

MUS 782

Discussion 3 – Stanford Article, Section 2

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Continue reading from the Stanford University document. Read section 2 and talk about your understanding of the content.

Section 2 discusses the origins and importance of analytic philosophy of education. It was helpful to learn that some of the items in the philosophical toolkit are conceptual analysis, careful assessment of arguments, the rooting out of ambiguity, the drawing of clarifying distinctions. These tools were used in analytic philosophy, which had its peak of influence in the early twentieth century.

Several philosophers discussed analytic philosophy. C.D. Hardie wrote *Truth and Fallacy in Educational Theory* where he discussed how the disagreements between philosophers oftentimes centered on word usage, so he proposed using ordinary language analysis. D.J. O'Connor published *An Introduction to Philosophy of Education* noting that use of the word “theory” was just a courtesy title since scientific research was not done on philosophical theories. In *The Language of Education*, Israel Scheffler made the case against use of slogans and clarified definitions (i.e. reportive, stipulative, and programmatic types). Scheffler’s *Reason and Teaching* stated that the fundamental educational ideal is one that encourages rationality and critical thinking. R.D. Archambault’s *Philosophical Analysis and Education*, which became central to the analytic philosophy of education (APE), discussed education as a process of initiation, liberal education, the nature of knowledge, types of teaching, and instruction versus indoctrination.

Marking the difference between education and indoctrination was a core idea of APE. It was decided that a person was educated if they had been changed for the better, acquired knowledge/skills, developed understanding, and began to care for and/or be committed to what they had learned. An assessment to determine if instruction was indoctrination included such questions as what content was taught, instructor’s intention, instruction methods used, and the outcomes seen from various instruction methods.

After a few decades of dominance, APE’s influence declined for several reasons. First, the scope of analytic philosophers’ work was too narrow and not of overall significance. Second, opponents viewed this type of analysis to be too conservative and supportive of traditional values. Third, mainstream philosophy’s criticisms of language analysis reached a tipping point.

Fourth, some prominent philosophers moved away from APE completely by adopting a new style of writing and argumentation. APE is no longer the center of interest, but it did have its time and place.

Reference

Phillips, D. C., & Siegel, H. (2013). Philosophy of Education. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Winter 2013. from <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/education-philosophy/>