

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND PEDAGOGY: PECULIARITIES OF INTERACTION

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ABSTRACT

Aim. The aim of the article is to determine the status and purpose of philosophy of education, and to identify the peculiarities of its relationship with educational practice and pedagogical science.

Concept. Philosophy of education and pedagogy explore different aspects of the same subject field – education. Realising different research functions, they do not act as competitors, but, on the contrary, have the potential for mutual complementarity and reciprocal strengthening of their cognitive capabilities.

Results. Philosophy of education as a branch of applied philosophy is not an instrumental tool and cannot directly influence educational practice. It is designed to provide comprehension and understanding of the most important problems of the theory and practice of education. The role of mediator is played by another science of education – pedagogy.

Conclusion. The most productive form of relationship between philosophy of education and pedagogical science is their interaction, which contributes to the mutual enrichment, building up and the fullest realisation of their special research capabilities. Pedagogy has a choice of philosophical and educational concepts to develop educational theories which are verified by experiment and directly implemented in practice. Philosophy of education realises its theoretical functions at all stages of educational activity.

Cognitive value. The article presents a new perspective on the problem of the relationship between educational philosophy and educational practice. It is argued that the most efficient channel of transferring philosophical and educational ideas into practice is pedagogical science.

Keywords: philosophy of education, educational practice, pedagogy, comprehension, understanding, interaction, functions of philosophy of education



INTRODUCTION

Philosophy of education as an independent branch of knowledge was formed and acquired an institutional form in the United States, and then in Western European countries in the mid-twentieth century. In the post-Soviet space, including Ukraine, the increased interest towards this scientific discipline was found in the late 80s – early 90s of the twentieth century (Volkova, 2007).

We can identify at least two circumstances that led to the actualisation of philosophical and pedagogical issues in the post-Soviet countries during this period.

Firstly, the deep crisis of the educational sphere, the loss of clear, reliable social and moral guidelines for its further development created the need for philosophical understanding of the problems of education in order to radically revise the ideals, values, justification of new paradigms that could significantly improve the efficiency of educational activities. It would be no exaggeration to say that the spread of philosophy of education to a large extent was a kind of response to the crisis phenomena and was caused by the need to find ways to fundamentally reform the educational system.

Secondly, in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the stereotype that all the best (including in education) is abroad was firmly entrenched in the public consciousness. As a consequence, there was a desire, and with the fall of the Iron Curtain there was an opportunity to get acquainted directly with the theory and practice of education in the developed world. Specialists paid attention to the fact that philosophy of education, which existed there as an independent branch of knowledge, took an active part in the theoretical basis of educational activities in Western countries. Imitating the Western tradition and unwilling to keep up with their foreign colleagues, researchers of the post-Soviet countries in the 1990s did not only focus on the study of philosophical aspects of training and education, but also tried to give the philosophy of education an institutional character (Lutai, 1996).

During this period in Ukraine, as well as in other post-Soviet countries, there appeared publications dealing with the statement of the problem (Nichkalo, 1994), consideration of its separate aspects (Gerashchenko & Kletsova, 1996), and works of a generalising nature were published (Klimova, 1996; Klepko, 1998; Korzhenko, 1998; Kultaieva, 1991; Lutai, 1996).

It is important to note that in the 1990s philosophers began to explore problems that have traditionally been in the field of view of educational scholars. Thus, in his dissertation, Aleksander Rostovtsev (1992) considered the content of general education as a philosophical and methodological problem, while Sergey Grigoriev (1995) focused his thesis on the philosophical analysis of the learning process.

The formation and development of philosophy of education as an independent branch of knowledge in the post-Soviet space was complicated by the existence of a highly developed and quite authoritative scientific disci-

pline – pedagogy, which had and did not want to lose its monopoly on education as a subject of scientific research. As a consequence, not only philosophers, but also pedagogical theorists became engaged in the development of philosophy of education, which caused certain contradictions and led to mutual „invasion“ of representatives of these branches of knowledge in the „alien“ subject field. On the one hand, some specialists believed that philosophy of education should replace the „outdated“ pedagogy in the theoretical understanding of educational practice. On the other hand, there was a widespread opinion among pedagogical scholars that pedagogical science was capable of solving all general issues of educational development on its own and did not need the services of philosophy. At the same time, there were calls to combine the efforts of philosophers and pedagogues to create a coherent and forward-looking philosophy of education, which would be a „categorical imperative“ of the time (Rostovtsev, 1992, pp. 3-5).

