

**THE ACT OF WIZARDRY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF
A WIZARD WITHIN A CONSTRUCTIVIST
PERSPECTIVE: URSULA LE GUIN'S "A WIZARD OF
EARTHSEA"**

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Abstract: Since the beginning of the 1970s, there has been a tendency towards constructivism and the popularity of behaviorism decreased (Eisner, 1999). Many of the concepts underlying the constructivist perspective have a long history and they are particularly rooted in the work of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner and other prominent educational theorists and researchers (Harris & Graham, 1994). Constructivist learning theory puts a great emphasis on the learner's point of view as it is considered to be the crucial element in creating a climate for learning (Garmston & Wellman, 1994). The purpose of this study is to evaluate the story of Ged, the protagonist, and his adventures as he is wandering through Earthsea in *A Wizard of Earthsea* (1968) by Ursula Le Guin. The analysis of the novel, which is intended to tackle the theme of education, demonstrates that there are various examples of the constructivist theory, from both a cognitive and a social view of the theory. The concept of education was analyzed by basing the study on the theme of education portrayed in *A Wizard of Earthsea* to reveal the rationale of education lying behind it. Thus, educational philosophy through different instances was emphasized since education plays a major role in the life of an individual.

Keywords: Constructivism, Educational Philosophy, Role of Education, Maturation.

**BÜYÜCÜLÜK VE BİR BÜYÜCÜNÜN YAPISALCILIK KURAMI
AÇISINDAN GELİŞİMİ: URSULA LE GUIN'İN "YERDENİZ
BÜYÜCÜSÜ" ADLI ESERİ**

Öz: 1970'lerin başından beri davranışçı yaklaşımın etkisi azalmış ve yapılandırmacılık kuramına bir eğilim olmuştur (Eisner, 1999).

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Yapılandırmacı bakış açısının altında yatan birçok kavramın çok uzun bir tarihi vardır ve bu kavramlar Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner ve diğer önemli eğitim teorisyenlerinin ve araştırmacıların çalışmalarına dayanmaktadır (Harris & Graham, 1994).Yapılandırmacı öğrenme teorisi, uygun bir öğrenme ortamı oluşturmada öğrencinin bakış açısının önemli olduğu görüşüne dayandığı için bu bakış açısını özellikle vurgulamaktadır (Garmston& Wellman, 1994). Bu çalışmanın amacı, Ursula Le Guin tarafından yazılan *A Wizard of Earthsea (1968)* adlı romanda hikâyenin kahramanı olan Ged'in Yerdeniz'de geçen yolculuğu boyunca yaşadığı deneyimleri anlatmaktadır. Eğitim temasını ele almak üzere yürütülen romanın analizi, yapısalcı teorinin hem bilişsel hem de sosyal yönünün ele alınarak ve yapısalcı teoriye dayalı örneklendirme yoluyla yürütülmüştür. *Yerdeniz Büyücüsü* adlı romanın altında yatan eğitim temasını ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla eğitim temasına dayandırılarak analiz edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, eğitimin bir bireyin kaderinde çok önemli bir yere sahip olmasından dolayı romandan alınan farklı örneklerle romandaki eğitim felsefesi vurgulanmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yapısalcılık, Eğitim Felsefesi, Eğitimin Rolü, Olgunlaşma.

1. *A Wizard of Earthsea* and Ursula Le Guin

Born in 1929, in Berkeley, California, Ursula Le Guin is a renowned American science fiction writer (Walsh & Le Guin, 1995). Being the daughter of anthropologist Alfred L. Kroeber and Theodora Kroeber, Le Guin attended Radcliffe College and she earned her master's degree from Columbia University. Besides, as a Fulbright fellow, she continued her studies in France (Le Guin, 1971). Having written four collections of poetry, more than fifteen novels, short stories, books for children, criticism, screenplays and edited anthologies, Le Guin's works have been honored with the National Book Award, the Hugo Award, the Nebula Award, the Prix Lectures-Jeunes, the Pushcart Prize, the Boston Globe-Hornbook Award, the National Book Award, the Kafka Award, Writer's Digest's 100 Best Writers of the 20th century and the Gandalf Award for fantasy writing (Justice, 2001; Walsh & Le Guin, 1995). Le Guin claims her success is the natural outcome of her talent for writing, which she developed through hard work and practice (Justice, 2001).

Le Guin's works are considered to change the notions of what fantasy and science fiction can perform and she is also considered to be a remarkable spinner of fantastic tales through which she can make the readers take note of the words and cultural assumptions (Mc Cafferry and Gregory, 1984). According to Le Guin, science fiction serves a bridge between literature and rhetoric (Rochelle, 2001). De Bolt (1979) tackles Le Guin from birth to success and collects some fragments about her life and views, many of which now underline the science fiction. De Bolt (1979, p. 14, 27) also emphasizes Le Guin's 'faith in human nature's capacity for goodness' and she regards science fiction as having a 'capacity to face an open universe.' Furthermore, Le Guin's profound sense of the 'mystery of the real' justifies her constant resistance to

the 'rationalist escapism', which suggests that human suffering is something that can be cured (Fekete, 1971, p. 92). Le Guin considers being an author and the act of writing as an art form: 'There are dance artists, painting artists and writing artists. Authors are writing artists. You can practice art in whatever medium you choose, and words are mine' (Justice, 2001, p. 38).

