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Four Views of Teachers Discussing Controversial Issues

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Abstract: Discussions on the nature of social reality and the characteristics of a good society, as well as the role of the school in this context, lie at the core of social studies. In this context, the teachers have always been and will always be criticized for the values they did not or were unable to convey from all ideological references. Often deemed a misfortune associated with the fate of teachers, this issue would be an incentive for more efforts in some senses, and poses an obstacle in others. The teachers are often accused of embracing racist and sexist discourses and expressing associated norms of cultural and economic domination on the one hand, and of voicing a sinister secular humanism claimed to lay the foundations of the superiority of capitalism and its democracy. In this context, the roles the teachers are required to assume in the discussion of controversial issues in their daily classes is a hot topic. This paper aims to present four critical perspectives regarding controversial issues expressed by teachers. These perspectives are often called exclusive neutrality, exclusive partiality, neutral impartiality and committed impartiality. Studies so far assume committed impartiality to be the most defensible teacher position.

Keywords: Controversial issues, Exclusive neutrality, Exclusive partiality, Neutral impartiality, Committed impartiality

Introduction

We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark. The real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light (Plato). In the process of transition from the industrial society to the information society, global changes occurring with respect to science and technology have had a deep impact on the education system, along with a wide range of other fields. In this context, postmodern philosophy and constructivist perspectives came to dominate the structure and operation of the education system hitherto based mostly on positivist philosophy and behaviorist perspectives. The modus operandi whereby standard knowledge is conveyed to the student, followed by an assessment of the ability to remember that knowledge as the only criteria of achievement, is now abandoned. Instead, a research-based approach to education based on a process through which the student engages in the study and structures the knowledge based on her own experience came to dominate. The earliest references to research-based learning can be found in Dewey's text (Dewey, 1938). Dewey believed in the ability of the children to learn through activities, the experiences they receive in solving real-life problems, and discussions with others. In the 1990s, investigators drew attention to the need to encourage teachers to teach courses with a perspective based on designing and implementing Deweyist projects (Krajcik, Blumengeld, Marx, & Soloway, 1994; Roth, 1995; Roup, Gal, Drayton, & Pfister, 1992; Tinker, 1997). The problems solved by the teachers through cooperation are not readily comparable to the conventional science class "experiments," where they tend to achieve confirmation in a laboratory where they sought the "correct" answer. In contrast to going through the exercises provided in the applicable chapter of the textbook, students shape their methods to perceive the world by solving real-life problems. In those years, many investigators described efforts at in-class inquiries through student-centric long-term projects (Crawford, 2000; Krajcik et al., 1994; Magnusson & Palincsar, 1995; Roth, 1995; Roup et al., 1992; Solomon, 1989; Warren, Rosebery, & Conant, 1989). The conventional theories of learning claim that knowledge exactly corresponds to the "actual" world, and provides an exact "picture" of the world. In other words, the world expresses itself clearly. As teachers, through

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the use of conventional theories, we intend to represent or convey these rules (e.g. grammar), conceptual categories (e.g. scientific), or facts we assume to be true (e.g. history). In contrast, the proponents of the social constructivist approach claim that knowledge is collectively created by people who defend and discuss a specific perspective or interpretation. The defenders of this view challenge those who assume knowledge, by nature, has a “given” and permanent quality. Instead of considering knowledge immutable, those who embrace the social constructivist approach claim that what we consider knowledge is based on contracts we build and agree on as a community (Barnes, 1995; Gavelek and Raphael, 1996; Rosenblatt, 1938).

This transformation in education perspective signals substantial transformations in a large number of fields (Gülpinar, 2005; Kuhn, 2003). Major changes regarding the content and the presentation of curricula, learning-teaching process, and the roles of the teacher and the students were proposed. Doing so led a transformation whereby the conventional educational approach aiming to teach compliance and obedience was replaced by the constructivist approach, which is a flexible one entailing a framework as a program underlining pluralism, authenticity, and diversity, and focusing on learning (Bauman, 1989; Özkiraz, 2003; Hesapçıoğlu, 2001; Korkut, 2005). In this approach based on having the learner structure knowledge, already accepted qualities of the teacher were supplemented by counseling and facilitating learning (Açıkgöz, 2014; Çakmak, 2001; Hesapçıoğlu, 2001; Oğuz, Oktay and Ayhan, 2010; Özden, 2013; Sevinç, 2005).

The teacher’s role at school evolves from a conventional domain to a contemporary one, in line with the changes and developments in education. In this context, the teachers who embrace the changes occurring in education assume the responsibility to facilitate the spread of practices based on a contemporary outlook on education, and enjoy the benefit of facing lesser complexities regarding their new roles (Akpınar and Aydın, 2010). A glance at the conventional roles the teachers play at the school reveals “disseminating knowledge” as the most important one. They are also required to act as disciplinarians, justices, and confidants at school. Such arguably conventional roles, however, are subject to change along with other changes in education. Teachers should be leaders in education to show the way and facilitate access to the sources of knowledge, rather than conveyors and providers of knowledge. The teacher should play the role of “teaching how to learn” rather than simply disseminating knowledge; to do so, competence in teaching how to learn is a must (Özdemir and Çanakçı, 2005).

