CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LEARNING PARADIGM BASED UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT
The aim of a contemporary university is to educate a generalist who has mastered a wide array of knowledge and is be able to tackle the problems that arise in unpredictable future situations. In order to achieve this aim the university needs to react to the changes in the society, the market, and political situation while simultaneously developing the university Curriculum and implementing the studies on the basis of the learning paradigm that ensures acquisition of transferable skills and competencies, construction of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary knowledge, fostering of lifelong learning culture. The article analyzes the characteristics of a learning paradigm based university Curriculum and reveals the link of each Curriculum element to the requirements of the learning paradigm. The article consists of three parts: the first part presents the analysis of Curriculum concepts and definitions; the second part presents features of the contemporary university Curriculum; the third part presents analysis of each university Curriculum element in the aspect of the learning paradigm.

KEY WORDS: university Curriculum, learning paradigm, Higher Education, JEL code – I23, university Curriculum characteristics.

Introduction

Rapidly changing reality, globalization processes, formation of a knowledge society and development of technologies have caused changes on all levels of education as well as the higher education. These changes posed new requirements to the higher education: the university became responsible for education of a universally competent professional (a generalist), a person who is able to solve problems immediately as they arise, able to make rational decisions, responsible for the fu-

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tecture of the country and the world, a person who has acquired and developed main competencies especially the self-directed learning competency, transferable skills, and is effective in tackling challenges of the 21st century (Knowles, 1975, Barnett, 1990, Barr & Tagg, 1995, Bowden & Marton, 1998; Barnet & Coate, 2005, Jucevičienė, 2007).

However, rapid changes in the social, economic, and technological spheres cause that acquired knowledge and skills lose their value and become outdated in a short period of time. Increasing competition among universities caused by globalization processes, technological development and budget cuts cause to consider how best to prepare learners who will learn for a lifetime (Emes & Cleveland-Innes, 2003).

The main imperative for the university becomes orientation of the Curriculum towards development of competencies and skills in this way ensuring successful studies of the students and career prospects of the graduates. Thus, the mission of the university becomes education of a generalist – intellectual professional for the future society (Horbačiauskienė, 2011) and fostering of a life-long learning culture (Longworth, 2000). According to Barnett & Coate (2005), the purpose of the university Curriculum should be an accomplished human being, who has developed his/her own self and self-understanding, who becomes a person of being and a person of becoming, is highly motivated, autonomous, flexible and open to the word.

In order to achieve these aims the university should implement the learning paradigm – based Curriculum which equips students with versatile interdisciplinary knowledge, develops practical competencies and skills as well as moral, ethical, and civil viewpoints. Thereby, the main problem question posed in this article is: what are the characteristics of a learning paradigm based university Curriculum that ensures successful studies of each student in a higher education institution, successful career after graduation and readiness of each graduate to efficiently act in a rapidly changing environment?

The learning paradigm has been researched by a number of scholars (Knowles, 1975; Barr & Tagg, 1995; Nunan, 1988; Bowden & Marton, 1998; Jucevičienė, 2007; etc.), the university Curriculum structure has been analyzed from different points of view by Jucevičienė (1989; 2007), Barnett (1990; 1997), Doll (1993), Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman (1995), Young (1995; 2000), Biggs (2003), Fallows & Stevens (2000), Jacobs & Jacobs (2003), Jackson (2003), Evers & Wols tenholme (2003), Dolence (2003), Prideaux (2003), Waks (2003), Barnett & Coate (2005), Nygaard, Hojlt & Hermansen (2006), Wolf (2007), Jucevičienė et al. (2010), etc., however, thorough research of the characteristics of the learning paradigm based university Curriculum has not been found.

The aim of the article: to reveal the characteristics of the learning paradigm based university Curriculum.
Research methods: analysis of scientific literature.

1. Curriculum conceptions and definitions

The notion of Curriculum has been researched by a number of education scholars who analyzed the Curriculum design, development, and change in various aspects: from the point of view of educational philosophy (Dewey, 1938; Griffen, 1976; 1990; Lawton, 1982; Doll, 1993; Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman, 1995; Barnett & Coate, 2005; Slattery, 2006; Elkana, 2009), in the aspect of teaching and learning (Marsh & Willis, 1995; Biggs, 2003), implementation of gender roles (Ellsworth, 1997), teacher participation in Curriculum development (Ben-Pe-rettz, 1990; Shawer, 2010), construction of study programmes (Jučevičienė, 1989; 2007; Laužackas, 2000; Pukelis, Sajienė, 2000; Saugėnienė, 2003). The sources of scientific literature provide plenty of Curriculum definitions (up to 120 definitions). According to Schelten (cited by Laužackas, 2005) the denotative meaning of the word Curriculum translated from Latin emphasizes the meaning of a race, running of a circular path, running in circles. However, the connotative meaning of Curriculum in the context of education science means pedagogic interaction which takes place in a continuous cycle of a study course. Doll (1993) originates the word Curriculum from the infinitive form of the Latin verb currere by emphasizing that it is a process of exploring personal experiences and learning from one’s own experience.

The term Curriculum has had an interesting semantic evolution from the earliest records to the multiple meanings that are used today. The Curriculum concept is as dynamic as the rapid changes in the contemporary society and cannot be defined by one single definition. Today wide conceptions of Curriculum are discussed in the field of education science – these are nontechnical and more philosophical approaches that include ideas from the fields of aesthetic (Eisner, 2006), feminism (Lather, 1991; Gilligan, 2010), pluralism (Banks, 2011), political and social spheres (Giroux, 2011; McLaren, 2007), moral and ethics (Reid, 2012), spiritual sphere (Pinar, 2012).

On the grounds of the analyzed scientific literature Curriculum definitions can be grouped into the following categories: Curriculum as Content, Curriculum as Learning Experiences, Curriculum as Objectives, Curriculum as a Plan for Instruction, Curriculum as the Totality of Learning Experiences.

Curriculum as Content. Over the years and currently the dominant conception of the Curriculum is that of the content or subject matter taught by teachers and learned by students. Phenix (1962) defined the Curriculum as what is studied, the “content” or “subject matter” of instruction. According to Phenix the content includes the whole range of matters in which the student is expected to gain some knowledge and competence. Some academic subjects are customarily associated
with the idea of *Curriculum*, such as language and literature, mathematics, the natural and social sciences, the fine arts. The *Curriculum* may also include practical studies that develop skills.

*Curriculum as Learning Experiences.* This conception explains *Curriculum* as the experiences of the learner, complemented by the organized content or subject matter. Selecting the content with accompanying learning experiences in one of the central decisions in *Curriculum* making. This conception is illustrated by Tanner & Tanner (1980) definition that “*Curriculum* is a reconstruction of knowledge and experience systematically developed under the auspices of the school (or university), to enable the learner to increase his or her control of knowledge and experience” (p. 43).

