Gregory SANDSTROM

HUMAN EXTENSION AS AN INNOVATIVE METHODOLOGY FOR POSITIVE SOCIA LISATION

Abstract. Weaving together the topic of emigration from and reverse migration to Lithuania, this paper raises the notion of 'human extension' (M. McLuhan) for the purpose of positive socialisation. It proposes that active participation in improving the higher education system will lead to better conditions inside Lithuania, including job creation and innovation diffusion that is attractive for Lithuanians abroad. The main argument is that social and cultural development is not something that ‘evolves’ randomly, but is rather the result of goal-oriented planning, collective choices and committed individual actions. Lithuania’s membership in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) demands such activities as those established by the university extension movement in the U.K. in the late 19th century and by the U.S.A.’s 20th century and beyond cooperative extension services, which aim to meet the needs and desires of people with available resources. Expressed in the idea of human extension, the strategy of positive socialisation for development in Lithuania invites the possibility of cultural renewal in the post-Soviet era with the aim of human flourishing.

Keywords: Extension Theory, University Extension, Innovation Diffusion, Lithuanian Emigration and Reverse Migration, Positive Socialisation, Active Inclusion, European Higher Education Area.

Introduction – What Choices do People Have?

“Saulutė leidžias vakaruos;
Skubėk namo, skubėk, Kastyti!
Matutė laukus nekantruos:
Jai nusibos besižvalgyti
Į besiūbuojančias marias
Ir vėjo ištemptas bures.”
– Jonas Mačiulis (Maironis)

“The sun is sinking in the west,
Turn back, Kastytis, in a hurry!
Your dear old mother finds no rest,
She will be wearing down with worry
Until she sees your flapping sails
Approaching on the foaming waves.”
– Translation by Lionginas Pažūsis

Each of us has a choice: to do something or to do nothing1. How and why we make our choices at every moment in our lives is at the heart of pedagogy, learning and development.

1 “When you have to make a choice and don’t make it, that is in itself a choice.” – William James
Here we engage the topic of higher education and civil society by starting with the historical fact that 21st century Lithuania is losing many of its young people and potential work force to the West\(^2\). A major challenge for Lithuania is thus how to attract those who have left their homeland to return. The choice to leave one’s native country for better opportunities is important on the topic of emigration from and reverse migration to Lithuania, i.e. whether or not to ‘extend’ oneself abroad and if or when to ‘turn back,’ as Jūratė called to Kastytis in Maironis’ poem.

This paper suggests that one aspect of how to meet this challenge is to provide improvements and incentives for positive socialisation in Lithuania, which includes development, innovation and job creation that provide ‘reasons to return’ to a better situation than when Lithuanians went away to the West. In order to achieve this lofty reverse migration task, what is needed is an action plan that goes beyond mere theorizing. One of the main fields in which this must happen is social pedagogy because this is where teachers learn to strategize how to reach out to and educate youth in a way that enables their self- and collective-development and empowers their positive conceptualisation of nation and citizenship.

The educational system is one of the main public sources that can instil a new ethic and vision for the nation. Speaking to this, the paper draws on the idea of ‘human extension’ (Sandstrom, 2011), which is based partly on the university extension movement that originated in the U.K. in the late 19th century, as well as the cooperative extension services (innovation diffusion) model in the United States of America that began in the early 20th century and also predominantly on the ‘extensions of man’ work of the Canadian culture, media and technology sage Marshall McLuhan. The latter contributed insights in the 1960s and 70s on how education and cultural development are changing in the transition from the industrial to the post-industrial, electronic-information epoch. These features of human extension as an innovative methodology in human-social sciences are all brought to bear in this paper on the topic of positive socialisation as it relates to demographics, pedagogy and migration in/from Lithuania.

Human extension methodology (HEM) highlights the role of *internal* decision-making and action in the process of human development, rather than relying on *external* structural or environmental analyses. It is a re-humanising approach in contrast with theories that dehumanise society with purely objectivistic, empirical

or impersonal ‘evolutionary’ methods. HEM concentrates on the historical choices and actions that are made by people around the world, including local policies, laws, declarations, and other events that lead to measurable effects in society.

