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Analytic Paper 1 Regarding Dewey's

The Child and The Curriculum (1902) and *Experience and Education* (1938)

What is Dewey's concept of experience as it relates to education?

In his essay, *The Child and The Curriculum* (1902), Dewey discusses experience, both in the child (immature) and expert (mature), as being composed of and being informed by logical and psychological influences. These two components are introduced on page 343 of the essay, whose space is dedicated to introducing the opposing sects of the *child* and the *curriculum*, and though Dewey articulates the expert's experience's tendency to be weighted in favor of logical influences (pg. 341), it is imperative to note that, to him, both the logical and psychological are inseparable regarding experience, each informing and being informed by the other. [This sentence is clear and well-constructed, but a little long.] Equally important as the recognition that these two components reside in experience is to understand that different levels of experience (immature or mature) may exhibit more or less of either logical or psychological aspects. [Good discussion. Better if you explain what Dewey's specific meanings for "logical" and "psychological" were. The former in particular did not mean "formal logic."]

In *Experience and Education* (1938). Dewey also discussed Agreeableness and Disagreeableness is also discussed as an initial influence on later experiences. [Two features or one; subject-verb agreement] Agreeableness, is presented in terms of how it is challenging for educators- [semicolon] Dewey describes a role of educators which is to set up experiences that do not repel students but rather engage them. To Dewey, allowing for enjoyable experiences

assists in increasing desirable experiences later (Dewey, 1938. Chapter 2). [Good to introduce these two terms, but better if you described the meaning of at least one in own terms, even as “agreeableness” sounds self-defining.] Dewey also characterizes experience as comprised of two intertwined components, *continuity and interaction*. [You move quickly from agreeableness/disagreeableness to continuity and interaction. What is the connection between the two?]

Chapter 3 of the book, “Criteria of Experience” discusses continuity being the notion that every experience a person has will inform or has been informed by future or previous experiences. [Not quite, a present experience cannot be informed by an experience that has not happened yet. Present experience shapes/influences future experience.] Dewey acknowledges that *continuity* itself is a ~~universally experienced~~ *universal* aspect of experience (page 13 on e-copy), and continues to describe *continuity* as discriminatory in the sense that each individual’s growth will establish unique paths, constructed of unique combinations of experience. [Yes, but “discriminatory” here has unfortunate connotations. Dewey’s idea was that continuity applied to all experience; it did not contribute to understanding what made experience educative.]

Also discussed as a ~~criteria~~ *criterion* of experience, Dewey discusses *interaction* as one’s present experience being an agent of his/her interaction between the present situation and previous experience. This aspect of experience signifies the importance of considering experience in terms of what has happened in the past, how the present situation and previous situations contribute to the present experience, and how the present experience will influence/guide future experiences in the future. [I think that you need to look back at “interaction,” you are stating here continuity (well). Interaction concerns the “dialogue” between the internal and external conditions of experience (that taken together constitute “the situation”).]

[This section does well in terms of the main subconstructs. The one that is missing (and harder to see in Dewey's E&E discussion is "growth." As Dewey's discussion of the burglar case indicates, not all experience leads to growth that is productive for all. He then goes to locate "educative experience" as a kind of experience that leads to productive growth.]

What features of experience make them educative

Both *The Child and The Curriculum* and *Experience and Education*, in some way, directly or indirectly, discuss Dewey's conceptualization(s) of what makes experience educative. C&C, as a whole, is concerned with presenting and critiquing the perspectives of subject-centered and student-centered education, [Your sentence is too long; chop it here.] offering a brief resolution regarding the need to that considers the child as an entity whose educational experience different from that of the mature adult, thus, requiring, not the absence of guidance, but guidance that considers experience from the perspective of the child. [True, but you only capture one side of Dewey's argument; he also argues that the child's experience is like the adult's in its fundamental nature. So there is no fundamental separation to resolve.] The phenomenon of psychologizing is discussed by Dewey as the process of transforming subject-matter back into the experience of from it has been abstracted. [Yes, but what does that mean?] In C&C, the necessity for us (concerned with educational theory) to consider educative processes in terms of adult experience and subject content as interactive and considerate of the immature, personal nature of the child's experience. Psychologizing, to my best understanding, attempts to reinstate material into the child's experience in a manner that emulates the experience of which the subject was first developed extrapolated. [Yes! Very well stated. But also, note how abstract that characterization is. It may be right in principle, but where does it lead in terms of specifics?] In other words, provide the child the opportunity to experience the subject in similar nature of

which it was originally experienced. Through this, the child will ~~discriminate this~~ build from his or her previous experience and *grow*- a term used by Dewey to characterize an educative experience (E&E, page 13 e-copy). [Good characterization of “psychologizing.”]

