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WHAT CAN "INTEGRAL" MEAN IN EDUCATION?[1]

ABSTRACT

There are many misconceptions about what is called "integral education". We propose an integral approach to education based on the historical thinking of John Dewey and on the more recent AQAL concept by Ken Wilber. At the centre of integral education, there is a Subject. Subject equals his/her perspective. Integral education is a process of constructing/creating perspectives in the subject. We propose that four main perspectives can be applied to the educational process and the Integral Education Matrix includes these perspectives. The matrix can be a useful tool for planning actions and outcomes in the process of education.

Key words:
integral education, development, subject, process

[1] The article was prepared on the base of the thesis of the lecture presented at "9th Whitehead Conference in Katowice-Panewniki Process Education – from School to Life", May 11–12.2012.

1. Introduction

We propose a concept of integral education based on the Integral Theory by Ken Wilber and, more specifically, on his AQAL[2] conception. We first raised the issue at a conference in Toruń entitled, *Body. Education. Mind* in 2008[3].

We were inspired by Sean Esbjőrn-Hargen's article *Integral Teacher, Integral Students, Integral Classroom: Applying Integral Theory to Education*[4]. In this paper we elaborate upon the analysis by adding the concept of perspectives as the main factor of the integral approach in education.

In his introduction, Esbjőrn-Hargens outlines the aim of an integral approach in education as follows:

> Where, indeed, can one to learn how to think and perceive differently? Certainly, education in some of its contemporary "alternative" expressions offers students ways to "stray afield" of their own embeddedness in particular modes of being and knowing. These alternative approaches provide important ways to transcend the prison of a life not reflected upon. Yet education in its conventional manifestations also cultivates important capacities for thinking and perceiving anew. Moreover, conventional education encompasses and preserves the ground from which tradition itself springs, providing the practices by which the status quo guarantees its persistence into the next generation. Thus, both conventional and alternative educational approaches offer something of value to those who want to avoid "knowledgeableness" and foster inquiry that changes the knower. And yet adherents to these two approaches are often wary of one another! How can educators artfully integrate the best of conventional and alternative approaches to education: honoring each and yet transcending the limits of both? This article explores that question in the context of one approach to integral education inspired by the Integral Approach developed by Ken Wilber[5].

John Dewey could be regarded as one of the pioneers of the integral education. He explained his thinking about education in his *Pedagogic Creed* in 1897:

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[2] Acronym AQAL constructed from first letters of All Quadrants (Dimensions) and All Levels (Development) is used as name of the whole integral approach to the reality (see below).

[3] P. Błajet, *Edukcja według AQAL* [AQAL Education] [in:] *Ciało. Edukacja. Umysł* [Body. Education. Mind], P. Błajet (ed.), Bydgoszcz 2010; B. Przyborowska, *O granicach w edukacji* [About Limits in Education] [in:] *Ciało. Edukacja. Umysł…*, op.cit.

[4] S. Esbjörn-Hargens, *Integral Teacher, Integral Students, Integral Classroom*, "AQAL: Journal of Integral Theory and Practice" 2007, No. 2.

[5] Ibidem.

I believe that this educational process has two sides – one psychological and one sociological (distinctions in quotation by authors) (1 – concerns the résumé just below); and that neither can be subordinated to the other or neglected without evil results following. Of these two sides, the psychological is the basis. The child's own instincts and powers furnish the material and give the starting point for all education. Save as the efforts of the educator connect with some activity, which the child is carrying on of his own initiative independent of the educator, education becomes reduced to a pressure from without. It may, indeed, give certain external results but cannot truly be called educative. Without insight into the psychological structure and activities of the individual, the educative process will, therefore, be haphazard and arbitrary (2). If it chances to coincide with the child's activity it will get a leverage; if it does not, it will result in friction, or disintegration, or arrest of the child nature.

I believe that knowledge of social conditions, of the present state of civilization, is necessary in order properly to interpret the child's powers (1). The child has his own instincts and tendencies, but we do not know what these mean until we can translate them into their social equivalents. We must be able to carry them back into a social past and see them as the inheritance of previous race activities. We must also be able to project them into the future to see what their outcome and end will be (2). In the illustration just used, it is the ability to see in the child's babblings the promise and potency of a future social intercourse and conversation, which enables one to deal in the proper way with that instinct.

I believe that the psychological and social sides are organically related and that education cannot be regarded as a compromise between the two, or a superimposition of one upon the other (1). We are told that the psychological definition of education is barren and formal – that it gives us only the idea of a development of all the mental powers without giving us any idea of the use to which these powers are put. On the other hand, it is urged that the social definition of education, as getting adjusted to civilization, makes of it a forced and external process, and results in subordinating the freedom of the individual to a preconceived social and political status.