This paper offers HEM as a tool for learning and developing positive socialisation in Lithuania that can aid in the demographic challenges facing the country. The methodology can be applied locally or globally to other human-social scientific contexts as well, but for Socialinis ugdymas it is appropriate to focus on the Lithuanian case, which requires facing the migration problem. The research for the paper is based on social scientific literature, supplemented by conference presentations, publications and discussions in several countries on educational transformation, innovation diffusion, cooperative extension services, university extension, knowledge transfer and strategies of human development.

University Extension and Innovation Diffusion

“All human artefacts are extensions of man[kind].” – Marshall McLuhan
“[A]ll Adaptive innovations and Extensions are purposeful.” – Henning Anderson

A major innovation in the realm of higher education with regard to positive socialization is the practise of ‘university extension,’ which originated in the 1860’s and 70’s at Cambridge and Oxford Universities in England. ‘Local lectures’ and new educational opportunities for working class people were created that aimed at improving the general societal level of education. The university extension movement, according to William H. Draper, was “a movement in the sphere of education…of which the main feature is the spreading of knowledge of such subjects as are treated in Universities to other places than towns or cities where Universities already exist” (1923: 1). The idea of university extension or educational outreach into the community has since been mirrored or adapted and expanded vastly in diverse educational settings around the world, promoting the ideas of ‘continuing education’ or ‘life-long learning’ today.

A similar meaning of ‘extension’ can be found in the notion of agricultural ‘innovation diffusion.’ The most widespread usage of innovation diffusion theory (Ryan and Gross, 1943; Rodgers, 1962; Rodgers and Valentine, 1995), otherwise known as

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4 2006: 10.
‘extension theory’ (Stephenson, 2003), has been by the United States Department of Agriculture and by agricultural training and development institutions around the world.

In the United States, cooperative extension services complemented the Smith-Lever land grant Act of 1914, which echoed the university extension model in the U.K., in this case providing land to build colleges for educational purposes. This Act encouraged the ‘extension of education,’ especially in agriculture, home economics, citizenship, government and other practical issues for citizens. The main goal was for more people to become educated with the idea that this would lead to increased innovations and higher quality of life in communities. Likewise, for university professors to share their knowledge and expertise with those who seek it, especially non-traditional students.

Human extension as a social scientific methodology thus overlaps with the university extension model and innovation diffusion theory, based on the idea that education and innovation in society ‘extend’ from educators and innovators to learners and adopters (Sandstrom, 2010a). The on-line *Journal of Extension* and *Journal of Extension Systems* have widely studied innovation diffusion related to agriculture, education, fisheries and forestry, in various local and global settings. This paper focuses on human extension specifically in the realm of education and its potential implications for Lithuanian society with regard to migration.

The idea of ‘extension’ is a core part of the strategy recently proposed by Vice Chancellor of the University of South Africa, N. Barney Pityana, who calls for creative planning and development in education, sharing resources, recognizing the capacity and power of African initiatives and of South Africans being the instigators for their own development (2008). A similar approach based on extension principles was also proposed recently at the Commonwealth conference on Open and Distance Learning (i.e. education extension services). The knowledge and experiences of cooperative extension services and university extension can be applied in Lithuania as it seeks to improve its post-Soviet educational system and to raise the living conditions in the country through positive socialisation.

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5 At this point a note of caution, however, seems necessary to resist the notion that ‘human extension’ offers a kind of magical method for reverse migration and/or positive socialization. Drawing on a scientific basis of several extension theories, this paper suggests that pro-social behavior can result from intentional contributions made by universities, parents, siblings, peers, teachers, community organizations and cultures to develop in youth a concern for the well-being of others. In this sense, positive socialization can grow, expand and be nurtured by following the method of human extension with a view to improving one’s local, national or regional conditions.
Using human extension as one’s language preference generates focus on inventiveness, creativity, choice and productive societal action involving the unique local features of a nation’s educational and scientific systems. It offers a vehicle for promoting cooperation (cf. ‘mutual aid’ – *vzaimopomosh*) rather than conflict (cf. ‘survival of the fittest’) with national and international programs, science agreements, educational exchanges, training activities, workshops and scholarly consulting. These are just a few examples consistent with extension logic, which can be applied to the current situation in Lithuania.

