RESEARCH ARTICLE

Modern and Postmodern Models in Education: A Critical Evaluation

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Abstract

This article offers a philosophical analysis of two foundational paradigms that have gained increasing prominence in contemporary educational discourse: the modern and postmodern models of education. The modern paradigm is rooted in an objective conception of reality and the pursuit of universal knowledge. It is characterized by a teacher-centered approach in which knowledge is viewed as a fixed entity to be transmitted to students. In contrast, the postmodern paradigm adopts a constructivist and participatory framework, emphasizing that knowledge is shaped by subjectivity, context, and socio-cultural influences. Within this model, learning is not regarded as the transfer of static information, but as a dynamic process of meaning-making through dialogue and interaction.

This study undertakes a comparative examination of the epistemological and ontological foundations of both paradigms, with particular attention to their treatment of key educational concepts, including knowledge, learning, socialization, curriculum, assessment, and authority. While the modern model often reflects a hierarchical teacher-student dynamic, the postmodern approach prioritizes individuality, collaboration, and creativity. As such, postmodernism represents not only a methodological shift but also a deeper ethical and ontological reconfiguration of how knowledge and learning are conceptualized.

Drawing on existing comparative literature, the article critically explores the underlying assumptions, internal coherence, and practical implications of each paradigm, ultimately shedding light on the influence of postmodern thought in the field of educational philosophy.

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Introduction

Contemporary educational literature increasingly engages with two foundational paradigms that shape the architecture of education systems: the modern and the postmodern models. These paradigms are grounded in distinct epistemological and ontological assumptions, each proposing a different vision for the purpose and process of education.

The **modern paradigm** is rooted in the intellectual legacy of Enlightenment rationalism, emphasizing reason, science, objectivity, and universal truth. Pedagogically, it aligns with behaviorist and objectivist models, viewing knowledge as existing independently of the learner. In this view, education is a process of transmitting fixed, authoritative knowledge from teacher to student, where the teacher is the epistemic authority and the student a passive recipient. This model reflects a representationalist epistemology, assuming that reality is mind-independent and knowable through objective means.

In contrast, the **postmodern paradigm** challenges the foundational assumptions of modernity. Drawing on phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical theory, and post-structuralism, it embraces a constructivist view of knowledge as contextual, subjective, and socially mediated. Knowledge here is not transmitted but co-constructed, emerging through dialogue, participation, and critical reflection. Rather than positioning education as the delivery of static content, this model conceives learning as an open-ended, dynamic, and dialogical process.

While both paradigms encompass diverse sub-variants, each maintains an internally coherent philosophical orientation. The modern model privileges stability, certainty, and universality in knowledge, whereas the postmodern model foregrounds plurality, uncertainty, and learner agency. The shift from modern to postmodern approaches thus signifies more than a methodological divergence—it represents a deeper rethinking of the nature of knowledge, learning, and subjectivity itself.

In summary, the modern paradigm emphasizes transmission and objectivity; the postmodern paradigm promotes construction and contingency. Understanding this dichotomy is essential for critically evaluating contemporary educational theory and practice.

In general discourse, the modern model is typically represented by the figure of the authoritative teacher and the compliant student, ready to absorb predefined knowledge. The postmodern model, by contrast, is described through concepts such as co-construction of meaning, collaboration, flexibility, respect for individuality, and creativity. As such, this model entails a far more complex and multilayered philosophical foundation than is often assumed, challenging educators to rethink the very aims and processes of teaching and learning in a pluralistic and uncertain world.[1]

In this article, our aim is to philosophically analyze and critically engage with two dominant paradigms in contemporary educational discourse—conceptualized here under the frameworks of the modern model and the postmodern model. Specifically, we seek to examine how these paradigms approach foundational concepts in educational theory and practice, such as knowledge, learning, socialization, curriculum, assessment, and authority/power. Through this critical

[1] See Bünyamin Yurdakul, "Yapılandırmacılık" (Constructivism), in *Eğitimde Yeni Yönelimler* (New Trends in Education) içinde, ed.: Özcan Demirel, Ankara. PegemA Yayıncılık, 2005, pp. 39-58; Richard S. Prawat "Constructivisms, modern and postmodern", *Educational Psychologist*, 31:3-4, 1996, pp. 215-225; Manisha Jaiswal et al., "Exploring the Impact of Modernism and Postmodernism Ideologies on Humanities Education: A Case Study of Students Perspectives", *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 29 (2), 2023, pp.50–64; Gert J. J Biesta, and Tatto Marek "The Role of Education in the Age of Postmodernity." *Educational Theory,* 54, no. 1 (2004), pp.1–10; Ke Shi, "Contrasting Behaviorist and Constructivist Perspectives on Learning for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders", *Psychology Research and Practice*, Vol. 1(1), 2022,:pp. 43-52.

evaluation, we intend not only to delineate the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of these two models but also to trace the implications and manifestations of postmodern thought within the field of education. Before embarking on the main discussion, it will be beneficial to briefly review selected comparative frameworks from the existing literature that address the contrast between modern and postmodern approaches. Engaging with these comparisons will help illuminate the presuppositions, internal logics, and practical implications of each paradigm, thereby providing a conceptual scaffolding for the deeper philosophical analysis that follows. This preliminary step also enables a clearer situating of both models within the broader landscape of educational philosophy.

Modern and Postmodern Models in Education

Within educational discourse, the distinction between the modern model—commonly understood as an extension of behaviorism and positivist epistemology—and the postmodern model, which encompasses post-positivism, process-oriented approaches, constructivism, and subjectivism, is frequently foregrounded through a series of binary comparisons. These two paradigms are often situated at opposing poles, reflecting fundamentally different ontological and epistemological commitments. To cultivate critical awareness of these oppositional frameworks, it is useful to examine two illustrative comparisons frequently cited in the literature. The first of these is proposed by David H. Jonassen, who articulates the modern–postmodern dichotomy through the conceptual opposition between objectivism and constructivism. David H. Jonassen establishes a critical distance from objectivist paradigms by aligning them closely with positivist epistemology. In contrast, he positions constructivism as the epistemological counterpoint to objectivism, and does so in a decidedly affirmative tone. Through this framing, he offers a comparative schema that juxtaposes the respective conceptions of knowledge and learning inherent in each model[2].

