

## **Progressive Education in Turkey: Reports of John Dewey and his Successors**

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### **Abstract**

John Dewey, the well-known figure in progressive education, visited Turkey in 1924. Through his visit, Turkey was introduced to progressive education. Although his visit was short, the reports he prepared influenced the shape of the Turkish education system. After Dewey's visit, many foreign educators were invited to Turkey, particularly through the end of the 1950s. Among these, a large number came from the U.S. The aim of this study is to analyze the reports of American specialists who came to Turkey and conducted research on the Turkish education system from the perspective of progressive education principles. In this study, reports prepared by Dewey (1924), Beryl Parker (1934), the committee under the presidency of E. Walter Kemmerer (1933–1934), W. Dickerman (1951) John Ruff (1951), R. J. Maaske (1953), and M. Costat (1955) have been analyzed. Since the reports of American educators are primary information sources, published as a book by the Ministry of National Education, this study is a qualitative, historical research/historical case study. The technique of document review was used in the analysis of the reports. The research found that American educators included the principles of progressive education in their reports, and principles of progressive education cited in Dewey's report were mentioned repeatedly in subsequent reports. We conclude that these reports were highly effective for introducing and establishing progressive education in Turkey.

**Keywords:** Progressive education, progressivism, American specialists, reports of the foreign specialists, Turkish education system.

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## Introduction

Progressive education is one of the mostly widely discussed educational movements. An analysis of the relevant literature shows that discussions about this movement center on three topics: the first of these is when and where progressive education appeared, the second is whether its influence still continues, and the third and the last is its definition.

It does not seem possible to give a clear answer to this question of when and where progressive education first appeared. Sources largely converge around the idea that progressive education first appeared in the U.S. (Norris, 2004; Puckett & Diffily, 2004). However, other researchers argue that this movement has its roots in Europe and in educators (such as Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel) from this region (Berube & Berube, 2007; Reese, 2001). When progressive education first emerged is another matter of debate. According to those who claim that progressivism is rooted in Europe, this movement is quite old. However, those who argue for its American origins cite two different timeframes: some researchers argue that progressivism emerged as a natural consequence of social and political problems of the end of 19th century. In that period, a number of pedagogical restrictions and inequality came to be debated from universities to villages (Cremin, 1959; Norris, 2004). According to other opinions, progressivism originated with Dewey at the beginning of the 20th century. Some researchers who share this belief hold that the progressive movement emerged at the end of 19th century, and the development of the movement culminated with Dewey (Berube & Berube, 2007; Cremin, 1959; Mala, 2011). Conversely, another group argues that Dewey was directly responsible for the emergence of the progressive movement (Chakrabarti, 2002; Martin, 2002).

Another debated issue about progressive education is whether it has lost its influence. This argument started in 1950s (Til, 1962) and continues today. Those who feel the movement has lost its influence state that it became fatherless after Dewey's death and weakened thereafter (Berube & Berube, 2007; Bowers, 1967; Norris, 2004). However, those who hold the movement retains its influence still consider Dewey as its main influence and cite him routinely (Chakrabarti, 2002; Martin, 2002; Puckett & Diffily, 2004; Til, 1962). In addition, they also regard reconstructionist and constructivist movements as a continuation of the progressivist movement and argue that these two movements are grounded in Dewey's principles (Bakır, 2011; Bal, 1991; Ergün, 2009; Keskin, 2011; Martin, 2002; Puckett & Diffily, 2004).

The final argument about progressive education is its definition. Many different definitions of progressive education are found in the literature. Norris (2004) states that progressive education can probably be defined 100 different ways, and none of these definitions can be considered fully correct or incorrect. Conversely, Davies (2002) states that the progressive education model maintains a paradoxical existence in today's education system and thus has differing definitions.

It seems possible that the debates on progressive education will continue. However, whatever the matter of debate, it is possible to say that progressive education emerged as a consequence of a number of factors and has affected and still affects the educational system of many countries, especially the U.S. Dewey is the most widely known and popular name in progressive education, and therefore this movement is almost identified with his name. For this reason, it is appropriate to briefly review his studies on education.