In that situation, the question of the status and purpose of philosophy of education, its relationship with theoretical pedagogy, which claimed solely to be a general theory of education and upbringing of the younger generations became of particular importance.

In our opinion, the problem of correlation of philosophy of education and general (theoretical) pedagogy, and their differentiation continues to be relevant at the present time and still needs a serious scientific analysis.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION: ITS STATUS AND PURPOSE

The English-language scientific literature offers very similar characteristics of educational philosophy. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* treats this academic discipline as a branch of applied or practical philosophy concerned with the nature and purposes of education, as well as with philosophical problems arising from educational theory and practice (Siegel et al., 2018). The subject matter of philosophy of education is defined very broadly to include ethics, sociopolitical philosophy, epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of mind and language, and other areas of philosophy. The observation that philosophy of education deals with both sides of the traditional gap between theory and practice seems essential and important: it deals with its parent discipline (philosophy) and with external educational practice.

In other words, the subject of educational philosophy includes both the basic philosophical questions (the nature of knowledge to be taught, the nature of equity and justice in education, etc.) and the problems concerning specific educational policies and practices (desirability of standardised curricula and testing, social, economic, legal, and moral aspects of specific funding mechanisms, justification of educational decisions, etc.) (Ibid.).

The Encyclopaedia Britannica also treats philosophy of education as a field of applied philosophy that deals with philosophical reflections on the

nature, purposes, and problems of education. This draws attention to the dual focus of the discipline, which, like the two-faced Janus, looks inward at the parent discipline (philosophy) and outward at educational practice, taking as its theme both basic philosophical questions (e.g., the nature of knowledge) and more specific questions arising from educational practice (e.g., the desirability of standardised testing). The basic issues that have occupied educational philosophy throughout its history are defined as the goals and guiding ideals of education and the criteria for evaluating educational activity. It is emphasised that philosophy of education has also been concerned with elucidating key educational concepts, including the concept of education itself, as well as related concepts of teaching, learning, schooling, education, and the ideological treatment of children (Siegel, n.d.).

The presence of both theoretical and practical interest in education in the philosophy of education is precisely the reason for identifying topics that are of central interest to it. The most important of them include problems of ethics, theory of cognition, which allow us to clarify the difference between such concepts as "knowledge", "belief", "understanding", to reveal the distinctive features of different fields of knowledge (natural science, mathematics, history), to better understand the nature of human development and differences between such processes as learning, indoctrination, learning by experience, etc. (Hirst & Peters, 1998, pp. 27-38).

Nel Noddings (2003), having approximately the same position regarding the status of philosophy of education, emphasised that philosophers of education usually do not create theories of education (or teaching, learning, etc.), but are engaged in analysing, clarifying, and refining concepts, arguments, theories, and language, sometimes strengthening them, and sometimes raising powerful objections that lead to revision or rejection of theories and arguments. At the same time, the author stresses, philosophers, despite the dominant analytical view, sometimes create educational theories, and today many of them are engaged in constructive work. The question of whether it is legitimate to call the work of creating new theories of education philosophy is, in the author's view, part of the exciting contemporary debate.

Noddings' observation that modern philosophers of education use methods or approaches inherent in a particular philosophical trend: analytic philosophy, existentialism, phenomenology, critical theory, hermeneutics and postmodernism, seems important (Ibid.).

Considering philosophy of education as a field of applied philosophy, researchers place other emphases. This scientific discipline is interpreted as "philosophy in the field of education", a method of approaching the educational experience, criticism of the general theory of education and systematic reflection on general theories. The key problems of philosophy of education are as follows: interpretation of human nature, world, universe and their relations with a man; interpretation of educational goals and ideals; interrelation of different components of the educational system; interre-

lation of education and different areas of national life (economic system, political order, social progress, cultural reconstruction, etc.); educational values; theory of knowledge and its connection with education (Chazan, 2022, pp. 23-34).

