

## Doğan Cüceloğlu's Philosophy of Education in Context of His Speeches and Writing Works

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### Abstract

Educational philosophies direct the education of societies and, therefore, their future. Research has been carried out to determine the educational philosophy of many educators worldwide and in Turkey. However, no research revealing Doğan Cüceloğlu's philosophy of education, who recently passed away, one of the academicians of our country has been found. This study aims to determine the educational philosophy of Turkish psychologist and academician Doğan Cüceloğlu, who has tried to make sense of education and psychology together throughout his life. The current research is a qualitatively conducted grounded theory study. Doğan Cüceloğlu's speeches and writing on education were carried out in the light of the data collected by the document analysis method. Data were collected by examining the books, articles, interviews, conversations, social media accounts, speeches, and TV programs he wrote and analyzed by coding. "Why, what, and how to teach?" were answered by making inferences from Doğan Cüceloğlu's sentences. As a result of the research, it was understood that in terms of the purpose of education, Doğan Cüceloğlu's educational philosophy is existentialism; in terms of the content of education, it is existentialism; in terms of method of education, it is progressivism and existentialism. It has been determined that Doğan Cüceloğlu's perspective on education generally reflects existential understanding.

**Keywords:** Doğan Cüceloğlu, education, educational philosophy, grounded theory, existentialism, Doğan Cüceloğlu's educational philosophy.

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## Introduction

Philosophies produced to solve education problems are called educational philosophy (Noddings, 2008). The main educational philosophies, in order of their emergence, are as follows: perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, reconstructionism, and existentialism (Beatty, Leigh & Dean, 2009). People and societies make important educational decisions, and the realization of these decisions is shaped according to these educational philosophies (Ornstein, 1990).

When the studies on the philosophy of education are examined, it is seen that some research is carried out to reveal the philosophical and political views of the people in the field of education. Some of these are as follows: The study titled “Mehmet Akif Ersoy’s philosophy of education (A qualitative analysis in the context of his speeches and works)” by Baysülen (2016), the thesis titled “İsmet İnönü’s philosophy of education (A qualitative analysis in the light of his speeches and writings)” by Yılmaz (2015), the study named “An Evaluation of Nurettin Topçu’s understanding of education in terms of philosophical approaches” by Uslukaya (2018), Akdağ’s (2005) master’s thesis titled “Hilmi Ziya Ülken’s educational philosophy”, the thesis study “A comparative research on the educational ideas of Nurettin Topçu and Mümtaz Turhan” by Acar (2011), the study named “Hasan Ali Yücel’s philosophy of education and his contributions to Turkish national education” by Taşkesen (2006), master’s thesis named “Johann Friedrich Herbart’s philosophy of education” by Sağdıç (2019), the study titled “John Wilson’s philosophy of education and his contributions to religious education” by Uluğaç (2018), Öktem’s (2014) thesis research on “Rousseau’s understanding of education and its reflections on today”, the study titled “Emrullah Efendi’s educational philosophy policies and practices 1908-1914 as a minister of education” by İpek (2002), a research named “Atatürk’s Philosophy of Education (In the Light of What Atatürk Said and Wrote)” by Toprakçı (2011). In some of the listed studies, while the educational philosophies of the research subjects were revealed, data were collected in the light of their writing; some are based on works written about them. Looking at the methods of these studies, it can be said that Doğan Cüceloğlu’s view of education and educational philosophy can be defined in the light of his own published works, recorded interviews, and conversations.

It has been observed that there is no study in the literature about Doğan Cüceloğlu’s views on education or his philosophy of education. The researchers agreed on the necessity of investigating the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu, an academic expert in psychology. With this research, Doğan Cüceloğlu’s views on education were examined, and his educational philosophy was tried to be revealed. Such an effort may be important in guiding those who shape the Turkish education system policy by ensuring that Doğan Cüceloğlu’s views on education, the education system, education policies, and education philosophy are known. Such an effort may be important in guiding those who shape the Turkish education system policy by ensuring that Doğan Cüceloğlu’s views on education, the education system, education policies, and education philosophy are known. In addition, his advice to teachers about education can reach more people by providing a better understanding of the works of Doğan Cüceloğlu, who passed away recently. It is thought that this research will be important in revealing Doğan Cüceloğlu’s education philosophy and shed light on both the theorists working to create an educational philosophy and policy and the teachers who actively influence education at every stage of education.

This research aims to reveal the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu in the light of his works (books and articles he wrote) about education, conversations, speeches, interviews, and seminars about education. In addition, this research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the frequently used words in Doğan Cüceloğlu’s works and speeches that reveal his educational philosophy?
  - 1.1. “Why should we teach?” - What are the words frequently used in the expressions in the objectives dimension?
  - 1.2. “What should we teach?” - What are the words frequently used in the expressions in the content dimension?
  - 1.3. “How should we teach?” - What are the words frequently used in the expressions in the method dimension?

2. What is the educational philosophy embodied in answering the questions that reveal Doğan Cüceloğlu's philosophy of education?
  - 2.1. "Why should we teach?" – What is the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu that emerged regarding purposes?
  - 2.2. "What should we teach?" – What is the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu that emerged regarding content?
  - 2.3. "How should we teach?" – What is the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu that emerged in terms of method?
3. What is the educational philosophy embodied in the light of Doğan Cüceloğlu's works and speeches?