Comparison of Objectivism and Constructivism in Epistemological Terms

Category	Objectivism	Constructivism
Reality	Exists independently of the knower (the "real world") Structured by entities, properties, and relations Structure can be objectively modeled	Constructed by the knower Dependent on human cognition and interpretation Structure arises from lived experience and symbolic meaning-making
Mind	Symbol processor Mirror of nature Abstract machine for symbol manipulation	Symbol builder Interpreter of experience Constructs reality through conceptual systems
Thought	Disembodied and abstract Governed by external reality Reflects and mirrors reality Algorithmic and atomistic (reducible to components) Comparable to machine logic	Embodied and imaginative More than representation—enables abstraction and meaning-making Gestalt-oriented Constructs cognitive models Surpasses machine capabilities
Meaning	Corresponds to fixed entities and categories in the external world Independent of the organism's understanding	Emerges from individual understanding Dependent on context and interpretation Constructed internally
Symbols	Representations of external reality Internalized "building blocks" of the objective world	Tools for constructing and interpreting reality Represent internal conceptual structures

[2] David H. Jonassen, "Objectivism versus Constructivism: Do We Need a New Philosophical Paradigm?", *Educational Technology Research and Development*, Vol. 39, No. 3,1991, pp. 5-14.

A comparable comparison is found in "Learning and Teaching" (Öğrenme ve Öğretme), a seminal work by Yüksel Özden. Authored with the explicit aim of demonstrating the necessity of restructuring the Turkish educational system—and identifying the foundational principles that ought to guide this restructuring—Özden situates behaviorism within the epistemological framework of positivism, while associating constructivism with the broader philosophical currents of postmodernism. Within this framework, Özden contrasts the two paradigms across several dimensions: their respective conceptions of reality and knowledge; their theoretical orientations toward learning and the learning–teaching process; their reflections in curriculum design; and their underlying assumptions about assessment and evaluation. The comparative schema he proposes is as follows[3]:

Positivism	Post-positivism
Order and uniformity prevail in the universe.	Chaos and plurality prevail in the universe.
The scientific process is evolutionary.	The scientific process is revolutionary.
The understanding of objective reality prevails.	The understanding of subjective reality prevails.
The future is predictable.	The future is unpredictable.
Knowledge is discovered.	Knowledge is created.
Knowledge is independent of the historical and social processes in which it is produced.	Knowledge bears the traces of the historical and social processes in which it is produced.
Knowledge is certain, and the understanding of a single truth prevails.	Knowledge is provisional, and a pluralistic understanding prevails.
Emphasis is placed on universal laws.	Emphasis is placed on context-specific findings.
Knowledge is acquired for future use.	Knowledge is acquired to generate new knowledge.
Learning occurs through the transmission of formal knowledge to students.	Learning occurs through the interaction between the student and formal scientific disciplines.
The purpose of education is solely to develop numerical and verbal intelligence.	The aim of education is to foster the development of multiple intelligences.

In the same work, Özden presents an additional comparative framework, this time focusing exclusively on education and instruction. He positions behaviorism—identified with positivism—against constructivism, which he aligns with postmodernism. Within this dialectical juxtaposition, Özden offers the following schema[4]:

Behaviorist Approach	Constructivist Approach
Learning is a result obtained through external influences (reinforcement, repetition).	Learning occurs as a result of the construction of old and new knowledge within the human mind.
The learner is a passive recipient of external stimuli.	The learner is an assimilator of stimuli and an active constructor of behaviors.
The curriculum is developed inductively and emphasizes fundamental skills.	The curriculum is designed deductively, with an emphasis on fundamental concepts, and is guided according to students' problems.

[3] Yüksel Özden, *Öğrenme ve Öğretme (Learning and Teaching)*, Ankara: PegemA Yayıncılık, 2003, pp. 67-68.
[4] Yüksel Özden, *Öğrenme ve Öğretme (Learning and Teaching)*, p. 67.

Teachers expect definite and single correct answers to questions in order to assess student success and learning.	Teachers strive to understand students' views and opinions on a given subject.
Teachers serve as sources that transmit knowledge to students.	Teachers, as learners themselves in the learning process, engage in reciprocal interaction with students and facilitate the learning environment.
Students are regarded as "empty vessels" to be filled with knowledge by the teacher.	Students are responsible for their own learning; they interpret the information they acquire from their environment within their own minds and thus actively participate in the instructional process.
Activities related to the curriculum are limited to textbooks.	Activities related to the curriculum are largely based on primary sources.
Student assessment is perceived as a process entirely separate from instruction and is generally conducted at the end of the curriculum through tests.	Assessment is not separate from the instructional process. It occurs concurrently with instruction through teacher observations or the collection of student work.
There is a strict adherence to a pre-prepared curriculum.	In the instructional process, students' interests, needs, and questions about various subjects occupy a central place.

An analytical examination of the comparative tables—particularly those developed by Jonassen, and Özden—reveals a profound philosophical bifurcation between the modern and postmodern models in educational theory. These paradigms are grounded in fundamentally divergent ontological and epistemological commitments, which in turn shape their respective conceptions of knowledge, learning, and pedagogy. The modern model, informed by the traditions of positivist epistemology, objectivism, and behaviorism, presupposes the existence of an objective reality independent of the knower (realism), along with the possibility of epistemic certainty and neutrality. Within this framework, knowledge is conceived as a fixed, external entity, awaiting transmission from the teacher—who assumes an authoritative, central role—to the passive learner. Learning, accordingly, is framed as the direct transfer of accepted truths, and the learner's task is to receive, store, and reproduce these truths faithfully. In this context, the mind is metaphorically cast as a mirror of nature: a passive processor that reflects external reality as it is. Thought is viewed as disembodied, algorithmic, and abstract—reducible to manipulable symbolic units and devoid of experiential grounding. Learning is conceptualized as a linear and mechanical process, dependent upon repetition, reinforcement, and stimulus–response conditioning. The outcomes of learning are presumed to be predictable, measurable, and standardizable, which justifies the emphasis on outcome-based assessment and standardized testing. Similarly, the curriculum is designed as an inductive, content-heavy, and largely immutable structure, aimed at transmitting universal and timeless truths in a systematic manner. By contrast, the postmodern model, encompassing constructivism, social constructivism, and various strands of subjectivism, fundamentally rejects objectivist assumptions and embraces a more interpretive, contextual, and relational ontology of knowledge and reality. Here, reality is not discovered but constructed through the dynamic interplay between subject and world. Knowledge is regarded as situated, provisional, and shaped by experience, language, culture, and interpretive activity. The mind, in this paradigm, ceases to be a mirror and is instead envisioned as an active constructor of reality—a generative system that produces internal representations and cognitive models grounded in prior knowledge and experience. Thought is no longer seen as an abstract computational process, but as a meaning-making act embedded in bodily, emotional, and social contexts. Learning becomes learner-centered, emergent, and dialogical; it is not the passive reception of information but the active construction of meaning. The process is characterized by non-linearity, contingency, and unpredictability, depending heavily on the learner's prior experiences, intentions, and socio-cultural positioning. Accordingly, assessment practices shift from the quantification of static outputs to the evaluation of learning processes, privileging formative, reflective, and process-oriented approaches. The curriculum, likewise, becomes more flexible, adaptive, and responsive to the lived realities of learners. It is no longer a fixed repository of knowledge, but a

negotiable space of inquiry shaped by learners' needs, interests, and developmental trajectories. In sum, while the modern model seeks order, certainty, and control, the postmodern model embraces plurality, ambiguity, and complexity. It privileges understanding over classification, construction over transmission, and participation over prescription. In this sense, the metaphor of the mind as a mirror gives way to a constructivist metaphor: the mind not as a passive reflector, but as an active architect of meaning and a participant in the co-construction of reality..