*Curriculum as a Plan for Instruction.* The processes of developing, implementing, and evaluating a *Curriculum* may be considered as the essential elements of a *Curriculum* plan. A *Curriculum* plan is a system for both decision making and action with respect to *Curriculum* functions directed at a special population (Lunenburg, 2011). Stark & Lattuca (1997) define *Curriculum* as an academic plan that includes purposes, activities, and ways of measuring success. The academic plan is “set in a context, including not only the institution, program, or a course mission, but also the goal and characteristics of a specific groups of learners”. “The plan also includes a set of process strategies, as well as an evaluation and feedback component” (Ibid., p. 2). According to Walker (1990) *Curriculum* consists of: a) activities that teachers and students attend to together; b) content that students, teachers, and other concerned generally recognize as important to study and learn, as indicated particularly by using them as a basis for judging the success of both school and scholar; c) the manner in which these matters are organized in relationship to one another, in relationship to the other elements in the immediate educational situation and in time and space. Walker emphasizes the freedom of choice of the activities, pedagogies, and ways of assessment as well as the context and integrity of the subject matter.

*Curriculum as Objectives.* This conception defines *Curriculum* as educational goals and objectives which make a base for *Curriculum* planning. Noteworthy is the work of Benjamin Bloom (1956) who attempted to devise some means that would permit greater precision of communication with respect to educational objectives. The taxonomy was this means that allowed to classify educational objectives into categories descriptive of the kinds of behaviour that educators seek from students in schools (or universities). It is based on the assumption that the educational program can be conceived of as an attempt to change the behaviour of students with respect to the subject matter. The taxonomy divided objectives into three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The cognitive domain includes those objectives having to do with thinking, knowing, and problem solving.
The affective ones include those objectives dealing with attitudes, values, interests, and appreciations. The psychomotor covers objectives having to do with manual and motor skills.

Curriculum as the totality of learning experiences. This conception of Curriculum encompasses a much wider Curriculum space: it is everything that takes place in the educational institution and beyond its limits – guidance of students, relationships between students and teachers, learning environments and experiences, a totality of efforts while aiming for educational objectives.

In this article the Curriculum is understood as systemic and interconnected elements of a study program (aims, content, forms and means, teaching and learning methods, assessment system) and its implementation.

2. Features of the contemporary university Curriculum

The development of the university as an institution is determined by two main factors: tradition and the social context of the time that continually forces the university to adjust the intellectual heritage of the past to the present situations. The ideal of the higher education changes together with the society: it exists in the social context of the specific epoch, not outside of it. Each epoch brings forward its own values and forms a peculiar lifestyle, therefore, the university should form the intellectual environment that implements the goals of the epoch at its best. Despite the differences characteristic to the national systems of higher education, scholars working at universities strive for the same objectives: preservation and interpretation of knowledge and ideas, quest for the truth, and education of the students (Flexner cit. Samalavičius, 2003).

The university of the 20th century traditionally accumulated, preserved, and disseminated the knowledge as well as the wisdom of the past, developed practical knowledge and skills, added to designing of the future, promoted unlimited research and experimentation (Samalavičius, 2003). The higher education of this period is marked by increasing influence of the market: it forced universities to react to the needs of business and industry and turn to the education of professionals. These factors caused a new quality of the higher education – massification (Jucevičienė, 1997). Mass education aims for satisfying of the needs of the society and the market (to educate representatives of different professions), involving a variety of social strata into education, and is distinguished by a variety of systems and institutions. Mass higher education performs three main functions: create, disseminate, and apply scientific knowledge. The quality of higher education and accreditation become very important in this context (Gudaitytė, 2001). Massification of higher education (when higher education becomes accessible to a large group of society) is considered an epistemological change (Bamett, 2000), when science and its classic
forms created at universities turn into applied forms of science, additionally losing it’s educational value.

It should be emphasized that the goal of the mass higher education is liberation of thinking of different strata of society reaching for intellectual emancipation. Therefore, mass higher education seeks to integrate quite different things: traditional values of the higher education and market, liberal education, as well as services, sociality, and individualism (Gudaitytė, 2001). But the question of importance is: *what is the university of the 21st century like and what is its mission?* Jucevičienė et al. (2010) defined that a contemporary university is an institution that: a) creates scientific knowledge; b) implements studies and educates future intellectuals and professionals; c) disseminates knowledge in the society and participates in creating innovations. Horbačiauskienė (2011) emphasized that the mission of a contemporary university is not only to educate specialists who can satisfy current demands of the industry, but also intellectually emancipated people: a university should educate such specialists who would be able to solve global problems and understand them in the context of other fields of science; specialists who have acquired communication and collaboration skills, able to think critically and creatively, manage risks etc., in other words professionals generalists, actively participating, successfully surviving in multicultural communities, able to change their professional identities, appreciating manifestations of artistry and creativity.

The new mission of the university is determined by one of the main tasks put forward to the university in the 21st century: the development and change of the knowledge society into the learning society. The *Learning society* is characterized by learning taking place everywhere and at all times enabled by common efforts of the society and implemented on three levels (individual / group / societal), when individuals learn and study self-directedly particularly in learning partnerships (Jucevičienė, 2007).

Increasing orientation towards the needs of the market has caused the rise of the *Service University*. The main feature of this concept is the provision of scientific knowledge to the market in the form of research, training, and consultation (Cummings, 1995; Clark, 1998; Tjeldvoll, 1999).

The concept of Service University ensures education for a profession and provision of intellectual services to the society. According to Jucevičienė (1998), increasing influence of the market forces universities to satisfy the needs of business and industry for professional education and encourages to universities provide intellectual services for additional incomes. Market relations prevailing at university have caused changes in a student’s role as well: the student is considered a client who satisfies his / her educational needs, hereby, the whole society has become the client of the higher education. It is obvious that the altered role of the student causes changes in the activity of the university and in the process of studies, therefore, the
following questions arise: how does the market affect the process of studies and what changes does it cause in the university Curriculum?

Research into the university Curriculum proved that the influence of the market is indisputable: university study programmes have been adjusted to the needs of the clients, that caused an increase in profession – oriented (competency-based) study programmes. Curriculum oriented only towards the competencies of the students neglects academic knowledge and focuses on the structure of competencies necessary to the labour market (Bowden & Marton, 1998). The study programmes focused on development of skills and competencies focus on the results that can create new and effective products for the market. There is a distancing from traditional bachelor and master programmes; the study forms acquire the forms of short-term training courses (Markevičienė, 2001).