I believe each of these objections is true when urged against one side isolated from the other. In order to know what a power really is we must know what its end, use, or function is; and this we cannot know save as we conceive of the individual as active in social relationships. But, on the other hand, the only possible adjustment, which we can give to the child under existing conditions, is that which arises through putting him in complete possession of all his powers. With the advent of democracy and modern industrial conditions, it is impossible to foretell definitely just what civilization will be twenty years from now. Hence it is impossible to pre-

pare the child for any precise set of conditions. To prepare him for the future life means to give him command of himself… Education, therefore, must begin with a psychological insight into the child's capacities, interests, and habits (2). It must be controlled at every point by reference to these same considerations. These powers, interests, and habits must be continually interpreted – we must know what they mean. They must be translated into terms of their social equivalents – into terms of what they are capable of in the way of social service[6].

Dewey understood education as a process of:

1. Integrating the psychological side of a person and sociological conditions – integrating interior and exterior, individual and collective dimensions of a person (this heralds the dimensions perspective in education in Wilber's Four Quadrants Model described below);
2. Actualization of person's interior developmental in relation to the present state of civilization and to the projected future (the developmental perspective of education).

2. What is integral education?

- In the center of the education there is a SUBJECT.
- From the point of view of the integral psychology, a subject equals his/her perspective. For example, the communication between you and me (subjects) is the communication between our (subjective) perspectives, i.e. subjects do not speak, their perspectives speak.

A subject therefore means perspective, or, in Wilber's terms, "coming into being means perceiving/touching each other":

> […] a universe comes into being when a collection of sentient beings arises. G. Spencer Brown (whose *Laws of Forms* we will return to momentarily), famously said that a universe comes into being when an inside is marked from an outside – but that assumption merely embeds the monological prejudice and collapse. Conscious universes do not come into being that way; that is merely an abstraction away from what is always already the case with sentient manifestation. Not only is there is no inside without outside, there is no singular without plural; universes come

[6] J. Dewey, *My Pedagogic Creed*, http://dewey.pragmatism.org/creed.htm [access: 15.05.2012].

> into being when sentient beings come into being and perceive/touch each other. Thus, inside and outside is always already first and second persons; and singular and plural is always already we's and its. The absolute minimum you need to get a universe going is the four quadrants.
>
> Thus, a universe comes into being, not when an inside is marked from an outside, or a before is marked from an after, but a group of sentient holons arise. Even quarks have prehension, which means, the first quark is not a first particle but a first person. And whatever that quark registers is not a second particle but a second person. There is no way around this. The universe is built of perspectives[7].

Wilber's assertion correlates with the concept of "prehension", which was proposed by Whitehead, who describes prehensions as the concrete direction of analysis of the world. To prehend something is to have a distinct idea or concept of that thing. In the process of prehension, we appropriate an element of an actual entity. Therefore, prehension is not merely a mode of thinking; the process of prehension changes the internal constitution of the prehending subject"[8]:

- (Integral) Education is about creating/helping discover perspectives in a subject. Wilber's Integral Theory claims that if an approach to education excludes any of the perspectives, it falls short of a truly integral approach;
- This means that integral education is a process;
- Our conclusions/assumptions correlate with what Tom Murray claims on the relations between the progressive and integral approaches: "The progressive approaches cover a wide range of concerns echoed in integral theories:
  - Addressing the many aspects of being human: body/mind/emotion/spirit;
  - Including multiple holonic orders: the individual, aspects/parts of the individual, the classroom, the wider community and society;
  - Allowing for multiple ways of knowing: in terms of "quadrants" – subjective, objective, intersubjective; and types – multiple intelligences, and so-called masculine and feminine modalities;
  - Giving full attention to both internal realities (values, visions, feeling, motivations, relationships) and external realities (measurement, action, physical health, educational infrastructure);

[7] K. Wilber, *The Ways We Are in This Together*, "Integral Life", http://integrallife.com/integral-post/ways-we-are-together?page=0,11 [access: 10.06.2012].

[8] A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology*, New York 1978, p. 169.

- Seeing knowledge in terms of the coordination of perspectives (including critical approaches to knowledge and power, epistemic or meta-knowledge, and dialogic approaches)"[9].

What misapprehensions are there about an Integral approach in education? Three examples of misuse of the term are:

– Primary education named in Poland, which is known as "integrated education" (*edukacja zintegrowana*);
– Christian education based on religious principles that are not integral;
– Some aspects of alternative education (e.g. the model of education based on Carl Jung's psychology, which concerns pre-rational levels of consciousness).