To what extent are these comparisons accurate?

It is evident that these contrasts contain important truths; however, it must also be acknowledged that some elements tend toward exaggeration, particularly insofar as the modern model is somewhat caricatured. To reach a definitive judgment, it is imperative to isolate and analyze philosophically significant aspects of these comparisons individually, maintain the discussion within an analytical framework, and subject them to critical scrutiny. Therefore, it becomes necessary to elaborate on the comparisons between the two models by drawing more extensively from the educational literature. The modern model, which we conceptualize to encompass and refer to behaviorist approaches and their various subversions, can, for the purposes of our inquiry and in fidelity to the educational literature, be delineated through a set of foundational principles. These include the primacy of objectivity in knowledge, the characterization of learning as the acquisition of knowledge, the predominantly didactic and formal nature of education, the representation of epistemic authority by the teacher or the centrality of teacher-centeredness, the necessity of a sociological distance between teacher and learner, and the determinacy of the curriculum whose content is assessed in an outcome-oriented manner. What is meant by these principles, and what lies at their core?

Modern Model and Distinguishing Characteristics

In the modern model, learning is conceived as the acquisition and internalization of knowledge that exists objectively and independently of the learner, obtained through certain authoritative sources—such as teachers, encyclopedias, and textbooks—and consolidated through repetition and memorization. Within this framework, priority is given to knowledge over skills and behaviors, and a strong correlation is assumed between learning and the individual's developmental trajectory. The educational development of the child is understood as progressing along a continuum from concrete, unmediated experiences of the external world toward abstract theoretical constructs. The success of education, within this paradigm, hinges upon the discipline of the learning process, the effective encoding of prescribed curricular materials into memory, and the transformation of these cognitive contents into observable behaviors. Assessment is conducted in accordance with predetermined curricular objectives and is behaviorally focused; consequently, it is distinctively explicit and objective. This objectivity stems from the clear specification of which behaviors are to be measured and the quantitative measurability of such behaviors. Learning is deemed to have occurred when a student manifests a particular behavior; thus, behavior constitutes a product or outcome, and assessment is correspondingly outcome-oriented.[5]

Central to the modern model is the ideal of attaining and possessing true, objective, and universally valid knowledge as delineated in the curriculum. The criterion of truth in this model is the correspondence of knowledge to objective reality—namely, the world of objects as it exists independently of human perception or cognition. In other words, knowledge must accurately reflect the external world. Accordingly, the mind is conceptualized as a mirror that faithfully represents the world of objects. This epistemological stance is rooted in a realist ontological worldview, which acknowledges the independent existence of the world apart from human minds and beliefs. The reality of the world is

[5] David H. Jonassen, "Objectivism versus Constructivism: Do We Need a New Philosophical Paradigm?", *Educational Technology Research and Development*, Vol. 39, No. 3 ,1991, pp. 5-14.

inherent and thus entirely independent of whether or not it is perceived by humans. Therefore, within the modern model, there is an unequivocal acceptance of objective reality and the notion that true knowledge corresponds to that reality. The veracity of knowledge is subject to empirical testing and verification. This criterion of falsifiability plays a crucial role in excluding metaphysical claims and subjective assumptions from the status of knowledge. From the perspective of educational sciences, this entails that unfounded beliefs, prejudices, and metaphysical assertions have no place within curricular content. Due to its adherence to an objective conception of knowledge and a realist ontology, the modern model places great emphasis on specialization. Consequently, curricula and the behaviors to be inculcated are predetermined by curriculum designers—experts who base their decisions on scientific knowledge and national needs. Neither teachers nor students, nor their social environments, possess legitimate grounds to alter the curriculum. The curriculum is conceived as a coherent whole composed of objective knowledge, which is logically subdivided into smaller units. Modifying any part of this structure is discouraged, as the interdependence of its components is essential for achieving the predetermined educational goals. Furthermore, instructional materials—including textbooks, tools, resources, and the learning environment—are meticulously designed to maintain this curricular coherence.

Within the modern model, the teacher embodies the repository and representative of knowledge; consequently, the locus of education is centered upon the teacher. This attributed role legitimizes the conception of education primarily as a didactic and instructional activity. From this perspective, one of the teacher's fundamental responsibilities is to faithfully transmit the objective, universal, and immutable knowledge structures to students in strict accordance with the prescribed curriculum. Unquestionably, this transmissive paradigm positions the teacher at the epicenter of the educational process as the active agent, while relegating the student to a passive recipient whose sole activity consists in receiving, rehearsing, memorizing, and ultimately transforming the delivered content into observable behaviors. Accordingly, the learner's agency is substantially diminished, limited to the absorption and reproduction of knowledge rather than its critical appropriation or reconstruction. For this reason, critics have at times caricatured the modern model as one that regards students merely as "empty vessels" to be filled with knowledge by the teacher. This metaphor encapsulates the asymmetry inherent in the pedagogical relationship posited by the modern model, wherein the student's role is reduced to a container awaiting the unidirectional flow of information.

Within the framework of the modern educational paradigm, the teacher assumes a pivotal role as the embodiment of institutional authority and epistemic power. This privileging stems fundamentally from the teacher's epistemic superiority vis-à-vis the student, predicated upon specialized training and experiential knowledge, which grants access to ostensibly objective and universally valid forms of knowledge. The teacher's authoritative position is instrumental not only in the transmission of knowledge but also in orchestrating the cognitive methodologies through which students internalize said knowledge, alongside the maintenance of disciplinary regimes and evaluative practices. Consequently, the modern pedagogical model envisions the student as a receptacle whose epistemic contribution—particularly in terms of subjective perspectives—is largely delegitimized due to its inherently internalized and thus epistemically unreliable nature. A salient feature of this model is the maintenance of a pronounced sociological distance between teacher and student, rooted in the overt dominance of the teacher's authority within the educational milieu. This distancing effect substantially impedes processes of relational integration, affective fusion, and empathetic identification between the pedagogical subjects—processes which are, ontologically and pedagogically, prerequisites for genuine internalization and meaning-making. The institutionalization of explicit power, therefore, circumscribes students' capacities for authentic self-expression and autonomous personal development. Thus, one might argue that the modern model concomitantly engenders a condition of enforced personal privacy or guardedness within the educational setting. Moreover, this dynamic is compounded by a teleological progression within learning, moving from the concrete toward the abstract, which engenders a significant discontinuity between the educational environment and the broader socio-cultural context. The valorization of abstract cognitive faculties tacitly delegitimizes affective engagement, rendering emotional expression

seemingly extraneous or inconsequential within pedagogical interactions. Such a paradigm inherently undermines both the integrity of the individual subject and the socializing function of education. Given that socialization fundamentally necessitates affectively grounded processes of identification and the availability of sincere relational models, the modern educational model's imposition of sociological distance and its privileging of rational abstraction operate conjointly to suppress emotional expressivity.

