

The learner-centred paradigm of education: its features and philosophical basis

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Abstract. Nowadays, educators notice swift changes in education as a social institution. One possible way to describe and analyze its transformations is T. Kuhn's paradigmatic approach applied to education. The paper states that the contemporary educators work within the learner-centred paradigm. However, it may seem that education is still influenced by the previous paradigm. So, the paper has two main objectives. The first one is to consider the two educational paradigms: the teacher-centred and the learner-centred to show their differences. Secondly, it is essential to know what concepts are topical in contemporary philosophy, and if they coincide with the learner-centred paradigm. The author attempts to distinguish philosophical concepts that have a considerable impact on the worldview at present. They are the following: four-dimensional ontology, constructivist epistemology, the problem of agency, personal identity, and the narrative approach to the questions of identity and cognition. These concepts are explained and analyzed through the lenses of the learner-centred paradigm.

1 Introduction

At present, the humankind experiences dramatic changes caused by technological development. As a result, one faces transformation in all spheres and social institutions. Y.N. Harari states that rapidly developing technologies cause disorientation and anxiety [1]. The system of education is not an exception. The changes happening there are so fast that it is not able to adapt to them.

K. Robinson remarks that as a result of economic and technological development, we face the situation of academic deficiency, which has two important outcomes. Firstly, due to economic transformation, the amount of workplaces decreases. As a result, more graduating students apply for a job, for which they are overqualified. Accordingly, a degree is not a guarantee that a student will find a job. Moreover, it leads to an increase in educational standards and pupils and students' loss of motivation to learn. Secondly, employers are disappointed with the content of academic programmes. It is necessary for them to find an employee who is flexible, adaptable, and communicative. Academic programmes are not designed for developing those personality traits and competencies [2].

According to E. Blass, the system of education contradicts the employers' requirements. Behaviour, considered as cheating at school, is often treated as a good strategy at work [3, p. 130]. J.W. Cook says that the impact of technological development is considerable, and as a result, the purpose of education becomes unclear at present. That is why the school system should be redesigned [4, p. 3].

Thus, there is a necessity to reconsider the development of education. One of the possible approaches to achieve this task is the paradigmatic approach introduced by T. Kuhn in the book „The Structure of Scientific Revolutions”. He defined the concept of a paradigm as “accepted examples of actual scientific practice – examples which include law, theory, application, and instrumentation together” as the paradigm provides “coherent traditions of research” [5, p. 10]. Though T. Kuhn applied the concept of paradigm exclusively to describe the development of science as a social institution, the researchers think that the concept can be used in other domains. For example, S. Crowell says that the paradigmatic approach can be applied to culture and education, as well as to science. Such educational paradigm is regarded as a dynamic unity [6, p. 61]. In “A Companion to the Philosophy of Education”, the word “paradigm” is used to describe a philosophical concept of education in a certain period. Therefore, there can be distinguished the Aristotelian paradigm, Neohumanists' paradigm, the classical Marxian paradigm, the feminist paradigm, and others [7]. S. Loomis and J. Rodriguez use the notion of “paradigm” as a certain way to organize education as a social institution that is treated as a shape of human interaction that “evolves from prior philosophical commitments” [8, p. 53].

Concerning paradigms in education, R. Barr and J. Tagg prefer the metaphor of a game. They write the following: “A paradigm is like the rules of a game: one of the functions of the rules is to define the playing field and domain of possibilities on that field. But a new paradigm may specify a game played on a larger or

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smaller field with a larger or smaller domain of legitimate possibilities” [9, pp. 14-15]. In their opinion, a paradigm sets the rules and basic principles of people’s activity.

According to W. Huitt, a paradigm is a mental representation or a shared worldview [10]. It is also the representation in a mind of an agent of “how an entity is structured (the parts and their interrelationships) and how it functions (behaviour within a specific context or time dimension)” [11]. However, W. Huitt admits that these two concepts are not synonyms: a worldview gives an overall image of reality, while a paradigm shows how the worldview is understood and investigated [10, p. 74]. Thus, a paradigm is a framework with a more precise presentation of factors and their relationship. W. Huitt distinguishes four main paradigms in science: mechanistic, existential or phenomenological, organismic or systems, and process paradigm [10, p. 69]. He admits that the paradigms of education should be based on the following frameworks:

1. Context or socio-cultural background;
2. Input or subjects’ characteristics before learning and teaching;
3. The process including factors that describe teachers and pupils thinking, feeling, planning and other activities and behavioural patterns in learning;
4. Output including assessments and results of learning, compared with the aim of education [11].