As education is about discovering perspectives, there can be many (unlimited) perspectives of *prehension*. For the purpose of this analysis, four perspectives have been chosen:

1. Time (T): present, past, and future, e.g. when you are trying to speak about yourself, you can say I fear (phenomenology); I was frightened (introspection); or I am anxious about something in the future;
2. Space (S): I (e.g. something may happen to me), we (e.g. something may happen between us), it (e.g. something may happen to it);
3. Dimensions (Di): inside, outside, individual, collective; Wilber's Four Quadrants[10]: UL/UR/LL/LR (see below);
4. Development (De) levels; Grave's Spiral Dynamics (see below), other developmental theories (e.g. J. Piaget, R. Kegan, E.H. Erikson, L. Kohlberg, J. Loevinger, C. Gilligan etc.).

From these four perspectives, the Integral Perspective Equation can be stated as I= T x S x Di x De (Integral *Perspective* = Time *Perspective* x Space *Perspective* x Dimension *Perspective x* Development *Perspective*). Thus, the Integral perspective takes into account the time, space, dimension, and development perspectives (and other perspectives).

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[9] T. Murray, *What Is the Integral in Integral Education? From Progressive Pedagogy to Integral Pedagogy*, http://integral-review.org/documents/Murray,%20Integral%20Pedagogy%20Vol.%205%20No.%201.pdf [access: 10.06.2012].

[10] More about Wilber's Four Quadrants and Grave's Spiral Dynamics: K. Wilber, *Integral Spirituality. A Startling New Role for Religion in the Modern and Postmodern World*, Boston–London 2007; K. Wilber, *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality. The Spirit of Evolution, Shambhala*, Boston–London 2000; K. Wilber, *Psychologia integralna. Świadomość, duch, psychologia, terapia* [Integral Psychology. Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy], Warszawa 2002; K. Wilber, *Integralna teoria wszystkiego. Wizja dla biznesu, polityki, nauki i duchowości* [A Theory of Everything: An Integral Vision for Business, Politics, Science and Spirituality], Poznań 2006; www sources.

Ad 3. Dimensions perspective

Figure 1. Wilber's four quadrants: Upper Left/Upper Right/Lower Left/Lower Right (source: http://www.integralhealthresources.com/integral-health-2/)

These are the basic perspectives on the reality that an individual can have. For example, my student is:

- Sensing, thinking, imagining, experiencing anxiety, tired, and suffering (UL);
- Sitting, smiling, reading, writing, and speaking (UR);
- Communicating, sharing values, and contesting values (LL);
- Using the internet, functioning in the scholarly system, passing exams (LR).

All of these perspectives should be taken into account for the effectiveness of the educational process. If a teacher ignores one of the dimensions (e.g. he/she has no idea about the student's culture/subculture (LL) or doesn't have a proper understanding of the student's reading/writing abilities (UR), then he/she will undoubtedly have troubles with leading the educational process.

Ad. 4. Development perspective

	LIFE CONDITIONS			BRAIN/MIND COPING CAPACITIES
A	State of nature and biological urges and drives: physical senses dictate the state of being.	BEIGE	N	Instinctive: as natural instincts and reflexes direct; automatic existence.
B	Threatening and full of mysterious powers and spirit beings that must be placated and appeased.	PURPLE	O	Animistic: according to tradition and ritual ways of group: tribal; animistic.
C	Like a jungle where the tough and strong prevail, the weak serve; nature is an adversary to be conquered.	RED	P	Egocentric: asserting self for dominance, conquest and power. Exploitive; egocentric.
D	Controlled by a Higher Power that punishes evil and eventually rewards good works and righteous living.	BLUE	Q	Absolutistic: obediently as higher authority and rules direct; conforming; guilt.
E	Full of resources to develop and opportunities to make things better and bring prosperity.	ORANGE	R	Muitiplistic: pragmatically to achieve results and get ahead; test options; maneuver
F	The habitat wherein humanity can find love and purposes through affiliation and sharing.	GREEN	S	Relativistic; respond to human needs; affiliative; situational; consensual; fluid.
G	A chaotic organism where change is the norm and uncertainty an acceptable state of being.	YELLOW	T	Systemic: functional; integrative; interdependent; existential; flexible; questioning; accepting.
H	A delicately balanced system of interlocking forces in jeopardy at humanity's hands; chaordic.	TURQUOISE	U	Holistic: experiential: transpersonal; collective consciousness; collaborative; interconnected.
I	Too soon to say, but should tend to be I-oriented; controlling, consolidating if the pattern holds.	CORAL	V	Next neurological capacities. The theory is open-ended up to the limits of *Homo sapiens*' brain.
The theory is open-ended, with the possibility of more systems ahead...				

