



AIMS AND METHODS OF EDUCATION: A RECAPITULATION

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Socrates: He [Aristides] too gave his son Lysimachus the best education in Athens, in all subjects where a teacher could help, but did he make him a better man than his neighbor? You know him, I think, and can say what he is like. Or again there is Pericles, that great and wise man. He brought up two sons, Paralus and Xanthippus, and had them taught riding, music, athletics, and all the other skilled pursuits till they were as good as any in Athens. Did he then not want to make them good men? Yes, he wanted that, no doubt, but I am afraid it is something that cannot be done by teaching.

Plato, 'Meno'

Abstract. This paper gives an overview of principal distinction between the aims of the so-called "traditional" and "progressive" education and respective pedagogies associated with each. The term "traditional" education is used to denote the kind of education that prepares people for their role in society as it is, while the term "progressive" is used for education that aspires to equip mankind with capacity to shape the change of society. The paper raises some critical questions about the role of pedagogy in achieving the aims of the progressive model, arguing that the employment of "progressive" methods does not necessarily guarantee the achievement of the commonly professed purposes of progressive education. This is illustrated in the paper by the results of a study in English schools showing how despite the claim of progressive methods, teachers tend to retain traditional attitudes and on the other hand, how even traditional teaching methods can serve the progressive purpose. This is not to advocate for the traditional pedagogy, but to suggest that it might be something other than pedagogy that makes a critical difference in educating liberal-minded citizens of the future. In this sense the paper explores the role of other factors that make a difference towards progressive education, such as democratisation of human relations in school ethos and respect for children's freedom.

Key words: traditional and progressive education, educational aims, pedagogy, democratisation of schools, school ethos.

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Introduction: scope of the paper

The debate about the aims of education and the methods most appropriate to achieve those aims is perhaps as old as educational activity itself. At least since the ancient Greek philosophers, mankind has been aware of the central importance of educating its youth and has given much thought to improvements in education. Ever since education and its values were literally a matter of life and death for Socrates, education has remained a controversial political activity inevitably tied to a vision of a desirable social order, whether it is Plato's Utopian Republic or a modern liberal democracy with its own conflicting views of educational role and method. Essentially, the tension seems to have always revolved between two principal aims. Education as a means to maintain the existing social order and equip human beings with the practical knowledge and skills that will help them earn their livelihood in the world as it is, has been constantly opposed by the higher ideal to enable children and students to develop into independent and creative individuals who may live a fulfilled existence and shape the world to their own human need and vision.

Western civilisations understanding of what "education" means, what the aims of education are, and what status it has in society, has inevitably changed over time. In a short personal manifesto the English novelist and writer John Fowles argues the classical aims of education in ancient Rome or Greece or in the Renaissance were far superior to our own: "they opened the student admirably to the understanding and enjoyment of life and to his responsibilities towards society (...) at its best it arrived at something none of our present systems remotely approach: the rounded human being" (Fowles, 1993). However, before the 18 century these opportunities were only open to the fortunate few. With the Enlightenment ideals encapsulated by the civic courage of Voltaire and Rousseau, education became a central part of every individual's right to decent existence. In Victorian England, education became institutionalized as an obligation of society and the state to its own people and with the 1870 Education Act, it became compulsory for everyone to attend schools (Wilson, 2002).

Similarly, Bertrand Russell regretfully noted the role of teachers changed from that of "a man of exceptional wisdom whose words men would do well to attend" to that of a teacher as "a civil servant obliged to carry out the behest of men who have not his learning" (Russell, 1950). The meaning of "education" narrowed down to "formalised learning" in our time largely associated with notions of "schooling" and "teaching". With the revolutionary behaviorist theories of learning by Pavlov, Thorndike and Skinner, "education" received a new, even narrower, association with effective teaching and learning methods. However, the espousal of the wide aim of educating "rounded

human beings" remains present in many education systems today, at least in professedly "liberal-progressive" education in Western Europe and the United States.