Having confirmed the influence of the concept of Service university on higher education, it is important to reveal how the Service university concept affects the university Curriculum. Therefore, the following question is posed: What new forms of study has the university Curriculum acquired under the influence of the market? Scholars agree that present university Curriculum is oriented towards educational learning outcomes, i.e. development of core, generic, special, personal, and transferable skills that are requested by the employers. The entrepreneurial culture dominating the university is illustrated by learning outcomes approach and modularization that guarantee development of competencies and skills for the market, i.e. education of specialists.

The learning outcomes approach is considered the main feature of a service university. Learning outcomes approach promotes the use of various learning forms, especially active methods, in order to master a variety of cognitive, interpersonal, and practical skills; realize the principles of how these methods work. When made available to learners explicit statements of intended outcomes encourage clarity and ownership. It makes the course clear and understandable for everyone: learners are able to take charge of their own learning to a much greater extent and to take part in the discussions as to what they should be expected to achieve. Burke (1995) claims, that there is a growing evidence that this open approach has positive effects on learner autonomy, motivation, levels of achievement, and on the utility and transferability of these achievements to new situations. Learning outcomes approach emphasizes that “practical” intelligence is of more use than academic intelligence: tacit knowledge – the ability to succeed at work – would bring higher success (Burke, 1995). It also promotes openness thereby contributing to informed debate and rational decision-making, involving a wide community of stakeholders in the education and training process. By stating the intended outcomes of the system accountability becomes a realistic possibility by opening up arrangements to measurement. However, outcomes approach does not specify in advance the le-
arning process, but allows maximum discretion and innovation to maximize the effectiveness of that process.

Modularization is one of the attributes of the learning outcomes approach. Young (1995) defines modularization as “breaking up of the Curriculum into discrete and relatively short learning experiences”. These experiences may have separate learning objectives and assessment requirements. Jucevičienė (1989) states that modular-credit system allows university to react to the needs of society and be flexible in adjusting study programmes to societal needs. It also enables rationalization of teaching and learning process, individualization of Curriculum content, learning methods, and pace of studying. Modular system is crucial in mass higher education because information is provided in full, thorough, and relevant chunks with explicitly formulated learning objectives. In this way information becomes “a desirable commodity” which is the basic principle of the educational information market. Modular education becomes meaningful in the context of the credit system that ensures comparability of studies and mobility of students (Jucevičienė, 1989).

In conclusion, the 21st century universities became dependent on market forces causing strong competition among universities. Subsequently, the Service university concept emerged which has ensured provision of intellectual commodities to the market and the society. These changes have heavily influenced the university Curriculum – the process of studies has been directed to achievement of learning outcomes and organized in a modular way that is also oriented to satisfaction of students’ needs and interests as well as purposes of labour market.

3. University Curriculum elements in the aspect of the learning paradigm


The learning paradigm is based on theoretical foundations of constructivism, socio-cultural constructivism, social learning and experiential learning theories.
Constructivism (Piaget, 1929; Dewey, 1938; Vygotsky, 1986; Glaserfeld, 1995) is a theory that explains how knowledge is constructed in the human being when information comes into contact with existing knowledge that had been developed by experiences. It has its roots in cognitive psychology and biology and an approach to education that lays emphasis on the ways knowledge is created in order to adapt to the world. The purpose in education is to become creative and innovative through analysis, conceptualizations, and synthesis of prior experience to create new knowledge. The educator’s role is to mentor the learner during heuristic problem solving of ill-defined problems by enabling quested learning that may modify existing knowledge and allow creation of new knowledge. The learning goal is the highest order of learning: heuristic problem solving, metacognitive knowledge, creativity, and originality.

Vygotsky (1986) claimed that the roots of cognition are socio-cultural. Therefore, learning can never be separated from the context: a child learns by looking at the surrounding people and the social world. The understanding of the same fact and learning of the same thing by two different people can be completely different. The understanding of an individual is formed under the influence of social, cultural, physical environment and the system of symbols. Individual understanding is formed during the interaction with other people.

Bandura’s (1977) theory influenced the rise of the concept of self-directed learning. This theory added a social element, arguing that people can learn new information and behaviors by watching other people. Known as observational learning (or modeling), this type of learning can be used to explain a wide variety of behaviors. Bandura’s social learning theory has had important implication in the field of education: today, both teachers and parents recognize the importance of modeling appropriate behaviors. Other classroom strategies such as encouraging learners and building self-efficacy are also rooted in social learning theory.

Life-long learning conception emphasizes experiential learning. According to Jarvis, Holford & Griffin (2004), experience is accumulated throughout life and can be defined as a form of thought. Marton & Booth (1997) explain experience as internal relations of an individual to the external world. Experience is accumulated by the means of reflection according to the Kolb’s learning cycle (Kolb, Fry, 1975). Kolb stated that learning involves the acquisition of abstract concepts that can be applied flexibly in a range of situations. In Kolb’s theory, the impetus for the development of new concepts is provided by new experiences. Effective learning is seen when a person progresses through a cycle of four stages: of (1) having a concrete experience followed by (2) observation of and reflection on that experience which leads to (3) the formation of abstract concepts (analysis) and generalizations (conclusions) which are then (4) used to test hypothesis in future situations, resulting in new experiences.
The emerging epistemology (Haworth & Conrad, 1990) suggests there is not one single objective truth, but rather that knowledge is socially constructed. The emerging knowledge perspective suggests that the traditional canon must be expanded to include a balanced view of multiple rather than a single knowledge perspective: a multiple knowledge construction perspective ensures integration of interpretative, feminist, post-structural, and multicultural approaches into the university Curriculum and hereby education of a holistic competence in the study process.

The learning paradigm characterized as a shift from teaching to learning (Knowles, 1975; Barr & Tagg, 1995; Bowden & Marton, 1998) is based on individual construction of knowledge by employing past experiences provides possibilities to fill the content of Curriculum with individually constructed knowledge, moreover, it allows students to choose and decide on individual learning styles, forms, methods, learning objectives, and methods of assessment.

The grounds of the learning paradigm based Curriculum is an agreement of the academic community that education is not the process of imparting of knowledge to the student by the teacher, but a constructive and self-directed student’s activity which is ensured by providing the student with learning facilities, conditions, and support necessary to implement the learning process (Valuckienė, 2009). Therefore, the main question posed in this article is: what is specific about each university Curriculum element in the context of the learning paradigm? The answer to this question is provided in the analysis of Curriculum aim, content, teaching and learning methods, the system of assessment, characteristics of students and teachers as the whole of interconnected elements of the pedagogic system.

