

## EVOLUTION OF PEDAGOGICAL VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER AS AN EDUCATOR IN THE HISTORY OF PEDAGOGY

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**Abstract:** The present study examines the possibility that ideas derived from the development of pedagogical theory may be used as a basis for practical pedagogical activity in primary school. Attention is directed towards the understanding of the role of the teacher in the educational process and towards the way in which this understanding has changed during different periods in the development of pedagogy. The analysis is based on works by Johann Amos Comenius, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Friedrich Herbart and John Dewey. These authors present different approaches to the organisation of teaching and to the interaction between teacher and pupil. Within their ideas various solutions can be identified regarding the question of how the learning process should be organised and what the role of the teacher within this process should be. On the basis of this analysis a pedagogical model is proposed which presents a sequence of activities directed towards the active participation of pupils in the learning process. The model includes the formulation of a question, the work of pupils in investigating a given topic, the discussion of different ideas, and the attainment of shared understanding. Within this process the teacher performs the role of organiser of the learning environment and supports the work of the pupils. The proposed model may be applied within the conditions of the all-day organisation of the school day. A particularly appropriate environment for its implementation is provided by interest-based activities, where pupils have the opportunity to work on small educational projects, collect information, and present the results of their work. In this way historical pedagogical knowledge may find practical application in educational activity and support future teachers in organising work with pupils in primary school age. The study is based on historical and theoretical analysis of selected pedagogical works and their interpretation in relation to contemporary educational practice.

**Keywords:** *History of pedagogy, teacher as educator, pedagogical theory, inquiry-based learning, collaborative learning, primary school education, project-based learning, teacher education.*

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### Introduction

The preparation of future teachers within the university environment includes a thorough acquaintance with the development of pedagogical ideas. During their academic studies, students of pedagogy examine various conceptions of education formulated in different historical periods. These conceptions reflect specific understandings of the aims of schooling, the organisation of instruction, and the position of the teacher in working with pupils. The university discipline History of Pedagogy provides an opportunity for this development to be examined in its historical sequence. Through the analysis of classical pedagogical texts, students become familiar with different pedagogical approaches to the organisation of the educational process. In this way, different interpretations of the teacher's role gradually emerge. Within certain pedagogical conceptions the teacher is understood as a bearer of knowledge and a moral authority. In other conceptions greater emphasis is placed on the teacher's function as an organiser of instruction. There are also approaches in which the teacher is viewed as a mediator between the pupil and the cultural environment. Contemporary research in the history of pedagogy shows that pedagogical ideas themselves contribute to the understanding of present educational practice. John Furlong and Martin Lawn examine the development of pedagogical theory as a

process through which different conceptions of the teacher's role in education have been formed [1]. In a similar perspective, other researchers such as Harry Daniels and his colleagues analyse historical conceptions of education and emphasise the significance of pedagogical thought for understanding contemporary school practices [2]. Linda Darling-Hammond and her colleagues, as well as Gert Biesta, draw attention to the relationship between pedagogical theory and real educational situations, stressing that pedagogical ideas influence the way learning activity is organised and how the role of the teacher within the school is understood [3]; [4]. In pedagogical practice there is an increasing search for forms of work that involve more active participation of pupils in the learning process. Such forms of work include the discussion of questions, collaborative work among pupils, the search for information, and the presentation of the results of the activities carried out. This organisation of learning activity creates conditions in which pupils can develop skills for communication, cooperation, and independent thinking. Within contemporary school education there are opportunities for the implementation of such activities. The organisation of the all-day school programme provides space for educational initiatives beyond the framework of the traditional lesson. During the hours devoted to interest-based activities, pupils may participate in tasks that include the

investigation of a given topic, the discussion of different ideas, and the presentation of the results of collaborative work. In this context, the present study examines the possibility that ideas from the development of pedagogical theory may be used in the creation of a pedagogical model for work with pupils in primary school age. The aim of this study is to analyse how selected pedagogical conceptions from the history of pedagogy may contribute to the development of a structured pedagogical model for organising inquiry and collaborative learning activities in primary education.