Le Guin's writing is suggested as imaginative literature and it is maintained that imaginative literature is rhetorical in that it deepens the understanding of the self, the other, the world and also the beliefs the readers and the authors consider to be true (Rochelle, 2001). In a dialogue with William Walsh, Ursula Le Guin discusses science fiction and realism and when Walsh (1995) questions her if she has a different mindset and pulls from a different world in writing either of these genres. She expresses her view on fantasy as follows:

I don't see that opposition. Science fiction and realism are versions of the same literary trends—they both depend, in a sense, on science to tell us what is real. Before about 1700 all literature was basically fantastic. We had a religious consensus. The higher reality was a religious reality, the earth was basically a lower reality. There wasn't any science to tell you that this was possible or this was not possible. Sometimes it's difficult to tell fiction from natural history between the Middle Ages and the 1500s. Invention and reality are pretty much mixed together. As we began to move into the age of science, industry, and technology, we had a touchstone—yeah, this is possible—science says we can fly to the moon. Science also says that we can't fly to the moon on wings, flapping our wings and breathing, because there is nothing to breathe between the earth and the moon. That kind of voyage becomes strictly fantastic. You get a clearer line between realism and science fiction on one hand and fantasy on the other. However, since I write all of them, to me it's just a different mood (Walsh & Le Guin, 1995, p. 195).

Guin's Earthsea Trilogy – *A Wizard of Earthsea* (1968), *The Tombs of Atuan* (1971), and *The Farthest Shore* (1972) – is considered to be her most successful work and it has also been compared to J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (Mc Caffery & Gregory, 1984). In *How They Do Things with Words: Language, Power, Gender, and the Priestly Wizards of Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea Books*, it is overtly stated by Le Guin that she 'followed the intense conservatism of traditional fantasy in giving Earthsea a rigid, social hierarchy of kings, lords, merchants, peasants' (Comoletti & Drout, 2001, p. 114). According to Rochelle (2001, p. 152) Le Guin uses the 'content of traditional myths of the Hero' and 'the Quest' and 'utopia', which are made rhetorical through her inversion and subversion. Indeed, Le Guin succeeds in differentiating stories through her reimagination and reinterpretation.

Being the first novel of the fantasy cycle, *A Wizard of Earthsea* (1968) is the story of Ged, the protagonist, and his adventures as he is wandering through Earthsea. Bittner (1984) argues that the physical journey of Ged, the protagonist in *A Wizard of Earthsea*, is, in fact, a kind of journey in quest for his selfhood and wholeness. The reader comes to understand Ged as a young boy, named as Duny first, who is also called Sparrowhawk by his friends. He is a boy with

'loud and proud and full of temper' (Le Guin, 1968, p. 2). Duny is introduced in the novel as a boy with some supernatural powers; yet, he is unaware of the power of words and; thus, he is not qualified in making use of the balance of power. It is apparent when Duny uses his spells by weaving a fog to prevent the invading Kargs to the village. Thus, Stevens (1990) finds the 'blind mist' symbolic as Duny is still blind to using his knowledge wisely at this point and he does not restrain his power; hence, he uses his power improperly at times. Even when Duny meets Ogion, the old mage, and undergoes a process by entering the stream (Le Guin, 1968, p. 15) and getting his true name, as Ged by Ogion, he is thought to have passed through adulthood. However, in order to gain true wisdom and knowledge and; thus, mature emotionally and prove his worth, Ged is left with the choice of becoming an independent sorcerer or learning the true meaning of both as himself and as a wizard. Thus, *A Wizard of Earthsea* tells the story of an inexperienced boy who shows impatience by showing his spell to please others and at times loses sight of 'a delicate equilibrium' by ignoring the power of light and dark (Stevens, 1990, p. 5). Le Guin portrays Ged's development as a kind of 'therapeutic re-integration of dark and light which also means re-integration of Ged into the community' (Kuznets, 1985, p. 30).

Just like the medieval parishioners receive some gifts in return for their good deeds, Ged and all the other wizards in *A Wizard of Earthsea* do not own much and they manage to make a living through begging and giving gift of some kind of supernatural power to the individuals of community in return (Comoletti & Drout, 2001). It is a country where learning the names of things around and the process of naming are of paramount importance. Indeed, Le Guin's parents, an anthropologist father and a psychologist mother, also studied the use of naming in order to structure reality in California Indians. Likewise, the first thing Adam did in the biblical story was to name the animals in the Garden of Eden. Le Guin, similarly, echoes this idea in her work and she maintains that the idea of naming is of great importance in order to gain wisdom and mature emotionally. Indeed, in *A Wizard of Earthsea* the language used by wizards and act of naming and knowing the name of everything is the main magic of wizards (Rochelle, 2001). According to Kuznets (1985) *A Wizard of Earthsea* is not primarily preoccupied with the development of a new king; instead, it is about the prophet and helper and it is maintained that Le Guin approaches Ged's development in a manner which is not new to fantasy in the novel. In *A Wizard of Earthsea*, there is a centralized hierarchy consisting of kinds of masters who hold social rank for the purpose of providing them with the necessary education. Just as Ged is trained at Roke, an island where true wizards receive their training, wizards go to different cities or castles in order to serve the high-honor lords (Comoletti & Drout, 2001).

2. *A Wizard of Earthsea* and Constructivism

Throughout the novel, formal instances of the Constructivist theory will be tackled in order to reveal the concept of education underlying Ged's maturation

in *A Wizard of Earthsea* by Ursula Le Guin. Since the beginning of 1970s, there has been a tendency towards constructivism and the popularity of behaviorism ceased (Eisner, 1999). Many of the concepts which underlie the constructivist perspective have a long history and they are particularly rooted in the work of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner and other prominent educational theorists and researchers (Harris and Graham, 1994). Constructivist learning theory puts a great emphasis on the learner's point of view as it is considered to be the crucial element in creating a climate for learning (Garmston & Wellman, 1994). The main premise on which constructivist learning is placed is described as follows:

The central principles of this approach are that learners can only make sense of new situations in terms of their existing understanding. Learning involves an active process in which learners construct meaning by linking new ideas with their existing knowledge (Naylor & Keogh, 1999, p. 93).