Curriculum aim reflects basic requirements for a study program in order to obtain a qualification degree. Barnett & Coate (2005) argue that the main purpose of higher education in the unpredictable 21st century is to develop ability to change, adapt, learn, solve problems, act in a multicultural environment, establish relations among fields of science, develop interdisciplinary non-linear thinking. Therefore, the learning paradigm based studies should guarantee education for unpredictable future: as Valuckienė (2009) puts it, the aim of studies in the learning paradigm is the learning aim of the future society which is understood as assistance to an individual to prepare for self-directed learning, to constantly renew his/her knowledge by learning to apply the acquired knowledge in practice in a rapidly changing environment. Barr & Tagg (1995) claim that the main aim of the study programmes in the learning paradigm is to stimulate learning, enable students for construction of knowledge and discoveries, which is achieved with the help of empowering learning environments and improvements in the quality of studies.

Study programmes should respond to the demands of the society (by ensuring development of competencies and skills), however, to some extent they should provide the students with a freedom of choice: the learning – based system of studies
should recognize the results of prior learning (as well as informal results), provide possibilities to choose modules oriented towards implementation of individual learning objectives but also preserve the main “course” of a study programme (Valuckienė, 2009).

The aim of the study process in the learning paradigm is twofold, claims Jučevičienė (1989): it consists of the teaching aim (more important to the teacher and the organizer of the studies) and the learning aim (more important to the student). Rowntree (1981) defined three types of aims: 1) aims referring to skills for life (development of generic skills); 2) methodological; 3) content aims. Methodological aims refer to technical skills and knowing “how”, however, content aims represent conceptions, generalizations, and principles, which make the core of the matter (Toohey, 1999). The aims formulated by students are influenced by their motives, wishes, and interests: what knowledge the students will demand from the teacher or the institution depends on the interests of the students, thus, the aims should be formulated in respect to the interests of a particular student. It should be taken into consideration that teaching aims are formulated prior to learning aims. Learning aims provide guidelines to actual aims. The students should have a possibility to: a) discuss learning aims with the teacher; or b) plan the ultimate aim. It is important to negotiate the aims between a teacher and a student: the teacher should assist the student in defining his/her potential capacity and sign a contract where the student agrees that his / her effort, level of activity and achievement of results will be rewarded by a certain grade (Jučevičienė et al., 2010). The aims of the study program and each module separately should be presented to the students at the beginning of the course. Hereby, the students are presented with a complex aim of the studies. Jučevičienė (1989) claims that it allows the students to individualize the program consciously and motivates them for quality learning.

**Curriculum content.** The ideas of higher education are disseminated with the help of educational content – it implements societal values, beliefs, and rules related to understanding of learning, knowledge, individuality and the society itself (Barnett & Coate, 2005). The world in which the only permanent thing is the change should prepare students to constantly changing environment (Barnett, 2000). Jučevičienė et al. (2010) claim that based on modern humanistic values the emphasis should be on humanisation of educational content: educational content should relate to the meaning of human life and the meaning of learning. Therefore, the most significant feature of educational content in the learning paradigm is an open-ended content which is created during every pedagogic interaction. The requirement to specify the details of educational content in a module burdens the teachers: the content requires constant redesign and readjustment in respect to rapidly changing situations, new developments, as well as the contributions made during the pedagogic interaction. The educational content of a subject is created throughout the
The content of a module should foster self-directed activity, thinking, and problem solving, therefore, according to Jucevičienė (1989), the content has to be provided in an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary way with an emphasis on problem nature and practical application of the information.

In order to apply the content to individual needs of the students, the content should be differentiated: information to be divided according to the intellectual level and needs of students. To ensure differentiation the content should contain compulsory material as well as additional material for satisfaction of cognitive interests.

Žydžiūnaitė & Crisafulli (2012) suggest to simplify the presentation of theoretical concepts while forming the content: it is not a suggestion to simplify the content by “destroying” it or “corresponding the level of the student”. On the contrary, a demand for a variety of new didactic devices emerges: the student should be involved into the study process with the help of an attractive and simple theoretical content that enables his / her self-actualization and motivates for studies. It is crucial to foster formation of individual attitudes of the student concerning theoretical concepts through practical application of theories. In the process of studies the student should formulate his / her own attitudes and the didactic devices can assist in increasing his/her motivation to explore the professional (practical) space of the study program (p. 127).

The content based on the learning paradigm encompasses not only information, but also the knowledge constructed by students, their skills, attitudes, and values. Pedagogic system based on learning aims to apply different learning styles and methods, that enable recognition and choice of particular knowledge necessary for performance of specific tasks while searching for individual and diverse solutions that are not based on the single truth or an objective answer. This kind of approach to knowledge construction encourages quest for subjective truth, individual experience, and, moreover, interdisciplinary knowing and collective creative process in which students learn from each other and share common understanding (Valuckienė, 2009). It should be noted that knowledge exists in the conscious of every person, therefore, in the process of studies knowing is created through personal experience. Knowledge is actively constructed and thus learning is perceived as creation and interaction of knowing structures (Barr & Tagg, 1995).

Speaking of the planned content of a study program, it is worth mentioning, that the content of modules can overlap and that is not to be regarded as a drawback: the overlap of the content emerges when the same theories or conceptions are presented from a different angle. It provides a possibility to discuss and analyze problems
from a different perspective; therefore, it encourages formation of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary attitude.

The main criteria for evaluating the quality of a learning paradigm based study process is adaptation of Curriculum: the Curriculum is adjusted to individual needs of students, it enables self-directed learning, formation of educational environments, development of a self-directed learner, the student’s responsibility for his / her learning process and results (Jucevičienė, Edintaitė, 2010).

Learning paradigm based Curriculum takes into consideration prior experience acquired by the student, therefore, from the beginning of the course the study program should be flexible and open to the student’s requests, acknowledge the results of prior learning experience (also informal results), provide possibilities for choice of modules, oriented towards implementation of individual learning aims, but also preserving the main course of the study program. It’s worth speaking about the APL system (Accreditation of Prior Learning). APL is the overall term widely used for the recognition of, and award of, academic credit on the basis of demonstrated learning that has occurred at some time in the past. This learning may have come about as the result of a course, or self-directed study, or as the result of experience either at work or in leisure pursuits. Countries that have introduced APL system (e.g. Canada, Finland, the UK, France, etc.) officially recognize the results of experiential learning, however, APL system neither has a legal basis nor functions in the sector of higher education in Lithuania.

Teaching and learning methods. These are all the activities of teaching and learning in the study program. Teaching / learning methods are an important vehicle that helps reaching the aims of the study program. The choice of teaching / learning methods is directly related to the aims of the study program and implementation of the content. A method is perceived as a form of organization of a learner’s activity, whereas, the form is perceived as they way of interaction between the teacher and the learner that allows to implement the aims, content, and methods (Jucevičienė, Edintaitė, 2010).