### **Background of the Study**

Carr (2004), who examined the relationship between education and philosophy, suggested that education should have a philosophical basis. According to Peters, Tesar, and Locke (2014), the philosophy of education is the study of philosophy, which is generally carried out to raise educational goals, methods, problems, and questions about education. On the other hand, Siegel, Harvey, and Callan (2008) defined the concept of "philosophy of education" as a branch of applied philosophy that deals with the nature and aims of education and philosophical problems arising from educational theory and practice. According to Ergün (2009), the educational philosophies of societies are among the main elements that shape the country's education policy and direct educational practices.

The philosophy of education, which can be defined in different ways by different scientists, examines the problems in education in general and tries to explain the concepts and ideas that shape education. Educational philosophers analyze and clarify the concepts and questions underlying education. The main questions that education philosophy seeks to answer are: "What should be the aims of education?", "Who should be educated?", "Should education differ according to natural abilities and interests?", "What role should the state play in education (Noddings, 2018)?" Philosophy of education can have different meanings in the context of the relationship of philosophy with an education based on various perspectives. The approaches to seeking answers to the questions of the philosophy of education have also been shaped by these differences and have led to different views (Toprakçı, 2011). In this sense, the leading educational philosophy trends in the literature on which the majority agree are perennialism, essentialism, reconstructionism, progressivism, and existentialism (Ornstein, Levine, Gutek, & Vocke, 2016).

Perennialists think that the main reason for students to be educated is to understand the great ideas that have emerged from Western civilizations. According to perennials, these views are necessary to overcome problems (Mosier, 1951). In addition, western philosophy works for this purpose in every era. Perennialists emphasize conveying universal principles to students as they are; since human nature is static. Human beings have logic, so the quality of the power of thought needs to be increased. The first aim of education is to bring human intelligence to the highest level. The great victories and ideas humankind has achieved since its existence are issues that should be emphasized in education. While teaching these subjects, it is preferred to use methods that force students' minds. Students studying with the perpetual education curriculum are asked to examine the sublime works of art and literature. The main topics to be taught are shaped around unchanging facts (Cohen, 1999).

According to essentialism, a community's basic ideas and shared culture should be taught to everyone, especially at the primary school level. To achieve this, teachers use their authority in the classroom. In essentialism, the curriculum is subject-centered (Sahin, 2018). According to Sahu (2002), in essentialism, the student must be disciplined to ensure learning takes place. In addition, education should not be given according to the interest or desires of the student. The center of education in essentialism is a curriculum that requires much effort. Education should aim to raise citizens who will benefit society and should be open to all children (Şahin, 2018).

Britannica (2019) states that the philosophy of progressivism in education is a movement that reacted to the so-called narrowness and formalism of traditional education in Europe and the United States in the late 19th century. One of the main goals of progressivism is to educate the child as a "whole"

(Blake, Smeyers, Smith, & Standish, 2008) – that is, to see the student as a “whole” individual, physically, emotionally, and intellectually. In progressivism, the school is designed as a laboratory for the student. Children learn by doing and experiencing. Creativity and crafts are essential in the curriculum, and children are encouraged to do experiments and think independently. According to American philosopher John Dewey (2019), the most influential theorist of progressivism, a class should be a democracy in the microcosm.

According to Cohen (1999), the philosophy of reconstructionism is a thought that focuses on social problems and creates a society based on the existing social structure. Educators who advocate this philosophical trend focus on a curriculum emphasizing social reform as education’s goal. The subjects taught in school are, in general, social problems. The courses aim to enable students to take actions that will enable them to overcome social problems such as famine, international terrorism, and wars.

Apart from these four main educational philosophies, the existential philosophy of education also has an important place. Existentialism focuses on human existence. According to existential philosophy, which rejects absolute and universal ideas, the individual creates reality himself. The task of schools is to assist the student in self-discovery (Tan, 2006). Existentialism always focuses on the individual. The message of this philosophy, in general, is not directed to the individual being considered but to the “individual trying to define what makes her/him human” (Morris and Troutner, 1966). Therefore, in the existentialist view, the question of being should precede the question of knowledge while carrying out philosophical research. Self-aware individuals understand their existence in terms of their experience of themselves and their situation (Flew, 1979). The goals of existential philosophy are for the individual to be aware of his essence, to understand the reason for his existence, to be loyal to his own belief and the values he has created, to choose freely as he wishes, and to create his truths. These goals should not be ignored in education (Rumianowska, 2020).

All countries make arrangements in their education systems according to the necessity of time. These arrangements are made according to society’s social and economic conditions. In the Ottoman Empire, education policy was organized by foundations until the Tanzimat period. This situation started to change in the Tanzimat period, and the government regulated the education policy in the Republican period. The cultural and educational policy in the Republican period caused differences in the philosophical foundations of the education curriculum. Since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, many changes have been made in the education system (Gömleksiz & Kan, 2005).

