JOURNAL OF NARRATIVE AND LANGUAGE STUDIES | ISSN: 2148-4066
NALANS
Journal of Narrative and Language Studies – December 2018, Volume 6 – Issue 11

Note to Editor

Theory of Postromantic Education in the Postmodernist Era: Maxims

Mustafa Zeki Çıraklı*

APA Citation:
Çıraklı, M. Z. (2018). Editorial. Theory of postromantic education in the postmodernist era: Maxims. *Journal Narrative and Language Studies,* 6(11), 133-136.

I

Literary terms have not thus far failed to catch the attention of the researchers in the field, but its true background pertaining to humanist approaches as well as its extent concerning post-method premise has yet to be elucidated philosophically. Nor sounds the existing literature on the issue illuminating enough as it misses the maxims of the legitimacy of the notion of "education." Granting the debt of the educational thinkers to Romanticism, I am sharing these maxims particularly for those who are "teaching" language, literature, translation and the arts although we all know, at least feel, that learning is hardly achievable without creation and creativity, and that teaching has been the fantasy of the despots conceiving education as a bad idea.

II

We are now at the threshold of a new age: different than the jazz age of the language and literature class; drinking and alcohol is forbidden while drunkenness is invisibly roaming around. Considering the vast scope of the existing literature in the educational sciences, the references to those who have invested considerable time to develop new techniques, strategies and methods are frequently lacking in philosophical reflections as to what makes the difference between educational "space" and "setting." I humbly suggest reconsidering the findings and terminologies of literature and narratology to renovate the views on the future of education and to project critical points in relation to what makes it possible to reincarnate human being as such. Therefore, I argue that today's educational philosophy can solely be based upon a "postromantic framework" regarding the historical context of the so-called postmodernist era.

III

You can say, "I feel as if I were reading a piece of Kumaravadivelu's works though it is entitled as "postromantic" rather than "postmodern! "Yet, I need to differentiate between the postromantic framework and the post-method approaches. Certain parameters of postromantic

---

*Assoc. Prof. Dr., Karadeniz Technical University, Department of Western Languages and Literature.
mzcirakli@ktu.edu.tr

theory may signpost conformity with post-method pedagogy based on the post-modernist educational philosophy that violates hierarchy in class by featuring plurality and appraising decentralization. The notion of the post-method still implies the primacy of method, or set of methods, even though eclectic, and though it focuses on the democratization of the setting. It is still based on the social context rather than the individual learner since it is determined, in Lacanian sense, by the Symbolic Order. What is more, it is still "teaching-oriented." Here, the notion of "democratizing" should be replaced with "humanising", which is crucially of priority at a time when man is suffering from dehumanisation.

IV

As long as the concepts of "student," "teacher" and "class" are being preserved, we cannot talk of conformity with the historical postmodernity. That would be ridiculous at least in philosophical sense. It is clear that classical and modernist education would be drowned in these waters. Post-method approach was right at appraising plurality and decentralization and resisting any kind of "setting" that produces hierarchy in class. However, Postromantic Framework seeks beyond. It replaces "student" with "human learner" and envisages the individual, in Wordsworth's terms, with the quality of "wise passiveness," inherently associated with imagination, inspiration and creativity. Postromantic Educational Framework should therefore refer itself to the notion of learning but it would never adopt a learning-centered attitude, that is, it is not obsessed with learning and teaching. Its priority is to exhume the human potential and disinter the human naturalness in today's postmodern context.

V

The illusioned teacher is obsessed with a trinity of following convictions: Emotional Perfectionism (Tragedy), Ethical Perfectionism (Comedy) and Ontological Perfectionism (the Absurd). A tragic lesson is therefore serious and complete with a certain magnitude. A tragic class is embellished with every kind of artistic ornament in language. It represents (wo)men, as student or teacher, in action through pity/parody and fear/laughter affecting the proper purgation/permeation (examination) of these emotions. Purgation and relief, the Greek notion, is catharsis/catalysis, only to be feasible when the creativity of the learner is keenly murdered in a very organized, planned, managed way in line with the holy syllabus. Long live Aristotle! Can we explain the following statement with reference to Aristotle's view of tragedy: "In a tragic lesson/classroom setting there is no blood, but murder." Classroom can additionally be a comic setting when it "tames" with laughter and humiliation. Even more, a classroom, at its best, is a surreal setting having no genuine touch with life and human being.

VI

"I have never let my schooling interfere with my education" uttered earlier Mark Twain, foreshadowing the paradigm shift in education: the end of class. Only can life provide "spatiality" and "memory". It is implied then; class is associated with memorisation whereas life is accumulated with memory. No Memorization but Memory. Unless educational setting is transformed into "space," there would be no ground for human being, experience and learner (not student).

