

Heideggerian Notes on Education: Learning and Being-in-the-world

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The article discusses issues, trends and possibilities of current education in Heideggerian terms. The situation of education is related to the broader situation of our time. Thus, enframing brings both danger and possibility to education. The latter should also be concerned with learning to think Being. Education shares in the fundamental character of being-in-the-world and the double possibility of authenticity or inauthenticity as well as dangers of deworlding and detemporalising. This article will be followed by the second part, which will discuss how currently education, like current sciences, supervenes on a Being-forgetful notion of ratio, thus, an ‘other’ relation to language (logos) is relevant.

Keywords: being-in-the-world, education, enframing, Heidegger, language

Heidegger’s writings constitute many volumes. But it would perhaps be just a small exaggeration to say that Heidegger never wrote a treatise. Most of his ‘treatises’ are in fact the written texts of his lectures which he gave directly to students. If one reads *Being and Time* in the context of the lectures he had been giving around that time and a few years prior, it is not difficult to notice that both in style and in content it is but another of those pre-written lectures, perhaps just a little more formatted to serve as a separate treatise. Many notions had been pre-developed before. Especially his phenomenological readings of ancient Greek philosophy which make up the core of *Being and Time*. Hence, the ‘philosophising’, or thinking, Heidegger could hardly be distinguished from the ‘teaching’ Heidegger. The project of thinking Being was in an organic connection to his academic situation and his concern with education. Interestingly, the course in the early 1920’s on the ‘phenomenological concepts in Aristotle’ covers mainly the problematic discussion of the situation of the university at the time and barely mentions Aristotelian concepts or their phenomenological reading which is nevertheless given in a subsequent lecture of a different name. Probably, the names for the lectures were given in advance according to the curriculum but the true content was developed according to its own needs and its own temporality.

The same is true of the works which date after *Being and Time*: they are also mostly texts of lectures, seminars or public addresses, and also a few dialogues or interviews. One could assume that the lecture hall was for Heidegger what the agora was for Socrates. Also, Heidegger during his time gained a reputation as a teacher and lecture giver, which preceded his reputation that came from publishing *Being and Time*.

Thus, it should not come as a surprise that Heidegger's thinking can also be related to the problematic of teaching, learning and education. In recent years (or even decades), there has been a dialogue in academic papers about the contribution that Heidegger's notions can make to the current practice of teaching or learning, also to the very organisation of the education which is an aspect of a broader technical organisation of current societies and polities. There are two aspects: 1) How does the Heideggerian learning to think Being as different from entities apply to the actual practice of teaching and letting learn?; 2) How does Heideggerian thinking call into question the notions that underlie current understanding of how and for the sake of what education should be organised? These two aspects correspond to two aspects in Heidegger's philosophy: he is concerned with both the authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*) at the 'individual' level and the Being-historical transformation of the whole epoch (this aspect will be discussed more in the article to follow this one). The current form of education can be assumed to be derivative of the current situation of thinking, or revealing Being.

In what follows, this article will pay attention to the traits or notions of Heidegger's thought which could be relevant to transforming or changing education. It will mostly focus on the relevance of its 'formality', temporality and being-in-the-world to teaching and learning.

In the course of the discussion, we will refer to the articles that refer to the discussions of the education of children (pupils) or students in the light of Heideggerian notions: Duarte, Rocha, Thomson, Mika, Ehrmantraut, Biesta (all in the same issue of the journal, 2016), Riley (2011), Bagni (2010) who focuses on mathematical sciences, Donnelly (1999), Standish (1997) and Mertel (2020) whose analyses ponder the interconnection between technology and education, Kakkori, Huttunen (2012), Gibbs (2010) and Neufeld (2012). Socratic discussion was recalled in the context of current education in Asakavičiūtė et al. (2023); education was discussed from the perspective of Ortega y Gasset's philosophy by Valantinaitė et al. (2020), and in terms of Kant's deontological ethics by Grincevičienė et al. (2019). Temporality and spatiality in relation to human creativity were also discussed by Kačerauskas (2007), its relation to transcendence in Kačerauskas (2005), discussion of many additional issues is developed in Kačerauskas, Vėželis (2016).