When the Republic of Turkey was newly established, it tried to establish a new education system by inheriting its old cultural tradition. Although the influence of the perennials and essentialism philosophies in the Ottoman period continued, the new Turkey adopted a pragmatist, progressive, and reconstructive philosophical trend in education. Efforts were made to shift from teacher-centered education to student-centered education, and educational technologies were rapidly adapted to education. While all these were being realized, progressivism indirectly and sometimes directly affected the Turkish education system. Like other developed and developing countries, Turkey has tried to develop education in this direction while inviting scientists such as John Dewey, a pragmatist, to the country and getting beneficial opinions from them. The Turkish education system has also begun to be restructured in line with the ideas of J. Dewey (Kesgin, 2015). With the Village Institutes practice in the 1940s, the philosophical movement of reconstructivism in education was adequate, but this system did not affect the general philosophy of education since it lasted for a short time (Hesapçioğlu, 2009). Ulubey and Aykaç (2017), in a study that aimed to determine which educational philosophies were reflected in the primary school programs developed between 1926 and 2005, concluded that Turkey’s educational philosophy is a mixture of perennials and progressivism, as a result of their research findings.

### **Doğan Cüceloğlu**

Doğan Cüceloğlu, who has carried out many studies in the field of psychology, was also a renowned academician in media psychology. During his lifetime, he has published non-fiction books in psychology and education, has been a radio and TV presenter, and has organized many conferences and seminars on the importance of education in individual development. He continued his studies on

society, people, and life until the last days of his life. He repeatedly emphasized the importance of education in his works. He stated that the role of education should not be denied in reaching an advanced society level and in the process of self-discovery (Savaşçı, 1999; Öğretmenim Bir Bakar Mısın – Öğretmen’in Gücü, 2018; Öğretmen Olmak – Bir Can’a Dokunmak, 2013). The fact that he is an academican and psychologist who is an expert in his field, his productivity, his love of the nation, and the importance he gives to education made the author of the present article think that he has thoughts based on an educational philosophy worth examining. As a result of these reasons, it was decided to examine Doğan Cüceloğlu’s thoughts on education. It is thought that determining his educational philosophy will contribute to the literature.

### Method

This research was designed with the theory-building approach, one of the qualitative research designs. The document analysis method was used in the research. In the theory-building approach, also called grounded theory, which is frequently used in qualitative research, data are collected in a planned manner and compared simultaneously; then, a theory based on this data is produced with an inductive method (Noble & Mitchell, 2016). In theory-building studies, from the beginning of the research process, the researcher codes the data, compares the data and codes, and collects more data. The process continues like this. Finally, a grounded theory of the subject under study emerges. This theory, which emerged with factual data, is presented in an explanatory way (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2015).

In document analysis studies, printed and electronic resources are evaluated by examination (Bowen, 2009). The published works of Doğan Cüceloğlu and the programs he participated in were analyzed by document analysis technique. In order to reveal Doğan Cüceloğlu’s philosophy of education, a tool called “Educational Philosophies Definitions Chart” was created by the researcher by making use of the educational philosophy determination tool used by Toprakçı (2011) in his article. In Table 1, the questions of “Why,” “What,” and “How” have been tried to be answered in the context of five educational philosophies (perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, reconstructionism, and existentialism) in order to define educational philosophies.

Table 1.

Educational Philosophies Definitions Chart

	Perennialism	Essentialism	Progressivism	Reconstructionism	Existentialism
Why?	*for humanity *to reach the creator *to obey the laws of the universe	*to adopt the main cultural elements *to raise good citizens	*to adapt to changing life conditions *to evolve and move forward	*to ensure democracy *for revolutionary transformation	*to liberate *to develop the potential *to discover one’s essence
What?	*great works *basic morals *universal issues	*experiences of our elders *cultural values of society	*curriculum created by taking interests into account	*real-life problems *Science	*Empathy *critical thinking *spiritual values
How?	*through discipline *using the deductive method	*by using books *by using the rote method	*learning by doing and experiencing *with collaboration and research	*using technology *using democratic techniques	* by raising awareness * allowing them to choose their truth

### **Data Collection**

Data collection was carried out with the document analysis method. After the “Educational Philosophies Definitions Chart” was created, in the context of educational philosophies in Table 5, the following questions were asked by the researcher to give answers on behalf of the reason, content, and method of teaching, respectively: “Why should we teach?”, “What should we teach?” and “How should we teach?”. While searching for these answers, the following works, which are also mentioned in the limitations of the research, were taken into account such as Doğan Cüceloğlu’s books, speeches, and articles published on the internet. All these works belong to him and can be considered a direct source. Since Doğan Cüceloğlu did not have direct answers to the questions asked to define the philosophy of education, the expressions bearing the nature of indirect answers were sought in the works.

### **Data Analysis**

In the present study, content analysis was carried out with the data collected by the document review method. After searching for answers to the questions of educational philosophies in the works written by Doğan Cüceloğlu, open coding was done by the researcher during the data analysis. The keywords in the answers to the questions of educational philosophies from the first-hand sources of Doğan Cüceloğlu were matched with the codes allocated to the themes. After collecting the necessary data for the research and coding, themes were created by the researcher using the questions of “Why,” “What,” and “How” related to the education philosophy of education in order to clarify the research findings and make them easier to read. After the coding, the frequencies of the expressions compatible with the codes were analyzed, and the number of answers given to the questions of educational philosophies was shown in a table. The collected data were interpreted by using the “Educational Philosophies Definitions Chart” created by the researcher.