In the context of the learning paradigm the methods applied by the teacher are oriented towards forming powerful educational environments (Lipinskenë, 2002; Cesevičiūtė, 2003), encouraging student’s activity and autonomous learning, enabling of learning processes, fostering of life-long culture. All the methods used in the content of the learning paradigm emphasize not the acquisition of formal specific knowledge (know-what), but development of cognition skills, knowing and competence how to act (know-how).

The altered role of a student determines that the methods used in the learning paradigm promote independence, interest, motivation, and critical thinking of students. The following learning strategies are implemented on the basis of the learning paradigm.
The most important learning strategy for implementation of the learning paradigm is *self-directed learning*. That is a process of learning where the learner himself takes the initiative to establish his learning needs, formulate learning aims, assess and evaluate necessary resources, choose learning strategies (Boud, 2006). The full-scale implementation of self-directed learning strategy should provide the student with possibility to form his / her own study program, where student himself establishes aims and manages learning processes.

By acknowledging social nature of learning and construction of knowledge through communication the learning paradigm relies on *group learning* which is developed by applying different strategies of collaborative learning.

*Collaborative learning* is a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together. Unlike individual learning, people engaged in collaborative learning capitalize on one another’s resources and skills (asking one another for information, evaluating one another’s ideas, monitoring one another’s work, etc.). More specifically, collaborative learning is based on the model that knowledge can be created within a population where members actively interact by sharing experiences. Often, collaborative learning is used as an umbrella term for a variety of approaches in education that involve joint intellectual effort by students or students and teachers. Collaborative learning is often organized by applying inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, etc.

*Problem-based learning* is a student-centered pedagogy in which students learn about a subject through the experience of problem solving. Students learn both thinking strategies and domain knowledge. The goals of problem-based learning are to help the students develop flexible knowledge, effective problem solving skills, self-directed learning, effective collaboration skills and intrinsic motivation. The in-depth aim of problem based learning is directed towards the process of analysis of a problem and its surroundings, activation of knowledge, data retrieval, teamwork skills, and finally solution of a problem (Zumbach, 2003).

*Inquiry-based learning* directed to development of cognitive and inquiry skills. This active learning method fosters critical thinking, development of research skills, and creativity. Vickery (2006) indicates that this methods often requires ICT, applies requirements for professional academic research, ethics and practice of research. Inquiry learning emphasizes constructivist ideas of learning, where knowledge is built from experience and process, especially socially based experience. Therefore learning proceeds best in group situations. An important aspect of inquiry-based learning is the use of open learning. Open learning has no prescribed target or result that people have to achieve. There is an emphasis on the individual manipulating information and creating meaning from a set of given materials or circumstance. In open learning there are no wrong results, and students have to
evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the results they collect themselves and decide their value.

**Action based learning.** Learners acquire knowledge through actual actions and practice rather than through traditional instruction. This type of learning is applied for achievement of aims of a particular task. Boud (2001) notes that action-based learning takes place in the process of cooperation between a university and external organizations by providing opportunities to students’ learning. Students discuss learning aims with the higher education institution and the organization, therefore, different students study in different ways. At the beginning of the learning process the student’s competences and level of education are being established. Learning projects are carried out in a specific workplace and are oriented towards challenges raised by the learner and the organization.

In summary, all teaching and learning methods applied in the context of the learning paradigm focus on purposeful development of communication, collaboration, partnership, and teamwork competences, critical thinking, practical skills, construction of knowledge through active participation.

Student assessment is one of the most significant elements of university curriculum, because outcomes of assessment have a strong impact on students’ future careers. Assessment is the feedback of students’ achievement (striving for the aims and objectives of study program). Methods of assessment are closely related to developed competences and methods of teaching and learning (Bulajeva et al., 2011). Potter (2006) stated that the most important aspect of assessment is to provide relevant information and the results of learning to the student / the teacher / administrators.

The aim of assessment in the context of the learning paradigm is first and foremost promotion of learning, testing of understanding, determination of individual qualities, and assurance of feedback. It is essential not only to assess learning results, but also learning process and involve students into the process of assessment, i.e. the student participates in decisions on what and how is assessed, the student has the possibility to plan his / her learning and time, control his / her learning process. Therefore, the system of assessment should ensure active engagement of students in assessment of their acquired knowledge, skills, and values. The assessment of student’s learning results should base on recognition of prior learning results. The teacher should allow the student to self-assess his learning progress, agree on formal methods of assessment, pay attention to assessment of unplanned achievements and collective learning results (Valuckienė, 2009).

Lipinskienė (2002) claims that assessment and learning become holistic – supplementing each other, promoting deep approach to learning, concentration on the essence of the matter but not on memorising the facts. As the learning paradigm assesses not the amount of acquired knowledge, but construction, analysis, and
management of knowledge, the choice of assessment methods is crucial. The learning paradigm applies self-assessment and peer assessment methods, diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, summative assessment, criterion-referenced assessment. The time of assessment is also very significant: it is carried out at the beginning of the course, in the middle, and at the end of the course. Thus, the assessment methods can be grouped according to their aim: to diagnose the current situation, to plan learning perspectives, and to summarize the results.

Diagnostic assessments (also known as pre-assessments) provide teachers with information about student’s prior knowledge and misconceptions before beginning a learning activity. They also provide a baseline for understanding how much learning has taken place after the learning activity is completed. Instructors usually build concepts sequentially throughout a course. However, it this form of assessment should be used carefully not to give rise to student selection an segregation.

Formative assessments take place during a learning activity to provide the teacher with information regarding how well the learning objectives of a given learning activity are being met. This form of assessment promotes learning progress and concentration on learning gaps. The aim of formative assessment is to assess and correct the content of learning and studies (Laužackas, 2005). It should base on constant initiative of students and their engagement into the process of assessment. Formative assessment does not contribute to the final mark given for the module; instead it contributes to learning through providing feedback. Feedback is considered the crucial aspect as formative assessment strives for improvement of learning efficiency (Ramsden, 2000). It should indicate what is good about a piece of work and why this is good; it should also indicate what is not so good and how the work could be improved. Effective formative feedback will affect what the student and the teacher does next.

Summative assessment demonstrates the extent of a learner’s success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or program, and which contributes to the final mark given for the module. It is normally used at the end of a unit of teaching. Summative assessment is used to quantify achievement, to reward achievement, to provide data for selection (to the next stage in education or to employment). For all these reasons the validity and reliability of summative assessment are of the greatest importance. Summative assessment can provide information that has formative/diagnostic value.