It was with American pragmatist philosopher and education theorist John Dewey (1859-1952) that the debate turned to the questions of pedagogy best suited for the progressive education for a liberal civilization. Dewey's ideas inspired a large-scale drive for respective change in pedagogy and began to be translated into practice. Dewey's disciple William Heard Kilpatrick linked the idea to innovative classroom practices adapting it to the so-called topic-based curriculum and project method, largely accepted in most modern education systems, particularly in primary education.

In this paper I will draw only a brief distinction between the pedagogies associated with "traditional" and "progressive" education in order to leave some room for raising some critical questions about the role of pedagogy in achieving the aims of the progressive model. I want to argue that the employment of "progressive" methods does not necessarily guarantee the achievement of the commonly professed purposes of progressive education. On the contrary, the continuing focus on the method of instruction seems to have contributed to a divorce of pedagogy from the wider aim of progressive education - that which hopes to bring up critical-minded and socially active citizens of the future. Indeed the paper will illustrate how using "traditional" teaching methods can serve the progressive purpose. This is not to advocate traditional pedagogy, but to suggest that it might be something other than pedagogy that makes a critical difference in educating liberal-minded citizens of the future. In this sense I will explore the role of many other factors that make a difference towards progressive education, such as positive human relations, school ethos and respect for a child's freedom.

Terminology

Before proceeding further, there is a need to clarify that Dewey's term "traditional" education is used here to denote the kind of education that prepares people for their role in society as it is, be it based on a vocational or academic curriculum. It is also referred to as "neo-classical/vocational" in other literature (Wrigley, 2003). The term "progressive" is used for education that aspires to equip mankind with capacity to shape the change of society. It should be noted that it combines the features of what is generally referred to as "liberal-progressive" education that hopes to improve society by promoting personal growth, and of "socially-critical" model that encourages education for the collective action to confront "unjust and irrational social structures" (Wrigley, 2003).

Values and pedagogies of traditional and progressive education

With Dewey and Kilpatrick, it might be argued that the ideals of freedom and democracy proclaimed by progressive thinkers of the eighteenth century, came to final fruition in education and educational method. However, like most of their successors Dewey and Kilpatrick are far clearer on some of the defects of traditional views of educational practice, than on how a progressive model and associated pedagogy can meet the new demands of social integration, democracy, and the need for critical-mindedness (Kilpatrick, 1928).

In *Experience and Education* Dewey (1938) criticised the hallowed traditional methods for imposition of subject-matter and standards of conduct. The use of textbooks as bibles and the main resources of lore, with teachers as lofty transmitters of knowledge and enforcers of rules of conduct, disregarded children's specific learning needs and personalities. His criticism is based on epistemological assumption that knowledge is construed as an active process, arising from human agents' encounter with the real experience. Imposing adult standards is inappropriate for the young, since they are beyond their experience. Dewey also criticised traditional education for teaching static knowledge as a finished product, disregarding changes that will occur, and encouraging a static culture of docility and obedience.

By contrast, Dewey (1938) commends a pedagogy for a new progressive education that promotes learning through experience in a "free activity". He advocates a looser arrangement of a schoolroom to allow more intellectual and moral freedom, building the curriculum on experience that pupils already have, and organizing the subject-matter through a growth of experience. The role of the teacher was as a guiding peer allowing children to develop and express their own purpose. Both Dewey and Kilpatrick emphasised that classroom activities needed to be social and cooperative, organised in a way that each individual could participate and share responsibility for a communal enterprise.

Challenges of progressive education

Dewey's theories were a pivotal contribution and a declarative break away from the traditional classroom in which solid blocks of history, geography, mathematics, were rigidly poured into children's heads in case they might come in handy in the future. Disconnected from the present or the unknown future experience, such knowledge tends to be forgotten, and new skills need to be learned over again when needed in an authentic situation, or, indeed, sometimes what was learned in school needs to be unlearned to cope with the new circumstances (Dewey, 1938).

However, Dewey's theory leaves us without a satisfactory explanation of how the skills that build on limited experience of the young, within the restricted resources that can be made available in the classroom, can be transferred into the real world. Dewey himself expressed concerns about the selection of activities for learning purposes, and expressed fears that educators who professedly adopted new methods might fail to remain faithful to them in practice (Dewey, 1938).