In their endeavors to comply with this requirement, teachers always receive criticism from every side of the ideological spectrum, with reference to the values the teachers convey or not. The conservative political right accuse teachers of defending a secular humanism with a hidden agenda of promoting the supremacy of capitalism and representative democracy. According to the liberals and radical left, on the other hand, teachers are the means of sustaining racism, sexism, and the norms of cultural and economic hegemony. The defenders of such a critical outlook, which views the traditional values of equality and mobility as a meritocratic legend, call the teachers to defend personal salvation and social justice, expecting them to reveal the hegemonic perversions the radicals claim to be the defining features of capitalist societies, not to mention the inherent contradictions and structural inequalities involved (Kelly, 1986).

Any discussion of the teachers’ role in general in the historical evolution of education perspective would entail specific references to the role of the social sciences and naturally the social studies teachers as well. Discussions on the nature of social reality and the characteristics of a good society, as well as the role of the school in this context, lie at the core of social studies. Should educators working on social studies embrace partisan positions concerning major issues such as nuclear weapons, religion in schools, income injustices, national security practices, or the reproductive rights of women? If yes, what would be the governing circumstances concerning the involvement of these positions, and the effect of material cases (e.g., in the case of abortion, the right to live on part of the child/fetus versus the woman’s/mother’s right to choose and control with respect to her own body) to provide a framework of debate in setting the attitudes? Should the educators working on social studies embrace a rather neutral route between the Scylla (In Greek mythology, the monster which lived on the calmer side of the Messina Strait between Sicily and Italy. It had six long legs and terrifying heads at the end of each leg, each with three rows of very sharp teeth.) of indoctrination and Charybdis (Another sea monster from Greek mythology, she is the daughter of Poseidon. She loves to steal the property of other gods, but was known to return what she stole right away. One day Zeus transformed Charybdis to a huge vortex) of ethical relativism? Or should the teachers of social studies review the priorities of the discipline, and support people who insist that domains other than the schools are better for clearer communication of controversial values? (Kelly, 1986).

Satisfying answers to these questions should take into account both planning on the part of social studies teachers, and the wide range of experience and knowledge brought into the class by the students. During the debates, the students spend most of their time listening to the solutions proposed by their classmates, and

presenting their own views. When discussing a proposition, the teacher asks the students to submit alternative methods to solve a given problem. Defending ideas merits strong encouragement and praise, even if the idea is not a robust one. In some cases, the teacher may opt for an incorrect means to presentation in order to reach a certain position. She may intentionally mislead the students. Furthermore, the teacher plays a major role in facilitating in-class debates on social and ethical problems. Finally, the teacher reviews the topics discussed, provides a summary, and where necessary, extends a practice for the students to implement what they had learned (Kelly and Brandes, 2001; Shimizu, 1999).

A number of studies (Eeds and Wells, 1989; Raphael and Goatley, 1994; Wells and Chang-Wells, 1992) drew attention to the change in the teacher's leadership regarding the contents of areas of discussion in classroom environments. For instance some (Freedman, 1993; Villaume, Worden, Williams, Hopkins and Rosenblatt, 1994) claim that the teacher should embrace a facilitating and participatory perspective rather than a dominating one. On the other hand, some such as Wiencek and O'Flahavan (1994) claim that during the debates among the students, the teachers should completely stand aside. The most fundamental change affecting the theoretical perspective that guides us in the development of educational practices is the increasing prominence attached in the study literature to the changing roles of teachers (Gavelek and Raphael, 1996; Hacam, 2018a).

How will social studies teachers assume this huge responsibility awaiting them? They need to be very tough, strong, and well-equipped for the struggles ahead. But how will they do that in the classroom? What kind of a role will they embrace in the use of their equipment and "magical" powers? What kind of attitudes do teachers embrace when teaching about sensitive issues in particular? With reference to Hill (1982), Kelly (1986) conceptualized four perspectives: exclusive neutrality, exclusive partiality, neutral impartiality and committed impartiality. Kelly claimed that, thanks to its contradictory position, committed impartiality is the most defensible attitude for the teachers to overcome obstacles to teaching controversial issues. The purpose of the present study is to reveal, with reference to a number of studies, what kinds of attitudes teachers adopt in the classroom with respect to controversial issues.

Thomas Kelly's Theory on Four Perspectives on the Teacher's Role

Exclusive Neutrality: The defenders of this attitude (Anyon, 1980; Apple and Weis, 1983; Brophy, 1979; Rosenbaum, 1976; Rutter, Monghan, Mortimore, Outson and Smith, 1982; Young, 1971) claim that the teachers should not cover in the curriculum any topic which may lead to controversy among the wider community. The schools have this latent obligation to serve every segment of society on an equal basis. Yet the inclusion of controversial issues would violate this implicit contract on a few grounds: (i) the establishment of specific personal, religious or political values is among vital duties of other social organizations (Bereiter, 1973) and/or (ii) classroom discussions about provocative values would inevitably bring about volatility and unpredictability, and thus undermine the norms of the organizational structure the teachers employ (McNeil, 1983). That is why it is only natural for the schools to exclude these issues early on. Such exclusion arguably maintains the non-partisan and impartial status of the school. Instead, on the basis of proof of the accuracy or significance of the knowledge in question, as shown through diligent scientific studies or building an extensive consensus in the community, the schools should embrace the position of teaching this knowledge free of charge (Apple 1979; Bernstein, 1978; Coleman, 1972; Goodlad, 1984; Habermas, 1971; Kelly, 1986; Kuhn, 1970; Lucas, 1983; Newmann, 1977b; Polanyi, 1974; Sichel, 1982; Hacam, 2018b).

