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**Clarifying the position of knowledge for understanding the deep meaning of the P.D.S. concept as a good promising for a new Teacher Education**

A basic foundation in teacher training, as in training in other fields such as medicine, is the integration of theoretical study and practical experience from the very beginning of training in the profession. Academic knowledge is considered to have priority while practical knowledge is considered secondary but necessary. Priority was therefore always given to academic courses and to the research that created them. As a result of this approach the didactic seminar, as a layer representing theoretical knowledge has become preferable in the necessary integration between it and between practical experiences. In recent years, with the increase in dissatisfaction for traditional teacher training, models have been suggested in which practical experience receives the same value as theoretical knowledge.

Since the P.D.S. concept strives toward correct integration of various types of knowledge, we will attempt to analyze the changes that have taken place in the standing of knowledge between the traditional training period and the training period based on the P.D.S. approach.

The purpose of this article is to cast doubt on the assumption that the philosophy being used as a base for the new training is completely clear.

In our opinion, this examination is essential for the continuing the correct application of this new training concept particularly because it is an especially complex approach. Avoiding this difficult examination will create vagueness that could cause us to swing like a pendulum between two extremes, a phenomenon characteristic of vague situations. The extremes are clear but they do not represent the reality. Professional training is intended for preparation to fulfill a task within the reality. In our view, such clarification could restore the strength of the position of academic knowledge without damaging other types of knowledge and without returning academic knowledge to the position of hegemony that it held in traditional training. Clarifying the position of knowledge will help us find the right balance between the various types of knowledge on the one hand, and on the other hand, it will sharpen the limitations of academic knowledge and clarify the extent of modesty needed by those who have the academic knowledge.

In an attempt to explain the necessity of practical experience as a central component of teacher training, Munby et al. (2001) distinguished between the knowledge **of** teaching and the knowledge **about** teaching. Knowledge “about” teaching can be learned theoretically. However, knowledge “of” teaching can only be learned through practical experience that permits the integration of learned academic knowledge “**about**” what happens during the teaching process in the schools with the knowledge “**of**” teaching in the schools. The explanation of knowledge “**of**” teaching can only be learned through practical experience is based on explanations suggested in the 1980s by Handal & Lauvas (1987) who used the definition of “practical theory” that the teacher develops during the course of teaching. This is special knowledge, whose main characteristic is the dynamics of building knowledge. This is a system of knowledge which regularly integrates theoretical knowledge and personal values, processed by personal experience and applied and fitted to suit different and constantly changing teaching methods.

In recent years a concept is being developed that it isn't enough to recognize the fact that there are many kinds of different knowledge that need a new kind of encounter; our grasp of the significance of the concept of knowledge must be clarified anew. For instance, Munby, Martin & Russel suggest putting aside the positivist grasp of knowledge, according to which knowledge encompasses absolute truth and objectivity, and adopting the constructivist concepts of knowledge, according to which knowledge is the product of a social structure dependent on bonds and relations.

The attempt to relate to constructivist concepts, relativism and other concepts expressing a different philosophy - contrary to the traditional philosophy as if they were understood and clear to those expressing them - has proved itself as incorrect. Many use these concepts as part of a new fashion without understanding their deep significance and their obligation concerning the necessity to adopt a new philosophy and also concerning the behavior demanded by a new philosophy.

The question that arises is how to relate to the positivist-quantitative renaissance as expressed in claims in the United States and in Europe for standardization of the educational system in general and teacher training by the new approach in particular? In other words, is not neo-positivism in such a contradictory position that it cannot be applied to a philosophy which is the basis of the educational

concept in a democratic era, and to teacher training according to a “professional development school” approach?

The question of the existence of a contradiction between the basic philosophical concept of education in a democratic society and of teacher training by means of the “professional development school” concept is also valid in relation to the ever-strengthening claim to increase quantitative research at the expense of qualitative research. The criticism of this is increasing due to the difficulty in deriving one absolute knowledge from which conclusions can be reached to help in policy and decision-making in the educational system that is based on a democratic philosophy. In other words, will the solution to problems arising in the application of the joint college-field approach create a pendulum process that will return the system to patterns of knowledge and methods accepted by academia, whose guiding philosophy is modernist-positivist? This is the same academic approach that was unable to supply a suitable answer to the educational system and to teacher training in a democratic era, where freedom, dynamism and openness, and therefore uncertainty, are its basic characteristics.

This is a particularly complex question, but the answers are also here. Standardization cannot be completely discarded, as it is a condition for preventing anarchy. This contradictory situation, the need for clear guidelines, but not “too clear,” representing “absolute truth” and recognized in relation to dynamism and flexibility, obligate those dealing in education (where democracy is its philosophy), to clarify the precepts and ideas that are the underlying basis of P.D.S.