Dewey (1859–1952) was a pre-eminent American philosopher. He presented opinions on a wide range of fields (ethics, social psychology, education, politics, logic, religion, and nature). Thus, he was a versatile philosopher. He was also an education reformer with a transcontinental reputation (Bakır, 2011; Chakrabarti, 2002; Cremin, 1959). He is considered to be the first to adapt pragmatic philosophy to education and according to some, he is the founder and most important representative of progressive education (Berube & Berube, 2007; Chakrabarti, 2002; Cremin, 1959; Mala, 2011; Martin, 2002). In 1896, he achieved a significant breakthrough in education by founding the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago with his wife, and in the years that followed, carried out his progressive education practices in this school (Bal, 1991; Cremin, 1959; Martin, 2002; Puckett

& Diffily, 2004). Dewey's first essential work was *School of Tomorrow*, which was published in 1915 (Berube & Berube, 2007; Bowers, 1967; Cremin, 1959; Mala, 2011). *Democracy and Education*, which was published in 1916, became famous as the most significant educational book at that time. Dewey continued publishing studies promoting progressive education until the time of his death.

What are the fundamental principles and guidelines of progressive education according to Dewey? Most of these principles and guidelines can be found in his books and articles. Furthermore, the Progressive Education Association was established in 1919 by supporters of progressive education; it published seven basic principles guiding progressive education (Berube & Berube, 2007; Puckett & Diffily, 2004; Schugurensky & Aguirre, 2002). This association continued its studies through the 1950s. Progressive education has continued to this day with the help of varied associations and institutions (the Progressive Education Network, Whole School Consortium, etc.), and from time to time, these associations publish principles about progressive education (O'Grady, 2011). When either Dewey's studies or the standards published by the associations founded after his death are carefully examined, the principles both have in common, and that have been used as the base of qualitative analysis in this research, can be summarized as follows (Atuf, 1929; Bakır, 2011; Bal, 1991; Dewey, 2007; Dewey, 2010; Gutek, 2006; Kısakürek, 1982; Little, 2013; Martin, 2002; McNichols, 1935; Norris, 2004; O'Grady, 2011; Sönmez, 2008):

1. *Student-centered education*: Students should be the center of education, and curricula should be prepared in accordance with their interests, abilities, and requirements. Multidirectional and multifunctional programs should be applied instead of monotype programs.
2. *Democratic education*: While discipline was a priority in the traditional education system, freedom is emphasized in the progressive education system. Thus, the school and classroom environment should be democratic, and students' freedom should be increased as much as possible to facilitate this.
3. *Problem-solving methods and practical education*: Education dependent on books and based on memorization and knowledge acquired from books is forgotten in a short span of time. However, practical education (learning by doing and living) is both permanent and entertaining. Problem-solving methods should be used in the lessons. Thanks to this method, students can both use their knowledge in daily life and experience permanent learning.
4. *Counseling/Guidance duty for teachers*: The teacher's mission is to guide students, not to just transmit information. Learning activities should be performed according to a plan prepared jointly by the teacher and students, and the teacher should not be in a position to impose knowledge on students. The teacher should present different choices to students and emphasize that they can choose which choice they want.
5. *Participation in society and the integration of school and life*: The function of school should not be to prepare students for life; rather, school should be life itself. All the facts and events of daily life should be integrated into the educational environment, or students should be exposed to these. One of the basic functions of education is providing students with opportunities to participate in society.
6. *School and family collaboration*: It is not possible to leave families out of the education process. Thus, school and family collaboration is needed at every phase of the process. Teachers play the most important and critical role in providing and developing school-family collaboration.
7. *Cooperative learning*: In the school environment, there should be cooperation instead of competition. Social purposes are as important as intellectual purposes in the school environment. Cooperative learning is the best way to achieve social goals.

Turkey was first introduced to the progressive education movement in 1924, the year Dewey came to Turkey, as mentioned previously (Akkutay, 1996; Ata, 2000; Bal, 1991; Kirby, 2010; Özsoy, 2009). Dewey first visited China before coming to Turkey, and visited locales including Mexico (1926), Russia (1928), and North Africa (1934) after visiting Turkey (Ching & Wang, 2007; Dalton, 2002; Martin, 2002). Dewey stayed in Turkey for two months, and during that time, he visited schools

and examined the Turkish education system. Dewey presented his impressions and suggestions in two reports to the ministry. The first was a preliminary report that he prepared while he was in Turkey, and the second was the basic report that he prepared after returning to the U.S. (Akkutay, 1996; Bal, 1991; Başgöz & Wilson, 1968).