FORMAL INDICATION AND EDUCATION

The ontological difference means that Being is not an entity. This implies that Being is outside the scope of formal logic because the latter deals with genera and species, or higher and lower classes, of entities. Since Being is not an entity, it cannot belong to any of the classes. It can be neither generalised nor specified. How, then, can it be spoken of and thought of? Heidegger adopts a distinction that he takes from Husserl – between formalisation and generalisation. Form deals precisely with the fundamental way a phenomenon is given without reducing it to 'logical' articulation. Logic as theory of definition stems from Socrates in his quest for the 'what' of virtues and, then, from Plato's teaching about ideas (*species* is the Latin translation of *idea/eidos*). The classical definition is defined precisely in terms of genus proxima and differentia specifica (Man is a featherless biped). But the dialectical skill of defining and refuting definitions was key only to one part of the Socratic method, the elenchus. The aim was for Socrates to stop being a gadfly and transform into a midwife. Eventhough it proved problematic to define beauty, moderation or another excellence in the elenctic stage, that art of refutations had to result in helping the interlocutor of Socrates give birth to the knowledge of the form of that excellence, which had already been there in his soul, but this knowledge is intuitive rather than discursive. It is an eidos – what is visible: this form is intuited directly

rather than ratiocinated. That is why we find Plato mocking mere logic, for instance, in *Parmenides* where he formulates the so-called third man problem which shows that his 'theory of ideas' allegedly involves an infinite regress. But the ideas are prior to logic. Aristotle also emphasises that primary principles cannot be proven but are the ground of any possible proof (deduction). They first must be intuited via induction, that is, via the ability to intuit the Being of entities which is the beginning and the end of doing philosophy. Without intuition, logical ratiocination would be mere 'artificial intelligence', which could be described as a calculative procedure without meaning or point in itself.

The difference between the intuition of form and mere ratiocination is very clear in Aristotle's ethics: even though the virtuous and wise man knows the form of excellence, he cannot give any formula of excellence but must each time be attentive to particular circumstances and also have the right character to be able to act correctly in those particular circumstances.

Temporality of Being is here evident. But Being as spoken of in theoretical (as opposed to practical) philosophy is also temporal: the [single] form of an entity does not do without the [plurality of] particular entities. This moment of particularity in theoretical philosophy corresponds to the particularism and situationism in practical philosophy. It is thus because the 'one' in the Platonic/Aristotelian principle of 'one over many' is a form rather than a class (in the formal-logical sense). The form 'contains' in itself plurality and situationality of particulars of which it is the form. We can notice a 'paradox' here, and this means only that it is 'beyond' or 'prior' to the formal logic of genera and species, or classes.

When describing Dasein, Heidegger points precisely to its 'form(s)' which are not deduced formally-logically, are not to be clarified by showing their place in the structure of genera and species, or higher and lower classes, but are intuited – as phenomena (what shows itself, what is visible). The phenomenon of Dasein is 'structurally articulated' (Livingston 2013: 11), but it is not restricted to the ordering and 'mathematical', or formally-logical, procedure (ibid). The method of indicating this phenomenological 'structure' (form) is in Heidegger called *formal indication*.

This formality is precisely what allows it to be temporal. For Heidegger, it is important that the authentic meaning of *form* is precisely a gatheredness of particulo-temporal happenings (Livingston 2013: 26). Thus, form is by no means timeless, or atemporal. Whereas time is meaningless in formal-logic. The very richness of [authentic] form consists in its temporality.

The fact that Heidegger explicated the method of formal indication can have an effect that can be called 'liberating'. It has restored thought to its true status as opposed to reducing it to the artificial intelligence of formal-logic and the inclination of the latter to occupy the place of authentic thought. The method is also properly scientific and philosophical in that it is phenomenological: it starts from the 'things themselves' as they are given but without being reduced to soulless empiricism (or losing sight of Being).

