Comparing the Philosophical Views on Language Teaching and Learning

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Abstract

The present study was an attempt to review four of the philosophical views on language teaching and learning including idealism realism, pragmatism, and progressivism. It has tried to investigate the underlying principles of the mentioned views and compare the views regarding the role of teacher, learner, curriculum, etc. The comparison of different factors revealed that in the traditional views, namely idealism and realism, role of the teacher was more dominant than the learners and the views were mostly fixed and objective but in the modern ones, namely pragmatism and progressivism, the role of learner becomes more important and it changes from passive in traditional views to active in modern ones.

Keywords : Philosophical Views, Language Teaching, Language Learning, Idealism, Realism, Pragmatism, Progressivism

Introduction

According to Greek, the word "philosophy" is made up of two words: *philo* which means love and *sophos* which means wisdom. This word means love of wisdom but according to the definition by Longman Dictionary, it means: "the study of the nature and meaning of existence, truth, good and evil, etc" (Spurgeon & Moore, 1994). Based on the definition by Longman Dictionary and considering teaching and learning, philosophy helps teachers to think about key issues and concepts in education, usually by asking some questions like: "What is being taught/learnt?", "What is meant by good life?", "What is knowledge?", "What is the nature of teaching?", "What is the nature of learning?", and "What should be taught/learnt?".. To get the