## Exposition

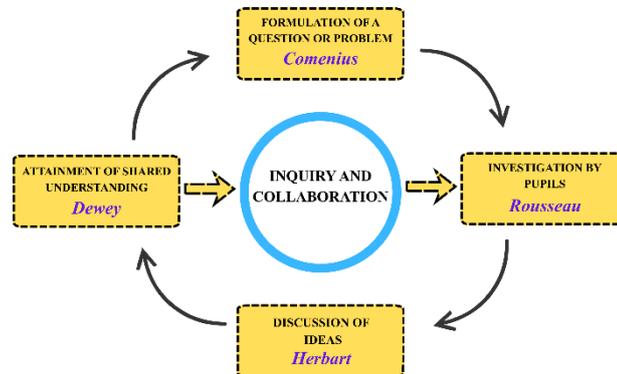
The examination of the role of the teacher as an educator requires a historical analysis that traces how pedagogical theory interprets the relationships between the teacher, the pupil, and society. In the history of pedagogy this question has never had a single, unambiguous answer. Different historical periods present different conceptions of pedagogical authority, of the degree of pedagogical influence, and of the place of the teacher in the process of education. Within the classical European pedagogical tradition, one of the earliest systematic conceptions of the role of the teacher appears in the works of Johann Amos Comenius. In *Didactica Magna*, Comenius examines education as a universal process of forming the human personality, encompassing intellectual, moral and spiritual development [5]. In this conception the teacher has a clearly defined educative function. The teacher acts as a mediator between knowledge and the development of the learner. Comenius maintains that pedagogical activity must follow the natural order of human development. The teacher should not act arbitrarily. The teacher must understand the nature and developmental stage of the pupil and organise the educational process in such a way that knowledge is acquired gradually. In this sense the role of the teacher expands. The teacher becomes not merely a transmitter of knowledge but an organiser of the educational process [6]. The pedagogical conception of Johann Amos Comenius presupposes a clearly articulated guiding role of the teacher within the educational process. The teacher is understood as a bearer of cultural tradition and the moral values of society, whose responsibility is to organise instruction in such a way that the development of the pupil follows the natural order of knowledge and learning. Within this pedagogical perspective, the authority of the teacher is grounded less in institutional power and more in the responsibility for the formation of the human personality [7]. During the eighteenth century, however, this classical conception of pedagogical authority began to be questioned. A significant shift emerged with the educational philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In his influential work *Emile, or On Education*, Rousseau argues that traditional systems of education often suppress the natural development of the child [8]. According to Rousseau, genuine education must follow the nature of the human being and create conditions in which the child gradually discovers the world through personal experience. Within this perspective, the role of the teacher undergoes an important transformation. The teacher is no longer viewed as the primary source of knowledge and moral norms. Instead, the teacher's role becomes that of organising an educational environment in which the learner can reach knowledge through individual development and lived experience. In this sense, Rousseau's pedagogical philosophy places the child at the centre of the educational process and challenges the classical understanding of teacher authority [9]. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, pedagogical theory attempted to reconcile these two opposing tendencies. An important contribution to the development of pedagogical theory