Since Dewey, years of practice in progressive schools show that his own reservations were justified and raise many new questions. In 1969, when the child-centered pedagogy had been a creed of progressive education for some thirty years, Douglas Barnes published an interesting study from Leeds Institute of Education, in an advanced diploma course. Teachers recorded 12 secondary school lessons in different schools and subjects. The aim was to use the material for discussion in the seminars on the role of classroom language in learning (Barnes, 1969). The study, however, also revealed how teachers help children formulate what counts as legitimate knowledge.

All the communication in the class was analyzed in terms of proportion of teachers' or pupils' questions and participation, and the language used. Teachers' questions were classified as (1) factual (naming, information); (2) those which invite reasoning (open or closed); (3) open questions not calling for reasoning; and (4) social (control, appeal). Pupils' participation was recorded into that (a) initiated by the teacher and (b) unsolicited questions and comments. The results were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The results showed a strikingly low percentage of open questions (e.g. 17% in Mathematics; 3.6% in Religious education) with exception of English lessons (48%), and hardly any of them were asked by pupils. The numbers also show a surprising predominance of factual over reasoning questions. While a factual question was "*Does anyone know any books or poems Homer wrote?*" and a typical reasoning question "*Why do you think they used bread for spoons?*", the analyzers had more difficulties classifying a question such as "*How do we recognise what a limerick is?*" as an open question, when the teacher was ready to accept four expected answers (Barnes, 1969: 20).

Many transcripts of lessons between teachers and pupils show not only how a mismatch between the language used by teachers and pupils creates different points of reference for different learners and a teacher, but also how teachers preconceive the end of questioning. Here is one example from a chemistry lesson in a grammar school as an illustration.

This simple example shows how the teacher and the pupils operate within different linguistic frame of reference, and how children try to imitate the language used by the teacher trying to integrate "particles" and "sediment"

into their own context of "school" and "milk going sour" and "cheese". However, more importantly for the discussion of this paper, it also shows how they relate what is being taught to their own experience and bring that experience into the classroom discussion. In fact, compared to the general proportion of children's talk in the lessons covered by the study, in this particular example there is a high level of participation and collaboration among the learners in the classroom. Is this teacher then to be accused of dismissing pupils' attempt to develop their own purpose of the lesson using their own experience and missing to use a moment of perfectly built up interest for explaining the process of cheese production, instead of pursuing his own "hidden agenda" of drawing a distinction between "solution" and "suspension"? Probably Dewey would say yes, and probably he would be right, but that would raise new methodological challenges.

T	You get the white.. what we call casein.. that's.. er.. protein... which is good for you.. it'll help to build bones.. and the white is mainly the casein and so it's not actually a solution.. it's a suspension of very fine particles together with water and various other things which are dissolved in water...
P. 1	Sir, at my old school I shook my bottle of milk up and when I looked at it again all the side was covered with...er...like particles and...er...could they be the white particles in the milk...?
P.2	Yes, and gradually they would sediment out, wouldn't they, to the bottom...?
P.3	When milk goes very sour it smells like cheese, doesn't it?
P.4	Well, it is cheese, isn't it, if you leave it long enough?
T	Anyway can we get on? We'll leave a few questions for later.

An even more problematic issue is how is the teacher to organise a lesson around the varying experience and intelligence of some thirty children and make sure that everyone's understanding is fully meeting their individual learning needs, including those children that do not express them? That might or might not be achievable in the classroom, and it is more than likely that not every child will equally benefit from the lesson. However, what is more interesting here is the dismissive attitude of the teacher, which not only interrupts the discussion at the point where children are left only half understanding the problem, but also sends a signal that their experience is irrelevant for the topic of the lesson, and they should focus their attention on what he has to say next.