### **Validity and Reliability**

What determines the value of research is its precision. Validity and reliability must be taken into account in order to ensure the precision of the research (Creswell, 2003). Validity determines whether research measures what it is supposed to measure and the accuracy rate of study results (Bashir, Afzal & Azeem, 2008). In order to ensure validity, the findings were interpreted separately by ensuring that the research questions were handled one by one. Then, the answers to all questions were interpreted and integrated to determine Doğan Cüceloğlu’s education philosophy. The research findings were interpreted by comparing them with their counterparts in the literature.

Stenbacka (2001) argues that reliability is essential in quantitative research; however, she says that the issue of reliability is not important in qualitative research since it is about measurement. She draws attention to how insignificant reliability is in determining qualitative research quality. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested using “consistency” for qualitative research instead of the term reliability used in quantitative research. They say that when measuring the reliability of research results is impossible, it is more important for data interpretations to contain consistent statements. In this study, which was designed with theory building, the confirmation of a faculty member and a researcher was applied to examine the consistency of the data. Direct citations to be used in qualitative research are raw data sources. Detailing the qualitative data by giving direct quotations provides the research to gain depth (Labuschagne, 2003). In order to provide depth and increase consistency in the research, the collected data were exemplified by quoting directly from the sources.

### **Limitations**

This study is limited to the books published under the names of “Öğretmenim Bir Bakar Mısın?” (2018), “Öğretmen Olmak: Bir Can’a Dokunmak” (2019), and “Savaşçı” (2005); his Twitter account, the works that contain Doğan Cüceloğlu’s published articles (Table 2), his speeches and conversations (Table 3), his seminars and interviews (Table 4).

Table 2.  
Doğan Cüceloğlu's published articles\*

Name of the Article	Publication Date
Karnedeki Notun Anlamı (The Meaning of the Grade on the School Report)	13.06.2015
Öğretmen Olmak: Bir Cana Dokunmak (Being a Teacher: Touching a Life)	16.05.2015
İyi Öğretmen ve Etki Alanı (The Good Teachers and their Influence)	02.05.2015
Öğretmen Soruyor: Ben Nerede Yanlış Yaptım? (Teacher Asks: Where Did I Go Wrong?)	29.04.2015
Çocuklarımız, Sınav ve Gerçekler (Our Children, Exams and Facts)	08.04.2015
Kıyaslanan Çocuk (The Child Compared to others)	14.10.2012
Yeni Müdür Konuştu (The New School Principal Speaks)	12.08.2012
Öğretmen Var, Öğretmen Var (Some Teachers are Good, Some are Bad)	01.04.2012
Kendi Egosuna ya da Öğrenciye... (To Their Own Egos or the Student...)	11.03.2012
Yanlış ve Hata (Mistakes and Errors)	04.03.2012
Bir Öğretmenin Gözlemleri (A Teacher's Observations)	17.07.2009

\*[www.dogancuceloglu.net](http://www.dogancuceloglu.net)

Table 3.  
Doğan Cüceloğlu's Speeches and Conversations about Education\*

Name of the Speech	Publication Date
Değişim Süreci İçerisinde Eğitim (Education in the Process of Change)	09.01.2017
Eğitim Bireye Ne Kazandırmalı? (What Should Education Gain Individuals?)	16.06.2016
Nasıl Bir Toplum Oluşturmak İstiyoruz (What Kind of Society do We Want to Create?)	29.03.2016
Özgür Bolat ile Eğitim ve Aile Üzerine Bir Sohbet (Conversation with Özgür Bolat on Education and Family)	28.03.2016
Eğitim ve Öğretimde Başarı – İbrahim Taşel ile Sohbet (Success in Education and Training – Conversation with İbrahim Taşel)	28.03.2016
Öğretmenin öğrenme yolculuğu nasıldır? - İrfan Erdoğan ile Sohbet (What is the teacher's learning journey like? –Conversation with İrfan Erdoğan)	28.03.2016
Hayata Hazır Gençler Yetiştirmek - Cihat Şener ile Sohbet (Raising Young People Ready for Life – Conversation with Cihat Şener)	28.03.2016
Aydınlık bir gelecek için neler yapmalıyız? - Cihat Şener ile Sohbet (What should we do for a bright future? – Conversation with Cihat Şener)	28.03.2016
Eğitim bir araç mı yoksa amaç mıdır? (Is Education a Tool or the goal?)	28.03.2016
Öğretmen-Öğrenci İlişkisi: Çocuğun gözüne bakıp 'Merhaba' demek (Teacher-Student Relationship: Looking into the child's eyes and saying 'Hello')	28.03.2016
Hüseyin Özcan ile Eğitim Üzerine Bir Sohbet (Conversation on Education with Hüseyin Özcan)	29.02.2016
İyi bir öğretmen nasıl olunur? - İbrahim Taşel ile Sohbet (How to be a good teacher? – Conversation with İbrahim Taşel)	29.02.2016

