

Philosophy of Education
For the students of
**Teaching English as a Foreign
Language (TEFL)**

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Table of Contents

Preface.....	7
Introduction.....	9
Section I.....	11
Introduction to Section I.....	13
Philosophy.....	15
Education.....	25
A summary of Section I.....	34
Section II.....	35
Introduction to Section II.....	37
Idealism.....	39
Plato.....	47
Realism.....	55
Aristotle.....	65
Naturalism.....	73
Jean Jacques Rousseau.....	83
Pragmatism.....	91
John Dewey.....	101
Existentialism.....	109
Humanism.....	119

Marxism, Socialism, Communism, and	127
Fascism.....	127
Secularism	135
A summary of Section II.....	140
Section III	143
Introduction to Section III.....	145
Islamic Philosophy of Education.....	147
Abu Ali Sina (Avicenna).....	159
Ibn Khaldūn.....	167
Farabi.....	167
Khwaja Nasir al-Din Tusi.....	173
Ghazzali.....	173
A summary of Section III.....	178
References:	179

Preface

History of education is as long as human beings. From the very primitive forms of life of the cavemen to the so-called industrialized societies of contemporary era, man has always been in pursuit of finding effective ways of transferring his knowledge and skills to his next generation. Various forms of such an attempt are called education and vary based on the medium of instruction, place and method of education, and reasons behind the process itself. The reasons behind education that determine its necessity as well as requirements, detailed specifications of educational curriculum, materials, roles of teachers and learners, and roles of schools as educational institutions are what constitute philosophy of education. Therefore, it seems fair to claim that philosophy of education is as old as education itself.

Throughout history many independent thinkers devoted time and cognitive contemplation to how best to overcome insufficiencies they observed in educational systems of their times. Moreover, nearly all ideologies, whether being religious, social, economic, or political, propagated their own version of educational standards and advertised it as the ultimate solution to deficiencies of the previous schools. Examples of these attempts are visible from idealism and realism in the ancient Greece to communism and humanism in the 20th century. The challenge of education and philosophy of education still remains unsolved.

The current book is an attempt to introduce main educational philosophies of all times, both western and Islamic. Each philosophical school is introduced and then its educational viewpoints are discussed in details. Moreover, great educational philosophers of the west and Islamic world are introduced throughout the book.

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Introduction

The aim of this book is to familiarize students of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) with philosophy of education and its evolution in different philosophical schools throughout history. The book can be utilized by both students as well as teachers in B.A. degree and M.A. courses for students of TEFL, and English teacher training courses. The book consists of three sections and 18 chapters. Section I of the book is aimed at familiarizing students with the concepts of philosophy and education, their sub-branches, and their interrelations. It consists of two chapters, philosophy and education. The educational objective of Section II is to introduce students with western philosophy of education and western philosophers. Its chapters include Idealism; Plato; Realism; Aristotle; Naturalism; Rousseau; Pragmatism; Dewey; Existentialism; Humanism; Marxism, Socialism, Communism, and Fascism; and Secularism. Section III of the book is devoted to Islamic philosophy of education and Islamic philosophers. It includes four chapters: Islamic philosophy of education, Abu Ali Sina, Farabi & Ibn Khaldun, and Tusi & Ghazali.

Each chapter begins with educational objectives so that students can have an understanding of them in advance. The chapters generally include an introduction of the title of chapter (ex. Philosophy, Humanism, ...), educational viewpoints, roles of teachers and learners, educational curriculum, and role of school. In the end of the chapters, students are presented with questions for exercises which are based on what they have studied in the chapter. In addition, students are required to answer

questions in Critical Thinking section where they need to think critically about what they studied and relate it to their understanding, experiences, or viewpoints.

I acknowledge my gratitude to all my family members who provided me with great encouragement throughout the whole process, especially that of my wife. My thanks should also go to my dear friend Mr Amir Shahraki who assisted me with his insightful comments.

Hossein Ali Manzouri

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