Criterion referenced assessment. Each student’s achievement is judged against specific criteria. This measures students against the learning criteria in their course, unlike norm-based assessment which measures students against other students. In principle no account is taken of how other students have performed. In practice, normative thinking can affect judgments of whether or not a specific criterion has
been met. Reliability and validity should be assured through processes such as moderation, trial marking, and the collation of exemplars.

**Self-assessment and peer assessment.** Both methods give responsibility to the student, emphasising an increased sense of autonomy in the learner. The focus of this assessment should be on the why and how rather than simply on factual information.

Student assessment forms and practices need to reflect, encourage and reward a student-centred learning approach. So, teachers need to be aware of any discrepancies between what they are asking students and what they really want them to know. Thus, the form of a **learning contract** is one of the assessment forms supporting the learning paradigm approach. Learning contracts are the goals set by the student depending on their learning drawbacks, which are in turn negotiated with the teacher in terms of what to study and how to be assessed. Learning contract drawn between the student and the teacher ensures that certain activities and tasks will be carried out in particular order and will help to achieve the goals. In this way, the student is enabled to identify personal learning needs and define the objectives of learning. The contract is flexible and oriented to the student needs not just concerning the terms of completion, but also by allowing the student to take full responsibility for the learning results and their changes (Boud, 2006)

Morkūnienė (2008) summarized the characteristics of assessment in the learning paradigm: a) assessment is related to teaching and learning during the whole process; b) conceptual understanding is assessed; c) prior student’s experience is assessed regarding future learning; d) particular competences are assessed: knowledge, skills and integration of attitudes; e) ability to communicate is valued as well as ability to solve real life problems; f) priority is given to evaluation validity; g) assessment of different tasks as means to plan student’s future learning activities; h) great variety of assessment ways; i) assessed what is valuable; j) comprehensive, fast and timely feedback; k) criterion and ideographic assessment; l) teacher and students participate in the assessment.

In conclusion, the assessment methods in the learning paradigm should grant a possibility to reflect on action, promote learning, and provide feedback for students. By choosing methods of assessment the teacher has to agree on assessment forms together with the student and adjust it to the student’s learning aims, in this way the assessment will present the student’s achievement as evidence of intended learning outcomes, hereby, the assessment will motivate students learning.

*A student* is a person who studies at least one subject at a higher education institution at a certain period of time (Jucevičienė, 1997). Dolence (2003) claims that understanding who the learners are is an essential and often overlooked component of shaping *Curriculum*. The author (ibid) provides the main characteristics of a 21st century learners populations: high school graduates, working adults, mid-
career professionals, late-career professionals and emeriti populations, re-entry learners, degree completers, geographic service area populations, interest-driven populations, employer populations, degree holders, disabled populations, other populations. Kundrotas (1996) highlights the formation of the concept of “an unconventional student”. Student exchange programmes add another notion to the understanding of an unconventional student – an international student with a diverse cultural background which usually differs from the culture of the country he comes to study. Obviously, participation of unconventional students in the study process manifests not only through cultural differences but also different learning styles. Valuckienė (2009) states that mass higher education has substantially altered the social structure of university students: the critical mass of students is now oriented to development of practical skills and competences necessary for highly qualified specialists, but not individuals interested in fundamental research.

Having analyzed characteristics of students necessary for successful participation in the learning paradigm Tautkevičienė (2004) stated that student’s learning (and enabling of a student’s learning) is the main criterion for evaluation of successful implementation of the learning paradigm. Student’s learning depends on the totality of factors which promote or hinder the learning process, therefore, the following student characteristics should be taken into consideration at the beginning of the course: prior learning experience, interests, attitudes, acquired competences, demographic factors.

Student’s disposition to study and individual decisions where and how the learning will take place is determined by the student’s prior learning experience and previously formed attitude to learning. Previously acquired negative experience of learning can form negative factors and hinder further successful learning process (Jucevičienė et al, 2010) Accordingly, the student’s interests determine the wish to achieve and explore, develop oneself, help to find direction, understand the reality better. In order to implement the learning paradigm and enable successful learning educational interest is one of the key factors that is a part of a cognitive process. Educational interest can be defined as a person’s need, inclination, or a wish to acquire competences in a certain academic or practical field, wish to continuously develop in multiple or a single sphere of activity, claims Merkys (2002).

In order to ensure successful learning the student should master the competence of self-directed learning. Self-directed learning is a purposeful activity of a student, when the learner takes control his / her own learning process. The competence of self-directed learning comprises metacognitive, motivational, and behavioural skills. A self-directed learner makes his individual decisions on when to be taught or when to learn, hence, he is able to assess his / her learning needs in view of his / her future life (Jucevičienė, 2007). The most important competence necessary to implement self-directed learning is the metalearning competence. Metalearning
can be defined as an awareness and understanding of the phenomenon of learning itself as opposed to subject knowledge. Implicit in this definition is the learner’s perception of the learning context, which includes knowing what the expectations of the discipline are and, more narrowly, the demands of a given learning task. Within this context, metalearning depends on the learner’s conceptions of learning, epistemological beliefs, learning processes and academic skills. A student who has a high level of metalearning awareness is able to assess the effectiveness of her/his learning approach and regulate it according to the demands of the learning task. Conversely, a student who is low in metalearning awareness will not be able to reflect on her/his learning approach or the nature of the learning task set. In consequence, will be unable to adapt successfully when studying becomes more difficult and demanding (Norton et al., 2004).

Jucevičienė et al. (2010) highlight the following characteristics of the self-directed competence: planning and management of the learning process, self-confidence, reflection on learning and monitoring, willpower, search for help and assistance, metalearning skills. Moreover, in order to participate in the learning paradigm it is crucial to be able to work in a team, communicate, collaborate, share knowledge, thus, students need to develop communicative, collaborative, and partnership competences.

Student’s information literacy which is defined as ability to find, evaluate, and apply information of different format is also highly significant for implementation of the learning paradigm. Information literacy comprises technical information retrieval skills (knowledge on information structure, ability to form data retrieval questions, choose relevant means for information retrieval, etc.), and information management skills (ability to evaluate information, select, analyze, synthesize, etc.) (Tautkevičienė, 2004).