Teaching/Learning and Worlding

The formality (and, hence, temporality) of Being and knowing or thinking also reverberates in the notion of teaching. If Platonic forms were to be construed as 'eternal essences' in the atemporal sense like in the (for instance, neo-Platonic) dephenomenalized gnosis (e.g. Stasiulis 2023: 42), then mind, having seen those essences, has no need to learn anymore because now one has the eternal knowledge. However, if Being is temporal and thus particulo-situational (singularity is plural), then Being can only be thought in relation to its plural (many) manifestations and a thinker can only intuit Being while it is distributed in its many manifestations.

In terms of Platonic learning as remembering, particular things remind us of their Being, but there is no 'eternal' knowledge: Being is One, but you must always or each time *keep remembering* it. You must keep learning. Thus, only he is able to speak and to teach about essence who is able to learn (each time) (Heidegger 1984: 74). Hence, the task of the philosopher/thinker is to keep speaking the Same just like Socrates kept speaking the same things about the same things over and over again (ibid); but just like Socrates could adapt to its many and differing interlocutors, Heidegger says that the Same should be spoken of differently with appropriate regard to the difference in circumstances (Heidegger 2003: 94).

The teacher should always remain a learner. But then the student's learning should also be based on the ability to intuit the *form*, Being, even-though the teacher can only provide particular instances of teaching. The student should be an interpreter of the lecture. In the following paragraph, Heidegger speaks about the interpretation of a text but this same kind of involvement should also be characteristic of student's relation with a lecture (or aimed at it):

'Not only must any commentary gather the substance from the text, it must also, imperceptibly and without being too insistent, add something of its own to it, from its substance. This supplement is what the layman, regarding what he takes to be the content of the text, always feels as an interpolation; it is what he, with the right he arrogates to himself, criticises as arbitrary. A proper commentary, however, never understands the text better than its author understood it, though it certainly understands it differently. Only this difference in understanding must be such that it encounters the same thing which the explicated text is meditating' (Heidegger 2002: 160).

This calls for a certain openness to revelations of Being which are blocked by the 'enframing' (Gestell) attitude. Contrary to such attitude, Riley argues that a teacher should 'lead students to see daring possibilities in their own capacities to think and follow and enquiry' (Riley 2011: 801). In this kind of teaching, raising (ontological) questions is no less important or even prior to answers or propositional statements. Here one could also quote Nietzsche: a proper teacher uses both word and silence to educate (Nietzsche 2005). Teaching, like thinking, is concerned with truth as unconcealing which is prior to truth as quality (correctness) of statements. Man is 'defined' by its essential relation to Being which makes him a living being that has a world. Hence, what a teacher does is initiate the student into some world and call him to respond (Riley 2011: 809–810). Riley points out that Heidegger calls for awakening human capacity to respond that is in our time threatened by loss (ibid: 810). In this, a teacher is a craftsman who passes on his craft to the learner where what the latter should be taught is not to impose his working force on the material but rather to respond to the material (ibid: 804). Likewise, Heidegger is critical of that kind of teaching – indeed, 'education's modern character' (ibid: 810) as such – that forms and presses upon learners and guides them to a certain imposed shape or paradigm (ibid: 810). As mentioned above, the teacher must, first of all, himself be able to continually learn and thus he must be 'capable of being more teachable than the apprentices' (Heidegger, quoted from Riley 2011: 811). This capability lies precisely in the above-mentioned open comportment and the *situatedness* of the world (cf. Riley 2010: 811). Teacher's responsiveness to the situation and to students lets them let learn to respond to the material, and this is eventually rooted in responsiveness to Being.

The key trait of this Heideggerian method is to 'let Being be' as opposed to imposing the 'subject's' grasp upon it. It allows one to enable the student to unfold and let him come forth, while preserving him in his essence (cf. Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism*), just like a craftsman, when working on the wood, unconceals rather than makes (see Riley 2011: 813).