D.F. Labaree does not use the word “paradigm” in his research. However, he describes long existing systems of education as a hierarchy of such levels as the rhetorical level, the system’s formal structure, teaching practice, and student learning. The rhetorical level means the public opinion towards schooling and the primary goal of education. This level is the easiest to influence. The second level of the system’s formal structure concerns all elements in the school organization: educational policies, curriculum and the content of education, the classroom management, textbooks and manuals, the teachers’ professional development. The next level is regarded as the core of the educational reforms. It concerns the questions about how a teacher works and what strategies and methods he or she uses. D.F. Labaree admits that if teachers do not put the demands of the reform into the classroom practice, it faces the problems and eventually stops. The fourth level is the students’ behavioural strategies, attitudes toward the process of education, and ideas of academic success or efficiency of the education systems [12, pp. 110-111].

Thus, the concept of educational paradigm can be defined as educational traditions shared and accepted by all educators at a certain time. These traditions include peculiarities of education as a social institution, the purpose of education, the organization of the school, including types of classroom management, the methods to teach and learn, the process of assessment, and values transmitted through the process of training and upbringing.

However, the most important component of an educational paradigm is philosophical concepts, concerning metaphysical and epistemological views, key ideas about personhood and personal development.

Philosophical concepts shape the worldview in society. They are the basis of the educational paradigm as well. Therefore, the primary task of the philosophy of education is to analyze such concepts and observe their impact on education.

There are different ways to distinguish educational paradigms in the philosophy of education. On the one hand, the scholars distinguish analytic, transcendental (Kantian) pedagogy, critical rationality, phenomenology, existentialism, hermeneutic, critical-emancipatory and other paradigms [13, p. 10]. On the other hand, Kuhn’s idea of scientific paradigm states that two or more well-developed paradigms cannot exist simultaneously at a certain time. A paradigm exists within the stage of normal science followed by the scientific revolution and paradigm shift. Thus, phenomenology, existentialism, hermeneutic should be treated as approaches within one paradigm, but not as separate paradigms since they exist simultaneously. There is no significant change in the organization of education as a social institution. Moreover, education as a social institution cannot be separated from the socio-cultural and socio-economical context. Therefore, each paradigm should represent the socio-economic type of society. A. Collins and R. Halverson admit that the industrial revolution created universal schooling as a new education system different from the apprenticeship, and the digital revolution is transforming education now [14].

Taking these factors into account, the researchers distinguish two main paradigms of education: the learner-centred and the teacher-centred. It is necessary to admit that the educators may call them in different ways. For example, J. Dewey, the founder of the philosophy of education, distinguishes two paradigms of education: traditional and progressive [15, p. 17]. M. Lipman speaks about reflexive education, based on the development of critical, caring, and creative thinking and traditional (non-reflective) education [16]. P. Freire considers two ways to characterize the relationship between the teacher and the pupil: through banking education, leading to the oppression of the pupils, and through dialogic education, which is considered as “the practice of freedom” [17, p. 81]. W. Huitt distinguishes two paradigms: based on instructivism (teacher-centred) and based on constructivism (learner-centred) [11]. G. Jacobs speaks about a new person-centred paradigm and the previous one which remained unnamed [18]. S.L. Watson and C.M. Reigeluth call these two paradigms: sorting-based and learning-based [19]. R. Pring analyses subject-centred and child-centred educational paradigms [20]. R. Barr and J. Tagg outline the instruction paradigm and the learning paradigm [9].

We can say that the teacher-centred paradigm predominated before the twentieth century, and the learner-centred paradigm has been developing since that time. R. Pring states that the beginning of learner-centred paradigm is associated with the philosophy of pragmatism, developed by C.S. Peirce and W. James, and especially with J. Dewey’s views on education, outlined in “Democracy and Education” and “Experience and Education” [20, p. 81]. Since that time, the learner-centred paradigm has been developing.