VII

Space is experiential whereas place is extensional. Space is therefore meaningful, functional and expressive. Space is human. Hence, I argue that classroom setting is infected with temporality whereas space stirs experientiality (spatiality) and that space turns out to be both functional and expressive for the human-learner (not student), who always retains a reflective and retrospective memory. Therefore, the memorial and expressive functions of space can be outlined as follows: a) Allegorical Function (comparison) b) Function of Transfer (Transitional Relief) c) Transpositional Function (Change from Lack to Loss) d) Trespassing Function (Getting into the Realm of the Incurable).

VIII

Creativity is human while mimicry is social. Human-learner is more of an individual than a social being. Learning, as an essentially creative and melancholic act, is never complete since the act of learning has much to do with the arts, having the individual meaningfully cling to life. Hence, as every artist does, human-learner clings to lack and pathos of the postmodernist era. Learning can provide a "cure" or "therapeutic" effect in the treatment of postmodern melancholy.

IX

Fallacy of assessment is a trap, for learning is not imaginable through the stages of an educational organization and in the classrooms. At the earliest, it is a phenomenon that can happen or commence when the organizational process is over. “A good story starts when it is really over” says A. Cohen.

X

Spontaneity is among the essential features characterising the postromantic framework. The State of Nature and the authenticity in the nature of human-learner can manifest itself through spontaneity. Remember the moments when you and your human-companions (not students) are relaxed enough that you can surprise yourself with spontaneity, particularly when it is not all managed or planned. As Edward Norton suggests “this is what you should be chasing, this feeling of spontaneity.”

XI

Creative drama can help achieve spontaneity (except for language learning settings). Any creative drama performance in language and literature classes can bring together critical concepts of “experientiality” and “fictionality,” which I discuss within the scope of “postromantic theory of education in the postmodernist era.” Through the integration of the techniques mainly based on improvisational act of creative play, non-exhibitional dramatic action is aimed at being imbued with insights into the process-oriented performance of the human-learners (participants). The participants are guided by a leader to share the imagination of the author, to contribute to the enactment of the envisaged fictional world created by the text, and predominantly to reflect on their own experience at various levels: real (as idle audience), implied (as abstract reader), imagined (as attentive reader) and manipulative (as deconstructive and reconstructive producer). Through employing techniques offered by creative drama, combining the verbal qualities and implications of figurative language of poetry and

considering the postmodernist inclinations for invention, reproduction, visualisation, virtualisation and fictionality, the human-learners' "natural" world are involved in the creative play of the individuals in the age of *simulacrum*.

XII

Human beings are gradually becoming robotlike entities while artificial intelligence is increasingly making humanised robots. Thus, the postmodernist melancholy due to the lack of "reality" and "actuality" in the post-truth era is merged with the individual melancholy owing to the lack of Self in the post-information era. In a nutshell, what is stunning about these maxims is that they hardly promise an ingenious way to escape from the dilemma of education, nor call for a new educational approach; rather, they seek to metamorphose the dehumanised educational setting into an experiential space for the human-learners. That is the heart of the matter!

References

Ayers, D. (2008). *Literary theory: A reintroduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Eagleton, T. (1996). *Literary theory: An introduction: Anniversary edition*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Habib, M. A. R. (2011). *Literary criticism from Plato to the present: An introduction*. Oxford: Wiley & Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (1990) *The condition of the postmodern*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Herman, D. (2013) *Storytelling and the sciences of mind*. MA: MIT Press.

Herman, D., Manfred J., & Ryan, M. L., Eds. (2010) *Routledge encyclopedia of narrativetheory*. London: Routledge.

Hühn, P., Pier, J., Schmid, W., & Jörg, S., Eds. (2009) *The living handbook of narratology*. Hamburg: De Gruyter.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (1994). The postmethod condition: (E)merging strategies for second/foreign language teaching. TESOL Quarterly, 28(1), 27-48.

Lacan, J. (1981). *The four fundamental concepts of psycho-analysis*. ed. Alan Miller,trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Norton.

Celce-Murcia, M., Ed. (2003) Teaching English as a second or foreign language. Boston:Heinle & Heinle.

Nunan, D. (2003). *Practical English language teaching*. New York: McGraw-Hill/Contemporary.

Rancière, J. (1991). *The ignorant schoolmaster: Five lessons in intellectual emancipation*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press.

Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed., Cambridge Language Teaching Library). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511667305

Sartre, J. P. (1988). *"What is literature?" and other Essays*. Harvard University Press.

Scrivener, J. (2005). *Learning teaching*: *A guidebook for English language teachers* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Macmillan.

Tegmark, M. (2017) *Life 3.0. Being human in the age of artificial intelligence audible audiobook.* NY: Knopf.

Williams, M., & Burden, R. L. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers: A social constructivist approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.