It is the developed point of Heidegger's analysis of at-hand-ness (*Zuhandenheit*). To have something at hand (*zuhanden*), to use it (*uti, frui*) is to unconceal – and unconcealing proper is not available to subject and to 'reckoning' (*rechnerisch*) thought but to *Dasein*. *To use is to allow an entity to be unconcealed*. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger distinguishes between two ways of looking after or caring about somebody: either 1) turning somebody into an object of care, and dominating him and making him dependent or 2) allowing him to unfold his potentiality for Being by transforming his own care into the authentic one (Heidegger 2006: 122). Here we could also quote Biesta (even though he is in some ways critical of Heidegger's philosophy as he sees it), teaching is 'an "appeal" to the freedom of another human being' (Biesta 2016: 11).

The unique quality of teaching consists in that it is *deinstrumentalised*, yet purposeful and concerned, even when it is most 'didactic' (Donnelly 1999: 947). Donnelly argues that Heidegger's writings allow us to see that uniqueness which consists in a tension between instrumentality and a concerned being with children, and the latter holds priority (*ibid*: 933, 947). Children can be recognised as mere entities (*vorhanden*), but for human beings, and especially in the settings of teaching, attribution of this status is incorrect (*ibid*: 946). Rather, ethical relation (like in other fields of human relations) and being-with with the learning children should be recognised as intrinsic to the worlding or the world which is prior to mere 'cognitive representation' (*cf. ibid*: 935). Human being in the world consists primarily in *comportment* rather than formal representation. Hence, teaching and learning should not be reduced to merely propositional content (information) but we should recognise that it is embedded or involved in a situation that can never be exhaustive analysed (*ibid*: 941). The job of the teacher is 'to set up conditions for learning to occur' (*ibid*: 945), whereas the contrary case – instruction without leaving the free leeway for the student to learn – would rather amount to brainwashing than teaching (*ibid*: 945).

Donnelly emphasises that he engages in a (Heideggerian) description of the situation of teaching-learning which in itself is namely descriptive rather than normative. A normative heeding could only be to acknowledge the concerned Being which is presupposed by practices of teaching, and to be critical of 'demands for an increased emphasis on instrumentality' (*ibid*: 947).

Riley (*e.g.* 2011: 811) finds it important to point out that Heidegger's pedagogy does not involve a definite ('the') answer but is concerned with answers and, foremost, with making the question problematic, and with elevating the status of recurring questioning and understanding the necessity thereof. His pedagogy, naturally, is related to his theory of Being and thought.

According to Heidegger, thinking originates directly from the presencing of Being (Heidegger 1977: 352). It is the same to be and to think. Formal indication is the underlying 'structure' of both presencing and thinking. The 'formality' of Being unfolds as the temporalising of the three united ecstasies, and thinking is also temporal and situated. Hence, it is replete with possibility. Duarte notes that 'the end of philosophy' and a new way of uncovering Being in thinking and poetising is at the same time a possibility for a new way of education (*cf. Duarte* 2016: 802).

Heidegger does not provide us with any content of the new thought. Rather, he uncovers the form, the possibility. As Being presences as temporalising, that is, the sameness of Being appears as multiplicity of situation while Being itself always remains hidden, Heidegger's Being-historical stance is possible: he engages in a dialogue with the beginning of Western thought available in the texts on ancient, including the very first ('pre-Socratic'), philosophers,

and at the same time this engagement is projected to the future. It is projected to the future not as a preconceived notion or plan, but as an unconcealment of this 'formal' principle and letting it unfold creatively in the future. The future is not seen as if on a TV or PC screen but it is indicated formally. Heidegger even finds an illustration of the principle in Homer, and describes it thus: the vision is seen as the future tense (das Futurum) from the perfect tense [das Perfectum] (Heidegger 1977: 346) where the perfect tense denotes the gatheredness of the three ecstasies of time (temporality). As Duarte has it, 'speculative thinking in education <...> makes a horizontal transcendence, into an imagined future beyond the apparent present' (Duarte 2016: 798). He notes that this newly opened possibility has obvious implications for educational practice and policy because 'Heidegger's prognostic' 'wholly interrupts, if not destructs, the hyper-teleology of contemporary educational thinking, where necessity rather than possibility is the rule, and, at the very, very least, we must speak in terms of probability, just to play it safe (or else!)' (Duarte 2016: 804).