However, there is an opposite view. V. Terziev thinks that the teacher-centred paradigm continued throughout the twentieth century, whereas the learner-centred paradigm has formed in the twenty-first century [21, p. 83]. J.C. Bodinet also writes that the changes in education happen slower than it is expected, so we are still within the education system created for the needs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries [22]. M. Kochetkov admits that the new paradigm is still not formed, especially in Russian higher educational establishments, and there are views that the new paradigm will deteriorate the situation and even led to the decrease of graduates' competence level [23, p. 37].

In out opinion, the educators work within the learner-centred paradigm. However, this paradigm is still forming. The paper has two main objectives. The first one is to characterize the teacher-centred and the learner-centred paradigms to show their peculiarities and differences. The second objective is to outline the philosophical principles, on which the learner-centred paradigm is based.

2 The teacher-centred paradigm of education

The teacher-centred paradigm is well described in P. Freire's book "The Pedagogy of the Oppressed", in which he develops his "banking" concept of education. According to P. Freire, the main characteristic of the paradigm mentioned above is that the teacher is considered to be an active subject, who transmits information in narration. The teacher is often the only source of information, and the teacher's main task is to "fill" the pupils' consciousness with ready-made answers to the worldview questions [17, p. 71]. The pupils are regarded as passive objects. They listen to the teacher's instructions carefully and memorize the information. In the teacher-centred paradigm, the teacher does not demand the pupils to understand the information because it will be enough for them to learn it mechanically and reproduce it on tests. The main method of learning is to drill. The pupils' primary task is to obey, but not to think critically [17, pp. 73-74].

In the teacher-centred paradigm, the teacher uses narration as the main method to present information. The teacher tells different facts about reality that are collected and systematized by the pupils. As a result, the pupils treat reality as unchanged, static, and predictable. That is why the content of the provided information is detached from reality, and its meaning and significance are lost. Therefore, P. Freire states: "Words are emptied of their concreteness and become a hollow, alienated, and alienating verbosity" [17, p. 71].

In P. Freire's concept, education is viewed as "an act of depositing", where the teacher is a depositor and the pupils are depositories [17, p. 72]. The teacher transmits knowledge to the pupils, and this procedure is the same as to deposit money in a bank. The pupils collect knowledge like the bank stores the deposit. If the pupils are hard-working and collect knowledge well, they can get "interests" on deposits. It means that they cumulate transmitted knowledge and add to it some own

conclusions. Thus, in the banking concept of education, the best teacher is someone, who "fills the receptacles" more completely, and the best pupil is someone, who "permits to be filled" [17, p. 72].

P. Freire gives the following characteristics of the society of oppression and the teacher-centred paradigm:

- (a) the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- (b) the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
- (c) the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- (d) the teacher talks and the students listen - meekly;
- (e) the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
- (f) the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
- (g) the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;
- (h) the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;
- (i) the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students;
- (j) the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere Objects" [17, p. 73].

Concluding the discussion of the teacher-centred paradigm, P. Freire emphasizes that such educational process increases contradictions between educators and children, which results in the society of oppression, which is full of adults, devoid of creativity and critical thinking. Therefore, the teacher-centred paradigm is typical for non-democratic and revolutionary societies [17, p. 78].

3 The learner-centred paradigm of education

In the book "Experience and Education" J. Dewey outlined the principles of pragmatic education, which formed the basis of the teacher-centred paradigm. Firstly, the primary task of the school is to cultivate individuality and self-expression. Secondly, free activity should be instead of discipline imposed from above. Thirdly, learning is regarded as the acquisition of experience in activities, which prepare the pupil to life. Finally, J. Dewey emphasizes that the aim of education has not to be static. Educators are to take into consideration the changing world. Thus, the learner-centred paradigm is regarded as opposed to the previous one [15, pp. 19-20].

The first considerable change happened in the learning-centred paradigm concerns the purpose of education. According to J. Dewey, the main objective of education is to prepare schoolchildren "for future responsibilities and for success in life, by means of acquisition of the organized bodies of information and prepared forms of skill which comprehend the material of instruction" [15, p. 18]. In J. Dewey's opinion, education is regarded as preparation for work and executing the duties of a citizen. M. Lipman also treats the purpose of education as preparation for life since the pupils should become reasonable adults. However, he

calls education “the great laboratory for rationality”, so the purpose of education is not only to teach children to complete different tasks at work but also to teach them how to think rationally and prepare the schoolchildren for making decisions [16, p. 22].