\* <https://www.youtube.com/@DoganCucelogluOfficial>

Table 4.  
Doğan Cüceloğlu's Seminars and Interviews about Education\*

Name of the Seminar	Publication Date
Doğan Cüceloğlu'nun Değerler Bilincine Yaklaşımı / Başarının Anahtarı / A Para (Doğan Cüceloğlu's Approach to Awareness of Values / The Key to Success / A Para)	24.02.2021
Prof. Dr. Doğan Cüceloğlu ile Mesleki Çalışma Dönemi Webinar Etkinliği "Öğretmenim Bir Bakar Mısın?" (Teachers' Professional Working Term Webinar Event "Teacher, Can You Take A Look?")	29.06.2020
2018-2019 Akademik Yılı Açılış Konuşması (2018-2019 Academic Year Opening Speech)	18.09.2018 16.02.2019
Ezgi Aşık'ın Söyleşisi (Interview with Ezgi Aşık)	

\*[www.google.com/search/doğan-cüceloğlu](http://www.google.com/search/doğan-cüceloğlu)

### Findings

While researching Doğan Cüceloğlu's philosophy of education, the coding process performed by the researcher and the table indicating the frequency levels were taken into consideration to solve the research questions. The findings of the study were presented in a way that the dominant educational philosophy would be indicated, taking into account the answers given to the questions of educational philosophies and the sums of the answers given for each question according to the degree of frequency. In Table 5, the frequencies of the answers given to the questions of fundamental questions of educational philosophies in the works of Cüceloğlu are given.

Table 5.

The Structure of the Dimensions of the Philosophy of Education became concrete in the context of what Doğan Cüceloğlu wrote and said

	Why should we teach?	What should we teach?	How should we teach?	TOTAL
<b>Perennialism</b>	2	0	0	2
<b>Essentialism</b>	2	1	0	3
<b>Progressivism</b>	4	2	5	11
<b>Reconstructionism</b>	5	0	0	5
<b>Existentialism</b>	19	9	6	34
<b>TOTAL</b>	32	12	11	55

Three main themes were created from the document review data. These can be listed as follows: "Why should we teach?" - What are the words that are frequently used in the expressions in the objectives dimension?", "What should we teach? - What are the words frequently used in the expressions in the content dimension?" and "How should we teach? - What are the words frequently used in the expressions in the process dimension?". The codes of these four themes and the expressions from which the codes were taken are given below in order.

#### **Theme 1. "Why should we teach?" - What are the words that are frequently used in the expressions in the objectives dimension?**

What Doğan Cüceloğlu said and wrote in the context of the purpose of education was analyzed according to five main educational philosophy trends, and the following findings were reached: A total of 2 expressions were found following the purpose of the perpetual education philosophy: "For the future of the world" and "For raising generations who can contribute to the culture of the world." In the reference source "Hüseyin Özcan ile Eğitim Üzerine Bir Sohbet, "the following sentence can be



given as an example: “Our education should raise people who can contribute to world culture, understand it, and communicate with it.”. A total of 2 expressions were found following the purpose of the essentialist education philosophy: “Raising good citizens” and “incorporating the values of our culture into our education.” The following statement by Cüceloğlu in the “Ezgi Aşık’ın Söyleşi” is one of the examples: “One of the main purposes of education should be to raise good citizens.”. A total of 4 expressions have been found in Doğan Cüceloğlu’s writings and discourses, which are suitable for his progressive education philosophy; these expressions have formed two codes: “for the development of people” and “to enable them to adapt to living conditions.” The following statement in his article titled “Öğretmen-Öğrenci İlişkisi: Çocuğun gözüne bakıp ‘Merhaba’ demek” is one of the expressions in which the codes are accessed: “Education should prepare the child strongly for life.” A total of 5 expressions were obtained from Doğan Cüceloğlu’s words following the purpose of the reconstructive education philosophy. These phrases are grouped under the following codes: “for revolution” and “for reconstruction.” The phrase he said in his book “Öğretmen Olmak, Bir Can’a Dokunmak” is one of the expressions taken into account while creating these codes: “Education exists as a tool of social change in Turkey.”. A total of 19 expressions were found in what Doğan Cüceloğlu said and wrote following the purpose of the existential philosophy of education. These expressions formed the codes of “to liberate,” “to develop one’s potential,” and “to realize oneself.” For example, the sentence “Every person has only one innate purpose: to realize herself” (p.57) in the book Savaşçı exemplifies these statements.