was made by Johann Friedrich Herbart. In his work *General Pedagogy*, Herbart conceptualised education as a process directed toward the formation of moral character [10]. According to Herbart, the central task of education lies in the deliberate guidance of the learner's development so that stable moral judgements and ethical dispositions may emerge. Within this theoretical framework pedagogy begins to appear as a scientific discipline grounded in both ethics and psychology. The educator can no longer rely solely on personal experience or intuition. Instead, teaching requires an understanding of the principles of instruction and of the psychological processes underlying learning. Through this approach Herbart attempted to establish a systematic and theoretically grounded model of educational practice. His ideas exerted a considerable influence on educational thought and teacher training across Europe during the nineteenth century [4]. At the beginning of the twentieth century, pedagogical thought gradually shifted toward a new understanding of education. John Dewey introduced a conception that placed social experience at the centre of the educational process. In *Democracy and Education* Dewey conceptualised the school as a democratic community in which pupils learn through active participation in meaningful social activities [11]. Within this framework the role of the teacher undergoes an important transformation. Rather than functioning primarily as a transmitter of knowledge, the teacher increasingly assumes the role of organiser of the educational environment. The educator structures learning situations that encourage inquiry, critical reflection, social interaction, and the active engagement of pupils in the process of learning. Parallel to these developments, alternative perspectives on the teacher's educative role emerged within pedagogical theory. In the works of Anton Makarenko the teacher is understood as the organiser of a collective educational process. According to Makarenko, education is realised through participation in a social community in which pupils develop discipline, responsibility, and mutual cooperation [12]. This orientation toward the social and moral dimensions of education was further elaborated in the pedagogical reflections of Vasily Sukhomlinsky. In his work *My Heart I Give to Children* Sukhomlinsky emphasised the importance of a humane and empathetic relationship between teacher and pupil. For him, the educator must strive to understand the inner world of the child and cultivate trust within pedagogical relationships [13]. A historical comparison of these pedagogical conceptions reveals that the role of the teacher as an educator has undergone significant transformation. Within classical pedagogy the teacher was primarily perceived as a moral authority and bearer of cultural tradition. In modern pedagogical thought, however, the teacher increasingly appears as the architect of educational environments and as a reflective participant in the developmental process of the learner. This evolution demonstrates that pedagogical theory continuously reinterprets the relationship between educational authority and the autonomy of the learner. It is precisely within this dynamic tension between guidance and freedom that the contemporary understanding of the teacher as an educator has been shaped. Tracing the presented chronological line within the university discipline *History of Pedagogy*, a subject through which many pedagogy students are academically prepared, allows an important conclusion to be drawn. The different pedagogical conceptions do not exclude one another; rather, they emphasise different aspects of the teacher's role within the educational process. In the work of Comenius, the significance of well-organised instruction becomes evident; Rousseau highlights the importance of the natural development of the pupil; Herbart

stresses the necessity of systematic and purposeful pedagogical guidance; Dewey underlines the social character of learning; while later pedagogical traditions place particular emphasis on collective interaction and on a humane attitude towards the learner. In this

sense, and following the chronological development outlined in the history of pedagogy, Dr. Abner proposes a structured pedagogical model that brings together several of the most enduring ideas within pedagogical theory.

Figure 1. Inquiry and collaboration model integrating historical principles of pedagogy



Source: Conceptual model developed by Dr. Avi Abner. All rights reserved.

The proposed model is based on a clear sequence of pedagogical actions: the formulation of a question or problem situation, the engagement of pupils in investigating the issue, the discussion of different ideas, and the attainment of a shared understanding. Within this process, the teacher assumes the role of organiser of the educational environment, while the pupils participate actively in the construction of knowledge. Such an organisation of learning activity is particularly appropriate within the framework of the all-day organisation of the school day, where there is greater opportunity to employ flexible forms of educational work and to support the development of pupils' talents. During the hours devoted to interest-based activities, pupils can engage in exploratory tasks and small-scale educational projects that encourage more active participation and cooperation among them. Project-based work creates conditions in which pupils can formulate questions, search for information, discuss different ideas, and present the outcomes of their work. In this way the learning process becomes more closely connected with the experiences of the pupils themselves, while also providing opportunities for the development of communication skills, cooperation, and independent thinking, which are essential for the development of pupils in primary school age.

## Conclusion

The historical development of pedagogical thought demonstrates that the understanding of the teacher's role has undergone continuous reinterpretation in relation to the aims of education and the organisation of learning. Different pedagogical traditions have emphasised particular aspects of this role, including the organisation of instruction, the guidance of the learner's development, and the creation of educational environments that support intellectual and social growth. The model proposed in this study integrates several principles that can be traced throughout the history of pedagogical theory. By structuring learning activities around inquiry, discussion, and collaborative exploration, the model encourages the active participation of pupils in the educational process while positioning the teacher as an organiser of the learning environment. Such an approach is particularly suitable in educational contexts where time is available for exploratory and project-oriented work. Within programmes that include interest-based learning, pupils may engage in small educational projects,

collective discussions, and presentations of their findings. These forms of activity support the development of communication skills, cooperation, and independent thinking among pupils in primary education. From a pedagogical perspective, the proposed structure demonstrates how ideas originating in the historical development of pedagogical theory may inform the design of contemporary educational practices. The model therefore provides a conceptual basis that may support the professional preparation of future teachers and encourage the development of inquiry-based and collaborative forms of learning in primary education.

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