According, K. Robinson for contemporary educational establishments are not only academic but also market-orientated, the purpose of education is developing a pupil’s creativity, because being creative is a vital skill in the changeable world that helps to adapt to any situation, and it is always a demanded skill [2]. E Blass thinks that in the twenty-first century, the primary purpose of education remains the same. It means to prepare a pupil for life. However, it does not mean to survive. In his opinion, the purpose of education is to prepare pupils for the new changeable world. It is possible to achieve if the learners will have the habit of learning [3, p. 132]. Thus, the purpose of education is to teach pupils how strategies of learning.

J.W. Cook states that in the twenty-first century, education should be focused on sustainable wellbeing, which means having a successful and meaningful life [4, p. 14]. This idea can be realized in practice on different levels. On the individual level, sustainable wellbeing stands for physical and mental health, life-management skills, and inclusion into social groups. On the level of a community, this idea is put into actions in local communities where citizens share their vision of the future and cooperate. On the governmental level, sustainable wellbeing concerns the decentralization of authority and horizontal approaches to policy challenges. On the planetary level, sustainable wellbeing presupposes caring attitude towards nature and wise usage of the resources. The primary task of education is to transmit these values. Going to school, a child is not separated from real life, so the task of the teachers is to show how to communicate efficiently, how to be a responsible citizen, and how to solve real-life problems [4, p. 14].

As for the context of education, formal knowledge is replaced by practical activities in the learner-centred paradigm. P. Freire admits that education should be problem-posing because such education based on solving practical problems stimulates a person’s creativity and desire to get better. According to the researcher, education and practice are inseparable as he states that “education is thus constantly remade in the praxis” [17, p. 84]. Moreover, it also highlights the importance of the principle of life-long learning. As J. Dewey stated: “The aim of education is to enable individuals to continue their education – or that the object and reward of learning is continued capacity for growth” [24, p. 63].

In the twenty-first century, life-long learning is one of the major trends in education. C.A. Chițiba defines the life-long learning as “the continuous development and improvement of the knowledge and skills needed for employment and personal fulfilment through formal and informal learning opportunities” [25, p. 1944]. The researcher also distinguishes four principles of life-long learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live, and learning to be. The first principle means

mastering learning tools but not getting structured knowledge. The second one stands for an adaptation of learning to future work. Learning to live is efficient and non-violent interaction with others. Finally, learning to be is based on the idea that learning should contribute to personal development [25, p. 1945].

The learner-centred paradigm proves that life-long learning is possible when learning is based on the pupils’ activity. According to J. Dewey, learning in activity is the only way to get the necessary experience, which he defines as “a practical enterprise, made possible by knowledge of the recurrent and stable, of facts and laws” [26, p. iv]. The philosopher outlines two principles of experience: continuity and interaction [15, p. 44]. Without them, it is impossible to realize a person’s activity. Even the first knowledge of how to walk and talk is an activity [15, p. 74]. The process of communication in society is also an activity. Therefore, learning by doing is a natural process for a human being. M. Lipman also believes that it is possible to educate successfully when education presupposes the practical application of getting knowledge in the problematical setting [16, p. 199].

However, the learning in activity is possible only when a pupil is motivated since coercion and pressure abrogate the significance of his or her actions. So the learning is based on the intrinsic factors: motivation, desires, and interests. That is why the traditional roles and behavioural patterns of the teacher and the pupil are changed. In the learner-centred paradigm, the teacher cannot be the only active participant in the process of education if the pupil remains passive. They are both active. That is why the teacher is viewed not as a mentor but as an assistant or an advisor. M. Lipman says that a teacher facilitator. Such a teacher is not authoritarian, but democratic [16, p. 18]. The teacher should guide pupils and encourage them to get new achievements, focuses on children’s perspectives and helps to develop their inclinations. In the research conducted by A-M. Iversen, A.S. Pedersen, L. Krogh, and A.A. Jensen, it is emphasized that a teacher is a facilitator and a resource person, whereas pupils and students participate in collaborative teaching and learning. A teacher gives them control and responsibility over their education [27].

