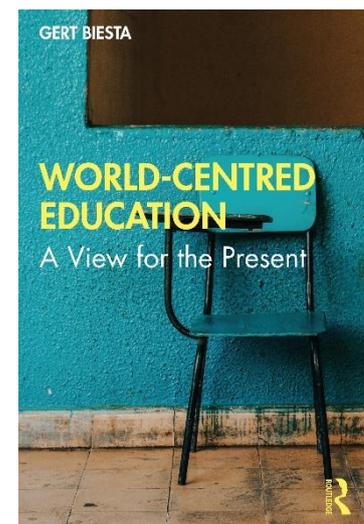


World-centred education: A view for the present (Routledge 2021)¹

Gert Biesta

In 'World-centred education: A view for the present', I seek to make an intervention in a rather old debate in education, between those who argue that education should be child- or student-centred and those who argue that it should be subject-matter- or curriculum-centred. The latter position is nowadays highly popular particular as a result of the impact of the global measurement industry, effectiveness-research and calls for a knowledge-based curriculum. These all focus on the production of a small set of measurable learning outcomes, often in order to ensure that national education systems remain competitive in the global market (although it is ironic that education itself seems to have become a global market where national education systems battle for the top position). In the background is a whole neuro-bio-socio-cultural apparatus that seeks to explain the dynamics of learning so that it can be better controlled.



Those we resist such a de-humanising grip on education, often do so with too romantic calls about allowing children and young people to grow and develop according to their own pace and under their own responsibility. While such calls are sympathetic, they run the risk of becoming uneducational, particularly because they forget that education can never just be about learning, growth or development, but starts from educators who have something to give to students. While both children and curricula are therefore essential for education, the point of education can never 'just' be the child or 'just' be the curriculum. Child and curriculum are brought together in education in order to encourage and equip the new generation for living their own life in the world, and to live it well. This is why all education has to be world-centred.

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In the seven chapters of the book, I present the case for world-centred education by means of two central ideas. One is that all educational matters are ultimately existential matters, that is, about how we live our lives and what we do with everything we may have learned or acquired and the way in which we become someone through this. The other is that the basic gesture of the work of education is that of teaching, and a key point I make that the gesture of teaching is intrinsically connected to the question of freedom rather than that it is a matter of control. All this should not be left to the future, because the work of education always takes place in the here and now. That is why, as I express it in the sub-title of the book, we need a view for the present.

Reference

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The Centre for Research in Educational and Social Inclusion

The Centre for Educational and Social Inclusion (CRESI) is based at the University of South Australia. Educational inclusion is a global issue. The impact of social circumstances on access to education and quality of education is profound. The Centre for Educational and Social Inclusion undertakes research to advance an understanding of the barriers and enablers to successful educational inclusion. For further information please see the CRESI [website](#).