### **Theme 2. “What should we teach?” - What are the words frequently used in the expressions in the content dimension?**

What Doğan Cüceloğlu said and wrote in the context of the content of education was analyzed according to five educational philosophies, and the following findings were reached: No expression can be associated with the content approach of the perennials in what Doğan Cüceloğlu wrote and said. One statement was found in what essentialism said about the content of education. The following statement he shared on his personal Twitter account is the expression that constitutes the “social values” code: “I see the future of a society in the values that live in the family and the educational environment.” A total of 2 statements were found regarding the content approach of the philosophy of progressive education: “It will enable the child to use his current talent more efficiently...” and “People’s tendencies are different...” (Çocuklarımız, Sınav ve Gerçekler) can be associated with the philosophy of progressivism. Regarding the reconstructivist philosophy of education content approach, no findings were found in Doğan Cüceloğlu’s works that could be associated with this philosophy. A total of 9 expressions were found following the content of the existential philosophy of education, and these expressions led to the formation of the following codes: “spiritual values,” “empathy,” and “critical thinking.” The following statements in his works can be associated with the content approach of the existential philosophy of education: “I care about values more than knowledge.”, “Science and technology are based on values.” (Öğretmen Olmak: Bir Can’a Dokunmak), “Values are the basis of a meaningful life.”, “Values are indispensable.” (Nasıl bir Toplum Oluşturmak İstiyoruz?) Cüceloğlu’s following sentences in his book “Öğretmenim, Bir Bakar Mısın?” can be given as an example: “Behind being productive in science and technology, there are values at the core of scientific thought. Teachers should keep the values underlying scientific thinking alive in the classroom.”.

### **Theme 3. “How should we teach?” - What are the words frequently used in the expressions in the method dimension?**

In Cüceloğlu’s writings and statements, no expression refers to what perennials and essentialist philosophies say about the method of education. A total of 5 expressions were found following the method approach of the philosophy of progressivism. The following statements in his works “Yanlış ve Hata” and “Öğretmen Olmak” are associated with the method of progressive philosophy: “Providing the opportunity for students to observe, ask questions, do research, “participate the student,” “educational experiences such as walks, school painting, garden cleaning,” “encourage asking new and quality questions.”, “interactive lessons.” These expressions enabled the codes of “living by doing,” “collaborating” and “using research method” to be reached. The phrase “A teacher who sees the knowledge and the source as a potential in himself/herself teaches a lesson based on

interaction,” said by Cüceloğlu at the Becoming a Teacher seminar, is one of the data collected in the research. In Cüceloğlu’s writings and statements, no expression could be associated with the method approach of the reconstructive philosophy of education. A total of 6 expressions were found that fit the method approach of the existential philosophy of education. The following statements in his works (His Twitter account and Öğretmenim, Bir Bakar Mısın?) coincide with the content approach of this educational philosophy: “Real education transforms knowledge into consciousness.”, “Helping the student discover his life,” “making the children realize they are their most important witness.” The obtained statements created the following codes: “by giving the person the opportunity to choose his truth” and “by making the person conscious.” An example is the following statement from his Twitter account: “Teachers should aim to help their students discover and build the meaning of their own lives.”.

### **Discussion, Conclusion, and Suggestions**

In this part of the research, the questions sought answers are discussed by comparing the inferences from the findings and the literature. “What is Doğan Cüceloğlu’s philosophy of education?” Based on what Cüceloğlu wrote and said, an answer was sought with the inferences made by the researcher.

#### **1. “Why should we teach?” – What is the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu that emerged regarding purposes?**

Based on what Doğan Cüceloğlu said and wrote, some of his words about what the purpose of education should be have been reached. Below, the results obtained by deducing from the findings obtained in the current research are presented with a discussion.

According to the philosophy of perennials, education aims to enable students to use their intelligence best (Howick, 1980). It will be possible to ensure that universal principles and traditions are permanent by raising individuals who think rationally and critically. Thanks to education, world culture will develop (Link, 2008). In short, the primary purpose of education is to raise people who will benefit all humanity (Ergün, Oral, & Yazar, 2018). The following statements in Doğan Cüceloğlu’s words supported these views: “We must educate people for the future of the world.” and “We must raise people who can contribute to world culture.”.

According to the philosophy of essentialism, education should ensure that society remains as it is. Education should not change society. Instead of changing people’s behavior in education, the focus should be on making them become good experts on basic issues (Howick, 1980). According to the essentialists, the main purpose of education is to transfer knowledge and culture to future generations as they are (Yayla, 2009). According to the philosophy of essentialism, education aims to adopt the main cultural elements and to raise good citizens (Ergün et al., 2018). The following statements in Cüceloğlu’s words coincide with the answers given by the essentialist education philosophy to the question of what should be the purpose of education: “We need to raise good citizens.” and “We must incorporate the values of our culture into education.” Therefore, from his statements, it is concluded that he has views following essentialist philosophy.

The philosophy of progressivism aims to prevent the reasons that may prevent change and development and to do this with education (Keskin and Şahin, 2018). Progressives regard education as life itself. They oppose absoluteness and dogmatism. (Gutek, 2005). They argue that students’ social and academic development in interaction with each other is the main purpose of education (Dewey, 2019; Gutek, 2005). It is seen that the following statements of Cüceloğlu coincide with the aims of the philosophy of progressivism and support these ideas: “Education should ensure the development of human beings.” and “We must educate the student in order to improve.”

The philosophy of reconstructionism aims to make a revolutionary transformation with education so that society becomes better than it is (Ergün et al., 2018). According to the philosophy of reconstructionism, the education system, which is seen not only as life but also as the “future” (Dewey, 1923), should restructure the society (Zırhıoğlu & Yayla, 2016). Reconstructionists have adopted the view that it is possible to improve people’s living conditions through education (Cohen & Gelbrich, 1999). It has been revealed that the following words in Cüceloğlu’s works support the views

of this educational philosophy: “Social change is necessary.”, “Creating another future is possible with education.” and “Sustainable social change is possible through education.”