This shift in relations between the teacher and the pupil demands a change in methods of teaching and different organization of the classroom. In the learner-centred paradigm, learning is treated as dialogical, so the dialogue is one of the most important methods. P. Freire writes that dialogue is the only possible way to educate a human being. It is the essence of education and its “existential necessity” since action and reflection are united in the dialogue [17, p. 88]. With the help of dialogue, a person can learn how to think critically. M. Lipman compares dialogue to conversation. He states that dialogue is unstable, unbalanced, and collaborative, that is why the dialogue is thought provocative. M. Lipman defines dialogue as a mutual exploration or inquiry that leads to personal growth and the development of mental skills [16, pp. 87-88]. In the dialogue, the participants develop self-criticism and self-correction. Moreover, the pupils learn how to achieve practical

results: how to make decisions and reach to the conclusion [16, p. 111]. A.-M. Iversen and A.S. Pedersen call this new method of teaching “co-creative generative dialogue” [28, p. 17]. It is interdisciplinary and focuses on innovation. The primary task of the method is creating new ideas together. The scholars emphasize that the co-creative generative dialogue turns into the team co-creative generative dialogue when it occurs in the classroom. This dialogue is based on non-violent communication, emphatic listening and conflict management [28, pp. 17-18]. J.C. Bodinet shares her experience of dialogical learning implementation in the classroom. She offers such methods as the visioning workshop, discussion and large circle discussions, concentric circles, small group work, Socratic inquiry, the world cafe method, and guest lectures [22].

In the learner-centred paradigm, one more important method and a way of classroom management is the project method implemented by J. Dewey and W. Kilpatrick. According to Dewey, when a teacher is aware of pupils’ motivations, needs and past experiences, he or she can suggest a plan or project, which contributes and organizes students into the group. The plan or project is called “a co-operative enterprise”, it is a suggestion, and it cannot be imposed from above [15, p. 72]. The teacher tries to manage the group in such a way that all pupils’ experience should contribute to the development of the project. Then, the process of interaction or “the reciprocal give-and-take” occurs, and pupils learn through the development of social intelligence [15, p. 72].

Moreover, in the information age, the information increases greatly, so there is a necessity to develop a skill on how to differentiate reliable and unreliable informational sources. P. Freire writes that the present demands critical spirit and flexibility [29, p. 6]. According to M. Lipman, critical thinking is a trend in education [16, p. 44]. M. Black, J. McPeck, I. Scheffler, K. Popper, R. Nickerson, and many other prominent philosophers and educators published books, concerning the development of critical thinking. H. Siegel emphasizes that critical thinking is organized on rationality. He defined critical thinking as principled thinking, based on reasons. H. Siegel believes that to teach critical thinking means “to teach students how the reasons are assessed, what principles govern such reasons, and why (we think) such principles are to be adherent to” [30, p. 8]. Thus, critical thinking is vitally important not only to cognition but also to the ethics of education.

However, N. Kozachenko admits that the issue of critical thinking is so popular that there are many definitions and approaches to it [31, p. 165]. Critical thinking is often viewed as rational thinking based on logical laws. According to M. Lipman, critical thinking as formal logical thinking can be treated as “a disconnected, discontinuous fragment, shouldered with responsibility for upgrading the whole of education” [16, p. 6]. Such logical thinking is not enough for developing rationality. Therefore, M. Lipman believes that critical thinking should be reflective, which

means not only critical but also creative and caring. It is developed through the dialogue between a teacher and a pupil and within the class [16, p. 84].

The development of critical thinking and the realization of the project method are not possible without fruitful and favourable school environment. In “Democracy and Education”, J. Dewey states that every environment can play an educative role in upbringing. He writes: “We never educate directly, but indirectly by means of the environment” [24, p. 22]. Furthermore, the educator emphasizes that school is the environment of a special kind, as it has a constant and controllable educative influence on an immature person. School is a simplified environment because it has a clear purpose of its influence: to prepare a person for life and develop mental and moral faculties. School as a controllable environment can eliminate negative or “unworthy features” of society to “establish a purified medium of action” [24, p. 24].

Nevertheless, school as a special environment cannot achieve this task without the principle of democracy, lying on its basis. For school is a society in miniature, it should be based on democracy because democracy is “mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience” [24, p. 101]. Firstly, without democratic communication between educators and pupils values and experience cannot be transmitted because dialogical education presupposes democracy. M. Lipman thinks that inquiry in the classroom is possible when “students listen to one another with respect, build on one another’s ideas, challenge one another to supply reasons for otherwise unsupported opinions, assist each other in drawing inferences from what has been said, and seek to identify one another’s assumptions” [16, p. 20]. So he admits that democracy and reasonableness are two principles or regulative ideas which lie in the basis of the contemporary paradigm of education. According to M. Lipman, democracy is crucial for the development of social structure [16, p. 204]. Secondly, for school resembles society, the organization of education based on democracy strengthens democratic institutions.