Even though the teachers and the curriculum cannot be impartial with respect to the freedom to discuss the infallibility of any kind of value, it is not impossible for teachers and the students to discuss the values in a just and impartial manner. To be honest, a lively discussion of a controversial issue is much harder than a controlled presentation by the teacher focusing on facts alone. The first need not be inherently chaotic or prejudiced. Certain group discussion skills may be defined and taught for use as means to develop impartiality as a norm (Lockwood and Harris, 1985; Newmann and Oliver, 1970).

A fair discussion over controversial issues in the classroom would not only represent a feasible attempt, but also a trying one. There are two reasons for this. The first one is a point defended by representatives of diverse political views, and refers to the requirement applicable to publicly financed schools in a democracy in particular, with respect to the development of understanding, competence, and commitment of individuals to foster their growth as responsible citizens (Cagan, 1978; Giroux, 1983a; Goble&Brooks, 1983; Newmann, 1975; Will, 1983). The second argument is inherently psychological. Crucial controversial issues, by definition, reflect a concrete concern directly or indirectly affecting the students (Newmann, 1981; Newmann&Kelly, 1983).

Exclusive Partiality: This position is characterized by an impulsive attempt to persuade the students about the accuracy and preferability of a position regarding a controversial issue, through a deliberate or inadvertent obstruction of a weak presentation of competing positions. In rather authoritarian forms of Exclusive Partiality, the teachers defend or assume the accuracy of certain perspectives, while competing perspectives are ignored, dismissed quickly, or punitively disqualified. The overall effect is essentially a unilateral presentation that arises when challenging the preferred perspective is either disheartening or prevented, regardless of the defense or rejection being a passionate, incidental, or a systematic one or not. In more refined forms of impartiality, the teacher may be inclined to allow authentic dialogs and opposition perspectives (Kelly, 1986). Exclusive partiality is seen as the corrective approach required to help ameliorate the picture in the face of extensive perversions perpetuated by dominant social norms and practices. Often with a view to reminding the enforcement of academic freedoms and/or warning the students about making moves regarding their opposing perspectives, (Berlak, 1985) these people actually construe exclusive partiality as a guaranteed form of the act of ideological affirmation. The people are trained by the conditions they live in. To enable their autonomy, and to provide them the means to realize, on their own, what is authentic and what is inauthentic for the individual in society, they need to be saved from widely accepted doctrines... Yet, this would refer to a reversal of the attitudes involved: individuals would be required to obtain knowledge suggesting otherwise (quoted from Marcuse by Cohen, 1982, p. 89).

From certain perspectives, various practitioners of exclusive partiality could be both sympathized with and supported. For instance, in the face of uninterrupted channeling of different values to the students, the teachers understandably, if not reasonably, may feel themselves obliged to provide a shelter similar to emotional and intellectual certainty to the students. On the other hand, the radical left critiques that insist that an honest association with the facts and the extension of equal rights to all people necessitates an encouragement of sharpening intelligence rather than isolating students have developed insightful theories providing dialectic associations between power, class, gender, race, culture, and the dynamics of education (Anyon, 1980; Apple, 1982; Arnot, 1981; Cherryholmes, 1980; Freire, 1970; Genovese, 1972; Giroux, 1983a; Kohlberg, 1981; Willis, 1981). These theories, albeit with some shortcomings, represent the most important challenge to the mainstream concepts of social reality and the distribution of justice. In a disturbing way, theirs is a perception which had been ignored or misrepresented by the conventional curriculum for extended time frames (Apple & Weis, 1983; Berlak, 1985; Dewey, 1944; Macklin, 1980; Newmann, 1975; 1977a; 1985; Raywid, 1980; Taxel, 1984).

Neutral Impartiality: The third position the teachers may assume with respect to controversial issues is neutral impartiality. The defenders of neutral impartiality stand out from their colleagues embracing exclusive partiality, on the basis of the belief that students should take an active part in the discussion of controversial public issues as part of their citizenship education. On the other hand, they are also unlike the proponents of exclusive partiality, with reference to the ideals concerning the procedure they approved, and the roles they need to play for the discussion of the values involved. As an ideal concerning the discussion of controversial value issues, impartiality necessitates the applicable principles of fair listening and critical dialogue. In their efforts to help students get the opportunity to think about all applicable perspectives concerning an issue, the teachers would try to recognize the achievement of the student which presents the best case standard entailing the presentation and criticism of the strongest arguments pertaining to competing perspectives. The most sophisticated defenders of opposing views of an issue can theoretically reach this standard, if they are able to see that, taking the development process of the students, their views ensure a most fair and accessible presentation. This difficult yet still achievable ideal of impartiality is based on cooperation, and is passionate; it does not entail conflict but seeks the truth (Kelly, 1986).