The existential philosophy of education puts the person at the highest level and emphasizes how valuable the individual is. It says that existentialism, freedom, choice, and responsibility should be emphasized in the context of education (Wang, 1988). Existentialism aims to increase one’s own individual awareness and moral development. Education should make people happy, and happiness is possible by enabling people to be self-aware, make their own choices, and take responsibility for their actions (Kooli, 2019). The following statements of Cüceloğlu support the views of the philosophy of existentialism: “Students need to discover the importance of self-witnesses,” “It is necessary to look at the existence of human beings,” “There is a need for education that develops the potential of human beings.” The existential philosophy of education requires that the student also discover his freedom and accept that he is responsible for setting the limits of his freedom (Suiçmez, 2009). The following statements in Cüceloğlu’s works and words seem to support this argument: “Education is necessary to raise free people.”, “Education is important in the journey of self-discovery.” and “It is necessary to set the student free.”

When the research findings were compared with the relevant literature review, it was concluded that Doğan Cüceloğlu’s philosophy of education, which emerged in terms of purposes, was existentialism.

## **2. “What should we teach?” – What is the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu that emerged regarding content?**

Based on what Doğan Cüceloğlu said and wrote, some statements about the content of education should have been reached. Below, the results obtained by deducing from the findings obtained in the current research are presented with a discussion.

In the philosophy of perennials, the accurate information that has been going on since the beginning of history in the temporal and spatial sense should be reflected in the content of education. Perennialism, which aims at the learner’s cognitive development, suggests that great works created by great people should be included in the curriculum. Raising intellectual people can only be achieved by teaching permanent knowledge (In Tan, Wong, Chua, & Kang, 2006). The curriculum is designed to teach the values and knowledge that exist in society (Kooli, 2019). It was concluded that Doğan Cüceloğlu disapproved of the perpetual curriculum since it was not seen that he advocated such a content approach in his works.

Essentialism argues that taking care of people’s differences is unnecessary and says that every person is essentially the same (Holma, 2007), and therefore a single subject-centered curriculum should be applied. The focus of the teaching curriculum is the culture and history of the society (Kooli, 2019). Essentialists emphasize that the unchanging customs of society from past to present should be taught to students (In Tan et al., 2006). Based on what Doğan Cüceloğlu said, it was revealed that he did not have a statement showing that he found a curriculum that describes the unchanging traditions and customs of the society appropriate. Therefore, it is seen that there is no evidence that Cüceloğlu defends the essentialist philosophy in terms of content.

According to Labaree (2005), progressivism is an educational philosophy that was influenced by the philosophy of pragmatism. Therefore, it is emphasized to create a curriculum suitable for student’s interests and abilities that can benefit them (Sadker et al., 2008). We can say that Cüceloğlu agrees that people are different from each other. He defends the necessity of maximizing the existing talent of the student in his works. However, since there is not enough data on this subject to satisfying the researcher, it has been revealed that progressivism in the content dimension of the philosophy of education is not the dominant philosophy of Cüceloğlu.

In the understanding of reconstructivism created against the philosophy of progressivism, the fact that progressivism and other educational philosophies make the status stronger politically is criticized. It is stated that teachers and students are essential in social empowerment. Reform is possible only if the school is seen as a social institution. In the philosophy of reconstructionism, a curriculum consisting of subjects that require students to find solutions to social problems is applied (In Tan et al., 2006). In

Cüceloğlu's works, expressions supporting the importance given to the school and the teacher by the reconstruction philosophy have been encountered. It is also stated that social welfare can be achieved through the school institution. However, no statement exists that the content should be realized to solve life's problems. Therefore, there is no evidence that he supports this philosophy in the context of education content.

According to Koirala (2011), the philosophy of existentialism rejects the teaching of subjects that do not consider human wants, needs, and the conditions in which humans are found. According to existential thinkers, man creates reality himself. Therefore, the subjects that should be given priority in the curriculum are literature, music, and art (Malik & Akhter, 2013). The main subject that should be taught to students in existentialism is how to be free (Cevizci, 2010). In existential philosophy, the essence of man and the subjective knowledge he has created is more important than the objective knowledge taught worldwide. At the same time, social and human sciences are predominant over the positive sciences. Creating an ethical human being, putting values before absolute knowledge, the fact that there are moral values under scientific thought, and the importance to be given to human values for humanity to have a bright future are expressions frequently encountered in Cüceloğlu's works. In the philosophy of existentialism, which argues that the lessons should be human-oriented, affective issues are emphasized (Wang, 1988). Derslerin insana yönelik olması gerektiğini öne süren varoluşçuluk felsefesinde duyuşsal ağırlıklı konuların üzerinde durulmaktadır (Wang, 1988). The following statements, reached from the works of Cüceloğlu, which were examined in order to answer the question "What should we teach," support the view of the philosophy of existentialism: "I care more about values than knowledge." and "Values are indispensable." Cüceloğlu, who repeated many times that man should discover his essence, has been found to advocate that human values should be included in the content of education. At the same time, he openly said that humanities should be given more importance than positive sciences. For this reason, it was revealed that Doğan Cüceloğlu was influenced by existential philosophy regarding content.