P. Freire states that increase of the general level of education and increase of the democratic level are interconnected: educated people cannot obey the authoritarian government, so the development of critical thinking causes the development of democracy [29, p. 32]. J. Dewey thinks that cultivating democracy at school brings up responsible citizens in all spheres and vice versa: the development of democratic institutions forms the request in society to educate a person on the principle of democracy [24].

In the twenty-first century, the principle of democracy should be in and out of the classroom. E. Blass mentions that nowadays the teacher makes an assessment at fixed time points, without paying attention to the pupil’s readiness. That should be eliminated, because in the twenty-first century, “assessment is submitted when the learner feels ready” [3, p. 133]. J.W. Cook writes that today’s school has to move towards complexity. It means shared responsibility between all school administration, teachers, pupils, their parents and members of a local community in

governance [4, p. 17]. Obviously, shared responsibility is not possible without horizontal management based on democratic principles and mutual respect.

4 The philosophical ideas for the learner-centred paradigm

The learner-centred paradigm was influenced greatly by the philosophy of pragmatism. However, it is necessary to outline several important philosophical issues that are developing nowadays and shaping the worldview of contemporary generations. These philosophical ideas concern metaphysics, epistemology, and practical philosophy. They are viewed by many contemporary philosophers, especially in analytic philosophy.

Firstly, the learner-centred paradigm emphasizes that the society and the world are unstable and changeable, and they are in sustainable development, so the pupil should be ready for these changes. Therefore, it is important to understand what change is and how it occurs. To give an explanation, we should refer to metaphysics since this branch of philosophy describes abstract qualitative characteristics of being as they are the basis of a person's understanding of reality. In the twentieth century, analytic philosophy develops a new metaphysical theory, which tries to explain the existence of an object or a person both in space and over time. Thus, the new theory considers four dimensions of an object, so it is known as four-dimensional ontology. It was introduced by D. Lewis and it is developed by R. Nozick, H. Noonan, R. Chisholm, and other contemporary philosophers. Four-dimensional ontology describes a thing changes or remains the same over time.

D. Lewis defines four-dimensional ontology as perdurance of an object or a person over time. Perdurance is opposed to the ideas of endurance at a certain time. Endurance theories, also known as three-dimensional ontology, regard an object as being wholly present at different periods. So it means that an object shows its features wholly at a time, there are no hidden qualities in an object. If a feature at one period of time is not the same as a feature at another time, it means that an object has changed. If an object perdures over time, it consists of temporal parts or stages, which D. Lewis defines in a similar way to spatial parts. Thus, the philosopher considers temporal parts as events and processes [32, pp. 202-203].

According to four-dimensional ontology, an object is not wholly present at a time, because at a certain time it exists only as a stage or an episode in its development. Therefore, wholly present objects exist as a sum of their temporal parts. In four-dimensional ontology, an object can have some properties at a certain period on time, but it cannot show them on another time, and it does not mean that the object has changed. It means that certain property belongs to one stage of an object, but it does not belong to the other one. Thus, changes over time are treated as more complicated. They are changes in the appearance of an object, but they are not changes in its nature [33, pp. 11-13]. K. Hawley shows the difference between three- and four-dimensional worldviews on the example of a banana. Let us imagine that a banana is

green and then it becomes yellow the next day. According to three-dimensional ontology, a banana has changed its colour. However, in such a situation, four-dimensional ontology treats a banana as multicoloured, so it has not changed in its features, but it has changed some properties of how the features exist [33, p. 13].

For educators, such approach to understanding reality and changes means that a person is a complicated creature, who never wholly exists in all properties at a time, so at a time a person is considered as a person-stage – a stage in the development. Thus, it is impossible to make an opinion about a person once and for all. One should constantly reconsider their attitude to a person from time to time. On the other hand, when a person shows different properties at a time, it may not mean a change in a person, so more attention should be drawn to personal development. The idea of the world as complicated and developing over time highlights the importance of life-long learning. To realize an object as the sum of its temporal parts, a person needs to reconstruct it constantly in mind over time.