In this context, impartiality refers to the belief and the applicable practice that teachers should be silent about their own views concerning controversial issues. At times, teachers may need to act as devil's advocates. This should be done not to manipulate in the name of impartiality, but to ensure due employment of applicable views. At other times, impartial teachers may reluctantly voice their personal views, when the students ask directly about them. On the other hand, their remarks would be characteristically restrained, and often are characterized by repeated statements that their view is only one of many possible views. Briefly put, they are expected to express their perspectives in a manner quite dissimilar to a positive view, as something expressed only in a context entailing a much lesser amount of defense, avoiding an impartial imposition to the extent possible under ideal circumstances (Elliott, 1973; Kelly, 1986; Stenhouse, 1972).

Why would educators defend this view? The first reason lies in *compliance* with public services. Bullough et al., studying the positivist movements in the earlier part of the century, along with their roots dating back to Plato, coupled with a substantial rise in effectiveness (Bullough, Gitlin, & Goldstein, 1984; Bullough, Goldstein, & Holt, 1984), observe how teachers are a part of a long-standing public service tradition, the ideal virtues of

which include being hard-working yet compliant, and unambitious but certainly not disinterested, along with an intelligent loyalty. A second reason purported by the advocates of liberal pluralism, the diversity of the people is a social good, as a force to live a social life and the source of personal enrichment, or as a rather protective “measure against the totalitarian suppression of civil rights” (Day, 1983; Greenbaum, 1974). In this pluralist perspective, the school provides an important venue for the expression of different values; while the teacher should assume that her essential interests lie in acting as an impartial referee who needs to ensure fair competition in the market of ideas. A third reason, that is *political prudence*, has a less optimistic perspective on pluralism. In a competitive and pluralistic setting where separatism poses a threat to tolerance, and where aggressive customers/consumers (i.e., parents and students) can potentially evolve into legal threats in just one second, expressing views on a controversial issue may be deemed an invitation for undesired conflict, at the very least. Silence can be considered the most prudent attitude to avoid such risks. A fourth reason lies in *moral relativity* (Brandt, 1959). According to the proponents of relativism, anything true and good would, in the final analysis, be personal and subjective as well. In this context, the teacher would consider the relativists’ assumption of the role “defenders of the nation’s moral conscience” as an authoritarian fallacy (May, 1983).

The fifth reason noted to explain an impartial attitude is about *indecision*, which has to do with the teacher’s perceived position as an authority figure. A rather more psychological point compared to the previous reasons put forward, this one is characterized by (a) the uncertainty of the individual’s position regarding certain controversial issues, and (b) the feeling of guilt or shame felt due to a lack of a clearer stance. These individuals assume that expressing their emotional contradictions or ignorance would make them seem like weaker models, rendering them an object of ridicule among the students. In order to hide their insecurities as authority figures, and to maintain their reliability, they show up at the courses with a stance based on silence and impartiality (Habermas, 1971; Ross, 1930; Kelly, 1986; Rosen, 1980). A final reason lies in the *rationalist perspective*, which rather focuses on the purported educational impact of the teachers’ style of discourse on the students. The champions of this position try to empower the students in analyzing alternative value judgments, and gaining a critical outlook on the positions they defend. On the other hand, on both philosophical and pedagogical grounds, the teachers avoided ethical absolutism which deems accurate spiritual choices clearly derivable from experimentally certified ethical requirements. Most of what Butts (1980) mentioned about breathing new life into citizenship education focused on this very issue.

In a pluralistic society, the youth are exposed to a number of diverse and contradictory effects. According to the teachers, acting on emotions based on a mixture of relief and regret, the problem is clearly not about seeing children as sponges sucking knowledge, or as explicitly opposing resistance. Adult authority figures should always be sensitive to their impact on the children (Giroux, 1983b; Hill, 1982; Leming, 1981). These findings support the display of the statement on various levels, rather than suppressing the views of the teachers during the discussion of controversial issues. At the level of verbal behaviors in the classroom, the students should see and experience teachers who are engaged with critical discourse, who prefer an open-minded and confident position towards adjusting their views as required and voicing opposing views, and who need adjustments in their positions. Such behavior can both enlighten and inspire students (Cain, 1999; Furlong and Carroll, 1990; Kelly, 1986; Lickona, 1980).

Committed Impartiality: Whenever a controversial issue arises, it is unavoidable and legitimate to underline the important role teachers assume in terms of expressing their own value positions. More specifically put, exclusive neutrality, exclusive partiality, and neutral impartiality inflicted major damage on the accurate role of the teacher, all the while they lacked any applicable strengths. The criticisms of these attitudes reveal the need for a more attractive fourth role definition. That very role, in turn, is committed impartiality conceptualized in a contradictory manner. Committed impartiality requires two sets of beliefs. First of all, the teachers should stop hiding and instead express their views on controversial issues. Secondly, they should encourage the pursuit of truth by enabling fair and critical opportunity to voice competing perspectives (Hill, 1982; Kelly, 1986).