The key feature of human extension language is this: nations and societies are not simply ‘natural’ processes that follow random ‘evolutions’⁶, where the environment fully determines peoples’ choices and actions. Instead, nations, societies and educational institutions, as human artefacts, constitute intentional, teleological systems (Sandstrom, 2010). They display cultural uniqueness based on innovations and experiences generated in one’s national or local history, which can be harnessed by educational programming that connect educators and innovators with potential learners and adopters.

Human extension harnesses this reality, not satisfied to squander human resources on the despair of historical determinism, environmentalism or materialism, wrought by evolutionistic ideology. Innovations on the societal level are built upon the ideas and inventions made by individuals and communities that are crucially important for national progress and re-enchantment (Sandstrom, 2010b). They are at the heart of positive socialisation facilitated through pedagogical research, teaching and development and achieved through human action and planning.

**Positive Socialisation, Pedagogy and Human Development**

“The new age of education is programmed for discovery rather than instruction.” – McLuhan

“Universities are living institutions capable of extension in various directions and in more ways than one.” – William H. Draper

Human extension connects with pedagogy and development at precisely the strategic point of making choices towards goals. What demonstrates the importance of

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⁷ 1964: x.
⁸ 1923: 1.
human extension for application in pedagogy and social sciences is that its primary goal is to contribute to positive socialisation on multiple levels. Human extension is highlighted here as a general method that promotes human choices and actions in society, and that necessarily takes into account creativity, inventiveness and productivity. This speaks to the realm of positive socialisation and raises the question of who decides what vision of education and society is best.

McLuhan believed there was a moral responsibility in any society for vetting innovations in culture, media, education and technology. “We can, if we choose,” he wrote, “think things out before we put them out” (1964). What this means is that human extension as a general method is always looking forward to the ‘effects’ of innovations for positive and / or negative socialisation and not just at the ‘causes.’ In other words, it is not enough to simply have good intentions to improve social conditions for youth development through new educational programming and activities. What is also needed is that the results of innovative human extension will be foreseen in advance, as far as possible. The potential ‘effects’ of university extension and innovation diffusion should therefore be studied in addition to the ‘causes.’

The activity of discovery, invention and innovation thus differs from simply instruction at the level of ‘involvement.’ This means that participation becomes the driving force of positive educational and social development, rather than rote learning or reciting dictation. The power of the electronic-information age stems from the massive increase in access to knowledge, wherein students interested in various academic fields engage in a dialogue of discovery rather than a monologue of instruction-learning. University extension on a grand scale using computer and internet technologies, including on-line courses, has therefore become the new frontier in which the transformation of education for both positive and negative socialisation is taking place.

The poet Maya Angelou once wrote: “At fifteen, life had taught me undeniably that surrender, in its place, was as honorable as resistance, especially if one had no choice.” This is why reclaiming one’s choice as a condition of liberating education is so important. The times of external control have seemingly passed in Lithuania – rule by foreign owners – to the point that Lithuanians are now responsible for choosing their own future pathways. One of the options for young Lithuanians has been to flee the country in search of ‘greener pastures,’ which means, jobs that pay more. However, instead of suffering from despair, instead of finding little hope in the developmental pathway of the nation and its future, due to a virtual exodus of young, educated and talented workers, the alternative for Lithuania is to find positive opportunities for change and growth, now as part of the European Union.
This paper suggests that pedagogy or educational science is a crucial field in this conversation. As Stuart Marriott wrote in his review of the U.K.’s university extension movement, “To elevate the teachers was a mission of national importance” (1981: 163). Promoting the same realisation is a responsibility of educational policy makers and innovators in Lithuania, who are seeking new ways of positive socialisation (Kvieskiene, 2005). This is the kind of approach behind the European Anti-Poverty Network’s strategy of “Active Inclusion” as a way of “Making it Happen” (2011). The goal of ‘putting people first’ for the purpose of a Social Europe begins with making improvements to education for those who are or who feel powerless and excluded. Human extension elaborates a way of thinking that empowers people to realise the importance of their deliberate choices and the actions that follow from them that highlights the realm of pedagogy and societal development.