It is pointed out that philosophy of education as a field of applied philosophy is diverse and draws on established branches of philosophy in epistemology, ethics, axiology, and politics to address educational goals, methods, problems, and educational policy, pedagogy, and curriculum (Peters et al., 2014).

Denis C. Phillips (2014) came to the conclusion that philosophy of education is not quite correctly to be regarded as one of the fields of applied philosophy, because, in his opinion, it is hardly a branch of activity comparable to philosophy of science or political philosophy. The author suggests that philosophy of education is not on the same level of complexity with any other branch of philosophy, but with the entire field of philosophy. This is explained by the fact that the field of education itself is so broad and complex, and so interwoven with many other aspects of society, and has such a fundamental social significance that its philosophical comprehension is almost limitless.

Based on the conducted analysis, we can state that the researchers' opinions regarding the status and purpose of philosophy of education are generally the same. This scientific discipline is considered as an independent branch of applied philosophy, which is designed to provide analysis, comprehension, clarification and criticism of educational theories, understanding of the most important problems of educational theory and practice and, above all, understanding of the nature of educational goals, objectives, educational content, teaching methods, etc. Attention is drawn to the dual focus of philosophy of education, which, on the one hand, is related to philosophy and, on the other hand, to educational practice.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

The dual nature of educational philosophy actualises questions about the nature of its relationship with educational practice. It is important to establish how exactly philosophical reflection can influence practical educational activity.

More often than not, scholars limit themselves to asserting that thoughtful and justified educational practice depends on philosophical awareness and understanding. Therefore, educational philosophy is essential to the proper management of educational activities (from classroom practice to curriculum decisions and policy development at the school, district, and state levels) and it will be beneficial not only to teachers, administrators, and policymakers at all levels, but also to students, parents, and citizens at large (Siegel et al., 2018).

It is accepted as an axiom that philosophy and education are closely and inseparably linked and that no separation between them is possible under any circumstances. The view of some scholars that philosophy deals only with abstract objects and concepts, while education deals with practical, concrete things and processes, and that there is no connection between them, is recognised as erroneous (Gingell & Winch, 1999).

However, specific ways and means of influencing the philosophy of education on educational activity, as a rule, are not considered.

An exception is *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Education* (Blake et al., 2003), which treats philosophy of education as a dynamic field designed not only to provide insight into the most important problems of educational theory and practice, but also to undertake serious philosophical work directly aimed at improving the practice of education.

Pádraig Hogan and Richard Smith (2003), co-authors of this volume, argue that there are two opposing views of the influence of educational philosophy on educational practice. They cite Plato as the exponent of the first view, who assumed that education is a practice in dire need of “guiding inspiration” from the most subtle and encompassing metaphysics (p. 167). A similar position is taken by such modern philosophers of education as Hirst and Peters (1998), John White (2012), and Allen Brent (1983), who attempt to single out various forms of knowledge as the basis for various learning activities that shape the mind of an educated person.

On this point, the observation by Siegel et al. (2018) that the existence of works on educational topics written by famous philosophers does not always indicate the influence of philosophy on practice, seems reasonable. Often their educational reflections have little or no philosophical content, illustrating the truth that philosophers do not always write philosophy. However, such works on educational practice are often seen as contributions to the philosophy of education.

The famous philosopher Richard Rorty drew the opposite conclusion, expressing doubts about the relevance of philosophy to education. In his opinion, educational practices at the level of primary and secondary education are not conditioned by philosophical ideas, but by the interests (truth) of the society to which children belong, and at the level of higher education by giving students the opportunity to “reinvent themselves” and to strive for “an open personal future for themselves and an open social future for their society” (Peters & Ghiraldelli, 2001, p. 73).

