is a huge field of uncertainty.

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Vincentas Lamanauskas

PhD, (HP), Professor, Chief Researcher, Vilnius University Šiauliai Academy, Institute of Education, P. Visinskio Street 25-119, LT-76351 Šiauliai, Lithuania.
E-mail: vincentas.lamanauskas@sa.vu.lt
Website: <http://www.lamanauskas.puslapiai.lt/>;
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Vincentas_Lamanauskas
ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4130-7899>