G. K. Chesterton wrote that “the chief object of education is not to learn things; nay, the chief object of education is to unlearn things.” What needs to be unlearnt is the idea that education is a random-evolutionary process completely determined by our environments, instead of a developmental process influenced by our deliberate choices and plans. Education and extension have goals and purpose, while biological and cultural evolution has none. To embrace the idea of human extension in/of education and to explore the possibilities of innovation and invention for positive socialisation means to accept a teleological view of change.

This leads directly to the heart of the matter: A person usually must believe that he or she can extend before they actually do extend. Extension then becomes the primary motive explanation for the power to change with purpose; it is a power based on human choice and action that is not held entirely captive to one’s surroundings, to structure, system, institution or external power. It is a motivation or inspiration for action that explains why people live and behave in certain ways, why they seek positive socialisation and education rather than negative socialisation and ignorance. Human extension should therefore be seen as a methodology of empowerment and learning by doing. Whether it is empowerment and experience to fail or to succeed defines the core of the project of active participation and positive socialisation for the betterment of self, community and nation.

We thus now reach a conclusion before the conclusion: If there is no extension, no development, no improvement in the living conditions and prospects for build-

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9 All Things Considered, 1908.
ing a satisfactory lifestyle then it will be much more difficult to attract Lithuanian emigrants back to their homeland.

Lithuania and the European Higher Education Area

“[U]niversity extension is embedded within the context of an institution known as the university, which, like all organizations and institutions, is embedded in a larger context called society." – Allan Lauzon

“[T]he internationalisation of higher education has significant impacts on the development of higher education in all European countries, large and small, including Lithuania." – Algirdis Valiulis

The basic idea of the university extension movement is to make university-level scholarship available to wider audiences than just those who are enrolled at a single campus, to ‘extend’ the knowledge created or produced at universities to society more broadly. This is one of the greatest international educational dilemmas of the electronic-information age because now more people than ever before have access to information and knowledge through the internet and not merely through physically attending classes at universities. It is also one of the major tools that will potentially attract Lithuanians back to their homeland; learning that Lithuania holds greater educational and career promises and resilience than perhaps they had previously imagined.

In the past, ‘environmental’ pressures forced Lithuanians how to think, behave or act in a certain way, consistent with the reigning governing power structures. However, today, in recovery and re-birth from Soviet political-ideological control, Lithuania’s education system seeks new opportunities for growth and development in light of its sovereign national history. It takes solace in belonging to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the Bologna Process. This is the new social environment in which Lithuanian education is developing and growing as a member of the EU.

Lithuanian society was previously denied certain healthy opportunities for positive socialisation based on a lack of national identity. But it is now possible to move beyond the Soviet legacy by accepting a post-Soviet landscape, a sovereign non-Soviet

10 2000: 80.
situation that opens up new possibilities for exploring a better future in Lithuania, collectively and also on the level of individual human rights and education. It is this kind of opening-up that is supported by human extension in so far as education can reach out to people in society who feel marginalised, excluded, downtrodden or simply without up-to-date labour skills, and help them to realise that conditions may not be as bad as they seem. Instead, new possibilities for growth and development are available for people to embrace, but it must be their intentional choice, not something forced upon them from outside and not something handed to them as an entitlement by the state, unearned from their own choices and actions.

The background assumption of this paper is that people generally love their homeland and their native language because it is their birthright. The same is thought true for Lithuania, which means that improved local conditions, new positions for work and safer, sustainable and prosperous families will potentially result in reverse migration. If this is the case, then positive socialisation can become a key factor in building a contemporary civil society in Lithuania that is a healthy and mutually participative partner in the EU and EHEA.