It is crucial to carefully define the expression of the teacher’s opinions. It is often recommended to ensure that the teacher’s personal opinions represent a positive ideal. Instead of avoiding a debate on controversial issues, they should be consciously incorporated into the course. Free expression of the teachers’ opinions should be accepted; such opinions should not be always masked by a function as the devil’s advocate, or should not be sacrificed for compromise through extreme humility or concessions through repeated restrictions. Questions about starting, timing and the tone should be decided upon by the rational teacher who complies with the requirements of impartiality and personal testimony. On the other hand, recommending that the teachers voice their personal views regarding the issues does not, as a general rule, refer to an effort to persuade the students again and again of the superiority of the teacher’s views. To the extent the teacher’s disclosures about herself evolves into a clumsy advocacy, the students may perceive it as a propaganda or psychological intimidation. In

both cases, the impartiality model would suffer. Noting the existence of certain specific phrases suggesting an abuse of a teacher's expression of her opinion regarding controversial issues does not lead to an overall view that the expression of positions of all teachers would constitute explicit or at least successful violations of impartiality. Yet that is what criticisms demanding impartiality with respect to committed impartiality are essentially demanding. Their logic resembles the following course. In-class conditions such as disproportionate force, mandatory participation, and pressure over the class creates an environment wherein the expression of the teacher's attitude, however limited, would mean implied advocacy. However, these conditions make all kinds of advocacy compulsory. Compulsion is in undeniable contradiction with impartiality; teachers should not be allowed to coerce the students. Therefore, the teacher's expression of her position should be prevented. Committed impartiality presents not only a paradox, but also a contradiction (Kelly, 1986).

The criticisms about the expression of the teacher's opinions would, implicitly, promotes robotic rationality as the ideal position. A glance at the view thoroughly contaminating the emotions, the leading product of this dichotomous concept is the hollow symbol of pure reason. It is a hollowed, one-dimensional creature. It is not even a trying ideal, for real people do not feel the need to run for the throne. A second basis for the claim that committed impartiality is inherently contradictory is that students are not always capable of maintaining reasoned thinking in the face of the views voiced by the teacher. The rationalist assumption that the student is impressed easily is a result of the belief that the teachers can strongly influence student behavior. In this vein, it is also crucial to underline that the teachers are equipped with the strong weapon that is continued confirmation of the impartiality maintaining the rational process, as well. This norm can be verified in practice; for the teachers either praise the logical views of the opposition, push the students to criticize the teachers' perspectives, and assume a public but critical perspective, or raise students who simply repeat ideas like parrots. In a nutshell, the teachers are equipped with certain strategic adjustments which may reduce the threats facing rational analyses they had potentially accelerated through the expression of their personal views (Hill, 1982; Kelly, 1986; Perkinson, 1984).

The concept of democratic authority emphasizes learning through direct experience, and refers to the expression of various related ideas. In the philosophical sense, as the governors of democracy, we are all competent. Therefore, in practice, we should see ourselves in this role, and act accordingly. In particular, as persuasively put in the literature (Newmann, 1975; Newmann, Bertocci, & Landsness, 1977; Wood, 1985), the schools should act as the space for and sponsors of young citizens receiving education. In order to fully develop the required qualifications and identity, it will be necessary to present opportunities to bring the youth in the schools realistically but supportively face to face with authority. Even though they are not the only source, the teachers implementing committed impartiality offer such an experience perfectly. As personal witnesses who enable the youth in stating their views, and providing a fair reception, these teachers theoretically both embody and authorize democratic authorities. When provided access to the ideas of the authority, as well as subjected to frequent pressure regarding objections to the validity of such ideas, along with guidance in the process to avoid false sanctions thereof, the students would definitely work in an educationally enriched environment at sites where citizenship obligations, competences, and courage arise and are refreshed (Mosher, 1982; Koçoğlu, 2015).

One of the most comprehensive pieces of study concerning the experimental educational programs for teenagers note that the form of adult-youth relationship most closely associated with social development of the youth is the one entailing the equally responsible mentor. Like committed impartiality, the term itself is controversial. Furthermore, both expressions unconventionally defend a concurrence of interests among equality and the dynamics of expertise, albeit not always in the same form. For our current purposes, the concept of colleague rather than mentor is most closely associated with the issue (Conrad & Hedin, 1981; Koçoğlu, 2014).

Committed impartiality offers a completely functional model of man, expressing and acting on logical ideas. A teacher who encourages the students as such, through the dynamics of a role model and the norms of impartiality, would develop an educational culture which legitimately brings the associated controversial issues of the major curriculum, without damaging the integrity of the contents or ego. If this positive view is embraced, the principle of impartiality of equal restraint emerges as a significantly misplaced self-censorship. Preventing someone from expressing her own ideas, as an alleged requirement to investigate the fair criticism of a strict partisan is like rescuing a healthy baby from exclusive and unbiased impartiality using bathwater free of committed impartiality. The challenge for social studies teachers is about neither preventing the teacher from voicing her own ideas, nor accepting irresponsible impartiality. Rather, they reject a non-disclosed impartiality free from myths and values as a form of misdirection, and work always to instill the class discourse with the balance of personal commitment and impartiality, which promises to activate critical thinking and civic courage

of us as well as of our young citizens. These are persistent obligations we cannot and should not avoid (Conrad & Hedin, 1981; Kelly, 1986; Mosher, 1982; O'Brien and Howard, 1996; Wood, 1985).

Yoshinori Shimizu's Four Pedagogical Attitudes Theory

Shimizu (1999) defined the following pedagogical terms used extensively to define the basic roles the teachers play in classroom settings: *Hatsumon*, *Kikan-shido*, *Neriage* and *Matome*.

Hatsumon: *Hatsumon* refers to asking a thought-provoking question at a certain point of the course. At the beginning of the course, the teacher may ask a question to help students understand the problem, or to encourage them to seek solutions. During a discussion by the whole class, for instance, one may talk about the perspectives proposed to solve the problem, or the connections between the effectiveness and applicability of each perspective.