Eventually, the new paradigm of knowledge construction that recognizes multiple perspective of knowledge construction by integrating interpretative, feminist, post-structural, and multicultural competences into university Curriculum, aims to develop the key competence of graduates – the holistic competence (Emes & Cleveland-Innes, 2003). The concept of holism refers to the idea that all the properties of a given system in any field of study cannot be determined or explained by the sum of its component parts. Instead, the system as a whole determines how its parts behave. A holistic way of thinking tries to encompass and integrate multiple layers of meaning and experience rather than defining human possibilities narrowly. Education with a holistic perspective is concerned with the development of every person’s intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative and spiritual potentials. It seeks to engage students in the teaching/learning process and encourages personal and collective responsibility.
Teachers. Contemporary higher education focuses on learning and refuses mechanical conveyance of knowledge and knowledge reproduction. Hence, the teacher’s personality, activity, and competence become the most significant factor in implementation of the learning paradigm based Curriculum. In order to fulfill the requirements of the learning paradigm the teacher is obliged to continuously search for new study forms and methods, teach fundamental and applied knowledge, including problem solving methods to prepare the students for life in unpredictable future situations. The main task of the teacher’s becomes organization of the study process and its management that converts teaching into learning that satisfies individual needs of each student (Jucevičienė et al., 2010).

The requirements raised for the teacher can be defined as the teacher’s competence. Teacher’s pedagogical competence plays the key role in implementation of the learning paradigm: it includes content competence, pedagogical competence, psychological competence, managerial competence, etc. Teacher’s competence ensures self-actualization of each student in the study process (Stanikūnienė, 2007). The main function of teacher’s competence is to enable the student’s learning, thereby, teaching should be understood as support for learning. In such a case, the teacher’s competence should be perceived as the teacher’s skills and disposition to assist the student in his / her learning (i.e. enable the student to study).

Implementation of the learning paradigm demands the highest form of the teacher’s competence – the holistic competence. The teacher who has mastered the holistic competence is able to transfer theoretical knowledge, creatively develop practical skills in respect to the student’s personality (Jucevičienė, Lepaitė, 2000). Holism understands knowledge as something that is constructed by the context in which a person lives. Therefore, teaching students to reflect critically on how we come to know or understand information is essential.

In the learning paradigm the process of teaching and learning is based on the theory of constructivism (Piaget, 1976; Vygotsky, 1978), thus, the teacher’s function is to take care of student’s knowledge construction process: communicate and observe skills and needs of every student, create efficient democratic learning environment where students are able to construct individual knowledge, understanding, and meanings. The teacher should recognize prior beliefs and opinions of the student and form relevant conditions to examine individual mistakes. This is achieved by developing students’ skills of reflection. Hence, the teacher should be competent enough to be able to form questions that promote reflective inquiry and deep approach to learning (Ramsden, 2000; Biggs, 2003; Lipinskienė, 2002).

The learning paradigm based university studies require an open dialogue between the teacher and the student: teacher ad students can discuss and agree on timing, content, teaching and learning methods, evaluation, sign learning contracts, etc. The learning paradigm context ensures development of ways of individual un-
Understanding: the teacher and the student share the ways of their understanding and learn from each other (Jucevičienė et al., 2010). The teacher does not demonstrate himself as a conveyor of undeniable truth and experience, he is not in the centre of attention. The teacher seeks to realize pedagogical partnership, form favourable educational environments, empowers students to organize their own learning, take responsibility for learning results, and become the key participants of the learning process. In the context of the learning paradigm it is essential that the teachers become “learning consultants” of high competence who know how to apply life-long learning techniques and are capable of developing leadership competence (Valuckienė, 2009). Žydžiūnaitė & Crisafulli (2012) stated that the authority of the teacher’s personality, that initiates the student’s wish to become an expert equal to the teacher, motivates students to study in a certain field of knowledge. In order to facilitate learning processes of students the teacher himself should continuously study and master metalearning competence, i.e. become a constant learner who continuously update his knowledge, learns how to learn and transfer learning experience to others (Longworth, 2000).

The teacher in the learning paradigm is seen less as person of authority who leads and controls but rather is seen as “a friend, a mentor, a facilitator, or an experienced traveling companion” (Forbes, 1996), a mediator, a consultant, a provocateur of student’s self-directed learning who brings forward questions related to the Curriculum content and the student’s personal experience (Valuckienė, 2009).

Conclusions

Learning paradigm based university Curriculum is flexible and dynamic; however, it preserves Curriculum logic and structure – the aim, content, forms and means of implementation, teaching and learning methods, system of assessment. Its main purpose is to enable students’ learning, develop lifelong learning skills, transferable skills, abilities to plan, manage, and evaluate learning processes not only throughout studies but also after graduation. Thus, the ultimate aim of the learning paradigm based Curriculum is to educate members for a knowledge society. The mission of the contemporary university becomes education of intellectual generalists with a wide array of knowledge and able to tackle the problems in uncertain future situations, as well as professionals capable of managing their learning processes. Education of a generalist as a member of a knowledge society is realized by implementing the learning paradigm Curriculum that promotes development of self-directed learning competence, collaboration, communicative, and partnership competences, critical thinking, planning, and management of learning processes. The analysis of Curriculum elements in the aspect of the learning paradigm reve-
eled the following characteristics of the learning paradigm based university *Curriculum*:

- **The learner at the centre of Curriculum**: This approach caters to multiple learning styles and adapts education to reflect learning needs of each individual. Each student is assessed and receives a tailored and dedicated support for attaining individual performance goals.

- **Orientation to empowering of student’s learning – Curriculum** grants power to the student to control his/her learning process: provides knowledge and skills how to manage learning process, allows to form learning aims and content, choose learning and assessment methods, promotes self-directed learning and metalearning competence, allows to participate in arrangement of learning experiences, such that students can continue to do so for a life-time. Such *Curriculum* enables students to process, synthesize, and criticize information, apply prior acquired experiential knowledge, and solve problems throughout their life. Students should be seen as active partners who have a stake in the way that higher education functions. The best way to ensure students’ learning is focus on engagement of students into the processes of *Curriculum* design.

- **Individualization**: all *Curriculum* elements can be adjusted to individual needs of students, their skills, interests, acquired prior knowledge, demographic characteristics, learning motivation, and students’ learning aims.

- **Orientation to construction of individual knowledge**: possibility not just to obtain objective scientific knowledge but also fill the *Curriculum* content with individually constructed (subjective) knowledge of the student as well as collectively constructed knowledge. Hereby, the *Curriculum* provides the multiple rather than a single knowledge perspective. The subjective knowledge that exists in each person’s mind and is shaped by individual experience is valued the same as objective knowledge.

- **Orientation to experiential learning**: experiential learning refers to parts of *Curriculum* that engage students in active, practical learning within and beyond the normal institutional setting. Experiential learning in particular refers to comprehensive engagement of the learner, it can lead to broader, more enduring learning outcomes. The relevance of content can be assessed and placed into context through reflective observation. This practice and reflection should become an integral element of a student’s academic program, substantially related to his or her scholarly pursuits. Experiential learning activities are often open-ended in the sense that neither student nor the teacher has prior knowledge of all the results.