We should note that other researchers hold similar views. Robin Barrow and Ronald Woods (2015) have pointed out that theory and practice are often sharply opposed in educational contexts. According to them, philosophy as a type of theorising, unlike psychology and sociology, does not conduct empirical research in the form of surveys and experiments. For it, theorising consists of nothing more than a persistent attempt to “think things through,” with particular attention to the meanings of words as the basic means of thinking. Philosophical theorising cannot provide direct, detailed

guidelines to enable all teachers to control their children, to maintain discipline, nor can it provide a set of rules telling them what to do with young people who do not want to learn anything, who rebel, etc. At the same time the authors believe that teachers should use their reason and the power of critical thinking in the process of educational activity (Ibid.).

Hogan and Smith (2003) conclude that these deeply contrasting concepts, which provoke much contemplative debate, have one thing in common: they illustrate the widely held view that public education is not an autonomous practice, but acts as part of some higher mechanism or dominant worldview. In their judgment, philosophy of education is obliged to show that education is nevertheless a distinctive practice with its own integrity, and that this entitles it to a decided degree of autonomy. In doing so, philosophy of education must justify ways of identifying the most appropriate understanding of educational practice and developing its fruitful and grounded behaviour.

The authors believe that educational philosophy can efficiently influence educational practice, provided it is internalised by teachers. However, the study of this discipline in professional training and in the professional development system for teachers should not be limited to a narrow range of topics that are assumed to be relevant to practice. Since education as a human experience is an extremely complex phenomenon that is governed "not so much by provable regularity but by surprises, frustrations, ... coincidences", it is important that teachers be encouraged to develop their own philosophy of education and not simply subscribe to a set of ready-made ideas. Philosophy of education will be able to influence educational practice if it is the teacher's own, thoughtful, and assimilated philosophy. Only then will philosophy be able to influence the field of education, which is not a "datum", but something about which there are many points of view. In doing so, teachers need to acquire a degree of respect for other people's viewpoints and interpretations and learn how to legitimately challenge and try to change them (Ibid., pp. 178-179).

The proposed way of influencing educational philosophy on educational practice (through a teacher's assimilation of philosophical and pedagogical ideas during professional training and in the system of professional development) is possible, but it can hardly be recognised as efficient. The point is that future teachers studying at universities do not yet have practical experience, nor do they have the necessary motivation and need for philosophical reflection and, therefore, for assimilation of the philosophy of education. The need and motivation may appear in some practicing teachers, who are prone to abstract thinking and generalisations, while studying the course of philosophy of education during the period of their further training. But it is reasonable to assume that teachers' "philosophical credo" is formed not in the process of studying philosophy of education, but rather spontaneously and depends not only on pedagogical but also on their life experience, socio-cultural context, etc. Such a (commonplace) phi-

osophy is eclectic, contemplative, and unlikely to have a significant impact on educational practice.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND PEDAGOGY

The nature and extent of the influence of philosophy of education on educational practice, in our view, is determined by the special cognitive possibilities and means of this scientific discipline.

Philosophy of education is, first of all, a rational reflection on the phenomenon of education itself, and its task is to comprehend the ultimate foundations of the educational process. It is reflection at the highest level of generalisation that enables understanding of the most important problems of the theory and practice of education (reflection for the sake of understanding is the formula that briefly expresses the purpose of philosophy of education). In this connection, it is appropriate to recall Ludwig Wittgenstein's statement that philosophy „leaves everything as it is“, that is, philosophy does not change the world, it just makes the world clearer (Vinten, 2020, p. 113).

This means that philosophy of education is not an instrumental tool and cannot directly influence educational practice, since philosophical and pedagogical concepts appear only as certain structural paradigms. It is directly connected with the science of education – pedagogy, and through it – with educational practice.

In Western countries pedagogy is most often understood as a method of instruction or „teaching method“ in the broadest sense, which includes a set of pedagogical techniques: conditioning (using stimulus-response techniques); teaching; instruction (direct transmission of information); supervision (teaching under supervision and regulation); facilitation (providing opportunities and resources for learning); modeling (providing a student with an example to follow) (Gingell & Winch, 1999, pp. 231-234).