The Postmodern Model and Its Distinguishing Characteristics

Conceptualized to encompass and reference constructivist and its sub-variants, the postmodern model, according to educational literature, presents a striking challenge to the foundational tenets of the behaviorally oriented modern model. The postmodern model foregrounds subjectivity and the individual as well as social construction of knowledge, positing several fundamental claims regarding education: learning is the construction of reality (ontological constructivism) and knowledge (epistemological constructivism) by the learner; knowledge is inherently subjective; interaction plays a crucial role in learning; overt deployment of power and authority in the educational process ought to be avoided; relationships between teacher and students should be predicated on equality and intimacy rather than authority; assessment should be process-oriented rather than outcome-based; and curricula must be flexible, capable of being reconstructed at the behest of teachers and learners alike.[6]

What, then, do these principles signify at their core?

In the postmodern model, the child is, above all, an autonomous individual. As an individual, the child actively organizes and constructs their knowledge by employing their cognitive schemas, conceptual frameworks, and experiential background. From this perspective, learning entails the learner's subjective construction of experience through reliance on pre-existing schemas, knowledge structures, or prior information; it involves the comparison, selection, interpretation, and reflexive feedback on both self and others' experiences. These prior schemas and cognitive structures guide not only the interpretation of perceived learning and knowledge but also the learner's attentional focus. Thus, learning within the postmodern model fundamentally comprises the learner's reconstruction and elaboration of experience predicated on pre-established cognitive frameworks. Success in education is measured by the developmental trajectory from the learner's initial baseline to the subsequently attained stage. Consequently, assessment privileges process over product. Importantly, the agents involved in evaluation extend beyond the teacher to include parents, the learner themselves, and peers. The postmodern model perceives the child as an agent endowed with self-regulation. This self-regulation is developed to such an extent that the learner autonomously organizes, controls, and in many instances determines the appropriateness of learning content to their own needs. A process-oriented, self-regulation-based evaluation of this nature is intrinsically holistic and detailed, yet qualitative rather than quantitative. The subjective appraisals of learners, alongside parental perspectives, are therefore accorded considerable value and determinative weight within the educational milieu.

Within the postmodern paradigm, reality—that is, the external world—is regarded as fundamentally unknowable and inaccessible. Knowledge is not discovered but actively constructed by the learner, predicated upon prior knowledge and cognitive schemata that manifest the immutable process of construction. In the act of knowledge creation, the learner concurrently constitutes their own reality. Hence, the notion of objective knowledge of an external world is rendered

[6] See. Tapio Puolimatka, "Constructivism, Knowledge, and Manipulation", *Philosophy of Education Archive*, 01 Jan 1999, pp 294-301; Michael R. Matthews, "Constructivism and Science Education: Some Epistemological Problems", *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1993, pp. 359-370; Graham D. Hendry, "Constructivism and Educational Practice", *Australian Journal of Education*, 40, no. 1, 1996, p. 19; Richard S. Prawat, "Teachers' Beliefs About Teaching and Learning: A Constructivist Perspective", *American Journal of Education*, 100, no. 3, 1993, pp. 354-395.

untenable. Prior knowledge, mental schemas, linguistic repertoire, sociocultural context, and vested interests play a constitutive and formative role in the construction and creation of knowledge, and by extension, reality itself. Indeed, Devitt engages in a comparative analysis of realist and constructivist epistemological frameworks. He identifies the doctrine of "Worldmaking" as a principal antagonist to realism. This doctrine posits that an independent reality transcends the limits of our knowledge and linguistic capacities, and that the known world is, to a significant extent, constructed through the imposition of conceptual schemes. This perspective aligns with constructivist epistemology, which asserts that knowledge is actively constructed by individuals and shaped by their conceptual frameworks, language, and sociocultural contexts.[7] As Mathews also states, the progression from "the mind is active in knowledge acquisition" to the epistemological conclusion "we cannot know reality" is endemic in constructivist writing."[8]

In the postmodern model, the knower is invariably conditioned either by the particular socio-political and cultural milieu in which they are embedded, or by the dominant theoretical frameworks in use. Consequently, knowledge cannot be approached with claims to neutrality; rather, our observations are invariably theory-laden and partial.[9] Accordingly, individuals are justifiably free to develop divergent cognitive schemata. The validity of these schemata does not hinge upon their conformity to an external world possessing an independent ontological status, nor on their capacity to accurately represent such a world. Rather, their epistemic legitimacy is contingent upon their utility for the knowledge producers, their adaptability to lived environments, and their contribution to sustaining life. Thus, the epistemological validity of subjectively constructed knowledge depends upon its pragmatic efficacy and adaptive function. This perspective clearly embodies a pragmatic orientation. Since each individual engages with the world of objects through the distinctive lens of their social group's worldview, language, and idiosyncratic cognitive schemas and conceptual structures, they necessarily employ disparate conceptual categories to comprehend the world. Hence, they inhabit multiple, coexisting constructed worlds. From this vantage, these worlds are logically incomparable and incommensurable, as no external objective standard exists. As Tarnas also points out, reality is not simply perceived by the mind but is constructed; constructed realities are manifold and none holds primacy over others. Consequently, the nature of reality and truth is indeterminate.[10] These postmodern assertions blur the boundary between epistemology and ontology and fail to establish an objective demarcation between knowledge and non-knowledge. From an educational perspective, this legitimizes the infiltration of social and individual beliefs, presuppositions, and metaphysical claims into the educational process on the grounds that they serve adaptive and functional roles. Given the indeterminacy of truth and the erasure of the distinction between knowledge and non-knowledge, it follows that all discourses—including science—are ideological in nature, thereby obliterating distinctions among religion, science, philosophy, and metaphysics. Since knowledge is construed as a construction in the postmodern model, there exists no rigid curriculum predetermined by the demands of science or nationhood and authored by experts. Instead, curricula are local and flexible, shaped in accordance with the interests and desires of students, teachers, and the wider social environment. This flexibility precludes the existence of a fixed national curriculum; local elements, expectations, and student interests must be accommodated. Accordingly, the postmodern model precludes rigid classroom structures and predetermined content-based teaching materials.