Dewey's visit to Turkey can be considered a milestone of the Turkish education system. After his visit, numerous specialists from either Europe or the U.S. were invited to Turkey. American specialists who were invited to Turkey between 1924 and 1950 greatly outnumbered those from other countries (Akyüz, 1999; Şahin, 1996). The Ministry of National Education published the reports of some of the foreign specialists who visited Turkey between 1924 and 1950; Akyüz (1999) estimates that the number of such published reports is 15. Most of these (12 reports) came from American specialists. It is known that the progressive education movement was adopted and practiced in the U.S. in the period between 1924 and 1960, when these specialists had visited Turkey (Berube & Berube, 2007; Norris, 2004; Puckett & Diffily, 2004). Therefore, it is important to analyze the reports by Dewey and other American educators who visited Turkey in terms of progressive education principles. This analysis is considered important for answering many questions about how progressive education became established in Turkey.

## Method

### Research Model

This research takes the form of a historical research/historical case study because its aim is to analyze Dewey's reports and those of other American educators who had visited Turkey. In historical research, as is well known, documents from the period examined are analyzed carefully in order to answer this question of what happened in the past (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2010; Merriam, 2013). Therefore, the technique of document analysis (documentary scanning) has been applied. Because the document analysis technique is frequently used in historical research, old and current documents can be used as the focus of research on their own (Punch, 2005; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

### Sample

In this study, *criterion sampling* is the chosen method of sampling. In this sampling method, the units that provide the determined criterion of the sample are applied to the sample (Büyüköztürk and others, 2010). To determine the sample of this study, the reports that were prepared by American specialists and published by the Ministry of National Education were used as the criteria. Since all of these reports were published as books by the ministry, they qualify as original and primary sources.

The reports that have been examined and analyzed within the context of this study are as follows:

- J. Dewey (1924), "*Türkiye Maarifi Hakkında Rapor*"
- B. Parker (1934), "*Türkiye 'de İlk Tahsil Hakkında Rapor*"
- The committee under the presidency of E. Walter Kemmerer (1933–1934), "*Amerikan Heyeti Raporundan: Maarif İşleri*"
- W. Dickerman (1951), "*Türkiye 'de Halk Eğitimi Hakkında Rapor*"
- J. Rufi (1951), "*Türkiye 'de Orta Öğretim Müşahedeler, Problemler ve Tavsiyeler*"
- R. J. Maaske (1953), "*Türkiye 'de Öğretmen Yetiştirme Hakkında Rapor*"
- M. Costat (1955), "*Türkiye 'de Meslek Okulları Hakkında Rapor*"

Two periods were considered in this study. The first period includes the years between 1923 and 1938. This period can be called the *Atatürk Period*. The second period includes the years between

1950 and 1960, when the Democratic Party was in power. The main reason for distinguishing these periods is to describe their differences by comparing them with each other.

### **Data Analysis**

Yıldırım & Şimşek (2011) state that data analysis has four phases: choosing a sample, developing categories, choosing the unit of analysis, and digitizing. The analysis process carried out according to these phases is as follows:

- a. *Choosing sample from data that is the subject of analysis:* The reports were examined as previously described, and seven of them were chosen according to the criterion sampling method.
- b. *Determining the categories/themes:* In this research, the fundamental principles of progressive education were selected as the category/theme. These were based on the common principles noted by all researchers in their studies. To determine these, a deep literature search was conducted.
- c. *Determining the units of analysis:* The sentences and the paragraphs in the reports were chosen as the units of analysis. When needed, even the words and phrases were chosen. The selected paragraphs, sentences, and words were analyzed under the relevant category/theme.
- d. *Digitizing:* Yıldırım and Şimşek (2011) state that it is not absolutely necessary to digitize the data acquired from the documents, and they point out that it is researcher's choice. In this research, tally keeping was preferred over digitizing and the common themes related to principles of progressive education were shown by keeping a tally.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Measures taken to increase the validity and reliability of the research are as follows:

- a. To increase the internal validity (credibility) of the research, expert review was used: an evaluating meeting was held with an academic who is an expert in the history of education. In this meeting, the seven reports to be used in the research were roughly reviewed, and the decision was made to conduct the analysis in accordance with the basic principles of progressive education.
- b. Detailed description was used to increase the external validity (transmissibility) of the research: the reports were analyzed in detail from the perspective of fundamental principles of progressive education. This analysis aimed to be loyal to the original data as much as possible.
- c. To increase the internal reliability (consistency) of the research, consistency analysis was used. This involved a second analysis conducted approximately three months later than the first one and a check of the consistency between these two analyses. A 90% consistency was found between the two analyses.
- d. To increase the external reliability (confirmability) of the research, confirmation analysis was used. This involved confirmation from an academic with an expertise in the history of education. The expert checked if the codification based on the reports matched the results found in the research process. The expert found a 95% match. Efforts were made to correct the mistakes found by this analysis.

