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[ijirset@gmail.com](mailto:ijirset@gmail.com)

[www.ijirset.com](http://www.ijirset.com)



# Traditional and Progressive Pedagogical Approaches in Primary Education

Turdali Muxtaraliyevich Sultanov<sup>1</sup>

Lecturer at Chirchik State Pedagogical Institute in Tashkent Region, Chirchik, Uzbekistan.<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The article discusses the importance of effective pedagogical approach of teaching in primary education. Two different approaches are analyzed and presented in the article. Also, the key differences between them as well as their advantages and disadvantages are identified throughout the article with valid examples and evidences.

**Key words:** primary education, teaching approaches, pedagogical methods, primary school children, progressive approach to teaching, traditional approach to teaching, importance of effective teaching, teaching.

## Introduction

In recent years, primary education has been the focus of significant scrutiny and controversy. Literacy and numeracy foundations developed in primary schools are seen as crucial requirements for later success both within the educational system and outside of it in the workplace. As a result, it's not unexpected that people have strong opinions on how young children should be educated throughout the crucial primary years. Primary school arguments are frequently couched in broad terms, such as those who favor 'traditional' or 'formal' ways to teaching versus those who prefer 'progressive' or 'casual' techniques. Of course, all sides in the major discussion profess to have the best interests of children at heart and to know how to teach children in a way that fosters their learning.

No one possesses the golden key to learning in primary school, which is a truth that must be confronted. After all, if we had relatively solid and verifiable knowledge about how children learn in response to the instruction we provide, it would go a great way toward putting an end to the dispute over how we should educate. In certain ways, it's terrible (in that it highlights how muddy the waters are) that children can be put to highly didactic baby schools and learn because of or despite what is provided to them in the name of education, yet their peers can attend child-centered schools and still learn. The dispute cannot be readily resolved, and attempts to do so often lead to questions like "What do we mean by learning?" or "What is the purpose of education?" One way to address the topic of how to best educate children throughout the early years is to combine the strengths of both "progressive/child-centered" and "traditional/subject-centered" approaches. In actuality, elementary schools are more likely to need to implement solutions that emphasize either "formal" or "informal" ways.

One essential take-away from the debate over elementary education is that educational research and practice are not dispassionate or uninterested endeavors. Values and beliefs guide all attempts to analyze teaching and learning, make policy and practice recommendations, and engage in teaching. These can be subtle and taken for granted, or they can be overt and based on careful consideration. Our worries about issues like school-society relationships, curriculum content, and classroom layout are influenced by our values and experiences, as well as what we believe education is for and about. Politicians, pundits, parents, employers, educationists, and anyone with a legitimate and vested interest in children's education are all keenly interested in classroom teaching and learning. Interest groups represent a wide range of political, ideological, and educational viewpoints, and any proposals for classroom practice can be backed up by a reference to some authority or body of information, thanks to the vast corpus of literature and research evidence addressing educational issues in all their forms. The foundations for policy suggestions and practice recommendations may include appeals to theory, research findings, rational reasoning, experience, common sense, or the free market's operation. Since what is appealed to is already saturated with beliefs and assumptions, they do not impose an element of objectivity or particular authority upon the proposers or their suggestions. Many discussions regarding educational practice have the flaw of commentators making authoritative and confident judgments while leaving it up to the audience to tease out the assumptions that have inspired the analysis and proposals. It is preferable to state my perspective and the educational ideals on which this book is founded right from the start.

In the classroom, teaching and learning should be centered on the teacher. The acknowledgment that the teacher knows more than her students and that her responsibility is to pass on knowledge, insight, and skills that they previously lacked is embodied in this concept of teaching. The teacher is the most important person in the classroom since he or she is in charge of the children's education. A consequence is that anyone with a legitimate interest in education should respect the authority and knowledge of the teacher in concerns of classroom learning. Teachers should not be considered as passive receivers of lay opinion or political doctrine if society lays a special weight on



them to be responsible for children's learning. Teachers should indeed be actively implicated in the formation of professional knowledge, and because they are responsible for the education of children, they should be equal participants in any debates about classroom behavior.

### **Progressive approach**

Progressive learning is an educational movement that focuses on teaching students how to think rather than memorizing facts. Children are pushed to learn information at the price of understanding what is being taught in traditional education. For example, a learner may be able to enumerate the many elements of a cell without fully comprehending how it works. Integrated curricula are used in progressive learning to allow students to approach topics and content from many viewpoints, enhancing their conceptual understanding of the subject.

