

Metamorphosis of the Student's Role in Modern Pedagogy

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Abstract

Characterizing today's student is a complex and challenging task, as the profiles, experiences, and educational paths of modern youth are highly diverse. Over the past decade, the heterogeneity of the population has significantly increased. Notably, within the university walls, we now have a diverse community with various educational backgrounds—professionally trained individuals, recent graduates, international students, working students, and so forth. This new, composite student population, with its socio-demographic characteristics, has moved away from the “traditional” ideal figure of a school graduate and increasingly demands new approaches.

In this paper, we will attempt to introduce the historical path that pedagogy has taken and illustrate how the student of a past era transformed into the modern student. To demonstrate this transformation, we will rely on empirical, comparative, and quantitative scientific research.

Keywords: Student, pedagogy, modern methods, role of the learner, metamorphosis

Introduction

Modern pedagogy is based on various educational trends that have developed throughout human history. Understanding these trends allows us to better grasp the foundations of pedagogy and sheds light on issues related to the transmission of knowledge. Our work does not focus on a detailed

presentation of each pedagogical approach but rather on understanding its essential characteristics.

How can we identify the fundamental ideological aspects of a particular pedagogical trend? Perhaps, first of all, we should review the history of pedagogical approaches.

The word "pedagogy" originates from the ancient Greek words "paidos" (child) and "gogia" (guidance, leadership, upbringing) (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Socrates is, in some ways, considered the father of pedagogy. Initially, the term referred to a person, typically a slave, who accompanied children to school to shield them from undesirable encounters and certain issues. Thus, originally, pedagogy was understood as the art of guiding children toward knowledge (Oestar, Jennifer M. 2020).

From the late 19th century, pedagogy was granted scientific status, providing insights into how learning should occur. Ultimately, pedagogy developed into a multifaceted discipline that draws from the history of education, sociology of education, didactics, psychology of learning, and philosophy.

Today, pedagogy is defined as a "practical theory"-it combines both educational thought and action. According to Émile Durkheim, "It does not study educational systems scientifically, but it addresses them in a way that enables the learner to bring them into practice" (Durkheim, Émile. 1982). What is an educational trend?

An educational trend is a combination of objective and subjective elements that emerge from the experiences of various individuals and the research or observations conducted during a given period. It provides a framework for defining learning.

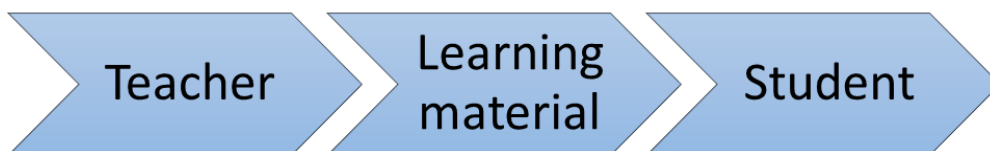
An educational trend is formed through the use of one or more educational methods (principles, approaches, techniques, tools). However, quite often, certain educational trends that have emerged and then become established over time will dominate.

To illustrate the role of the learner in the teaching process, let us provide a few examples from the history of pedagogy:

- The student is perceived as a passive component of learning – learning is a process of transmission. This ancient approach dates back to the 16th century and is associated with Jesuit pedagogy. The teacher's role is to impart their knowledge.
- The student is passive; they must understand and reinforce knowledge. This approach is based on repetition and memorization and became particularly popular in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- Behaviorism: Learning is a response to stimuli. This trend began in the early 20th century and saw its peak in the 1960s and 1970s. The teacher's role is to possess knowledge, break down tasks into modules,

observe students' progress, and reinforce observable behaviors. The student is passive, listening and deducing through instinctive gestures. This approach is based on positive and negative reinforcement, with rewards given for correct responses and punishments assigned for incorrect ones.

The schematic representation of the above-mentioned forms of teaching can be likened to a line:



The famous 19th-century Georgian realist writer Akaki Tsereteli also discusses the existence of harsh punishments for students in his work *My Story*: “Anyone who dared to speak Georgian would be handed a long plank-a ruler-to be struck across their palm. Then they would be expected to pass it on to someone else in the same manner, that is, to hit another’s palm with the ruler upon transfer... The same child could be ‘whipped’ three or four times in a single day by different supervisors” (Tsereteli A. 1894–1908).

In the 21st century, the role of students, and learners in general, takes on an entirely new significance. A modern young person, familiar with democratic values, can no longer assume the role of a mere passive listener and instead becomes an active participant in the learning process.

The diversity among students (social background, experiences, intelligence levels, desire for freedom) presents significant challenges to higher educational institutions-they must urgently implement complex educational standards that overturn flawed teaching approaches cemented over centuries. The appearance of the word “flawed” in this paper is not accidental, as we have seen how the mental genetic code of humanity, the student’s “ego,” ideology, and genetic heritage have been either diminished or entirely ignored.