The second philosophical concept that is important for the learner-centred paradigm concerns epistemology. As A. Abdula notes, the contemporary philosophy shapes specific attitude towards the cognition. On the one hand, the researchers develop theories of cognition that define knowledge as the way to reveal the truth and to construct reality in a person's consciousness. On the other hand, there is a problem of revealing and justification of the degree of certainty that cognitive forms contain by constructing reality. The subjectivity loses its rational foundation and the reality is constructed on an irrational basis [34, p. 193]. So knowledge is regarded as something unique and subjective. It is constructed in the process of interaction in the community.

The modern epistemology highlights the importance of environment and interaction in the process of cognition. For example, in the book "The Social Construction of Reality" P. Berger and T. Luckmann emphasize that a person is world-open to the environment, and the environment constructs a person as an agent, that is an active self-conscious participant of the socio-cultural process. They admit: "Humanness is socio-culturally variable" [35, p. 67]. What we call "knowledge" is everything an agent learns in socialization and social interaction, so knowledge meditates the objective reality or social world and an agent's consciousness. Knowledge is realized in two senses: "in the sense of apprehending the objectified social reality, and in the sense of ongoingly producing this reality" [35, p. 84]. For knowledge is defined as the socially and culturally determined process of reality production, it cannot be static or unchanged. Thus, the teacher in a learner-centred paradigm cannot keep using the "banking" concept of learning, describing the picture of the world in static facts.

For a person constructs the understanding of reality in the course of socialization, the question arises how personhood is constructed and how it is changed or stays the same over time. This question is about personal identity and agency. It lies between metaphysical and

epistemological domains and unites the concept of four-dimensional ontology and socially determined knowledge acquisition in interaction. For educators, the problem of personal identity may be interesting as the construction of self and agency. In our opinion, these concepts are important because of two reasons. Firstly, a person has to have the same self over time to be capable of realizing the information and the self remains the same and unified when the person interacts with the social environment and develops cognitive faculties over time.

The concepts of personhood and an agent are interconnected. C. Korsgaard, M. Schechtman, C. Rovane state that a person is an agent. According to C. Korsgaard, a person is an active being. However, she admits that an action requires a doer or an agent to whom this action is ascribed and who is regarded as its author [36, p.18]. That is why a person is an agent. C. Rovane adds that a person wants to be an agent, and that is a universal goal of agency [37, p. 85]. She also admits that a person becomes an agent because he or she is involved in the agency-regarding relations, which are necessary and inevitable. In the agency-regarding relations, people mutually recognize themselves as agents and shape their attitude to others, taking into consideration their agency. Besides, being involved in agency-regarding relations a person has got motivation and a purpose to act [37, pp. 48-49].

C. Korsgaard emphasizes that a person as an agent must be unified. It means an agent should have one undivided self to be capable of ascribing actions. This unity of self should remain unchanged over time, so being a unified agent over time presupposes the concept of personal identity [36, p. 7]. E. Olson states that the problem of personal identity has several aspects. Firstly, there is the persistence question that means a person is the same over time and conditions of staying the same person. The second aspect is the problem of evidence, which means that deciding whether a person now is the one who was yesterday. The third issue is about the unity of consciousness that raises the question if it is possible to have a split personality and change the self over time. Finally, personal identity presupposes the question about personhood that is the conditions of being a person. In our opinion, the aspect that should be mentioned concerns the appearance of the unity of consciousness and how it is kept over time [38, pp. 352-355].

According to C. Korsgaard, personal identity is a result of actions and choices [36, p. 1]. While acting, a person can have different motivations. Sometimes, the motivations are mutually exclusive, so a person appears in the situation of inner conflict that threatens the unity of the self. For a person needs to eliminate the conflict, a person needs to choose, and a choice is done, according to the individual understanding of good. When a person makes a choice, he or she ascribes this intention to the self and becomes its author. The next action can lead to a new struggle of motivations. So a new choice should be made. Moreover, the new choice should correlate with the previous one not to deteriorate the struggle of motivations or not create a new one [39, p.121]. C. Korsgaard also states that a person as an agent is

involved in various social practices. The social roles a person plays in society are practical identity that can be defined as a principle, which influences choices in the inner conflict. Thus, a person constitutes the unity of self in actions [36, p. 20].