Kikan-shido: *Kikan-shido* refers to learning occurring at the desk of the student. The teachers scan the individual problem-solving processes of the students, with a certain objective in mind. While active in the classroom and quietly watching the activities of the students, the teacher would be engaging in two important activities closely associated with the class debates to follow individual studies. First of all, the teacher would evaluate the students' problem-solving process. In some cases, the teacher would propose a way for the students to adopt, or extends clues to help the students solve the problem. Secondly, the teacher takes cognitive notes about the individual students taking conventional as well as distinctive approaches regarding the problem. The students would then be asked to present their solutions. Therefore, in the intentional scanning process, the teacher would discuss questions such as "what kind of solution methods should I initially present to the students?" or "How can I lead the discussion towards a process whereby the students' ideas are unified?" Some, but certainly not all answers to these problems may already be prepared as of the planning stage.

On the basis of the observations made during *Kikan-shido*, the teacher would carefully ask the students to present their solution methods on the blackboard, in line with a certain order. In this context, the order is crucial in terms of encouraging the students which use naive methods, as well as showing the mathematical connections between the ideas of the students. In some cases, the teacher may point out an incorrect or erroneous method or error, should she think that it would be good for the course. Once the ideas of the students are presented on the blackboard, an oral comparison would follow. The teacher's role is not to point at the best solution, but to direct the debate towards an integrated idea.

Neriage: The term *Neriage* explains the dynamic and cooperative nature of the debate during the class. In Japanese, *Neriage* refers to kneading or shining. In teaching settings, the term serves as a metaphor for the mathematical brainstorming process integrated with the shining and discussing students' ideas. Japanese teachers consider *Neriage* crucial for the success or failure of the course.

Matome: A Japanese term, *Matome* refers to summarizing. Japanese teachers believe that this stage is crucial for a successful course. The *Matome* stage is noted as a crucial difference between the classroom activities in the US and in Japan (Fujii, Kumagi, Shimizu and Sugiyama, 1998). A comparative analysis of the US and Japan reveals that the Japanese teachers in *Matome* stage are inclined to extend careful and final comments regarding the students' work on the complications of mathematics.

In general, in the *Matome* stage, the teacher would review the topics discussed by the students, and summarize what they learned during the class. A debate in which the whole class takes part, with a view to solving the problem, is a common method employed in Japanese schools to teach mathematics. The teachers play an important role in increasing the efficiency of this method. This crucial role is embraced by pre-service teachers, in both official and unofficial teaching environments (Shimizu, 1999).

Other Theories

There are other investigators who engage in various conceptualizations concerning the roles the teachers assume when teaching, albeit not at a level of detail achieved by Kelly and Shimizu. For instance, in a piece titled "The Education of Educators: What We Can Learn from Other Professions" Soder (1998) asked about the teaching perspectives of teachers, and observed that the participants were inclined to respond with certain terms characterizing the nature of the profession: "gardener" helping the growth of the students, "potter" applying a

cast for the mind of the learners, or a “conductor” managing each student simultaneously (Arnon, Shani and Zeiger, 1999; Inbar, 1996; Ulu Kalin, 2018a; Ulu Kalin, 2018b).

Peretz, Mendelsona and Kronb (2003) presented the concepts regarding the profession of teaching, along with the reasons why they were named as such. The grounds for naming, on the other hand, were noted to lie with the presence of certain characteristics regarding teaching. The concepts in question are as follows: (i) “*store owner*,” as he sells various consumer goods, combined with the perception that the teachers play a role of transfer in education; (ii) “*judge*,” as he represents authority, strict rules, and a judgmental attitude; (iii) “*zookeeper*,” given the perception that he presents a concrete example of watching over a difficult and demanding population; (iii) “*showman*” as he represents the role of men who provide happiness and joy briefly, without putting much effort into it; (iv) “*conductor*,” as he sets the nature of the performance, the format and tone of the result, while being responsible with the group as well as the individuals within; (v) “*puppet master*,” as he is similar to the conductor, albeit with an emphasis on the completely passive nature of the puppets. Finally (vi), “*animal trainer*” utilizes behaviorist methods including rewards and punishments in order to make sure that certain behaviors are exhibited, regardless of the intentions and preferences of the students. The findings of the investigators show that the most widely preferred concept pertains to the role of the caregiver (Peretz et. al., 2003; Koçoğlu, 2013).

Metaphors

Yet another concept concerning the roles the teachers assume in the class is “*metaphor*,” which is a topic covered by numerous studies and conceptualizations in the literature. ‘Analogy’ is a form of rhetoric employed to reinforce and animate the narrative in any language. Analogy utilizes another object or acts to better describe the nature of an object or the character of an action, with a view to making the latter reminded (Çelikten, 2006). Analogy represents the first stage of metaphors. As was the case with the analogies, metaphors try to present the concept in question with reference to another one which is similar to the first concept in some way. Doing so, as Sennett (1993) noted, a metaphor generates meaning larger than the sum of its parts, and presents us a new awareness.