The current metamorphosis of higher education, and education in general, is seen worldwide as a challenge for social development and knowledge-seeking societies. Notably, in recent years, the phenomenon of students discussing democratization has even emerged.

Implementing democratization in higher education institutions has become an undeniable challenge, which does not extend to the democratization of access to knowledge-a realm still marked by inequalities in certain sectors. For example, at the beginning of this century, developed countries faced high failure rates in the first year of studies and increasing student mobility between secondary and higher education, reflecting the

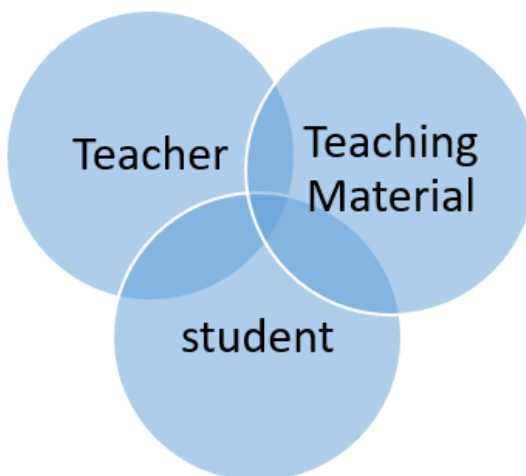
difficulties of transitioning. Indeed, upon entering university, first-year students, whose levels are often highly varied, frequently encounter significant challenges.

Based on empirical research, scientists note that students who fail to connect with their new environment often experience setbacks that define their professional paths.

Many influential monitoring reports examine various aspects grounded in the latest educational and scientific literature. However, a more significant challenge is the presence of teachers adhering to "traditional teaching" methods, who treat students as unquestioning recipients of the information they provide. Unfortunately, findings based on modern research suggest that this approach leads to the personal and professional downfall of young people.

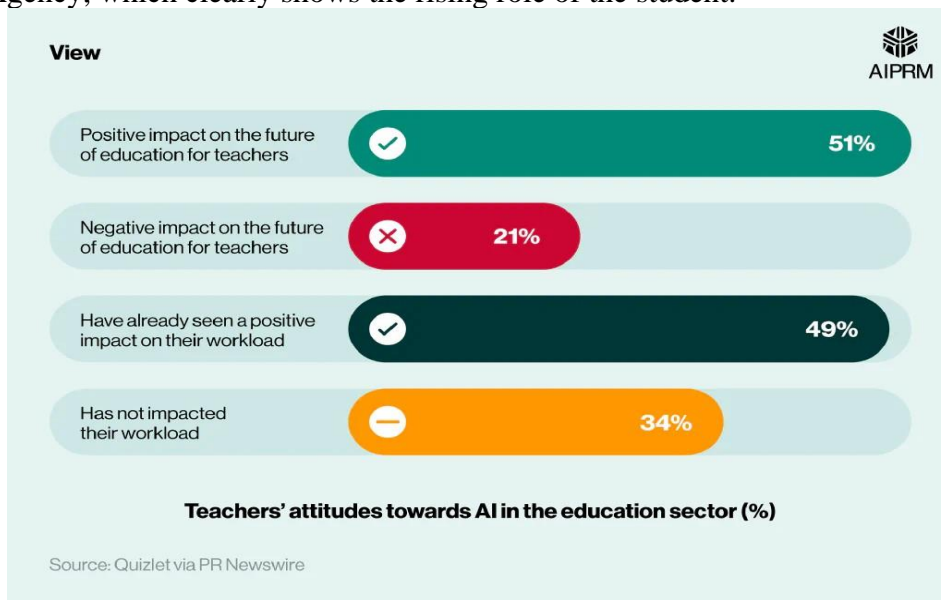
Today's students can no longer blindly accept information delivered by a lecturer; they engage in debates, participate in interactions, and through their involvement, a new, nonlinear form of learning is created. Here, the student is no longer a passive receiver of information but an active participant in enriching or presenting the material in innovative ways, alongside the teacher.

Accordingly, the scheme of this can be presented as follows:



In our era, the "Co-construction" teaching method is becoming established, offering close collaboration between students and teachers, where students create knowledge and resources together with academic staff. In English literature, several terms characterize this learning and teaching process, such as co-construction, co-creation, co-design, co-development, or even co-design. Co-creation involves a mutually creative process based on the ideas of both teachers and students, where everyone can contribute equally, even if not in the same way (Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2011; Bovill, 2013).

For example, we can present a schema from the United States Statistics Agency, which clearly shows the rising role of the student.



As for Georgia, out of 122 surveyed students, 98% cannot imagine the learning process without their active participation.

What Practical Aspects Should a Modern Educator Rely On?

Teachers can make informed decisions about which teaching methods align with their educational goals and the needs of their students. For example, if a teacher aims to foster creativity and critical thinking, they can choose co-construction methods over traditional lecture-based approaches.