Within the body of the constructivist learning theory, the learner constructs the knowledge rather than passively absorbing it (Brooks and Brooks, 1993). Sfard (1998, p. 12) suggests that constructivist perspective offers "an 'as if' message". With this, he demonstrates that how the mind can act in facing an independent world. Constructivist theories have their roots in Piaget and the learner is considered to be an active participant interacting with the environment either singly or with others; thus learning is argued to be the resulting construction and qualitative reorganization of knowledge structures (Packer & Gicochea, 2000, p. 228).

It is assumed that learners have to construct their own knowledge--individually and collectively. Each learner has a tool kit of concepts and skills with which he or she must construct knowledge to solve problems presented by the environment. The role of the community-- other learners and teacher-- is to provide the setting, pose the challenges, and offer the support that will encourage mathematical construction (Davis, Maher, Noddings, 1990, p. 3).

Despite being a popular topic in education, constructivist theory embodies discrepancy in terms of learning theories and pedagogical practices (Kivinen & Kristela; Philips qtd. in Porcaro, 2011, p. 40). As Tobias and Duffy (2009) argue constructivism can be used to describe an instructional theory, a learning theory as well as being an epistemology. Besides, Riegler (2010) defines constructivism as a horizontal 'meta science' covering a variety of disciplines and interdisciplinary topics including neural networks, cognition, learning, living systems, organizations, sociology, literary sciences, media sciences and so forth.

Constructivism is not a theory about teaching...it is a theory about knowledge and learning... the theory defines knowledge as temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and thus, non-objective (Brooks & Brooks, 1993, p. vii).

The analysis of *A Wizard of Earthsea*, which is intended to tackle the theme of education, reveals that there are abundant instances of constructivism throughout the novel. The analysis of *A Wizard of Earthsea* demonstrates that

there are various instances of the constructivist theory, from both a cognitive view and a social view of the theory. The novel will serve to help the researcher to find the traces of the concept of education through reflecting the views of milestone constructivists including Jean Piaget (1896 – 1980) and John Dewey (1859-1952). The concept of education is also going to be analyzed by basing the study on the theme of education portrayed in *A Wizard of Earthsea* to reveal the rationale of education lying behind it. The narrator, Ged's educational process before and after going to the school of wizardry will be emphasized in order to reveal the instances of his master's educational practices as well as the other instances Ged is exposed to occasionally.

2.1. *A Wizard of Earthsea* and Piaget's Model of Learning

Piaget, who formalized the constructivist theory, started by observing children and noticed that the thinking of children changed qualitatively, which meant that the tools they used to think and learn differed at different stages of development and this gave them a different view of the world (Piaget, 2001). For Piaget, the basic continuum for the development of adult thought is achieved through 'the dimensions of experience and concept, reflection and action' (Kolb, 1984, p. 23). Development from infancy to adulthood occurs by deriving from a concrete phenomenal view of the world to an abstract constructionist view (Piaget, 1970).

Piaget is often wrongly considered to view the child as a solitary scientist, who works out of any social context (Damon, 1981; Haste, 1987; Goffin, 1994; Lubeck, 1996; Santrock, 1997). However, Piaget primarily does not emphasize how the child develops but how the knowledge develops. In other words, Piaget focuses on 'the development of ideas,' and for him thinking is at the core of learning, yet social factors are also equally important (DeVries, 2000, p. 190). For Piaget 'the structure of the mind is the source of our understanding of the world' (Venn & Walkerdine, 1977, p. 73) and in contrast to behaviorists who defend that any learner could understand reality through direct experience, Piaget suggests that the interpretive schemes are the result of subsequential more complex successive interactions with the world. Accordingly, Piaget's theory suggests that any learner develops operations in order to act on the world and eventually the stage of reasoning flourishes as a result of adaptation, specifically biological adaptation of the learner (O'Loughlin, 1992).

In Le Guin's *A Wizard of Earthsea*, Sparrowhawk, who later gains the name Ged from his teacher, seems to be an ordinary child at the beginning of the novel. However, in terms of magic, he learns all he can from his aunt, which indicates that social factors as well as biological factors seem to play a crucial role in his maturation. Ged is already an endowed child about magic and he realizes this power when he comes into contact with birds and gets on well with them and that is why people start calling him Sparrowhawk. However, it is not only Ged's biological readiness to improve his talent, but also his thirst for getting into more complex interactions with the outside world. Indeed, in

Chapter 1, Ged helps the townspeople of Ten Alders, who are raided by the Kargad Empire from the nearby islands. It is apparent that these people are probably going to die since they do not have an army. In order to save the town, Ged casts a fog spell over the town and the townspeople manage to defeat the raiders. However, he goes into a trance as a result of this spell since he spends all his power to save Ten Alders.

He did not see how he could fight or be of any good to himself or the villagers. It rankled at his heart that he should die, spitted on a Kargish lance, while still a boy: that he should go into the dark land without ever having known his own name, his true name as a man. He looked down at his thin arms, wet with cold fogdew, and raged at his weakness, for he knew his strength. There was power in him, if he knew how to use it, and he sought among all the spells he knew for some device that might give him and his companions an advantage, or at least a chance. But need alone is not enough to set power free: there must be knowledge. ... "I've hidden us all," Duny said, sullenly, for his head hurt from his father's blow, and the working of the doubled incantation had drained his strength. "I'll keep up this fog as long as I can. Get the others to lead them up to High Fall" (Le Guin, 1968, p. 6-7).