In the postmodern paradigm, the inherently constructed and subjective nature of human knowledge functions as a foundational rationale for legitimizing interaction-centered education. Accordingly, the child's most fundamental characteristic within the educational context is their emergent curiosity, which manifests relationally. From this

[7] Michael Devitt, *Realism and Truth*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1991, p. 235.
[8] Michael R. Matthews, *Constructivism and Science Education: Some Epistemological Problems*, p.365.
[9] Michael R. Matthews, *Constructivism and Science Education: Some Epistemological Problems*, pp. 359-370.
[10] Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas that have Shaped Our Worldview*, New York: Ballantine, 1991, pp. 396-397.

perspective, a primary pedagogical obligation is to motivate students, to cultivate and amplify their curiosity through diverse strategies, and to immerse them in interactions both amongst themselves and with their broader social milieu. The success of the educational process thus hinges upon the teacher's capacity to sustain students' attention, comprehend their subjectively constructed realities and experiences, and respect these personal realities. Consequently, interaction, motivation, and student interests assume pivotal roles in learning within the postmodern model. The teacher acts as a facilitator, fostering communication and motivation, while providing opportunities for students to share their experiential realities. The focal point remains the student and their interests; the teacher is charged primarily with the orchestration of the learning environment.

The postmodern model vociferously opposes all forms of authority and power, especially the overt authority of the teacher. This opposition is philosophically grounded in the repudiation of educationally justifiable coercion, violence, and ideological imposition. Furthermore, overt authority induces compliance predicated on fear of punishment or hope of reward, which in turn stifles children's naturalness, authenticity, and individuality. By repudiating objective knowledge, the postmodern framework naturally contests the notion of the teacher as an epistemic authority. Within this view, the teacher's cognitive world is itself a subjective construct, shaped by their particular conditions and perceptions. Thus, any attempt by the teacher to impose their subjective cognitive structures and worldview upon the student constitutes a form of ideological domination.

The teacher's role is therefore redefined as one of guiding students to develop autonomous and independent capacities for perceiving their environment and experiences, enabling them to construct their cognitive frameworks and worlds from their own perspectives. The teacher may not direct students by virtue of their cognitive authority; rather, they are responsible for cultivating an environment conducive to the students' own self-becoming. The postmodern model also critiques the sociological distance imposed between teacher and student in the modern model, striving instead to establish a close, trust-based relationship. Consequently, individuals educated within this paradigm typically experience minimal personal privacy or confidentiality, as such feelings are rarely permitted to manifest fully. Educational situations remain intimately connected to daily life; the postmodern model does not necessitate a distancing from the concrete or subjective. Moreover, children are encouraged to articulate their desires, needs, sensations, and choices freely. The openness and sincerity engendered by such a liberatory environment afford the teacher meaningful insight into the student's personality and provide fertile ground for developmental support. Schools implementing the postmodern model often foster robust social communication, characterized by genuine and heartfelt relationships, which in turn reinforce ties between school and family. Within this communicative, sincere, and family-inclusive ethos, the boundary between the school environment and personal privacy becomes permeable and ambiguous. The diminution of personal privacy grounded in mutual social trust indicates the model's potent socializing potential. Trust, openness, and interaction facilitate internalization and enable the child to identify empathetically with their surroundings.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Both Models

As observed, the modern and postmodern models embody irreconcilable divergences regarding foundational educational concepts such as reality, knowledge, learning, curriculum, socialization, power/authority, assessment, and evaluation. A critical question thus emerges: which of these models offers a more realistic, practicable, and vital perspective within the philosophy of education? To answer this, it is necessary to advance the analysis by subjecting both

models' positions on reality, knowledge, learning, socialization, and power/authority to rigorous critical scrutiny alongside their logical implications.[11]

From a critical standpoint, the primary shortcoming of the objectivist-modern model, despite affirming external realism and its corresponding objective knowledge, lies in its predominant focus on the transmission of pre-established, objective knowledge within educational processes. Education must not only facilitate the acquisition of true knowledge corresponding to reality but also partake in the production of new knowledge. This imperative necessitates the cultivation of critical and creative thinking as well as the capacity to approach reality from multiple perspectives. Conversely, the subjectivist-constructivist-postmodern model prioritizes creativity and criticality but reduces external reality and knowledge entirely to individual and social construction, severing the connection between knowledge and the external world and suspending the ontological status of the latter. Accordingly, it posits the impossibility of adjudicating which construction is more valid, contending that differing constructions are incomparable, incommensurable, or unmeasurable against one another. This stance arises from a skeptical challenge to all criteria on the grounds of inherent partiality. This epistemological relativism represents the fundamental paradox of the subjectivist-constructivist-postmodern model. Nevertheless, is it not conceivable to eliminate the aforementioned weaknesses of both models and integrate their respective strengths? There exists no logical impediment to such a synthesis. Indeed, this endeavor is of considerable significance, for in educational theory and practice, we cannot renounce either the modern model's vital commitments to reality, objectivity, and verifiability, or the postmodern model's process-oriented conception that empowers the learner and foregrounds the mental construction of knowledge that stimulates critical and creative capacities. It is evident that knowledge is mentally constructed by human subjects. However, a clear distinction must be maintained between the construction of knowledge (epistemological constructivism) and the construction of reality (ontological constructivism). Knowledge is constructed through abstraction from reality; contrary to the subjectivist postmodern claim, constructing knowledge does not entail constructing reality itself. Reality exists independently, external to and irrespective of us. Hence, a novel synthesis must simultaneously acknowledge the existence of an external world (ontological realism), uphold the mental construction of knowledge without negating its potential objectivity, and provide criteria to distinguish knowledge from non-knowledge by verifying its correspondence with reality. Such a synthesis is neither logically nor empirically impossible. Achieving it requires merely two fundamental moves that foster interaction between the two models.

The initial move must be to abandon the idealist constructivism underpinning the postmodern model, which conflates ontology—the study of being—with epistemology—the study of knowledge—and asserts that reality itself is constructed concomitantly with knowledge. It is imperative to distinguish clearly between the ontological and the epistemological realms, emphasizing that it is knowledge, not reality, that is constructed. Subsequently, the realism posited by the objectivist-modern model—that is, the existence of an external reality independent of us—must be retained as the foundation (foundationalism) of knowledge and integrated with epistemological constructivism.