According to M. Schechtman, to be a person means to live the life of a person. Three elements make up a person's life: individual capacities, typical activities and interactions, and social infrastructure [40, p. 115]. The last component means belonging to various social institutions and the cultural determination of a person's lifestyle. All of these constitute different experiences united as self. M. Schechtman states that the unity of self remains the same over time as it is apprehended as a story or the narrative of a person's life [39, p. 112]. A. MacIntyre says: "The unity of human life is the unity of a narrative quest. Quests sometimes fail, are frustrated, abandoned or dissipated into distractions; and human lives may in all these ways also fail. But the only criteria for success or failure in human life as a whole are the criteria of success or failure in a narrated or to-be-narrated quest" [41, p. 219].

The narrative is considered as an autobiography, which unites different experience and makes life stages coherent. Considering life as narrative, a person can plan the future, because the future is a result of the present and past. So a person understands life as coherent, whole, and unique. For educators, the narrative approach of personal identity and agency is essential as it forms the basis of what is called "individual learning trajectory". Understanding life as a story, one can analyze strengths and weaknesses, inclinations and motivations to choose a path in education. When a person narrates a story of one's life, he or she understands different events better and is more responsible for choices. Such a person is more self-sufficient and prepared for the future. In the learner-centred paradigm, the teacher's task is to help the pupil become an efficient agent of social interaction. This task can be realized when a pupil learns to apprehend life as narrative.

Moreover, the concept of narrative is also applicable to the understanding of the nature of consciousness. K. Atkins says that thinking is narrative, and the process of cognition can be also described as the construction of a narration. The philosopher says that a person can ascribe the word "I" to herself it means to have the first-person perspective. When a person thinks what other people think about him or her, a person acquires the third-person perspective. The second-person perspective is an ability to interact with others. K. Atkins admits that the unity of consciousness is achieved when the first-, second- and the third-perspective unite in the whole self [42, p. 69]. This can be achieved in an inner dialogue while thinking [42, p. 141]. For the thinking is dialogical in nature, learning has to be dialogical too, then, it will become a natural activity for a person. Thus, the narrative approach to personhood justifies the idea of dialogical learning.

5 Conclusions

If one compares the educational principles introduced by J. Dewey with later ideas, one will see that they have not changed. However, when they were put into practice by the contemporary educators, they became more exact. Instead of preparation for life, educators speak about learning to learn. Such a slight change in wording does not stand for change in the essence of the educational process. The purpose of education formulated in the twenty-first century the only emphasizes J. Dewey's statement about the dynamic nature of education and the necessity for educators to take into consideration world changes and, perhaps, economic tendencies. In the twentieth century, many prominent educators emphasize that learning should ground on a pupil's activity and motivation. At present, it is not a piece of advice but a priority. J. Dewey, P. Freire and M. Lipman wrote about the importance of democracy at school. Nowadays, democracy is in teaching, learning and school administration. It is a key component of sustainable wellbeing, which is proclaimed to be the priority in education. Therefore, one can conclude that the learner-centred paradigm was introduced in the twentieth century. Nowadays, it is and improving actual teaching practices and in the process of school administration.

The paradigmatic approach suggested by T. Kuhn shows that it takes time to a paradigm to be formed. For changes in education take place quite slowly, it may take more time for the learner-centred paradigm to be settled down. Besides, the pace of its development is slower than the economic and technological changes. That is why education as a social institution faces a crisis at present. So, the learner-centred paradigm has to develop faster to catch-up with the world changes.

Any paradigm is shaped by worldview ideas, philosophical concepts, and principles. If they remain the same, a paradigm does not shift. The learner-centred paradigm was influenced by the philosophy of pragmatism. Nevertheless, the outlined discussions in contemporary philosophy fully coincide with the tendencies in education. So, the teachers influenced by philosophical concepts maintain the learner-centred paradigm. It means that while the described philosophical concepts remain unchanged, and while they make influence upon the educators' worldview, the paradigm will not change. Thus, the paradigm shift is not expected in the nearest future.

The further perspectives of our work are studying teachers' opinions towards the development of the learner-centred paradigm. It is also necessary to find out what philosophical concepts shaped the educators' worldview, especially in Ukraine, and how they influence actual teaching practices and the educators' attitudes towards the process of reformation and readiness to maintain the learner-centred paradigm.

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