Conclusion – The Extension of Choice

“We need to teach the next generation of children from day one that they are responsible for their lives. Mankind’s greatest gift, also its greatest curse, is that we have free choice. We can make our choices built from love or from fear.” – Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

The solution suggested by this paper is both simple and on the surface idealistic, while at the same time difficult and yet immanently realistic for positive socialisation. Lithuanian higher educational institutions should reach out to the community to discover the society’s collective goals and purposes and then build programs, courses and workshops that address them. This suggestion is based on the idea that human development is not just defined solely by material or economic growth, but also involves cultural growth that aims at meeting the needs and desires of people using resources available to them.

Likewise, Lithuanian educational institutions ought to investigate and in some ways replicate the gains in the U.K. and U.S.A. and worldwide for university extension,

cooperative extension services and innovation diffusion. This can help in developing the human resources of the nation for the purpose of social cohesion in light of its relatively recent sovereign post-Soviet identity as well as increasing students’ capacities and competencies in the educational realm. It can also serve to promote creativity in the economy and thereby spur the growth of new job opportunities and institution building which improves the standard of living.

One danger with the EHEA is that Lithuanians will continue to look outside the country, particularly to the west for idyllic models or opportunities and lose track of the internal cultural heritage and traditions that have made Lithuania a unique Northern European-Baltic nation historically. In light of this, we believe that domestically-sensitive reforms to higher education and new extension programs can make an impressive contribution to Lithuania’s social well-being. It should also be pointed out that nurturing positive socialisation within the country is not only meant for the purpose of attracting Lithuanian emigrants back to Lithuania, but so that when they do come back they’ll see a better country, both for those who re-enter and for those who stayed all along. It is recommended that more work be done on human extension and positive socialisation in Lithuania, not only on the theoretical level, but also as a way of translating social scientific research into effective social policy and practise.

Human extension as an innovative methodology focused on the educational task of positive socialisation can help lead to improved self-understanding and respect for the present and future of Lithuanian society. This may involve strategic outreach with the Lithuanian Diaspora in order to enhance the possibility that those who have departed from Lithuania will eventually gain a desire and return to their native country. If new opportunities are made available that will amplify healthy personal, family and community growth and a revitalised association with their national heritage, then more reasons to return will be openly visible.

As in Maironis’ poem with Jūratė and Kastytis, the hope of “flapping sails, approaching on the foaming waves” could not ultimately be realised without the extension of choice into action. Though not all dreams of homeland return are achieved, nevertheless, to know that one is responsible for one’s actions and can work with a positive vision toward accomplishing their dreams is a helpful starting point. And this begins with broad cultural and specific institutional improvements in upbringing and education, which remain at the heart of positive socialisation.
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Gregory Sandstromas

**ASMENYBĖS UGDYMO IŠPLĖTIMAS KAIP INOVATYVI POZITYVIOSIOS SOCIALIZACIJOS METODOLOGIJA**

Šiame straipsnyje analizuojama, kaip išplėsti asmenybės ugdymą, papildant pozityviosios socializacijos samprata, plėtojant socialines inovacijas ir skatinant

Įteikta 2013 m. liepos mėn.
Pateikta spaudai 2013 m. rugsėjo mėn.

**Gregory Sandstromas** – humanitarinių mokslų daktaras, Europos humanitarinio universiteto Komunikacijos ir medijų katedros lektorius, Lietuvos mokslo fondo stipendiatas; mokslinių tyrimų sritys: ekonomikos sociologija; tarpdisciplininės studijos, žiniasklaida, technologijos ir kultūra; tarptautiniai ryšiai ir komunikacija; istorija ir filosofija; mokslo tyrimai; evolucinės, altruišmas; išplėstinis ir intensyvus augimas; el. paštas gregory.sandstrom@ehu.lt

**Gregory Sandstrom** – Postdoctoral research fellow, Lithuanian Research Council and Lecturer, European Humanities University, Department of Mass Media and Communications; Fields of Research: science and technology studies, innovation diffusion, cultural transformation and higher education reforms; E-mail gregory.sandstrom@ehu.lt