Figure 2. Spiral Dynamics (source: http://integralnhne.ning.com/forum/topics/spiral-dynamics)

The colors in the Spiral Dynamics – beige, purple, red, blue, orange, green, yellow, and turquoise (coral would be next) – have no special meaning and have nothing to do with chakras or other color schemes. These colors were introduced only to make the description more attractive.

Figure 3. Spiral Dynamics priority codes (source: http://www.spiraldynamics.net/the--many-dimensions-of-change.html)

According to the concept of Spiral Dynamics, there is one code dominant in a person (in some situations, regress can occur, e.g. even a yellow/turquoise dominant person when placed in the extreme situation of a concentration camp can become "beige" when survival is the fundamental and only need). People construct their relation with reality through their dominant code. As already stated, the relation between subjects consists of the relation between their perspectives. e.g.

a teacher whose dominant code is red may want to establish a relation of power with his/her student; if the dominant code of the student is red, he/she will establish a fight relationship with his/her teacher; if student's dominant code is purple, he/she will probably be too submissive to gain the acceptance of "powerful" teacher.

In integral education, we attend to all student needs according to the codes and try to advance students to the next code level. I, as a teacher, perceive my student as orange (orange as dominant code), my aim will be to construct in him/her as a green code according to the "ZPD Strategy", i.e. acting towards the zone of proximal development[11], aiming to focus his/her attention on the needs of others and stimulating his/her inter-personal communication and relations and his/her compassion.

3. Integral Education Matrix

Table 1. Physical Education: aims/phenomena in Time x Space x Development perspective (=T x S x De)

Development level	Time: I Past	We Past	It Past	I Present	We Present	It Present	I Future	We Future	It Future
Beige		U U L R L L L R					Physical health		
Purple				Joy	Cooperation				
Red				Sense of power		Competition system			Competition system
Blue		Tradition cultivation					Orderliness		
Orange			Using existing system	Success		System functioning			Efficacy
Green								Friendship	
Yellow, Turqoise				Sens of unity			Mental health		

[11] L. Wygotski, *Wybrane prace psychologiczne II: dzieciństwo i dorastanie* [Psychology Works – Excerpts II: Childhood and Growing up], Poznań 2002.

In table one, the aims and outcomes of physical education are correlated with three perspectives: time, space, and development. In this matrix, we have a three-perspective view of the theoretical aims and phenomena of physical education (the dimensions perspective is not placed in this matrix and an example of this perspective is presented below). This map of our project reveals that physical education is rather unbalanced with an insufficient emphasis on the past. If we add to our project, for example, history of sport, it will be better balanced. Other aims and phenomena can appear in more places in this matrix, e.g. through participating in sport, we are engaged in a competitive system – (T – present) x (S – It) x (De – red) – but by participating and getting higher in the classification, we built or strengthen the system for the future – (T – future) x (S – It) x (De – red).

Table 2. Joy in four dimensions (=De – purple) x (T – present)x (S – I) x Di

UL Experiencing emotions Methods: Openness	UR Energy Methods: Encouragement, emotional expression, play
LL Positive climate Methods: Modeling, social reinforcement	LR Group coherence Methods: Mediation, task hierarchy, task structures

The table above shows us four dimensions of joy in physical education. It can/must be regarded as emotion experienced (UL); as a source of energy and an energy itself for running, playing, and skiing (UR); as an essence of positive climate in group activity (LL); and as a factor in group coherence. A teacher wanting to create joy in these four perspectives has to use different methods, specifically from each of the four quadrants. We must remember, once more, the necessity of teachers' activity in four quadrants. For example, it seems impossible to create joy if a teacher is not open and cannot express emotions.

Table 3. Teacher's Education: aims/phenomena in T x S x De perspective

Development level	I Past	We Past	It Past	I Present	We Present	It Present	I Future	We Future	It Future
Beige									
Purple					Empathy				
Red									

Table 3. cd

Development level	I Past	We Past	It Past	I Present	We Present	It Present	I Future	We Future	It Future
Blue		Socialization						Responsibility	
Orange	Knowledge		Using modern technology	Diagnostic and observational abilities	Cooperation	Mentoring	Self development strategies		Educational strategies
Green					Communication	Ability in diagnosing individual differences			
Yellow, Turquoise				Reflection	Multicultural communication		Openness		

Analysis of ministerial standards for teacher education shows that the program is focused on lower, pre-rational levels of development. If we assume that children and youngsters use pre-rational codes in a majority, this can be seen as the cause of some of the educational and relation problems that teachers encounter in their work at school.