By recognizing that students have diverse learning styles and experiences, teachers can adapt their methods to better meet individual needs. This may include incorporating elements from various pedagogical trends to create a more inclusive and effective learning environment. Understanding the core philosophy of different trends encourages teachers to reflect on their own practices and biases. This can lead to more purposeful and effective teaching.

Curriculum designers can use ideas from pedagogical trends to design content that is relevant, engaging, and aligned with desired learning outcomes. For example, a problem-solving-focused curriculum might include project-based learning activities inspired by co-construction approaches.

Understanding the limitations of traditional methods can inspire curriculum designers to explore new and innovative approaches to teaching and learning. This may include integrating technology, incorporating real-world experiences, or promoting interdisciplinary learning.

Policymakers in education can utilize ideas from pedagogical trends to inform teacher training programs, which may include training teachers in

various methods, such as co-construction, research-based learning, and differentiated instruction.

Understanding the resources needed to implement various pedagogical trends will help curriculum developers make informed decisions about resource allocation. For example, supporting co-construction approaches may require investments in technology, collaborative learning spaces, and professional development for teachers.

Policymakers can use criteria to identify ideological aspects for evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs. This may include assessing whether the program aligns with its established goals, promotes student engagement, and prepares students for success in the 21st century.

By becoming aware of various pedagogical trends, students can better understand their own learning preferences and needs. This enables them to take a more active role in their education and contribute to shaping learning experiences that best suit their individual strengths. Understanding the underlying assumptions of different approaches encourages students to think critically about the information they receive and the teaching methods used. This can lead to more meaningful and long-lasting learning.

Students can use their knowledge of pedagogical trends to support the implementation of changes within educational institutions, which may include creating student-centered learning environments, developing diverse curricula, or ensuring equal access to educational resources.

All of this requires the systematic and sustainable training of educators.

Considering the practical outcomes mentioned above, teachers, curriculum developers, and students can work collaboratively to create a more effective, equitable, and engaging learning environment.

Based on all of the above, in a historical and analytical context, and grounded in quantitative and comparative research, this paper aims to demonstrate the critical importance of changing teaching practices. Specifically, it seeks to illustrate how these practices must be reoriented to foster a dynamic rather than static role for students in the classroom. Modern young people cannot accept any form of information through mere rote memorization without understanding and internalization. Their "ego," genetic code, intelligence, and understanding of the core values of contemporary society drive them to assume the role of a primary contributor in the learning process.

The main argument presented emphasizes the fundamental necessity of a paradigm shift in pedagogical approaches. Traditional teaching methods, characterized by passive absorption and memorization of information, are becoming increasingly ineffective in engaging modern students. This inefficacy stems from a combination of inherent factors in the modern student:

a developed sense of self, an innate drive for understanding, enhanced intelligence, and a heightened awareness of societal values, which prioritize active participation and contribution. Therefore, educators must adopt a student-centered model that fosters a dynamic learning environment by:

Emphasizing critical thinking, problem-solving, and the application of knowledge over simple memorization; Strengthening student engagement by encouraging them to take ownership of their learning through active participation, collaborative projects, and self-directed learning opportunities. Recognizing "Metamorphosis": Acknowledging the transformation of the student's role from a passive recipient of information to an active creator and contributor of knowledge, reflecting the ancient Greek concept of transformation.

Integrating Modern Values: Aligning teaching practices with the values of contemporary society, such as collaboration, innovation, and social responsibility. By embracing these principles, educators can create a learning experience that resonates with modern students, fostering deeper understanding, greater engagement, and a lifelong love for learning. This shift is not merely a matter of pedagogical preference but a necessity for preparing students to thrive in an increasingly complex and dynamic world. The future of education lies in empowering students to become active participants in their own learning journeys, driving innovation, and shaping the future.

Conclusion

As a summary of all the above, we can conclude that the transformation of teaching practices, with the modern student at its core, is a fundamental requirement for contemporary teaching approaches. Traditional and outdated teaching methods predominantly demanded that the listener passively and obediently absorb the information delivered by the teacher. However, the psychotype of modern youth no longer conforms to the realities of past centuries-today's student becomes a creator of educational material, engages in intellectual debate, and independently selects the aspects to be mastered.

Accordingly, modern pedagogy must transform the often rote memorization methods of traditional teaching into an interactive process-infusing it with dynamic, student-centered approaches that provide opportunities for critical thinking, collaboration, and active participation. In other words, it should create a continuous circle of three components: the teacher, the learning material, and the student.

This shift from the old paradigm will help the new generation adapt more easily to modern circumstances and equip them with the ability to contribute significantly to a more complex and evolving society. The primary aspect of this society is democratic education, which embraces criticism, debate, and creativity from the student as integral to the learning process.

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