Experience and Education is more explicit in its conceptualization of what makes an experience educative. A succinct statement of Dewey’s understanding of educative experiences is that they are those ~~of~~ in which the student experiences growth- [use a dash, not a hyphen] growth, contingent on the individual’s discrimination of experiences- experience, characterized by *continuity and interaction*. [Good. Now you have the three essential elements (continuity, interaction, and growth). But “growth” requires more than difference from previous experience.] To further illustrate his definition of educative, Dewey also discusses the notion that experience does not equal growth and that experience can serve to be *miseducative* if it inhibits later experiences. [Good. Now clarify what “miseducative” means.] Equally significant as Dewey’s conceptualization of what makes experience educative is his acknowledgement that experiences are not comprised of universal value, meaning that an experience that is educative (i.e., leads to growth) to one individual may not be realized to the same educational level (less growth or inhibition of future experiences(miseducative)) to another. [Yes, but if we take this point seriously, it could lead to the conclusion that Dewey was saying that teaching a classroom of students was impossible. What that his message?]

Do you think Dewey’s views changed in fundamental ways from C&C to E&E or basically remained the same? State your position and argue for it

Differences between *The Child and The Curriculum* and *Experience and Education* do not appear indicative of changes in Dewey’s fundamental beliefs about the topics situated; [break the sentence here. Good statement of your thesis (first clause); it has more effect as a single

sentence.] C&C is concerned with establishing [critiquing?] the binary containing subject-centered and student-centered schools of thought [comma] while E&E is concerned with the theory of experience (first 3 chapters) and schools specifically. This is not to assume Dewey did not undergo changes fundamentally to his philosophical beliefs regarding education in the time between C&C and E&E, but based on each of the pieces of writing, exclusively, discrimination of beliefs by Dewey should not be assumed. [OK. Fair point. But do you see any evidence that any of his “fundamental beliefs” changed?]

Discussing Dewey’s conceptualization of *educative* experiences, C&C does not seem to explicitly define what constitutes an experience to be educative, but the necessary interaction between the child’s development and the external world around him is discussed as Dewey elaborates on his resolution between traditional education and new education (page 18 on e-copy). In this writing (C&C), the child’s development is described as the experience created via the child’s mind while the external world includes the educational environments in which the child is to be guided into. Dewey states that the child cannot develop something from nothing, noting the necessity for guidance from external stimuli (school and teachers). [Good. Even better if you added a sentence (relative to “something from nothing” to the effect that simply leaving the child to her own interest was not sufficient. Her interests should be developed productively.] E&E (chapter 3) more explicitly states that experience contains the components of *continuity* and *interaction*. As mentioned, each piece of writing discusses different aspects of experience, but these differences more reinforce each other’s premises than contradict. This point is illustrated through the concept of *interaction*-described in E&E as the notion that present experience is a function of previous experience and present situation. This understanding draws parallel with what is stated regarding the nature of the child’s development and influences from external

stimuli 36 years earlier in C&C. [I agree, though it is Dewey actual notion of interaction that best establishes the similarity in argument between the two texts.]

The notion of necessary guidance is evident in E&E as Dewey postulates that guidance by the teacher to assist the student in exercising his or her intelligence aids in freedom-freedom to find new experiences. C&C also discusses [the teacher's] guidance as an application to allow *freedom to* (page 17 e-copy), agreeing with the notions drawn by E&E. In both cases, Dewey also makes clear to not mistake *freedom from* with *freedom to* as the former arises from the absence of guidance yet is not indicative, rather counterproductive to, the latter which refers to the opening of exploration of future experiences for the child. [Well-said, Aric. The role of the teacher is another place where you could draw strong parallels between his position in the two texts.]

Dewey talks about educative *experience* differently in C&C and E&E [comma] but they seem to hold the same fundamental latency. [“meaning” better than “latency”?] C&C talks about educative processes are underdeveloped and immature beings while adult experience represents social aims meaning, and values that incarnate the mature experience (page 22). [This sentence needs help.] Eand E talks about educative as growth (also discussed in cand c) that comes from distinction of experience from continuity and interaction. Continuity and interaction are not mentioned in Cand C but dewey does mention a constant interaction of immature educative processes and mature adult experiences as comprising the freest essence of educational theory [Ideas here are clear and well-expressed, but it looks like you did not review and correct the form of these last two sentences.]