This indicates that Ged manages to achieve success to an extent, yet this instance is considerably important in terms of the concept of maturation. It is clear that maturation is a vital phenomenon in the development of a child within Piaget's framework. Elliot (2007, p. 47) also suggests that children's cognitive development is influenced by certain elements. When the child becomes mature, this leads to an increased amount of interaction with the world since the activity of the learners also increases. Thus, this allows them to have greater chances to learn from actions and accommodate and assimilate their notions of the world. As Ged is not so mature as a child at the beginning of the novel, he cannot build equilibrium with the outside world at the initial stages. Within Piaget's (1970) terms, operation seems to be the central idea in explaining the development of Ged. Ged acts real magic, which suggests the view that he does not merely copy his aunt and look at her and copy her, yet he modifies, transforms this act and tries to understand the process of this transformation in order to understand the way the act of magic is applied (Piaget, 1964). Thus, it can be claimed that the act of Ged does not take place in isolation and it is linked to other operations, which suggests that he is trying to constitute a base for his knowledge.

Although the process of transmission occurs via his aunt to some extent, it is this immaturity of Ged which causes his helplessness in the case of the raid of the Kargad Empire. However, with the arrival of Ogion, the old mage who would like to have Ged as an accompaniment, Ged's power is celebrated with a feast and he sets off with his new tutor, Ogion, to learn about magic; thus, to understand the development of knowledge by understanding the formation of knowledge, elaborating and organizing it. Accordingly, this instance affirms the view that the learning of children depends on some developmental stages (Bruner & Haste, 1987, p. 116).

Additionally, Piaget assigns much importance to the 'process of accommodation' to suggest that mutual interaction is of vital importance as well as the 'process of assimilation' since it refers to the experiences and events from the world. Accordingly, these experiences turn into schemas and concepts in learners' minds. Ged's discovery at the door of the School for Wizards is concerned at this point since Ged has no idea about the fact that he can only be accepted to the school provided he gives his true name. Moreover, Ged comes to discover in Chapter 3 that he has to know the true name of an object to change one thing into another, which points to the accommodation stage suggested by Piaget. Initially, Ged does not have a schema in his mind concerning the act of spell-weaving. However, upon meeting The Master Hand at the school, he comes to understand that to convert one thing to another requires knowledge, which provides true equilibrium in Piaget's words.

The Master Hand looked at the jewel that glittered on Ged's palm, bright as the prize of a dragon's hoard. The old Master murmured one word, "Tolk," and there lay the pebble, no jewel but a rough grey bit of rock. The Master took it and held it out on his own hand. "This is a rock; talk in the True Speech" he said looking mildly up at Ged now. "A bit of the stone of which Roke Isle is made, a little bit of the dry land on which men live. It is itself. It is part of the world. By the Illusion-Change you can make it look like a diamond- or a flower or a fly or an eye or a flame-" The rock flickered from shape to shape as he named them, and returned to rock. "But that is mere seeming. Illusion fools the beholder's senses; it makes him see and hear and feel that the thing is changed. But it does not change the thing. To change this rock into a jewel, you must change its true name. And to do that, my so, even to so small a scrap of the world, is to change the world. It can be done. Indeed it can be done. It is the art of the Master Changer, and you will learn it, when you are ready to learn it. But you must not change one thing, one pebble, one grain of sand, until you know what good and evil will follow on that act. The world is in balance, in Equilibrium. A wizard's power of Changing and of Summoning can shake the balance of the world. It is dangerous, that power. It is most perilous. It must follow knowledge, and serve need. To light a candle is to cast a shadow... (Le Guin, 1968, p. 27).

Indeed, Piaget (1964, p. 176) discriminates between development of knowledge and learning. The former means a continuous process, which concerns the 'totality of the structures of knowledge' whereas the latter is a process triggered by 'a psychological experimenter' regarding some didactic purpose. Accordingly, it is suggested that learning is a process which is far beyond the grasping of a single learning problem or a single learning structure. According to Piaget (1964) knowledge means much more than the copy of reality, which suggests that in order to know an object any learner must be able to act on it, which means modifying and transforming that object with so as to make sense of how that object was originally constructed. This process is called operation, an internalized action, and this constitutes the essence of knowledge. Thus, through a set of actions of transforming or modifying the object, the knower is enabled to reach the structure of the transformation. The discovery of Ged

regarding the fact that every object has a true name is verified within Piaget's framework.

Additionally, the education period of Ged in *A Wizard of Earthsea* is highly illustrative of the Piagetian model of learning since development from infancy to adulthood starts with a concrete phenomenal view of the world to the more abstract constructionist view of learning. There is a constant continuum between assimilation and accommodation and it occurs in successive stages (Kolb, 1984). Firstly, the motive underlying Ged's actions in the novel is not conquest; yet, wholeness. The concept of balance prevails throughout the novel and the idea of achieving equilibrium in Piaget's terms is emphasized overtly by Ged's teacher to show him that 'order is to be discovered in the world, not imposed upon it' (Baker, 2006, p. 241).

But that is mere seeming. Illusion fools the beholder's senses; it makes him see and hear and feel that the thing is changed. But it does not change the thing. To change this rock into a jewel, you must change its true name. And to do that, my son, even to so small a scrap of the world, is to change the world. It can be done. Indeed it can be done. It is the art of the Master Changer, and you will learn it, when you are ready to learn it. But you must not change one thing, one pebble, one grain of sand, until you know what good and evil will follow on that act. The world is in balance, in Equilibrium. A wizard's power of Changing and of Summoning can shake the balance of the world. It is dangerous, that power. It is most perilous. It must follow knowledge, and serve need. To light a candle is to cast a shadow... (Le Guin, 1968, p. 27).