### **Findings and Discussion**

This section sets forth the findings resulting from this analysis, presented according to the seven basic principles of progressive education.

### Student-Centered Education

**Table 1.** Foreign Specialists' Opinions and Suggestions for Student-Centered Education

Opinion/Suggestion	Foreign Specialist						
	1923–1938			1950–1960			
	Dewey	Parker	A. Hey.	Dicker.	Rufi	Maaske	Costat
Individual differences should be considered	*	*	*		*	*	*
School building and the equipments should be appropriate for students	*	*	*		*	*	*
Similar lessons should be united and relations within/between the lessons should be increased	*	*			*	*	*
Extracurricular activities should be included and their numbers should be increased	*	*			*	*	*
Curriculums should be flexible and they should be adjusted for students	*	*			*	*	*
Different schools/curriculums should be established according to students' talents	*		*		*		*
Measures should be taken to keep students' physical and psychological health	*	*			*	*	
Teacher-centered education should be abandoned					*	*	
Students should be active, not passive in the class		*			*	*	
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>

Table 1 shows that all the specialists except Dickerman touched on *student-centered education*, one of the basic principles of progressive education. Since Dickerman's report was public-education-oriented, he did not express an opinion about students. Opinions and suggestions about this principle are similar in the periods from 1923–1938 to 1950–1960. The most important suggestions about this principle were considering individual differences and organizing school buildings and equipment in a suitable way for students. Rufi (1956: p. 19) referred to the importance of individual differences in his report as follows: "...a well managed school should consider each student as an individual... with a character and personality unique to him/herself." The specialists also gave important advice such as developing flexible curricula, grouping similar lessons, increasing relationships within/between lessons, and striving for a learner-centered approach.

**Democratic Education**

**Table 2.** Foreign Specialists’ Opinions and Suggestions for Democratic Education

Opinion/Suggestion	Foreign Specialist						
	1923–1938			1950–1960			
	Dewey	Parker	A. Hey.	Dicker.	Rufi	Maaske	Costat
Education should be organized in a democratic way		*		*	*	*	
Independent thinking and participation should be encouraged	*			*	*	*	
Students should be given a chance to choose (school and lesson)		*			*	*	*
Students should be given tasks	*	*				*	
Students should take part in school management	*				*	*	
School and class climate should not be formal		*			*		
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

Table 2 shows that Rufi and Maaske made the most suggestions for democratic education. However, the report of American Committee had no suggestions relating to this principle. When the table is analyzed by period, the emphasis on democratic education from 1950–1960 turns out to be far greater than it was in 1923–1938. The most important suggestions were organizing education in a democratic way, encouraging independent thinking, and giving students the opportunity to choose their schools and lessons. In addition, they also suggested providing students with opportunities to participate in school management and giving them tasks that they are able to do. Parker (1939:35) noted with disapproval, “The climate that the classrooms have is very formal.” He also criticized the learning environment: “Because the teacher dominates the class completely, the student becomes a passive echo of the teacher’s words and wishes.”

**Problem-Solving Methods and Practical Education (Learning by Doing and Living)**

**Table 3.** Foreign Specialists’ Opinions and Suggestions for Problem-Solving Methods and Practical Education

Opinion/Suggestion	Foreign Specialist						
	1923–1938			1950–1960			
	Dewey	Parker	A. Hey.	Dicker.	Rufi	Maaske	Costat
Importance should be given to practice in teaching activities	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Academic education in Turkish schools should be ceased	*	*	*		*	*	*
Disharmony between theory and practice should be cleared	*	*	*		*	*	*
Students should learn by doing and living	*	*	*		*	*	*
Problem-solving skill should be gained to students	*	*					
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

Table 3 shows that the specialists shared common suggestions for practical education. Dickerman proposed the fewest suggestions. The specialists repeatedly observed that education in Turkish schools is academic and highly theoretical. In addition, they also noted a disharmony between theory and practice and recommended that more emphasis be given to practice. In his report, Ruffi (1959: 16) stated that education in Turkey “had become completely bookish and formal, which did not allow students to learn by doing and living.” Dewey and Parker suggested that students should thus acquire problem-solving skills.