The idealist postmodern constructivism suspends the relation between the knowledge we construct and reality, effectively virtualizing the world of objects and rendering interpersonal communication and interaction impossible by positing that each individual creates a separate world. It thereby obliterates any meaningful distinction between reality and hallucination, illusion, dream, or fantasy. Such an idealist constructivism precludes the possibility of conducting scientific education. Proponents of this view contend that "objects cannot exist independently of our conceptual schemas." The inevitable consequence of this position is that each individual only knows their own experience and that

[11] See. Tapio Puolimatka, *Constructivism, Knowledge, and Manipulation*, pp 294-301; Clive Beck, "Postmodernism, Pedagogy, and Philosophy of Education", *Philosophy of Education*, vol. 27, 1993pp. 1-13; M. Matthews, "Old Wine in New Bottles: A Problem with Constructivist Epistemology", *Philosophy of Education*, 1993, pp. 303 -311

no external reality exists. Since every experience and image is internal, unique, and incommensurable with other experiences or images, the situation becomes increasingly intractable. Unsurprisingly, this thesis eliminates the crucial educational distinctions between true and false knowledge, as well as between correct and incorrect values. The perspectives advanced by postmodern constructivists stand in opposition to realism, foundationalism, and the scientific principle of falsifiability. Realism maintains that the world of objects exists independently of the human mind and that we can discover, know, and compare reality against our knowledge, subjecting our knowledge to empirical testing. For instance, stones, plants, animals, and humans exist irrespective of our thoughts about them; they are not mere mental appearances, hallucinations, or dreams. Our minds, representations, ideologies, languages, or cultures do not create them. This is manifestly evident in everyday experience—for example, anyone with common sense knows that a hard object striking one's body causes pain. Therefore, to ascertain which among the various conceptions of the object world is true, we rely upon the accurate representation of objects. Although individuals starting from different premises may construct divergent theories or beliefs about the object world, it remains possible to determine, via specific criteria, which conform to the principle of objectivity. Thus, while our knowledge, ideas, and theories about the object world may evolve historically or through scientific inquiry, it remains obligatory to teach students the currently accepted and veridical bodies of knowledge insofar as they relate accurately to reality. Some of these bodies of knowledge may later be refuted or refined, but such revision necessitates continual testing against objective reality. To reject the teaching of what we presently hold as knowledge on the grounds that it may be overturned in the future is as irrational as refusing to eat because one might later alter one's diet. Hence, the perspective on reality and knowledge offered by the modern model is philosophically superior, as it acknowledges the existence of an external world, enables the discrimination between true and false knowledge, and provides a robust justification for transmitting presently validated knowledge to students. Nonetheless, proponents of the modern model must not lose sight of the fact that knowledge is ultimately a human creation, a mental construction. Imagination, critical reason, intuition, and beliefs may play potent roles in this constructive process. However, for any proposition to attain the status of knowledge, it must be verified, justified, and tested against reality.

In the second move, it is imperative to distinguish between the constructivist understanding of learning within the postmodern model and the notion of the construction of reality itself. It cannot be logically asserted that these two necessarily entail or presuppose one another. For a necessary relation to hold between entities, their existences or non-existences must be interdependent. However, no such necessary relation exists between constructivist learning and the construction of reality. Indeed, this lack of necessity can be observed in how some proponents of constructivist learning explicitly reject the tenets of radical constructivism. As constructivist learning suggests, individuals indeed possess differing schemas, concepts, beliefs, and theories, which account for their varied approaches to reality. Yet, these differences do not imply the absence of a principle capable of appraising their validity or determining which approximates reality more closely. From this standpoint, constructivist learning must be grounded in a realist foundation, since the process of knowledge creation does not occur in a vacuum but is inextricably linked to the world of objects. Thus, the constructivist learning approach can and should be logically separated from the notion of the construction of reality. The former aims primarily to describe the psychological processes students undergo while forming cognitive concepts, whereas the latter—that in constructing knowledge we simultaneously construct reality—emanates from sophisticated, fundamentally skeptical philosophical debates regarding knowledge and reality. It is an intellectually tenable position to acknowledge learning and knowledge as constructive processes while rejecting the construction of reality. This positions the constructivist perspective on a realist footing. According to the realist, materially grounded constructivism we propose in opposition to idealist constructivism, observational knowledge can be generated through the use of the observer's conceptual models applied to stimuli from the external world. It may even be conceded that perception of objects depends on the observer's prior knowledge, concepts, and expectations. However, this does not entail, as idealist-subjective constructivism claims, that distinguishing true from false knowledge is impossible.

Empirically, we know that careful observation sometimes enables us to revise prior beliefs and recognize errors. This implies that although separating observations about external features from conceptual frameworks is challenging, it is not impossible. The success of science in its observations attests to the ability of scientists to achieve this separation. Consequently, learning should be recognized as the act of structuring and creating knowledge. Yet this act cannot be understood as wholly dependent on the learner, as it necessarily involves interaction with the external world; knowledge cannot be generated ex nihilo. As such, when the constructivist understanding of learning—focused on the psychological genesis of knowledge—is distinguished from the constructivist view embedded in skeptical ontological debates about reality, it can be reconciled with the realism and foundationalism espoused by the modern model. This synthesis—a materially grounded constructivism that highlights both the interaction with the world of objects and individual creativity—is philosophically more coherent than the constructivist stance that attributes the existence of the object world to the human mind, veering towards an idealist worldview. Moreover, it opens new horizons for the philosophy of education. For instance, radical constructivism's proponent Ernest von Glasersfeld, by virtualizing objective reality, asserts the following: "Radikal yapılandırmacılık, bu nedenle radikaldir çünkü gelenekle kopar ve bilginin "nesnel" bir ontolojik gerçeği yansıtmak yerine, yalnızca deneyimlerimiz tarafından oluşturulan bir dünyanın düzenlenmesi ve örgütlenmesi olduğunu savunan bir bilgi kuramı geliştirir. Radikal yapılandırmacı, "metafiziksel realizmi" bir kez ve sonsuza dek terk etmiş olup, Piaget ile tam bir uyum içindedir; Piaget'in dediği gibi: "Zeka, kendini örgütleyerek dünyayı örgütler."[12]

It is evident that an idealist constructivist stance which denies objective reality is pedagogically untenable, as it confines individuals exclusively to their own selves and perceptions. Furthermore, the virtualization of objective reality obliterates any criterion to distinguish truth from falsehood, thereby rendering scientific education untenable. Indeed, by sidelining justification, such a view verges on anarchy even within the domain of values. For these reasons, postmodern-idealist constructivist perspectives—which exclude objective reality, deny the existence of any criterion for truth, and place all beliefs, fictions, and conjectures on par with scientific knowledge—must be unequivocally rejected. In their place, a realist constructivist framework should be adopted, one that emphasizes both the mental construction of knowledge during the learning process and the existence of an objective reality, while simultaneously proposing criteria to differentiate between true and false knowledge.