### **3. "How should we teach?" – What is the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu that emerged in terms of method?**

Based on what Doğan Cüceloğlu said and wrote, some expressions he used about what the method of education should be have been reached. Below, the results obtained by deducing from the findings obtained in the current research are presented with a discussion.

In the philosophy of perennials, it is not essential for education that the individuals in the society have their characteristics. Mistakes are not forgiven, and those who make mistakes are sanctioned. Maintaining order in the classroom where the teacher's activity is in question is possible with strict and prescriptive teaching (Tuncel, 2004; Erden, 2007). It is not seen that Cüceloğlu advocates a strict education in his works and speeches. There are statements that he does not recommend the punishment method because it will cause adverse reactions. For these reasons, it has been concluded that his educational philosophy is not perennial in the method dimension.

In the philosophy of essentialism, as in perennials, the teacher is the leader in the teaching environment. Memorization and expression techniques are used in education (Lynch, 2016). The teacher explains, and the student memorizes the information to absorb it (In Tan et al., 2006). The student has to do everything the teacher says and give correct and complete answers to the questions. Therefore, the perennialism philosophy supports an oppressive teaching method (Zirhlioğlu & Yahya, 2016). There was no expression in Doğan Cüceloğlu's works showing that he defended the methods proposed by essentialism. Therefore, it was revealed that he disagreed with the philosophy of essentialism.

In progressivism, which opposes the views of perennial and essentialist philosophy, the center of the education system is the student, not the teacher. The teacher is in a position to guide the student (Kooli, 2019). According to the philosophy of progressivism, the primary goal is for the student to solve a problem (Radu, 2011). For this reason, the student needs to be active throughout the learning process. A progressive teacher should use the scientific method in the classroom and encourage students to ask questions and do research (Cohen, 1999). Doğan Cüceloğlu says that learning by doing

and research methods should be used in the classroom that the student's being active during the lesson will increase learning, that the student should be encouraged to ask questions, that an interactive lesson will positively affect the learning process, the importance of experiences in education and all of these are opportunities. It turns out that he has a positive view of progressive philosophy on how teaching should be in terms of method.

Cohen (1999) says that the philosophy of reconstructionism can be used to improve people's living conditions. To achieve this, worldly problems must be brought to the classroom. The aim of reconstructive philosophy can be achieved by using democratic methods such as questioning and discussion. Although Cüceloğlu sees education as a tool of social change, he does not have any statement about the approaches offered by reconstructive philosophy as an education method. Therefore, it is concluded that Cüceloğlu does not support this philosophy in the context of the method of education.

The philosophy of existentialism in education says that the student should grow up free and responsible. The courses prepared by considering the value of humans make it necessary to determine a method with existential philosophy (Wang, 1988). Teachers and students determine the subject and method together (Sadker & Zittleman, 2018). In order to develop student freedom both during the lesson and in his own life, the teacher should use methods that will provide this in the teaching process (Duman, 2010). The role of the educator in existential philosophy is to enable the student to discover their essence and make their own choices (Koirala, 2011; Kooli, 2019). Cüceloğlu, in his works and speeches, states that real education is to transform knowledge into consciousness, that one's awareness should be increased, and that the student should discover the meaning of life; He also says that the teacher should help the student in this awareness process of the student. Cüceloğlu argues that the education system aims to make the child realize that he is the most important witness and that it is necessary to use the education method advocated by the philosophy of existentialism in order to achieve this goal; it turns out that he accepts this philosophical approach in terms of method. It is seen that Doğan Cüceloğlu's ideas on how education should be carried out in an educational environment are the same as progressive and existential philosophies.

#### **4. What is the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu embodied in the light of his works and speeches?**

In the context of what he said and wrote, it can be included that Doğan Cüceloğlu's philosophy of education is existentialism in terms of the purposes of education. Again, based on his statements, it turns out that existentialism is the approach that reflects Doğan Cüceloğlu's perspective on education in terms of the content of education. What he said and wrote about the method of education is in line with the philosophies of progressionalism and existentialism. When Doğan Cüceloğlu's works and speeches are examined, it is seen that his words mostly contain expressions that are close to the ideas put forward by the philosophy of existentialism. It can be said that Doğan Cüceloğlu evaluates education from the perspective of "existentialist" philosophy in general, based on what he said and wrote about the aims, content, and method of education.

In the current study, which aims to determine the education philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu, when the data are evaluated as a whole, it has been concluded that his view of education coincides with the "existentialism" education philosophy. Researchers can examine Doğan Cüceloğlu's perspective on education in the context of educational philosophies and carry out a study by reaching other works by Doğan Cüceloğlu which are not used in this study. In addition, since he passed away, interviews with family members or friends can be conducted with prior permission. Thus, more comprehensive research can be carried out.

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**Ethic statement:** In this study, we declare that the rules stated in the “Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive” are complied with and that we do not take any of the actions based on “Actions Against Scientific Research and Publication Ethics”. At the same time, we declare that there is no conflict of interest between the authors, which all authors contribute to the study and that all the responsibility belongs to the article authors in case of all ethical violations.

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