### Teacher Responsibility for Counseling and Guidance

Table 4. Foreign Specialists’ Opinions and Suggestions on Teacher Responsibility for Counseling and Guidance

Opinion/Suggestion	Foreign Specialist						
	1923–1938			1950–1960			
	Dewey	Parker	A. Hey.	Dicker.	Ruffi	Maaske	Costat
Teacher should be the one who does not merely transforms information, but guides students	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Teacher should bring out and develop the talents and interests	*	*			*	*	*
Teacher should guide not only the students but also the community	*		*	*			
Guidance service should be increased in the schools					*	*	
Principals and education supervisors should guide the teachers						*	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

Table 4 shows that Maaske made the most suggestions about teachers’ counseling duties. The most important suggestion was that the teacher should not just transmit information but guide students. The specialists also stated that a teacher in a counseling position should know students well. Ruffi (1956: 19) argued “...a well managed school should consider each student as an individual with a character and personality unique to him/herself and as a person who has a right of development under counseling that protects the well being of the student and society.” Other suggestions were predominantly aimed at counseling services carried out in the schools.

**Participation in Society and the Integration of School and Life**

Table 5. Foreign Specialists' Opinions and Suggestions on Participation in Society and the Integration of School and Life

Opinion/Suggestion	Foreign Specialist						
	1923–1938			1950–1960			
	Dewey	Parker	A. Hey.	Dicker.	Rufi	Maaske	Costat
School-environment relationships should be established and course subjects should be chosen from immediate surrounding	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Curriculums should be flexible and should be adjusted to the conditions of immediate surrounding	*	*	*		*	*	*
A relation between the lessons and life should be established and the school should be the life itself	*	*	*		*	*	
Students should be provided with out-of-class experiences	*	*			*	*	*
Schools and curriculums that are suitable for requirements of society should be established	*		*		*	*	*
Schools should be accessible to public	*		*	*	*		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>

Table 5 shows that the specialists' suggestions on student participation in society and integrating school and life were largely similar. All specialists agreed on the importance of establishing a relationship between the school and its surrounding community and choosing course subjects relevant to the local environment. The specialists also suggested developing flexible curricula that can be adjusted to the conditions of the local environment. Other suggestions included cultivating connections between lessons and life, establishing schools and curricula aimed at the requirements of society, and providing students with experiences outside the classroom. Parker (1939: 10) argued for the necessity of out-of-classroom experiences: "It is useful for true training to shorten the time spent in the classroom, to lengthen the time spent for life experiences acquired at outdoors."

### School–Family Collaboration

**Table 6.** Foreign Specialists’ Opinions and Suggestions on School–Family Collaboration

Opinion/Suggestion	Foreign Specialist						
	1923–1938			1950–1960			
	Dewey	Parker	A. Hey.	Dicker.	Rufi	Maaske	Costat
Studies about school–family collaboration should be done	*	*			*	*	*
Students’ guardians should be invited to the schools			*		*		
Family/home life of the students should be known					*		*
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

Table 6 shows that the specialists’ opinions and suggestions about school–family collaboration were limited. Rufi and Costat made the most suggestions about this issue. The most pivotal of these suggestions was increasing the number of studies on school–family collaboration. Costat (1956: 20) noted, “A teacher has responsibility for establishing relationships with families in each class.” Inviting students’ guardians to visit the school and becoming familiar with students’ family lives were among the other suggestions.

### Cooperative Learning

**Table 7.** Foreign Specialists’ Opinions and Suggestions on Cooperative Learning

Opinion/Suggestion	Foreign Specialist						
	1923–1938			1950–1960			
	Dewey	Parker	A. Hey.	Dicker.	Rufi	Maaske	Costat
Students should be divided into small groups		*			*		*
Students should be given small group activities		*			*		*
School and classrooms should be organized appropriately for group work					*		
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>

Table 7 shows that the specialists made the fewest suggestions about cooperative learning. Only Parker, Rufi, and Costat made suggestions. No suggestions about this principle appeared in other specialists’ reports. The most important suggestions were forming small groups within classes and giving these groups common activities. Parker (1939: 19) noted “...it is required to begin examining certain scientific methods, such as dividing students into groups, within a system and adjusting them to school matters.” Rufi first made the suggestion to orient schools and classrooms around group work.