Last, take on the role of a classroom teacher; feel free to specify a grade level and/or subject. How is Dewey’s educational philosophy that centers on his notion of educative

experience useful in understanding and carrying out classroom teaching. What important issues does it leave unaddressed? [To save space, Aric, next time use a shorter header. I will get it.]

C&C's binary concerns **the opposition of student-centered** (child) ~~and~~ **versus subject-centered** (curriculum) perspectives ~~regarding educational philosophy~~. From Dewey's analysis of both the child and curriculum as well as his thoughts regarding the resolution of the two schools of thought, I may extrapolate useful notions to translate **his principles** into practice to improve the not explicitly defined but relevant, experience, of the student. As discussed on page 10 of the e-copy, I see the teacher requiring adequate training in both content knowledge and ability to psychologize subject matter to students, not only allowing but affording them future experiences. [Well-said. Dewey would agree (I am sure).]

Dewey **contrasts** ~~talks of the~~ **scientists** and **teachers** on page 23 (e-copy) of C&C, [**Break your sentence here**] ~~and the~~ **The** teacher must realize their role's differentiation from that of the scientist who perceives subject matter as self contained. Teachers should break down the compartmentalization **between school subjects** that draws lines of organization which lacks consideration of individual experience and manifests school subjects into self-**contained** matter. In line with Dewey's discussion of how the teacher perceives experience, it is the responsibility of myself, as an educator, to abstract science in a way that develops present experience and guides future opportunities for experience-guidance not to frame a general path, stripped of freedom, rather, guidance to allow *freedom to explore and* investigate experiences. [Very well-stated, Aric!]

E&E's conceptualization of experience in terms of *continuity* and *interaction* is useful in guiding principles of freedom and discipline regarding the role of the teacher in the student and

school experience. Continuity works in conjunction with the map analogy mentioned in C&C, acknowledging the novel paths of experience each student may follow while the teacher supports such phenomenon by that **development via** guidance allowing for *freedom to*. Inhibition is also discussed as teachers should influence the student's ideas of inhibition, not as a means to establish rigidity and harshness [sp], criticized for opposing the democratic ideal discussed in chapters 2 and 3 of E&E, but to allow for a sense of freedom while maintaining guidance. [Yes. Better if you explain Dewey's idea that inhibition of impulse is a requirement for thinking to begin to take place.] This feeling of ~~choice~~ **complete openness** to pursue **immediate** interests is not indicative of educative experience as previously discussed, **as** experience requires discrimination of the present situation and future expectations in relation to previous experience. Removing guidance, in this sense, limits freedom. Providing too much guidance in a manner which resembles traditional education-compartmentalization of subject matter and a disregard for continuity and interaction also limits *freedom to*. [Good.] As proposed by Dewey in both C&C and E&E, the binaries of the child vs the curriculum and traditional education vs progressive education must be reconciled, not by a winner, but by acknowledgement of collaboration. ["Collaboration" suggests two parties. How are they?] I do not see this as compromise, as efforts to break down notions of radical and liberal animosity regarding education policy in both dichotomies does not *compromise* the positivity and optimism of the promise of better understanding the function of experience in relation to practice. [A bit abstract]

[Overall, in this section, I see you returning the role of teacher in each text and that is a good thing. But you did not really take on the issue of its limitations. You do show whether a strong understanding of the role of productive guidance in both texts.]

E-copy of The Child and The Curriculum:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/29259/29259-h/29259-h.htm>

A small point: Start the process of listing references under the header “References” (centered in the page) and using APA guidelines.

Aric,

Though your written expression did not always support your ideas, you have shown clear understanding of most all of Dewey’s key ideas, expressed in both texts. I agree with your assessment that his fundamental ideas did not change much from one text to the other, and you argue pretty well for that position. You have clearly grasped the distinction between “freedom from” and “freedom to” and how that distinction applies to Dewey’s sense of educative experience. On the downside, you missed his notion of interaction; it is related to continuity but distinct from it. You also don’t discuss Dewey’s idea of the progressive organization of experience in E&E and its relationship to “psychologizing the subject.”

In terms of written expression, your mechanics were mostly good, but you did include long sentences that should have been two. Also, in the beginning of the paper, you did more mentioning of key terms than you did explaining their meaning. You express conceptual relationships well, but sometimes your text is too abstract (even for me). I suggest that you consider using examples to ground your argument for the reader.

Good start!

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