Moreover, the internalization of knowledge is yielded by the interaction with the environment, yet this does not suggest a process of copying the material. For Piaget, the stimulus is a stimulus only when the subject acts it upon (DeVries, 2000). One of the most important instances in which Piagetian view of learning is portrayed is the acceptance of Ged to the School for Wizards in Chapter 3. In Piaget's terms, the dimensions of experience, reflection and action compose the basis for the development of adult thought (Piaget, 1970). At the School for Wizards, it is clear that Ged has the opportunity to move from a concrete phenomenal view of the world into an abstract constructionist view. This suggests that Ged tends to embody an egocentric view of the world prior to coming to the school, which is proved by his immature actions leading his fall several times. However, the key to Ged's learning lies in the mutual interaction of the process of accommodation of concepts and the process of assimilation, which suggests turning the events and actions from the world into some existing schemas and concepts in the learner's mind. For example, the fact that Ged has to give his true name in order to be accepted to the school is a new concept for him upon his arrival at the school; however, he comes to understand that he has to comply with the rules in order to adapt to the school, which underlies the adaptation of Ged to the school during his growth, along with the interactions. Moreover, the adaptation of Ged's intelligence is another key factor in the course of the construction of his own structures, which is dependent upon the information he acquires through experience (Piaget, 1976).

Furthermore, it is apparent that Ged starts the learning process by himself and then an account of the related information is presented so that he can accommodate the new information. This practice reflects the model of Piaget in that the learning process is 'a cycle of interaction between the individual and the environment that is also similar to the models of 'Dewey and Lewin' (Kolb, 1984, p. 23). While Ged is learning to balance the new information he grasps, silence, waiting and equilibrium are the main themes and the battle of Ged seems to be moral and internal.

In Le Guin's imaginary world, the concepts of maturity of the individual, personal growth and awareness and also the notion of equilibrium are sustained. It is obvious from the quotation that identification of oneself as an outcome of decent or 'light' deeds brings about 'Equilibrium of Creation' and through these equilibrium is considered to be identical to becoming autonomous, mature and responsible. Indeed, Ogion, the old mage, struggles to fit Ged's individual abilities and potential into a 'pre-existing system without consideration for his personal need'; thus, Ged seems to be fitting into the desired system through embracing paradoxes. Thereby, he manages to walk into maturity and freedom (Jenkins, 1985, p. 22).

Later, when Ged thought back upon that night, he knew that had none touched him when he lay thus spirit-lost, had none called him back in some way, he might have been lost for good. It was only the dumb instinctive wisdom of the beast who licks his hurt companion to comfort him, and yet in that wisdom Ged saw something akin to his own power, something that went as deep as wizardry. From that time forth he believed that the wise man is one who never sets himself apart from other living things, whether they have speech or not, and in later years he strove long to learn what can be learned, in silence, from the eyes of animals, the flight of birds, the great slow gestures of trees (Le Guin, 1968, p. 52).

Moreover, through his training period at the School for Wizards, Ged reveals the Piagetian model of learning as any learner's experience always includes social interaction with other cognizing objects, suggesting the fact that under any circumstances, but particularly an educational context, the social interaction between the learner is of paramount importance since the actions of the educator aims at generating or modifying the constructions of the learner involved (Von Glasersfeld, 1989). Indeed, the relationship between Ged and his teachers are revealing in terms of constructing his knowledge through various experiences. For instance, at the School for Wizards, Ged comes into contact with various mages such as Archmage Nemmerle, Master Patterner, Master Herbal, and Archmage Gensher. Archmage Nemmerle is particularly important since he is the teacher who risks his life to scare the monster which tries to give harm to Ged. Besides, upon his decision to go to Roke, he meets the Nine Masters of Roke, who are important people in providing him with new experiences to construct his knowledge about magic.

To check the ungoverned spell and drive off the shadow from Ged, Nemmerle had spent all his power, and with it his bodily strength was gone. He lay dying.

But the death of a great mage, who has many times in his life walked on the dry steep hillsides of death's kingdom, is a strange matter: for the dying man goes not blindly, but surely, knowing the way. When Nemmerle looked up through the leaves of the tree, those with him did not know if he watched the stars of summer fading in daybreak, or those other stars, which never set above the hills that see no dawn (Le Guin, 1968, p. 40).

Piaget (1964) points out that the idea of operation is of vital importance in order to understand the nature of knowledge as it is the essence of knowledge which modifies the object of knowledge. This suggests that the organism has to act on the object; thus, simply looking at it or having a mental copy or image of the object is not enough. For Piaget, knowing the object only occurs when it is transformed. Moreover, the process of this transformation has to be understood and the way the object is constructed should be understood by the knower as well. Thus, an operation can be defined as a set of actions which modify the object. Besides, it also gives the knower the chance to comprehend the structure of the transformation. Besides being an interiorized action, an operation is also reversible, which suggests that 'it can take place in both directions, for instance, adding or subtracting, joining or separating' (Piaget, 1964, p. 177). Thus, the classification of objects is part of a larger total structure and that these operational structures compose the core of knowledge. Moreover, Piaget views the child's adaptation as constituting development and his research reveals that the ideas of children are not the result of their schooling, but internal development. Additionally, the role of social understanding is highlighted within Piaget's framework. For Piaget, the idea of the self 'progressing from a lack of awareness to consciousness of others' perspectives' and establishing this self within a system of social relations is emphasized (DeVries, 2000, p. 194). Indeed, in the last chapter, Ged proves himself to reach a degree of maturation and this result is not only an out coming of his schooling but also his internal development. Ged and Vetch's sailing together in order to arrive home safely reveals the fact that Ged is indeed a talented wizard as Ogion believes and this verifies that accommodation has taken place.