Cultural and economic reproduction in progressive education

In social sciences and arts, and literature in particular, "social representation" translates even more directly into adoption of particular understanding of "how things should be" in teacher's own view or as generally accepted by a society or a dominant culture. Wexler (1982) points out that alongside a curriculum which communicates facts and values, social studies of schooling discover the existence of the "hidden curriculum", namely social relations that frame both the content and form of knowledge and help decide what is taught or not taught and learned in the classroom. Williams (1961) stresses (a) the critical importance for curriculum of "selective tradition", a concept of selecting certain meanings from a whole possible area of the past and present, to pass on as "the tradition" and neglecting certain other meanings, and (b) the role social power and class divisions play in that selection. Apple (1982, 2004) seeks to understand the ways and effects of neo-liberal theories to bring schools more closely in line with (globalising) "economic needs" and to explain the relations between cultural, economic and political forces that work behind such education to the present day. The long and thorough research in the field invariably suggests that cultural and economic reproduction is ongoing in modern education using progressive methods of instruction in support of the *status quo*.

A traditional method for radical schooling

In the forward to Neill's *Summerhill*, Erich From (1973) places the problem of "progressive" education serving the need of the industrial system of the time, down to a confusion of "true non-authoritarian education" with "education by means of persuasion and hidden coercion". He argued that authority of the "traditional" method did not lose any of its force with employment of "progressive" methods – it was only replaced by "anonymous authority" more suitable for a social system that needs individuals who "feel" free, but nevertheless do what is expected of them without being led. Thus, "persuasion and suggestion" replaced the force of the traditional "overt authority".

A radical example of English education without the fear of authority, and respectful of children's freedom, independence and creativity, is illustrated by the well-known experiment of Summerhill School in Leiston, Suffolk. The school started in the 1920's as an experiment by Neill and his wife, ardent believers in the idea of inculcating happiness as the main, if not the only purpose of education. Education in Summerhill School needs to be seen in light of children's overall experience in the boarding school. The principle of

life and schooling in Summerhill community is that the children are free to pursue their interests and choose what they want to learn, do, wear, say and become. All lessons are optional and the timetable exists only for teachers. However, according to Neill (1973) children who come to the school from the beginning, do not show the problems for other children who come from other schools, where there is an average three month period of "recovery from lesson aversion". Examinations exist only as an option, usually pursued by the children who want to go to university. Another striking difference in Summerhill is in the social relations that encourage approval of child's individuality and equality between children and adults. All school rules are voted in a general school meeting where the voice of a six year old counts as much as that of the headmaster.

Not surprisingly, the school met with much disapproval and criticism and was seen as a too far liberal experiment which did not provide its pupils with the standard of education that would help them succeed in the real world. It is also clear that the school functioned for a small number of children whose parents were themselves believers in this freedom and the sense of fulfillment from non-material benefits. The ethos of Summerhill was that human beings are innately good and, if provided with an opportunity to develop without repression, will ordinarily grow into happy, self-satisfied human beings who will not "preach a war" or "lynch a Negro" (Neill, 1973).

Judging by the experiences of pupils and their later lives, it seems that Summerhill did manage to bring up self-confident adults that have no fear of authority, are courageous to independently pursue their own dreams and live in harmony with others – very much the kind of people that the progressive education professes to educate. Yet, these are also the products of the very traditional methods of instruction at Summerhill, an ordinary timetable of forty minute periods on five mornings a week, with old fashioned classrooms and teachers. Indeed, the traditional pedagogy does not seem to impinge on children's attitudes once they choose what they wish to learn, or as Neill expresses it:

Whether a school has or has not a special method for teaching long division is of no significance, for long division is of no importance except to those who want to learn it. And the child who wants to learn long division will learn it no matter how it is taught (Neill, 1973: 5).

There are countless examples of inspirational teachers who made a decisive impact on the development of positive values in their pupils long before behaviorist psychologists claimed the discovery that learning can be scientifically studied and inspired the subsequent research into most effective educational methods. There are many instances of progressive methods failing to encourage genuine open enquiry and producing citizens who can fearlessly express and

inform their individual and social action by liberal ideas. While acknowledging a tremendous advance of teaching and learning practices with the adoption of progressive methods, there seem to be valid grounds for suggesting that it might not be the pedagogy that makes that critical difference between education for obedience and conformity vs. a socially critical education for liberal civilization.

Beyond pedagogy

If we accept the argument that the achievement of progressive educational purposes is not only, or not primarily, a question of appropriate pedagogical method, we need to ask what else is instrumental in educating and bringing up, independent, creative and responsible adults. The importance of school ethos, human relations, and respect for children's freedom might appear as obvious answers, but even these are not unproblematic.