In Ukraine, pedagogy is considered as an independent science that studies the processes of education, training and personal development. It includes four sections: general fundamentals of pedagogy, theory of training, theory of upbringing, theory of educational management (Volkova, 2007).

Pedagogy positions itself, on the one hand, as a theoretical scientific discipline, developing educational theories, on the other hand, as a practice-oriented, pragmatic science, widely using the method of experiment. The task of the pedagogical experiment is to scientifically justify the transformation of the pedagogical process under precisely considered conditions (Fit-sula, 2002). The experiment involves special organisation of pedagogical activity in order to verify previously developed theoretical assumptions, or hypotheses.

Pedagogy, as a theoretical and applied science, has two sources: educational philosophy and educational practice. Pedagogy relies on philosophical statements and principles in developing theories, and directly

implements the theories developed into educational practice in an effort to transform it.

What is the nature of the relationship between educational philosophy and theoretical pedagogy?

We define the relationship between philosophy of education and pedagogy as an interaction, that is, the interdependent action of these disciplines on each other, which contributes to the mutual enrichment, building up and the fullest realisation of their special research capabilities. The leading side of the interaction, depending on the situation, can be both philosophy of education and pedagogy.

The interaction of educational philosophy and pedagogy does not mean that these branches of knowledge absorb or subordinate each other. Each preserves its independence and specificity, uses its own cognitive means. The interaction takes place in the problem field of pedagogy, but the philosophy of education, being included in the study of pedagogical problems, does not replace the latter at all, but is engaged in the study of the ultimate foundations of the educational process.

Educational scholars traditionally believe that philosophy provides pedagogical science with a certain methodological impetus that sets the direction and methods of pedagogical search. In other words, the mission of philosophy is seen only in giving a start to pedagogical research.

We believe that modern philosophy of education is designed to give not only a start, but also to cover the whole distance with pedagogy. With this approach, philosophy of education implements its functions at all stages of the pedagogical process. At the stage of justifying the goals of education, the worldview and axiological functions are realised; at the stage of implementing the goals and evaluating the results of educational activity, the methodological and critical functions are carried out.

The worldview function corresponds to the target component of the educational process and, by implementing it, the philosophy of education offers a common vision, understanding of the image of the world and man's place in it. The philosophical concept of man, the idea of his place in the learning process, the factors of personality formation serve as the basis for determining the goals of education. The ideas about the world and man are concretised in ideals, values, and value orientations. The axiological function of educational philosophy at the stage of goal-setting complements the worldview function and is aimed at substantiating the ideals and the system of values and value orientations.

The stage of implementation of the goals and evaluation of educational results corresponds to the methodological function of educational philosophy, which is realised as an understanding of the nature and purpose of knowledge and aimed at designing cognitive activity, and the critical function, which acts as a kind of philosophical reading of pedagogical reality, which provides overcoming errors, delusions and the emergence of new, more adequate knowledge.

The question of the functions of the philosophy of education and the ways to implement them seems extremely complex, debatable, and needs special consideration.

CONCLUSION

Philosophy of education is an independent branch of applied philosophy, which is designed to provide comprehension and understanding of the most important problems of educational theory and practice. On the one hand, it is connected with its parent discipline – philosophy, on the other hand – with the educational practice. The subject of discussion is the nature and ways of the influence of educational philosophy on educational practice. Opinions are expressed both about the unconditional connection of this scientific discipline with practical educational activity, and about the lack of significant influence of philosophical theorising on practice.

Philosophy of education cannot be seen as an instrumental tool, capable of directly influencing and transforming practice in accordance with the concepts developed. Its connection with practice is indirect, and another science of education, pedagogy, acts as an intermediary. The most productive form of interaction between philosophy of education and pedagogy is their interaction, which contributes to the mutual enrichment, building and the fullest realisation of their special research capabilities. Pedagogical science uses philosophical provisions and principles to develop educational theories which are verified by experiment and directly implemented in practice. Educational scholars are able to choose a particular philosophy of education depending on the research tasks they have to accomplish. Philosophy of education performs worldview and axiological functions at the stage of goal-setting, and methodological and critical functions at the stage of goal implementation and evaluation of educational activity results.

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