As stated above, those who live by a democratic philosophy must clarify for themselves the concept of the knowledge they hold, and that guides the way they relate to the position to knowledge that we represented and the position of knowledge represented by those who have other philosophies, especially if we choose to create partnerships with schools based on a democratic concept, which, in our opinion, should be the basis for the partnership. In practice, the college-field encounter makes the school partner feel threatened when conflicts between the two kinds of knowledge are discovered (Huberman, 1999).

This stems from the constant tension existing between academic thought on the issue and the characteristics of educational training resulting from it, and between the direct encounter with “the field of education” (Chen, 1995). This tension can be seen as the basis for continuous and fruitful dialogue between academia and the field, whose

latest topic is “post-modernist conversation” (Aviram, 1996; Lavi, 2000). This is characterized by its imminent point of view, its judging procedure is validated by repetitious criticism, and it is open to many basic principles of description or explanation of reality. **In addition, the subject is establishing his own world as well as the significance of its existence** (Ophir, 1997). The claim of this article, then, is that the concept of the existence of absolute “truth” is intellectual fiction (Saguy, 2002), stemming from the existence of human existentialism, answering the human need deriving from anxiety about human existence (Azuz, 2000). Thus, radical change is needed in human thinking in general (Aviram, 1996; Azuz, 2003), and in the field of education and learning in particular, which has deviated from the post-modern philosophy of many “truths.” We must be aware that all learning and all educating for values are based on cultural relations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). That is, absolute and independent truth, reflecting longed-for certainty. This is a concept that expresses the recognition and the ability to give up the possibility of discovering the Meta-narrative that is behind a variety of phenomena. It expresses doubt at every claim of truth, and refuses “to adopt the elusion of a unified world” (Zivan, 2001).

This concept is the basis deep meaning of the freedom. (Ezuz, 2000) In the field of learning, the significant learning is acquiring in the space between theoretical learning that determines the dynamism of existence and between the chaotic and arbitrary existence which tends toward subjective-emotional random dimensions.

When getting to the root of the problem that occupies the educational system in a society planning to teach and to education in an era of freedom, it becomes clear, as noted above, that those dealing with education in general and with teacher training in particular, must see if they believe in a philosophy that is obligated to freedom and all it stands for. That is, that there are no absolute and final truths, all knowledge is tentative, they must be obligated to open and dynamic horizons, which is a necessary but insufficient condition. At the same time, and despite the logical deviations, there must be clear standards **agreed** upon by the participants in the dialogue, even if they are tentative. There is an obligation for logical and equal relating to types of academic and practical knowledge, and these should be under constant critical review. And above all, there should be caution against hierarchical positions of various types of knowledge through the giving of more validity to academic positivist-quantitative methods, which were disappointing, and preserving the obligation to uphold qualitative methods from the standpoint of various learning-

teaching processes. However, these methods make the conclusion-reaching and decision-making processes difficult. Caution should be taken in showing preference for reasonably easy to use types of knowledge that are probably not sufficient in an era of freedom.

In light of the approach presented above, Eraut (2002) suggests an alternative method for defining knowledge, in which the knowledgeable person would focus **not** on the truthfulness or on his ability to generalize, but on his serviceability. Personal knowledge, especially professional knowledge, can be generally defined as “content brought by people to actual situations, permitting them to think and to act.” This kind of knowledge is acquired through learning how to use the most available oral knowledge, making it compatible to the cultural of the society; this kind of knowledge comes from personal experience and reflection, and through mutual social ties. The process of learning the uses of public knowledge is bound in groups that are acquired in one context, generally in the context of educational and formal frameworks, very different from the process that takes place in the context of practical use; this is a very complex transfer as it demands great understanding of situations in a new context, and the choice of transfer of knowledge bound in groups that will suit every situation. This process also involves other types of knowledge to which oral knowledge must be integrated. This explains the gap between theory and practice, a gap that is kept in mind when determining the values of professional training programs, as well as the frequent encounter with problems of application when there is **a** change in policy and in educational initiatives.

Even when ideas are evaluated and understood on paper, additional study is necessary to make them usable in practical situations. This studying is done mainly in the work place (Eraut, 2003).

But this type of learning includes the danger that the practical circumstances, which are more complex and dynamic than any theoretical knowledge may create a kind of intuitive learning. It would give up the advantages that academic learning can, in any event, recommend for learning in the field. Thus, Eraut (2003) suggests making sure to include the deliberative dimension in the learning process. As a necessary condition, this dimension demands "thinking time during doing time". But in addition, it includes additional dimensions such as analysis and synthesis, meta-cognition and integration of outside knowledge, that is, knowledge acquired through traditional academic methods.