The way of education by doing is at the core of progressive education. Experiential learning is a notion that helps students to learn by actively participating in activities and projects. Students can better understand a subject and its implications by applying what they've learned to real-life settings. This also helps them acquire the abilities they'll need as adults. After all, the workplace is a collaborative setting that necessitates teamwork, critical thinking, creativity, and independence. Progressive learning enables students to reflect on their learning, pursue their own questions, and collaborate with peers and teachers, allowing them to improve their problem-solving, communication, and investigation abilities.

Teachers do not stand in front of the class and lecture, which is one of the ways our progressive education classrooms differ from traditional methods. Instead, we use the Harkness Method, in which teachers sit at a round table with students and act as a facilitator, interacting with them and encouraging them to think about and question the world around them. Rather than just disseminating material, our teachers engage pupils in conversation, creating a dynamic and engaging learning atmosphere that fosters a lifetime love of learning.

### **Traditional approach**

Traditional teaching methods, usually referred to as conventional teaching methods, are still widely employed in schools. Teachers encourage students to repeat and memorize the topic of study and what they teach in the classroom in traditional teaching methods, and pupils recite the lesson one by one when their turn comes. Other pupils, aside from those who are reciting, listen and wait for their turn. Students complete the entire class in this manner. The pupils are then asked to memorize the lesson, and teachers will assign an assignment, write a test, or give an oral test based on this recitation.

Traditional teaching methods are used in the classroom in such a way that students are rewarded for their efforts in the classroom during specific subject periods. In the classroom, rules and regulations are implemented in such a way that pupils' behavior is controlled. These norms and regulations were taken from long-standing conventions that schools had effectively implemented for many years. Teachers are in charge of passing on knowledge and upholding the school's norms of conduct.

### **How is the modern teaching method different from traditional teaching methods?**

The education system has been transforming and is introducing new methods of teaching which have a completely different angle and approach towards learning and teaching. In modern teaching methods, teachers teach every student on a different level and do not consider everyone one. They assume all students are different and apply different educational practices on them individually. They consider the needs of every student and deliver accordingly. Unlike old education, progressive teaching methods are based on activity, questioning, explaining, demonstrating and using collaboration techniques.

Spaced learning modern teaching methods is one such method which enables students to switch quickly from learning to activities. For instance, if a teacher is teaching through PowerPoint presentations for 10 minutes to students in the classroom then they have a sport time for at least 10 minutes. The technique helps in getting better grades and it actually works for students as it makes students' minds active. Spaced learning is more effective than traditional methods of teaching. Activity helps the brain cells to make connections which make students remember better.

### **Differences between traditional and progressive approach to learning and teaching in primary education:**

1. Critical thinking is often taught with intensive content acquisition in traditional schools. Developmental/progressive schools place a greater emphasis on the learning experience than on detailed material acquisition. Teachers are curious about what pupils in traditional schools know. Developmental/progressive schools are interested in hearing from students.

2. Project-based learning is more common in developmental/progressive schools' curricula, where students work in groups on projects that can last a week or longer.



3. Homework, tests, and quizzes are more common in traditional schools. Textbooks are used more frequently in these schools than in developmental/progressive schools.

4. There are significant differences in the report cards and grading systems. For elementary school, narrative written reports are commonly used in developmental/progressive schools. Grades and/or numerical evaluation methods are used in traditional schools.

5. In traditional schools, academic accomplishment is lauded. Honor roll announcements are made, and students discuss their grades. Individual academic accomplishment is not emphasized as much in developmental/progressive institutions.

To stimulate learning, progressive primary schools use play-based projects. Student-led initiatives (or projects designed with student input) are much more widespread in progressive schools. Teachers provide lesson plans and projects for students to work on in traditional schools.

Formal activities such as Cotillion are emphasized in traditional elementary and middle schools. Manners and correct greetings are highly valued.

Standardized testing is less important in progressive schools. Progressive schools' curricula aren't designed to prepare students for standardized testing. Some progressive institutions, on the other hand, may provide practice examinations to help students prepare for these exams.

Through writing contests, math contests, valedictorian, and auditions for sports teams, traditional schools encourage amicable one-on-one competition among children. In conventional schools, students and parents can examine the outcomes of competitions and honor rolls.

Individual recognition is rarely given in progressive schools since they prefer to recognize the accomplishments of the entire primary school class or grade.

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