The two basic principles of education are the moves from what is known to what is not, and what is concrete to what is abstract. Metaphors employ concrete examples to explain abstract principles. The perceived, visible, and physical reality is to be used for defining the unknown, invisible and spiritual reality. A limited vocabulary necessitates the use of comparisons for someone to achieve the transition from understanding one thought to another (Johnson, 1990). Metaphors, in turn, can help with the actualization and restructuring of the images in these categories, and also for making sense of the ingredients of educational practices. The educators think about what they do when they teach. It is possible to enhance the thoughts, images and practices of a teacher through the use of metaphors. Metaphors can change and improve what is happening in the classroom, by helping teachers who intend to enhance their teaching attach meaning to their own roles and responsibilities. This occurs in the context of the whole of the conceptualized roles of the teacher. The educators’ beliefs regarding education-teaching and the students, their attitudes and behaviors in the classroom, their views concerning the developments, and their ideas about what to do would naturally have an impact on their thoughts about what is right and what is wrong. These beliefs are often shaped during childhood, and play a certain role in determining what the teachers would learn about teaching (Çelikten, 2006).

Many new teachers had years of experience with other teachers during their own education, and took part in a number of activities. All these experiences led them to developing images, ideals and models about the meaning of the teaching profession. Once they grow into teachers, these former students would begin a restructuring of the knowledge from the teachers’ perspectives, based on new experiences. This, however, may lead to confusion and uncertainty. On the other hand, the ultimate objective is to reach to new and improved knowledge and practices through these experiences. New teachers usually act on generalized beliefs, images or metaphors which have a negative impact on their teaching performances. Two common metaphors in this context are “*teacher as a friend*” and “*teacher as a tough authority*”. Many young teachers go through the pains of learning through experience how these attitudes do not really work. In addition to these metaphors, there are others used in education, with positive effects on the teachers and the students. These include the teacher as a “*parent*,” as a “*gardener*,” as an “*oyster*,” and as a “*doctor*.”

Parent metaphor: Comparable to the rights and responsibilities the children have before their families, and the families have with their children, the teachers and the students are also subject to such responsibilities, rights, and requirements in the context of their mutual relationships. The class or the school is comparable to an

extended family. Here, the rules, virtues, and the integrity of the family can be taken into account. The rights of the individuals as well as the group are material. As is the case with families, the teacher should also be trained with reference to the rules and virtues of the school. The rights, obligations, and certain privileges of each individual in the school and in the class should be taken into consideration. In parallel to the behavior of the families regarding their children, the teachers should also work to improve the knowledge and character of the students. Both function as authority figures and role models.

Saban (2004) came across some data confirming the points raised above. In that study, a participant underlines how a teacher is very comparable to a parent, saying “The teacher is like the student’s parents, given how the latter try to prepare their children for life to the best extent possible, and do not spare any compassion and kindness from their children in these endeavors, and the former is also characterized by a will to protect the students from harm, trying to teach them something” (148-149).

Gardener: Another valuable metaphor to understand teachers is based on the analogy with a gardener. This is an intercultural one. The strength, simplicity, attractiveness and elegance of this metaphor makes it an extremely useful tool. Almost everyone, including the inhabitants of frozen tundra or the arid deserts, has had some kind of experience with plants. Most people are capable of understanding the relationship between the plants and water and sun, as well as the role played by the gardener in this context. Many have had some personal experience in growing plants, and paid the required attention to ensure their growth. The teacher is comparable to a gardener in terms of the latter’s efforts for planting and watering seeds, increasing their productivity, and paying due attention; in this analogy, so the students, just like seeds, can grow and bear fruit (Çelikten, 2006).

“The teacher is comparable to a gardener, for a gardener individually tends to the saplings he grows. He is well versed in the conditions required to facilitate the growth of the saplings, and pays all required care and attention. If, on the contrary, he is indifferent to individual saplings, imposing essentially the same conditions on them, he would cause the growth of one type of sapling while another dries.” (Saban, 2004; 148)

Oysters: In this metaphor, the children are compared to pearls, whereas the teachers and education are compared to oysters. In contrast to the better known and understood relationships between the parents and their offspring, the gardener and plants, the doctor and the patients, the growth of pearls by oysters is understood less, and rarely used.

The relationship between the child and education is comparable to the relationship between the pearl and the oyster. The pearl grows upon the intrusion of certain alien objects such as sand, into the shell of the oyster. In order to cover and coat the intruding alien object, the oyster secretes calcium, reducing the discomfort it causes. The coating would protect the flesh of the oyster, all the while growing the pearl and ensuring a transformation process. The process of developing a pearl is a gradual one, wherein each day sees the oyster coating the sand with more and more calcium, leading to the transformation of trivial particles of mud and sand to beautiful and valuable pearls. In the same vein, education and counseling can transform a person into a lovely and perfect being. Without the coating of counseling and education, we are bound to remain as worthless pieces of mud. The teachers wash off the undesired substances in our shells, applying healthy doses of education each other, helping us transform into lovely individuals.

Doctor: The metaphor comparing a doctor to a teacher claims that the teachers should correct errors and treat illnesses. The relationship between the doctor and the patient may shed some light on the relationship between the teacher and the student. First of all, when the people do not feel well, they visit someone who would help them recover, and who is more knowledgeable. The process of getting well depends on the application of the right treatment and the right medicine on the part of the doctor, and the patient’s compliance with the recommendations of the doctor. The teachers should know how to treat problems related to mental and character issues, and how to convey that knowledge to their students. The teachers should not only know the topics they are supposed to teach, but also how to teach them, at a level higher than their students. Comparable to a doctor who needs to know about human body and the basis of health and illness, the educator should also know how people learn, how that learning experience can be encouraged, and how learning could cure ignorance. Akin to doctors, the teachers should be professionally liable for any damage they may inflict on their students (Çelikten, 2006).