- **Teacher’s role**: the teacher becomes a learning consultant, a facilitator, a
mediator of learning whose main function is to enable students’ learning, assist each student in finding individual ways of learning, promote creativity and critical thinking, form conditions that allow to achieve success in the process of studies.

- **Teacher and student interaction**: Curriculum focuses on teacher and student interaction, open dialogue, and construction of shared knowledge, but not the final result. Neither teacher no student can anticipate the final results that will form in the process of their interaction, thus, the teacher and the student work as members of one team reaching for the same aim.

- **Orientation to interdisciplinarity**: Interdisciplinarity is a purposeful integration and synthesis of knowledge, skills, and methodologies from different fields of study and different perspectives. It can blend and work outside of disciplinary boundaries in creation of new ways of knowing. Students with significant exposure to different methodologies and fields of study are more likely to be able to solve problems, answer complex questions, address broad issues, and achieve some measure of unity of knowledge.

- **Holistic approach**: Holistic Curriculum is intended to cultivate fully developed human beings by fostering their physical, emotional, psychological, moral, and spiritual growth. Cultivation of personal meaning and fulfillment, lifelong learning ambitions, and connection to others and the natural world is the most important aim in the holistic Curriculum. Holism means oneness and interrelatedness, thus, such a Curriculum denies common dualisms such as mind-body, logic-intuition, art-science, or group-individual, it also rejects the fragmentation, standardization, and competition emphasized by modern society and schooling. Individuals can develop without experiencing systems that limit or stifle their growth and potentials.

- **Fostering life-long learning culture**: The learners have the opportunity to study self-directedly and become practical and rational members of the society who will be able to solve problems by changing them into life-long learning experiences. Such graduates will possess skills necessary for life-long learning which will provide them an advantage in the labour market and add to the development of the society.

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**References**


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Santrauka

Didėjanti rinkos įtaka aukštajam mokslui ir aukštojo mokslo masiškėjimo procesai lėmė paslaugų universiteto koncepcijos įsivyravimą aukštojo mokslo sektoriuje. Tai įtvirtino technoekonominio universiteto Grindžiamo universiteto Charakteristikos

CURRICULUM PARADIGMA

MOKYMOSI PARADIGMA GRINDŽIAMO UNIVERSITETINIO CURRICULUM CHARAKTERISTIKOS

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kompetencijų ir gebėjimų plėtojimą bei aiškiai apibrėžtų ir iš anksto numatomų studijų rezultatų siekimą. Tačiau žvelgiant į ateities perspektyvą, mokslui žaibiškai plėtojantis, technoekonominis Curriculum modelis jau nebeaptekinęs visuomenės lūkesčių ir poreikių, todėl naujoji universiteto misija – rengti intelektualiai emancipuotus plataus profilio generalistus, gebančius veikti neapibrėžtos ateities situacijose ir galinčius valdyti savo mokomos procesus profesionalus.

Generalisto pareigas užtikrinamas per realizavimą mokomos paradigmos, kuri įgalina besimokantį įgyti savivaldaus mokomos gebėjimų, tapti nuolat besimokančiuoju savo veiklos srityje, plėtoti bendradarbiavimo, komunikaciją bei partnerystės kompetencijas, kryptingai ir tikslingai planuoti savo mokomos procesus, vertinti savo veiklą, ugdyti kritinį požiūrį, tęsti mokymąsi už universiteto ribų.

Mokomos paradigma grindžiama universitetinio Curriculum caracteristikos atskleidžiamos per pedagoginės sistemos struktūros elementus: studijų programos tikslą, turinį, mokymo(si) metodus, formas bei priemonių, formuojant šios sistemos elementus – dėstytoją bei studentus.

Mokomos paradigma grįstas universitetinis Curriculum yra lankstus, dinamiškas, atviras kaitai, tačiau išlaikantis Curriculum logiką bei struktūrą. Studijų tikslai yra orientuoti į studentą ir jo mokomos įgalinimą visuose lygmenyse (individualonės bei kolektyvinės), derinami su besimokančiuoju, todėl negalima iš anksto suplanuoti ir nustatyti studijų rezultatų; besimokančiajam suteikiama galimybę pačiam iškelti savo mokomos tikslus ir jų siekti jam priimtinomis formomis. Čia ypatingai pagrįsta studento veikimo, pasirinkimo ir valdymo laisvė dėl Curriculum tikslo, turinio, mokomos metodų, formų bei priemonių bei vertinimo formų pasirinkimo. Studijų turinys orientuotas į procesą ir studento aktyvų veiklą, o ne į rezultatus, vertinamas yra pats mokomos procesas, o ne tik galutiniai studijų rezultatai. Atsižvelgiant į studento turinį anksčesnę patirtį ir interesus, įgyjamas žinios nėra statiškos ir inertiškos, bet konstruktyvios paties studento per jo asmeninę patirtį, pasaulėžiūrą ir individualią veiklą. Todėl labai svarbus tampa pasirenkami mokomos metodai bei strategijos – gyvas ir prasminges žinojimas kuriamas studijose eksperimentavimo būdu per atradimą ir tyrinėjimą, atradomas tampa vienu iš svarbiausių pažinimo šaltinių. Vertinimo formos – tai pirmiausia savęs įsivaizduojant formos, suderintos tarp studento ir dėstytojo, leidžiančios studentui fiksuoti savo mokomos pažangą, kuri susijusi su atliekama mokomos reiškiniai bei savianalize, siekiant asmeninio tobulėjimo. Tokios vertinimo formos numatoma, kad besimokančiai prisiima atsakomybę už savo studijų rezultatus ir mokomąsi, formuojant gilminių požiūrį į mokomąsi bei nuostatas į mokomąsi visą gyvenimą. Mokomos paradigma grįsta Curriculum esmė – įgalinti studentus tapti besimokančiais visą gyvenimą, t. y. gebančiais planuoti, valdyti ir vertinti savo mokomos procesus ne tik studijų metu, bet ir po jų. Kiekvienas mokomos paradigmojo veikiantis Curriculum elementas prisideda prie šio tikslo pasiekimo. Straipsnyje išryškinamos
svarbiausios mokymosi paradigma grįsto *Curriculum* charakteristikos: adaptyvumas ir transformatyvumas, pagrįstumas asmenine patirtimi, individualios prasmės kūrimu mokymosi procese ir jos integravimu į mokymosi procesą, kontekstualumas, tarpdisciplininiškumas ir multidisciplininiškumas, mokslinių tyrimų integracija į studijų procesą, holistiškumas, mokymosi visą gyvenimą kultūros puoselėjimas.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: universitetinė veikla, mokymosi paradigma, aukštasis mokslas, universiteto studijų programų charakteristikos.