4. Other (not all) possible perspectives

There can be many different perspectives, some of them may not be known yet, because perspectives continue to be created in Integral Education. We mention four of them so as to give only the examples:

- Subject/Object (inner/outer) perspective: "I can approach your consciousness as a *subject* in dialogue or an *object* to be studied, i.e. I can be aware of your person in either a first-person mode or a third-person mode"[12]. E.g. about your feelings you can speak from phenomenological (subjective) point of view or from a psychological (objective – scientific) point of view.
- States: Esbjőrn-Hargens mentions four major states of awareness.

[12] *Shambhala Publications*, tp://wilber.shahtmbhala.com/html/books/kosmos/excerptC/appendix-B.cfm [acces: 10.07.2012].

Table 4. Four major states of awareness

- **Gross-waking states,** such as the experience of the world through the five senses, physical impulses, and sensations. Examples: teacher/student has to deal with the sense of tiredness, discomfort, noise, colors, sounds, smells, sense of muscular relaxation, touch, which are very important factors in education.
- **Subtle-dream states,** such as visualizations, imagination, reverie, dreams, emotions, images, and the experience of intellectual luminosity.
- **Causal-formless states,** such as formlessness, certain types of spaciousness, vast openness, creativity, and the experience of emptiness (*shunyata*).
- **Witnessing states,** such as the capacity for unbroken attention (gross), lucid dreaming (subtle), or formless absorption (causal).

Source: S. Esbjörn-Hargens, *Integral Teacher…*, op.cit.

These four states, from a practical point of view, can be reduced to states of the body, mind, and spirit. Experiencing different states are ways to develop or stabilize levels of development:

1. Body levels – beige, purple and red levels;
2. Mind levels – blue and orange levels;
3. Spirit levels – green and the higher levels

– Lines: e.g. multiple intelligences. In integral education, if we want to develop a student integrally, we have to practice different lines of intelligence: cognitive, moral, interpersonal, intrapersonal, kinesthetic, aesthetic, etc. Treated as a value in itself, but also as conditions of effective activity in different dimensions at different levels (e.g. without interpersonal intelligence, it can be difficult to participate in the LL dimension; without kinesthetic intelligence, it can be difficult to build body levels of development)[13];
– Types.

The typologies presented range from rather well-explored gender differences, to the popular triad of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic/tactile types (five sensory representational systems of neuro-linguistic programming). They also contain the subtle nine-type personality system of the Enneagram and narrative types (narrative structures of communicating such as personal response paper – first-person, storytelling – second-person, and academic prose respectively – third-person). It gives at least one main category of learning types per quadrant.

[13] P. Błajet, *Ciało jako kategoria pedagogiczna. W poszukiwaniu integralnego modelu edukacji* [Body as a Pedagogic Category. In Search for Integral Model of Education], Toruń 2006.

Table 5. Learning types and examples in four dimensions

Upper Left (Experience)	**Upper Right (Behavior)**
Personality Types	*Sensory Types*
Extraverts	Visual
Sensors	Auditory
Thinkers	Kinesthetic
Judgers	Olfactory
	Gustatory
Lower Left (Culture)	**Lower Right (Systems)**
Gender Types	*Narrative Types*
Masculine	First-person
Feminine	Second-person
	Third-person

Source: S. Esbjörn-Hargens, *Integral Teacher…*, op.cit.

5. Conclusions

To adopt an integral approach in education, we can reduce the principles, perspectives, and their aspects presented above to the following summary[14].

Table 6.

Perspectives	Number of aspects
Time: present, past, future	3
Space: I, we, it	3
Dimensions: Four Quadrants	4
Development: pre-rational (beige, purple, red), rational (blue, orange), post-rational (green, yellow, turquoise…)	3
Subject/Object	2
States: body, mind, spirit	3
Lines: cognitive, emotional, moral, kinesthetic	4
Types: one per quadrant	4 Total: 26

Incorporating these approaches into learning can dramatically enrich education, making it more responsive to students' diverse needs, more attractive, and more effective. These 26 aspects can be applied in the teacher's personal activity

[14] S. Esbjörn-Hargens, *Integral Teacher…*, op.cit.

and development in dealing with the students' problems, both personal and in the classroom. By applying the proposed matrix and its four or more perspectives as outlined above, teachers can become more conscious of themselves and their practice. In turn, it can better serve their own transformation and the efficacy of their participation in the transformation of their students and schools.

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