Now when he saw his friend and heard him speak, his doubt vanished. And he began to see the truth, that Ged had neither lost nor won but, naming the shadow of his death with his own name, had made himself whole: a man: who, knowing his whole true self, cannot be used or possessed by any power other than himself, and whose life therefore is lived for life's sake and never in the service of ruin, or pain, or hatred, or the dark (Le Guin, 1968, p. 113-114).

2.2. A Wizard of Earthsea and Dewey's Model of Learning

Dewey (1910) argues that in order to design effective ways to train thoughts, there is an urgent need to comprehend the nature of thought. In constructivist learning, learners actively create their own knowledge by making sense out of presented materials. Constructivism relies upon the activation of several learner cognitive practices during learning. These include organizing incoming information, the selection of relevant information, and integrating incoming

information with existing knowledge (Spector et. al., 2008). Moreover, Dunn (2002) states that learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and this provides much of the input for the learning, occurring through their insights and experiences. Thus, it is clear that the most valuable evaluation is self-evaluation and that learning needs to focus on factors that contribute to solving significant problems or achieving significant results. Dewey (1938) puts more emphasis learning as a dialectic process integrating concepts, observation and action with the experiences.

In Le Guin's *A Wizard of Earthsea*, the training period of Ogion, the old mage, to mature Ged also resembles the instances of Dewey's model of learning. At the beginning of the training period with Ogion, Ged is seen as bored with the slowness of his mastery of magic; thus, it is very easy for him to get taunted with his immaturity. Triggered by a disdainful girl, Ged recklessly summons spirits of the dead, which is thought to liberate a dark force and he only manages to be rescued with the return of his master. Among all these inconsiderate behaviors of Ged, Ogion's attitude towards Ged is to be always patient. At times, Ged even inquires his master about the way he teaches him. They wander together in the wilderness, run together; however, they never seem to enter into a mysterious domain, which seriously conflicts with Ged's expectations. Even after four days, Ogion does not seem to teach Ged any name or spell, he even does not speak a word that Ged can hear. As a result, Ged starts to inquire Ogion about the learning process:

When will my apprenticeship begin, Sir?

"It has begun," said Ogion.

There was a silence, as if Ged was keeping back something he had to say.

Then he said it: "But I haven't learned anything yet!"

"Because you haven't found out what I am teaching," replied the mage... Wait. Manhood is patience. Mastery is nine times patience. What is that herb by the path? (Le Guin, 1968, p. 10-11).

Additionally, the act of collecting different herbs from the nature under the supervision of Ogion demonstrates the fact that Ogion wants Ged to experience the learning opportunity himself, to 'make the effort necessary to comprehend a shift in values,' and to change the work from task to learning opportunities and he also seems to shift the responsibility for learning from himself to Ged (Miller; Curtis & Watters, 1931, p. 5-29). Instead of teaching the subject matter, like how to perform a spell, Ogion seems to contribute to the development of Ged, to make him able to live successfully and independently in real life. What he is trying to achieve is maturation as well as patience and harmony. Therefore, the training period of Ogion before Ged leaves for the school of wizardry in Chapter 2 typically reflects Dewey's model of learning since it reveals a highly complex intellectual phenomenon. For instance, Ogion exploits his wide knowledge to show Ged what could happen in similar situations. Indeed, Ged apprehends the advice and warnings of Ogion, who

seems to have a much wider experience. It is clear from the remarks of Ogion as follows: 'Wait. Manhood is patience. Mastery is nine times patience' (Le Guin, 1968, pp. 10-11). Thus, the intellectual anticipation of Ogion is blended with the desire and impulse of Ged. The way Ogion sets Ged down to work resembles the basic phenomenon of Dewey, which involves the coordinated transaction of the organism-environment act.

Within the body of Dewey's framework, the idea of testing and experimentation are the key concepts as the learner is required to explore. Indeed, the acts of Ged are triggered by 'a conflict within the co-ordination' (Dewey, 1975, p. 107). However, Ged, in Chapter 2, again fails to give his action momentum, which leads to his fall once again. While wandering through Re Albi to collect herbs, Ged is teased by the daughter of the lord about his power. In order to impress the girl by calling a falcon, Ged exploits Ogion's spells and accidentally he reads a spell to call the dead, which reveals his immaturity. As a result, a terrible shadow monster appears and Ogion again helps Ged in order to prevent a catastrophe and he reminds Ged of the previous warnings he made about the girl, who might be half a witch. This points out to the fact that Ged still has not learned how to refrain from dangers and he cannot complete the circuit of learning. Thus, he cannot add to his cycle of adjustment and also his understanding of the world (Hickman, 2009). This gives Ogion a chance to give Ged a lesson:

Ged, listen to me now. Have you never thought how danger must surround power as shadow does light? This sorcery is not a game we play for pleasure or for praise. Think of this: that every word, every act of our Art is said and is done either for good, or for evil. Before you speak or do you must know the price that is to pay!" Driven by his shame Ged cried, "How am I to know these things, when you teach me nothing? Since I lived with you I have done nothing, seen nothing-" "Now you have seen something," said the mage. "By the door, in the darkness, when I came in." Ged was silent. Ogion knelt down and built the fire on the hearth and lit it, for the house was cold. Then still kneeling he said in his quiet voice, "Ged, my young falcon, you are not bound to me or to my service. You did not come to me, but I to you. You are very young to make this choice, but I cannot make it for you. If you wish, I will send you to Roke Island, where all high arts are taught. Any craft you undertake to learn you will learn, for your power is great. Greater even than your pride, I hope. I would keep you here with me, for what I have is what you lack, but I will not keep you against your will. Now choose between Re Albi and Roke (Le Guin, 1968, p. 15).