## Discussion

When Dewey came to Turkey in 1924, many discussions appeared both in the press and in academia (Ata, 2010). These discussions still continue today. When Dewey's essays are analyzed, the discussion appears to focus only on Dewey. A majority of researchers agree that progressive education in Turkey began with Dewey's visit (Keskin, 2011; Laçın Şimşek & Şimşek, 2010). There has not been any satisfactory information about the introduction and establishment of progressive education in Turkey. Since Dewey could not have achieved this change single-handedly, it is necessary to view this phenomena as a process.

After Dewey's visit, many foreign educators were invited to Turkey, and some of them prepared detailed reports on the Turkish education system. Most of these were from U.S. (Akkutay, 1996; Akyüz, 1999; Başgöz & Wilson, 1968). The American specialists' reports clearly influenced the establishment of progressive education in Turkey. Until now, there have been no studies that have explicitly examined this influence. This research analyzed seven reports, including Dewey's. The analysis was made in accordance with the seven principles of the progressive education movement. These principles are student-centered education, democratic education, problem solving methods and practical education, teacher responsibility for counseling, participation in society and the integration of school and life, school and family collaboration, and cooperative learning.

The specialists made numerous suggestions for student-centered education, which is one of the most significant principles of progressive education. These suggestions remained unchanged in both periods analyzed in this study (1923–1938 and 1950–1960). Therefore, it can be said that change was limited in student-centered education. The specialists' emphasis on student-centered education, especially between 1950 and 1960, is explicit evidence of this consistency in views. Analysis of research on Turkish curricula from past to present found that they conformed to this principle to a large extent (Akyüz, 1999; Binbaşıoğlu, 1999; Güngördü & Güngördü, 1966; Keskin, 2002). However, teacher-centered and subject-centered models remained in practice for many years. In present-day Turkey, both curricula and learning environments have become relatively more student-centered.

Democratic education is one of the most important principles of progressive education, and the specialists suggested organizing educational environments in a democratic way. The number of suggestions about democratic education was greater between 1950 and 1960 than in the earlier period. The 1950s covered a time when Turkey had a multiparty system, and the Democratic Party government had developed a close relationship with the U.S. that included numerous bilateral agreements made in secret (Sakaoğlu, 1992). An explicit example of Turkish–American ties of that era is the fact that most of the specialists who visited Turkey after 1950 were American (Keskin, 2012). The increase in the number of specialists' suggestions about democratic education can be considered consistent with the conditions of that period.

The specialists made similar suggestions about learning by doing living and practical education. These suggestions were quite similar in both time periods. The most significant finding was that education in Turkish schools was academic and highly theoretical. The specialists suggested that attention be focused on applied courses instead. Unfortunately, the traditional practices were deeply entrenched in the Turkish education system (Doğan, 1983; Keskin, 2012) and have not yet been completely updated.

The specialists' suggestions on the counseling responsibilities of teachers, school and family collaboration, and cooperative learning were limited in comparison to their other suggestions. They emphasized that teachers should guide students rather than simply transmit information. Teacher-centered education, which had been practiced in Turkish schools for many years, prevented implementation of this principle. The specialists also suggested increasing the number of studies on school–family collaboration and cooperative learning. The progressive principles in the specialists' reports are largely similar, and suggest that they performed a planned study. The most explicit

evidence for this is the specialists' references to each another. References to Dewey were also made in all the reports analyzed. The similarity of the specialists' opinions also point to a common effort.

Some of the suggestions on progressive education in the reports were put into practice immediately, while implementation of some was delayed, and yet others have only recently been put into practice. Until quite recently, some of the specialists' critiques remained valid; these have been addressed in recent years, showing that the specialists' findings remain relevant.

Progressive education is one of the most widely discussed of educational movements, and continues to be a subject of discussion even today. The aim of this research was not to reiterate these discussions again. While this discussion was at its peak, American specialists were trying to establish a progressive education movement in Turkey and theoretical changes (curricula, laws, and legislations) were made in those years. Obstacles to the implementation of this movement were removed over time and the Turkish education system has currently achieved a progressive orientation. Thus, the American educators' reports have had a significant influence on introduction and establishment of progressive education in Turkey.

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