In *Education for a Changing Civilisation*, Kilpatrick (1928) argued that we cannot teach or learn what we do not practice. If the ideals of democracy, freedom and self-determination are to be genuinely promoted by education and schooling they need to be practised in school. To go as far as to let a six year old child decide what they need to learn might appear as an irresponsible lottery with what interests a child could intrinsically develop. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile exploring how building a democratic school community, can contribute in creation of truly independent and socially responsible citizens.

Emphasis on the importance of ethos and a healthy school atmosphere is not absent from the research in field of education, particularly in the area of leadership and management, although it continues to be linked with psychological theories of learning. The importance of ethos and positive social relations is largely referred to as another factor in building an effective learning environment, rather than as means of creation of the habit of taking real responsibility – not only for what one learns in school – but also what kind of life one lives in a school, and how one interacts with others and participates in a school community.

Sergiovanni (1994) writes on the importance of democratic community-building in a school as a way to meet children's need to belong, to be active, to have control, and to experience sense of meaning in their lives. He pointed to the importance of "stewardship" in building school community, describing it as a request for unconditional love and belonging: "Students are held to high expectations and achievement is valued, but one's acceptance as a valued person is not connected to what one achieves" (Sergiovanni, 1994: 102). He also emphasises the relevance of encouraging children's feeling of responsibility for others and the community:

Instilling the spirit of generosity was a prime value in Native-American child-rearing philosophy. This value is entirely consistent with the aim of democratic community building: helping students to become active citizens and caring adults. A fundamental tenet of any democratic society is the establishment of an individual and collective responsibility for the common good – the welfare of all others in the community (Sergiovanni, 1994: 131).

If we agree that cultivation of human values such as tolerance, solidarity and welfare of others and the community remains the foremost aim of education today, then we can reasonably wonder why all the progress in field of education, both its expansion and methodological advancement did not help us do better than, say, Native Americans? The cultural critic George Steiner has pointed out that the twentieth century has shown that high culture and barbarism can co-exist in both society ("libraries, museums, universities... can prosper next to the concentration camps") and individuals ("personnel in the bureaucracy of the torturers (...) who cultivated a knowledge of Goethe, a love of Rilke"). As Steiner puts it: "formal excellence and numerical extension of education, need not correlate with increased social stability or political rationality" (Steiner, 1971: 62-63).

If present educators are sincere about encouraging their students' capacity to critically evaluate unjust actions of the powerful, and develop ability to empathise and assume responsibility for fellow humans affected by injustice, they will have more than a particular method of instruction to think about. It takes a deliberation by all levels of an educational structure to make students the genuine centre of the educational process, not only as acquirers of skills and knowledge, but also as decision-makers in their own community. Above all, it takes a great deal of self-criticism by adults of our time and belief that future generations might do better in making their world a more just and pleasant place to live in.

Concluding remarks

This paper set out to draw a distinction between the role of pedagogy and other factors instrumental in achieving the aims of progressive education, as opposed to traditional set of values and methods. The distinction between traditional and progressive education was based on Dewey's theory of education, which criticised traditional methods as ineffective, as well as for encouraging docility and conformity. New progressive methods were promoted, based on psychological theories of learning which proclaim learning through experience-building practice. However, Dewey's terms "traditional" and "progressive"

were used in the broader sense to denote education as children's preparation for their role in the society as it is or will be, and that which aspires to educate independent thinkers, able and daring to engage in shaping the society as they find fit. The paper has criticised the general tendency to identify the achievement of such progressive aims using progressive teaching methods, and unfortunately marginalising the importance of other factors such as social relations and attitudes.

Research evidence suggests that the employment progressive methods does not necessarily lead to pupil's independent inquiry and self-confidence. Despite seating arrangements, "interactive lesson plans", and the project work in progressive schools, genuinely "open" questions hardly ever occur (Barnes, 1969), many children fail to internalise educational input into their own individual experience or collectively translate it into social actions outside the classroom. The paper further recognised the effect of issues such as selection of curriculum, subliminal imposition of a dominant culture, ideology, whether by teachers themselves or wider educational and societal systems.