Thus, the kind of education in *A Wizard of Earthsea* tends to provide Ged with meaningful contexts to engage his mind and enhance his learning experiences. Ged's tutor, Ogion, who seems to be friendly and provide meaningful contexts which will make Ged mature. Besides, Ogion's tutoring involves going into the world to learn to some extent. It is apparent that he undeniably spares enough time for Ged. In Dewey's terms, 'the stimulus is a construction and this process is constituted by the 'coordination-seeking' activities of the organism (Vanderstraeten, 2002, p. 236). Similarly, Ogion tries to coordinate the

behaviors of Ged to adapt his behaviors. According to Dewey, the act of perception is of crucial importance and for Dewey it is not choice; yet 'a process of choosing' (Dewey, 1912/1985, p. 23). From the perspective of Dewey's theoretical framework, the transactional approach refers to the one in which knowledge is always engaged in action, which suggests that the relationship between the activities of the organism and the outcomes these activities bring about is of paramount importance (Vanderstraeten, 2002). The fact that experience plays a key role in Ged's actions reflects Dewey's framework in that no organism can be involved with the real world unless it is engaged in action. Indeed, Ogion is trying to show Ged that he can only get real knowledge through transacting with the environment. This idea parallels with Dewey's idea in that the real world is only real when it is experienced. Besides, in the school for wizards which Ged goes, the learning process of him resembles a cycle of interaction between himself and the environment, which also bears similarity to Dewey's model of learning (Kolb, 1984). For instance, the interaction between Ged and other older students at this school, Jasper and Vetch, concretizes Dewey's model of learning in that learning does not mean accumulating information randomly and memorizing it. In contrast, it occurs as a result of understanding and applying concepts, thinking about ideas and constructing meaning and repeating it in another context (Gordon, 2009). Indeed, when Ged goes on a tour at the school for wizards with his peers it is palpable that the discovery of his involves both the individual act of construction and the social construction of knowledge he receives from his friends at school.

Furthermore, for Dewey, learning is a notion which involves 'a circuit of imbalance' and 'restored equilibrium,' which suggests that any learner brings their sets of behaviors and expectations from their past into the new learning environment (Hickman, 2009, p. 8). In Chapter 4, there are numerous examples of Ged's educational process and his relationship with his teachers are emphasized. The stages Ged passes through are revealing in terms of Dewey's model in that he seems to follow the stages elaborated by Dewey:

- 1- "Emotional response: The learner being in state of equilibrium comes upon something unexpected and when the new situation is unstable he is tempted to trigger an emotional response to make the situation stable. For instance,
- 2- Definition of the problem: The learner attempts to make the situation more stable by applying lessons he learned from previous experiences. Thus, the new situation requires him to explore and accordingly the intellectual response of the learner is a matter of concern.
- 3- Formation of hypothesis: When the problem is defined and something has to be explored, the learner again tries to find a solution.
- 4- Testing / experimenting: Following a proposed solution, the learner sometimes gets into a difficult situation.
- 5- Application: When the learner discovers that something he has discovered leads him to a problem and once he has learned how to refrain from, he

completes the circuit of learning and adds to his cycle of adjustment and also his understanding of the world" (Hickman, 2009, p. 8-9).

Indeed, the aforementioned stages are illustrated through the chapters in *A Wizard of Earthsea*. For instance, in Chapter 4, Ged discovers that he has to pay attention to the balance of things in order to be a good mage. Thus, he starts building the hypothesis that things can easily be unbalanced and problems may arise.

The weatherworker's and seamaster's calling upon wind and water were crafts already known to his pupils, but it was he who showed them why the true wizard uses such spells only at need, since to summon up such earthly forces is to change the earth of which they are a part. "Rain on Roke may be drought in Osskil," he said, and a calm in the East Reach may be storm and ruin in the West, unless you know what you are about (Le Guin, 1968, p. 33).

However, Ged, triggered by Jasper and Vetch, Ged firstly turns into a falcon and following this, he decides to summon a spirit of the dead. Unfortunately, imbalance occurs and suddenly a shadow monster emerges and claws Ged's face, which drags him into a coma in Chapter 4. Driven into a coma for a while, Ged also causes Archmage Nemmerle's death since he uses all his magic to secure Ged. Similarly, in Chapter 5, Ged again tries to test and experiment by sending his spirit into the land of the land in order to get back Ioeth, the son of Pechvarry, a boat maker who Ged befriends. However, Ged was previously taught to let dying people go. His act on Ioeth unfortunately reveals Ged to the monster and now that the monster has discovered where Ged is, Ged is troubled with nightmares, which suggest the fact that the learning of Ged has not taken place once again.

To Pechvarry it seemed that the wizard also was dead. His wife wept, but he was utterly bewildered. But the witch had some hearsay knowledge concerning magery and the ways a true wizard may go, and she saw to it that Ged, cold and lifeless as he lay, was not treated as a dead man but as one sick or tranced. He was carried home, and an old woman was left to watch and see whether he slept to wake or slept forever (Le Guin, 1968, p. 51).