A curriculum constitutes a response to fundamental questions regarding why education is conducted, what is to be taught, how it should be taught, and how assessment and evaluation should be executed. All these components of a curriculum form an integrated whole, logically supporting one another. National and universal aims, scientific knowledge, and value policies collectively address the 'why' of education, presupposing a particular conception or ideal of humanity. Nation-states articulate this as the ideal citizen type. Accordingly, learning content, pedagogical strategies, and methods are determined in relation to the nature of the subject matter; similarly, the nature of the content provides cues on how assessment and evaluation should be conducted. The postmodern model, with its subjective and idealist constructivist orientation, prioritizes difference to such an extent that it precludes the possibility of a homogeneous and coherent national curriculum. It views any curriculum as ideological and coercive, thereby rejecting the authority of experts and institutional authorities to determine curricular content. Instead, it demands that students, parents, and local administrators hold primacy in curricular decisions. Conversely, the modern model generally disregards difference, proposing a standardized national curriculum devised by experts and applied universally. Clearly, these positions represent polar opposites. As proponents of the modern model assert, neither national curricula nor expert curriculum designers can be dispensed with. Nevertheless, in curriculum development, cooperation with diverse stakeholders is

[12] Ernest von Glasersfeld, "An Introduction to Radical Constructivism,", In P. Watzlawick (ed.), *The Invented Reality*, New York 1984, s. 24.

feasible, allowing for localized elements and activities without undermining the overarching national framework. However, the complete flexibilization of the curriculum—as advocated by the postmodern model, which cedes curricular authority to students, teachers, parents, and local officials—is unacceptable. Such an approach jeopardizes national objectives, scientific integrity, and universal values. Moreover, since the curriculum's learning domains and units are logically interdependent, with certain units constituting prerequisites for others, excessive flexibility risks fragmenting this coherence and failing to meet such structural requirements. Furthermore, unrestrained flexibility may permit the infiltration of parochial customs and anachronistic local values into educational programs—an outcome that is inadmissible. While some measured curricular flexibility is conceivable, it must never compromise programmatic unity around core objectives or the scientific rigor of the curriculum. Regarding assessment and evaluation, it is partially accurate to state that the modern model emphasizes outcomes while the postmodern model prioritizes processes. However, throughout the educational continuum, it is inevitable to assess both process and outcome. A similar observation holds for the dichotomy between teacher-centered and student-centered approaches, which should not be polarized; in some contexts, the teacher may assume prominence, while in others, the student may be central. If one insists on identifying a focal point, it is more accurate to conceive of an interactional, 'we-centered' approach, since the educational process constitutes a domain of reciprocal learning. Teachers learn and enrich their experiences alongside students within this process.

It can be convincingly argued that certain educational models incorporate more significant and effective processes of socialization than others, and on this basis alone, the preference for such a model may be justified; for one of the fundamental functions attributed to education is the deliberate socialization of students. Undoubtedly, socialization necessitates genuine and sincere relationships, a free environment, diverse options, interpersonal interaction, and modeling or imitation. Although students inevitably undergo socialization by virtue of residing within a society, unregulated socialization of this kind may engender significant risks by subconsciously inculcating implicit assumptions, often precluding conscious choice. In contrast, socialization through education is deliberate and regulated; it aims to enable students to make informed and conscious choices, while minimizing unconscious, extrarational influences on those choices. Consequently, the chosen educational model must prioritize minimizing subconscious effects, expanding the domain of conscious selection and rational judgment, and preserving individual autonomy in the name of socialization. When modern and postmodern models are compared from the perspective of socialization, both exhibit inherent difficulties. The modern model relies on the epistemic authority of the teacher and presupposes the attainability of objective knowledge. Accordingly, it endeavors to impart pre-existing knowledge structures to students. This may appear as a non-creative, assimilative educational paradigm. Furthermore, its highly formal and knowledge-centered approach significantly diminishes emotional expression and isolates the school environment from both the familial context and broader social milieu. Thus, its impact on the multifaceted development of personality is relatively weak. Nevertheless, the modern model seeks, in aligning students' conceptual frameworks with predetermined knowledge patterns, to socialize them to conform with socially accepted knowledge and values. Paradoxically, due to its formal, objectivist emphasis on knowledge and neglect of affect, the model increases privacy and personal secrecy, distancing students considerably from interaction and social environments. Hence, the modern model manifests certain deficiencies in facilitating socialization, as it paradoxically promotes individual autonomy and privacy while ostensibly aiming to socialize. Conversely, the postmodern model endeavors to create preconditions for the development of individuality, autonomy, and independent thought, grounded in its constructivist orientation in pedagogy. Yet, at least in its radical form, the postmodern model severs the connection between individual constructions and reality, thereby fostering subjectivism and solipsism. Radical constructivism asserts that individuals cannot know the relationship between their concepts and reality; they can only provide explanations of the world as it appears to them. It upholds the absence of criteria for the truth or falsity of differing constructions. This stance inevitably leads to solipsism, implying that each individual inhabits a separate world and constructs a unique world-image. Such a radical discourse renders

communication and interaction nearly impossible, as it becomes almost inconceivable for individuals inhabiting disparate worlds to find common ground or conceptual content sufficiently similar to understand one another. The moderate variant of the postmodern model, which affirms objective reality and values individual construction while supporting students' interaction with their environment during knowledge construction, fosters a climate of social trust and authentic expression. In so doing, it subjects students to a potent socializing influence. However, excessive interaction and socialization may ultimately erode privacy and individual autonomy, as society paradoxically intensifies its influence over the individual seeking to maintain selfhood, asserting dominance by appealing to deep internal emotions. The critical issue here is to devise intermediate strategies that prevent fusion with society from entirely annihilating individual autonomy. Since internalization constitutes the core of socialization and identification involves crucial psychological processes, successful socialization occurs through factors such as social trust that nurture identification. This entails the following: schools founded upon the modern model, which sharply delineates the boundary between teacher and student, tend to be weak agents of socialization, enhancing individual autonomy and personal privacy. Conversely, schools emphasizing interaction, cooperation, community, and social trust function as powerful socializing agents, yet may simultaneously pose challenges to the protection of individual autonomy and privacy. From this perspective, the moderate postmodern model creates a robust socializing environment within the school. Yet, due to its encouragement of extensive interaction and identification with society, it constricts the domain of individual autonomy and personal privacy. Just as social isolation fosters antisocial personalities, excessive interaction may obliterate individual autonomy and privacy, rendering the individual entirely dependent on society in the name of socialization.

The modern model advocates explicit authority and permits the exercise of the teacher's epistemic power or authority. In contrast, the postmodern model rejects overt power and authority, emphasizing notions of equality and freedoms between student and teacher. Although scientific research underscores the importance of children directing their own curiosity and learning, the assumption that students learn and develop entirely unguided cannot be sustained. Effective regulation of peer interactions, the preparation of conducive learning environments, and the presentation of curricular content within a coherent plan all necessitate robust guidance. Tapio Puolimatka draws attention to this point, stating:

"Learning is an active constructive process does not mean that mere student activity is sufficient to guarantee learning. Student activity ought to be guided in ways which make learning planned and meaningful. The teacher who lets the students' shifting objects of interest determine the progress of the lesson has replaced learning with mere activity. A model of education functioning without any authority is not necessarily more progressive than an educational model based on legitimate authority. Facts do not support the assumption that children develop best without guidance, even though the child's curiosity and self-directed learning are central educational resources. Teacher authority may be justified by its benefits. The directives given by an authority may often justifiably replace individual reasons since these directives enhance cooperation. The teacher may, of course, use her authority more or less reasonably, and her way of doing it may be legitimately subjected to criticism. The teacher has more possibilities to influence the child than the child has to influence the teacher. To hide this inequality in power and to create the illusion of equality promotes covert use of power and manipulation. Open authority diminishes the need for hidden manipulation and makes it possible for the child to assess ways in which power is exercised over her.[13]"