On the other hand, the example of Summerhill school as a radical experiment in education for freedom, was used to illustrate how progressive ideas can be cherished even while using traditional methods of instruction. More accurately, it can be used to suggest that the employment of traditional methods does not affect the development of a general atmosphere of freedom and democracy, once children willingly accept the authority of teachers as more knowledgeable, but equal in status.

The conclusion is drawn that pedagogy is not the crucial factor in accomplishment of the professed purpose of progressive education, as is often assumed in growing research in area of effective teaching and learning methodologies. It was suggested that issues of school ethos and relations between teachers and students and building democratic community in schools deserve a much more prominent place in education thinking.

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Наташа Пантић
 ЦИЉЕВИ И МЕТОДЕ ОБРАЗОВАЊА: РЕКАПИТУЛАЦИЈА
Анстракт

Овај рад даје преглед главних разлика између циљева такозваног »традиционалног« и »прогресивног« образовања и педагогија које су са њима повезане. Термин »традиционално« образовање односи се на врсту образовања које припрема људе за њихову улогу у друштву онакво какво је, док се термин »прогресивно« образовање користи за образовање које тежи да људе оспособи да обликују и мењају друштво. У раду се постављају нека кључна питања о улози педагогије у постизању циљева прогресивног модела и заступа мишљење да примена »прогресивних« метода не значи нужно и остваривање општепрокламованих циљева прогресивног образовања. Ово се илуструје приказом резултата испитивања које је спроведено у енглеским школама, а који показују да, упркос позивању на прогресивне методе, наставници теже да задрже традиционалне ставове а, са друге стране, како чак и традиционалне методе могу да послуже за остваривање прогресивних циљева. Није нам намера да се залажемо за традиционалну педагогију, већ да укажемо на могућност да можда нешто друго, ван педагогије, чини разлику у образовању либерално оријентисаних грађана будућности. У том смислу, у раду се испитује улога других фактора који чине разлику и воде ка прогресивном образовању, као што су демократизација међуљудских односа у етосу школе и поштовање дечије слободе.
Кључне речи: традиционално и прогресивно образовање, образовни циљеви, педагогија, демократизација школе, етос школе.

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 ЦЕЛ И МЕТОД ОБРАЗОВАЊА: РЕКАПИТУЛАЦИЈА
Резюме

В статје приводитс] обзор основних характеристик традиционалног и прогресивног образовања и свјезаних с њима педагошких. Термином »традиционално« именуется образование, готов]ее у-еника к выполнению определенной роли в у-е су\эствуй\ем об\эстве; термином »прогресивно« определ]ется образование, готов]ее у-еника к активному у-астию в

izmenenii i postrojke ob\estva. V rabote podnimayts] nekotore kly~evve voprosu o roli pedagogiki v dosti`enii celej progressivnoj modeli, otstaivaets] to~ka zreni], soglasno kotoroj primenenie progressivnyh metodov vedet ne vseгда k realizacii ob\epri]twh celej progressivnogo obrazovani]. V ka~estve illystrativnogo primera privod]ts] rezulxtatw issledovani], provedennogo v anglijskih [kolah, kotore pokazvvaet ~to, vopreki ispolxzovaniyu progressivnyh metodov prepodavately starayts] sbere~x tradicionne vozzreni]; s drugoj storonw, dannoe issledovanie pokzvvaet ~to imenno tradicionne metodw mo`no ispolxzovatx dl] dosti`eni] progressivnyh celej. Avtor ne nameren zastupatxs] za tradicionnyu pedagogiku, a tolxko ukazatx na vozmo`nostx, ~to drugie pri~inw vne pedagogiki, sostavl]yt raznicu v obrazovanii liberalnyh gra`dan budu`ego. V <tom smysle v rabote issleduet] rolx drugih faktorov, vedu`ih k progressivnomu obrazovanii, takih kak demokratizacii vzaimootno]enij v <tose [kolw i uva`enie detskoj svobodw.

Ключевые слова: tradicionnoe i progressivnoe obrazovanie, celi obrazovani], pedagogika, demokratizacii [kolw, <tos [kolw.