Hence, these instances confirm the fact that the testing and experimenting stages of Ged have failed, therefore, the final application stage does not come immediately, which clearly demonstrates that he has not matured enough at this stage. However, these tragic instances will prepare him for reasoned inquiry in other situations in the novel, which suggests that the knowledge of Ged has to grow and he must be open to new experiences in order to mature. It is important to note, however, that upon these misfortunes in Low Toning, Ged manages to maintain balance by defeating one of the most dangerous dragons via using its true name: "We are matched, Yevaud. You have the strength: I have your name. Will you bargain?" Still the dragon made no reply" (Le Guin, 1968, p. 57). This instance is particularly important since Ged is able to discover that something he has learned previously is helpful for him during a time when he faces a problem. In refraining from the dragon, Ged is able to apply his knowledge of

calling he true name of things so as to be secure, which reveals the fact that he has completed his circuit of learning and has been able to add to his understanding of the world by calling the dragon's true name, Yevaud. The method Ged has learned under realistic circumstances provides him with the realistic contexts to act on; thus, active learning occurs (Sikula, 1996).

After leaving Low Toning, Ged starts wandering through Earthsea in Chapters 7 and 8 and his life resembles 'the lives of clerics in the mediaeval mendicant orders' (Comoletti&Drout, 2001, p. 115). Through these journeys, Ged follows the cycle of Dewey several times. Firstly, he meets something unexpected. Although Ged has succeeded in managing a state of equilibrium, his waking up in a strange tower and meeting Serret, the wife of Benderesk, puts him into a difficult position. Initially, Ged trusts Serret as she shows him a magic stone named Terrenon, which is very powerful and not evil. Besides, Serret tries to convince Ged that this stone will help him to beat the shadow. However, when Ged discovers that Serret and Benderesk are conspiring against him and that Serret is the daughter of lord of Re Albi, whom Ged tried to impress a long time ago, he defines the problem and tries to make the situation more stable by applying the lessons he learned from his previous experiences. This new problem put Ged into trouble; however, as he has been able to understand the nature of the problem, he decides to stay and fight and turns himself into a falcon. Having managed to escape from Benderesk in the falcon form, he returns to Gont, where he meets Ogion. "Welcome, lad," said Ogion. "I have come back to you as I left: a fool," the young man said, his voice harsh and thickened. The mage smiled a little and motioned Ged to sit across the hearth from him, and set to brewing them some tea (Le Guin, 1968, p. 79). The dialogue between Ged and his master is revealing in terms of his own view that he has failed to achieve balance through his actions. Thus, the testing and experimenting stages turn out to be problematic for Ged. As a result of all these stages, Ogion reminds Ged of the fact that he is strong enough to beat the magicians, and evil stones. Accordingly, he tells Ged that he should stop being the hunted and start being the hunter in order to defeat the shadow and reach salvation.

At last Ged said, "I came here for counsel, not for refuge, Master. I will not bring this shadow upon you, and it will soon be here if I stay. Once you drove it from this very room-" "No; that was but the foreboding of it, the shadow of a shadow. I could not drive it forth, now. Only you could do that." "But I am powerless before it. Is there any place..." His voice died away before he had asked the question. "There is no safe place," Ogion said gently. "Do not transform yourself again, Ged. The shadow seeks to destroy your true being. It nearly did so, driving you into hawk's being. No, where you should go, I do not know. Yet I have an idea of what you should do. It is a hard thing to say to you." Ged's silence demanded truth, and Ogion said at last, "You must turn around." "Turn around?"... (Le Guin, 1968, p. 80).

Thus, as Dewey's basic phenomenon, 'the co-ordinated transaction of organism environment or act' suggests that stimulus and response of the organism are not

external to the act; yet are 'always inside a co-ordination and have their significance purely from the part played in maintaining or reconstituting the co-ordination' (Dewey, 1896/ 1975, p. 99). Indeed, the actions of Ged reveal the fact that his actions to escape from the shadow and to secure himself derive from his conflict within the coordination in Dewey's terms (Vanderstraeten, 2002). Besides, within Dewey's framework, 'ideas undergo change through interaction between the person and the environment' (Oxford, 1997, p. 42). Indeed, through interacting with infortunes he faced with in Osskil and following the advice of Ogion about not transforming himself again, Ged recollects himself and his surroundings provide him with a reference point to make sense of his experiences. Ged learns a lesson from Ogion: "In the cold dawn when Ogion woke, Ged was gone. Only he had left in wizardly fashion a message of silver-scrawled runes on the hearthstone, that faded even as Ogion read them: 'Master, I go hunting'" (Le Guin, 1968, p. 81).

Conclusion

The results of the analysis are revealing in terms of the major role of education in the development of an individual. It is also revealed that language plays a significant role in developing the external world and the individual mind of the learner. The reader comes to understand that Earthsea is created through the use of language (Comoletti, 2001). Moreover, Ged's interactions with his peers as well as his teachers demonstrate that his mental functioning is 'assumed to be inherently situated with regard to cultural, historical, and institutional contexts' (Wertsch, 1991, p. 159).

It is clear from the instances illustrated within the study that Ged's maturation not only derives from his mental functioning but also sociocultural settings. The importance of education prevails throughout the study since it is education which best equips the learners with substantive knowledge as well as the necessary skills which they need in real life. Education will help individuals to pursue their own goals, to mature, and to participate in the community as autonomous individuals. Ged, who is observed lacking the necessary qualifications and accordingly driven into some difficult situations throughout the novel, manages to mature by interacting with his immediate environment. However, there is more than that: Ged is also supported by decent educational activities and institutions. Therefore, education seems to serve as a social role. Indeed, Dewey (1916, p. 3) emphasizes the 'social continuity of life' which has attracted the attention of philosophers for many years.

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