Trying to reveal the “teacher” perceptions of pre-service teachers, through the use of certain metaphors, Bramald, Hardman and Leat (1995) claim that the personal attitudes the pre-service teachers develop towards economics in general are shaped by the experiences they receive at the schools they studied in the past. Bramald, Hardman and Leat underline the fact that such personal attitudes regarding how to achieve effective

teaching, developed on the basis of experiences, often converge around conventional theories on education, compared to contemporary perspectives on education. For instance, according to Calderhead and Robson (1991), pre-service teachers equate effective teaching with “describing,” and effective learning with “memorizing.” For instance, roughly two thirds of pre-service teachers (97 participants amounting to 64%) define the teacher with reference to her traditional roles (“providing knowledge to the students,” “providing some form to the students,” and “treating the students”). Only the remaining one-third (54 participants amounting to 36%) underline the need for the teachers to “make learning a fun experience,” “support personal development of the students,” and “guide the students through the learning process.”

Conclusion

Teaching refers to the performance of the activities planned for learning. Teaching and learning cover closely interrelated activities to bring about a change in behavior. A planned and orderly perspective towards such change in behavior makes it possible to produce desirable behavior; and success in this context depends on careful decision-making about what the students need to learn, and how such achievements can be realized. Given the fact that the behaviors expected to be learned in a complex society are numerous and wide-ranging, it is virtually impossible to achieve them through personal efforts. In the quest of overcoming that difficulty, the school stands out as a particularly important institution. The school should name the behavior the individuals may need, and arrange for education in an organized setting, based on these select values. Thus, the identification of what is to be learned would lead to the necessity to define the act of teaching as well. The teacher is the primarily responsible party regarding the act of teaching (Balci, 1988; Bela, 1968; Sünbül, 1996).

Analyzing the views and practices a high school teacher may have with respect to the biology class she had been successfully developing and implementing in a study class, Crawford (2000) observed, after the introduction based on a review of the examples from the animal kingdom, that the recent national science education reform by the Australian National Research Council (NRC) advocated the establishment of learning environments based on questioning on part of the teachers, that the teachers were expected to focus on engaging in and supporting study when interacting with the students, and that questioning the authentic questions derived out of the students' experiences was the basic strategy for the teaching of science (p. 917). Organizing such non-conventional and questioning-based education is a complicated task, and many teachers have yet to embrace the essence of this learning style wherein the students start to “think” scientifically (Fradd and Lee, 1999; Roth, Boutonné, McRobbie and Lucas, 1999). The process of harmonizing education with reform perspectives is a slow one. The details from the real-life classroom environment, with respect to contemporary issues, were left to imagination by the form teacher aiming to employ inquiry-based strategies, leading to frequent disappointments. The gap between study and application can expand the chasm between the curriculum the reforms intend to achieve, and the course taught at the classes (Crawford, 2000; 917).

Perhaps the most important point one has to remember through the process of overcoming the problems and developing educational environments producing positive results is about accepting that all students deserve equal opportunity to perfectly fulfill their potential as human beings and students. The teachers play a key role in making such opportunities available; and the records of education so far do not suggest a high level of achievement. According to Bandura and Walters (1977), the teachers' professional effectiveness is closely associated with their perceived efficiency, and the belief that they are influential on the level of learning and success on the part of their students. The perceived efficiency may be associated with the general views the teachers have of themselves as specialists. On the other hand, Combs, Blume, Newman and Wass (1977) claim that the self-respect of the teachers is a function of their perception of themselves and the roles they play in society. That self-respect would then affect the teaching strategies and behaviors the teachers employ in the class. Therefore, it is essential to have a positive self-perception on the part of the teachers, in the school as well as in social settings. A precondition of training better-equipped individuals through successful results of the system of education, enabling them to shape the future of the nations is to provide the teachers with a robust education in every sense, followed by them duly reflecting that education to their students in classroom settings.

The teachers would play a crucial part in making their effective education practices successful in classroom settings. In the contemporary world where the teacher-centric conventional education perspective, in which the role of the student is that of a passive listener is abandoned and replaced by a constructivist approach to education, placing the student at the center, along with a more active role for the student, the role of teachers is also undergoing a change. The teachers are required to play different roles in this new perspective on education. Serving as an intermediary between the student and the education program is now the most essential duty of the teacher. Doing so, the teacher may embrace new roles of preparing the venue, counseling, and facilitating

learning instead of the conventional roles of conveying knowledge and controlling the class. In the constructivist perspective, the class focuses on the structuring of knowledge on part of the student. Thus the teacher-centric class perspective is being replaced by a learner-centric class. There, the students are not silenced as the conventional perspective would do; their minds would not be invaded with a forced regime of objective knowledge. To the contrary, the students are granted the opportunities to develop knowledge. The skills of discussion, critical and creative thinking, and problem-solving are central; the prime objective is showing the way for knowledge to the students, allowing them to take the journey themselves, rather than emphasizing memorizing. What is expected of the teachers is to duly play the applicable part.

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