Correcting students' misconceptions, presenting alternative options, and providing guidance necessitate epistemic superiority. Guidance coupled with epistemic superiority logically entails the affirmation of power or authority. For these reasons, the teacher's power or authority in educational settings must be philosophically grounded. Such grounding can

[13] Tapio Puolimatka, Constructivism, Knowledge, and Manipulation, p. 299.

be established under the principle of aiming for the well-being of both students and the general community. Furthermore, it is effective to invoke the understanding that directives issued by an authority serve to foster cooperation rather than merely regulate individual behaviors. The teacher is compelled to exercise authority to some degree in the educational milieu; denying this is untenable. However, the manner and methods by which authority is exercised remain open to critical scrutiny. Instances where certain teachers misuse their authority cannot justify the conclusion that authority itself is meaningless or unnecessary. The teacher's influence over students exceeds the reverse influence. Therefore, concealing this asymmetry of power, as the postmodern model attempts, creating an illusion of equality and consequently denying authority, constitutes a departure from reality. Provided the teacher's explicit authority is rule-based and values transparency, students are afforded knowledge of the conditions of authority and can accordingly adjust themselves. A power vacuum equates to chaos, engendering uncertainty in students regarding what, how, and when to act. The teacher's explicit authority—particularly its mode of exercise—may, as the postmodern model posits, occasionally strain sincere and genuine teacher-student relations. Nevertheless, such challenges can be mitigated through flexible and prudent use of authority. Rejecting the explicit exercise of authority on the basis of this issue alone is unwarranted. In fact, explicit authority clearly delineates the positions of both teacher and student and regulates their relations within a framework of mutual respect. Contrary to common misconceptions, authority does not inhibit freedom but rather situates freedoms within a structured framework. A rational approach to authority is an integral component of democracy predicated on freedoms. The absence of authority, or authority vacuum, in an environment comprising immature individuals who have not completed their development provokes anarchy. Such anarchy, in turn, obstructs others from exercising their freedoms. Within an institution like a school—encasing developing students with relatively fragile value systems—lack of authority precipitates chaos. This predicament was also recognized by anarchist philosophers such as Bakunin, who notably remarked:

"The principle of authority, in the education of children, constitutes the natural point of departure ; it is legitimate, necessary, when applied to children of a tender age, whose intelligence has not yet openly developed itself. But as the development of everything, and consequently of education, implies the gradual negation of the point of departure, this principle must diminish as fast as education and instruction advance, giving place to increasing liberty. All rational education is at bottom nothing but this progressive immolation of authority for the benefit of liberty, the final object of education necessarily being the formation of free men full of respect and love for the liberty of others. Therefore the first day of the pupils' life, if the school takes infants scarcely able as yet to stammer a few words, should be that of the greatest authority and an almost entire absence of liberty ; but its last day should be that of the greatest liberty and the absolute abolition of every vestige of the animal or divine principle of authority."[14]

Therefore, once the logic of power/authority is properly comprehended, it becomes evident that it does not inhibit the development of individual freedom; rather, it rightly directs the formation of the personality and establishes the legal framework necessary for freedom. In light of these analyses, it can be asserted that the modern model is more functional than the postmodern model in terms of the exercise of authority and the safeguarding of freedoms. Nevertheless, the modern model requires further development in accordance with educational research findings, along with increased sensitivity and flexibility regarding how the teacher's power and authority ought to be exercised.

Evaluation and Conclusion

As the preceding analysis suggests, neither the modern nor the postmodern model, taken in isolation, provides a wholly sufficient or universally practicable framework for education. From an epistemological standpoint, the modern model appears more coherent and educationally grounded, as it affirms the possibility of objective knowledge, recognizes the

[14] M. Bakunin, *Gof and State, trs. by Paul Avrich*, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1970, p. 42-43.

existence of an external reality independent of the subject, and offers criteria for distinguishing knowledge from non-knowledge. In contrast, the postmodern model's subjectivist orientation—which virtualizes objective reality and emphasizes the incommensurability of subjective knowledges—lacks comparable epistemic rigor.

However, the modern model's conceptualization of teachers as mere transmitters of knowledge and students as passive recipients presents significant pedagogical limitations. It tends to reinforce rote learning and promotes a teacher-centered approach that marginalizes learner agency. Philosophically, the dichotomy between teacher-centered and student-centered education is a false binary; it reduces the complexity of the educational process to oppositional extremes, neglecting the interdependence of its components.

In this context, the postmodern emphasis on the learner as a co-constructor of knowledge offers a more dynamic and interactive pedagogical approach. Yet this must be tempered with the modern model's realist conception of knowledge and reality to form a more balanced and functional framework. Such a synthesis transcends reductive dichotomies and affirms the collaborative, dialogical, and cooperative nature of meaningful education.

Further, while the postmodern call for greater curricular flexibility has merit, especially in promoting inclusivity and responsiveness to diverse contexts, uncritical flexibilization can undermine the coherence of national educational programs. It risks the introduction of unscientific content under the banners of locality, multiculturalism, or pluralism. Although a degree of curricular flexibility is both feasible and desirable, it must not come at the expense of scientific integrity or the foundational values of modern education.

With regard to assessment, privileging either summative (outcome-based) or formative (process-based) evaluation exclusively is reductive. An effective educational system requires a thoughtful integration of both, balancing measurable outcomes with developmental processes.

In terms of socialization, the postmodern model's focus on emotional engagement and interpersonal interaction supports social cohesion but may, if unchecked, lead to excessive socialization that compromises individual autonomy and privacy. Conversely, the modern model's de-emphasis of affective dimensions risks alienating learners and overemphasizing autonomy at the expense of community. A sustainable educational model must navigate this tension, preserving both individual agency and social connectedness through a dialectical integration of the two paradigms.

When considered through the lens of authority and power, the postmodern model's wholesale rejection of authority in favor of unbounded freedom, equality, and individuality is philosophically and pedagogically problematic. The modern model's conception of authority—as bounded by principles, norms, and regulations—offers a more defensible approach, one that reconciles authority with freedom and personal autonomy.

In conclusion, educational theory and practice should not rest on exclusive allegiance to any single paradigm. Rather, it is both intellectually responsible and pedagogically necessary to critically engage with the insights of multiple models, synthesizing their respective strengths into coherent and contextually responsive frameworks. Uncritical adoption of the postmodern model as the sole foundation for education risks fragmenting national coherence, undermining the scientific basis of curricula, and eroding universal humanistic values. An educational philosophy that collapses the distinction between knowledge and non-knowledge, truth and falsehood, and elevates pluralism, locality, and subjectivity as untouchable absolutes is ill-equipped to sustain a viable, rigorous, and inclusive educational enterprise.

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