We are living at a threshold period and learning deals with preparing the transformation of thinking, and that also has to do with poetic language and language what also allows the 'un-said' (cf. Duarte 2016: 805, 804). Those who are not poets must learn through listening to the poetic (ibid: 808).

The sense of temporality that enables such learning is, of course, kairotic rather than chronological. Also, a Heideggerian teaching requires learners to participate actively in the educational process (cf. Kakkori, Huttunen 2010: 13). Of course, Heidegger's lectures were attended by a number of 'active learners', some of whom became established philosophers in their own right. Just like Aristotle emphasises, a student needs the right *heksis* (a right stance or attitude) of his own to be able to learn (cf. Gibbs 2010: 401).

HEKSIS

In order to explain the temporality of presencing, Heidegger reads and interprets the texts of Greek philosophy and specifically Aristotle (as is usual to him). He explains that the *aei* (always) which characterises *ousia* for the Greeks does not mean atemporal eternity but an everness as correctly conceived temporality. Dasein, in order to uphold his authenticity, needs to exist in authentic temporality rather than in static essentiality. Dasein must keep coming back to retrieving his essentiality *often* (Heidegger 1993: 191). As Aristotle has it, the correct *heksis* is formed via often attempting/striving to make the right decision. Heidegger is emphatic that this oftenness is opposed to practicing a routine which, on the contrary, destroys the *Augenblick* (Heidegger 1993: 190). The reason why Dasein always needs to engage in deciding and deliberation (what Aristotle calls *proairesis*) is that Dasein always essentially has the two possibilities of authentic and inauthentic being and existing in either unconcealment or concealment of Being.

Thus, Heidegger equates this phenomenon of deliberation to the phenomenon of conscience. Conscience does not speak to Dasein in propositional statements or maxims but, rather, indicates formally as a general calling to orient oneself to unconcealing. It is precisely to such a calling at the end of metaphysics that Heidegger's thinking responds. The point is that, in 'enframing' (as the essence of technology) as well as in Descartes' ontology, Being presences (merely) in such a way that it itself (in its hiddenness) is forgotten or concealed. It is at this attempt at unconcealing (remembering hidden Being) that Heidegger's dialogue with previous philosophy down or up to its very inception is oriented. It would naturally call pedagogy and education to the same kind of orientation.

Also, it is not a solitary task but the one that calls for ‘fellow thinking’ (Mitdenken), though also in individual ways, among learners and teachers, and institutional arrangement, then, is not the most important thing in this engagement (Ehrmantraut 2016: 782).

CLOSING REMARK

The formality of formal indication accounts for Being, whose grasp has traditionally been theoretical, to appear as Being-in-the-world, or, to put it differently, it shows Being as temporalising. Hence, learning as acquiring (‘theoretical’) knowledge is also accountable to characteristics of temporality and being in the world. Teaching and learning, in turn, are linked to thinking Being (in the Heideggerian sense). This approach can be seen to be quite at home in humanities but does it have relevance to ‘hard’ sciences? Or is the very clear-cut distinction between humanities and sciences an expression of that kind of uncovering Being that Heidegger’s thinking critiques? This is precisely the case. The following article (to continue this one in the following issue) will show how Heideggerian principles apply to teaching sciences and how the movement that allows a Heideggerian approach in teaching/learning sciences is connected to reconsidering the very notion of *ratio* and linked to ‘other’ way of speaking and uttering Being and sameness.

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Haidegeriški pastebėjimai apie edukaciją: mokymasis ir buvimas pasaulyje

Santrauka

Straipsnyje, remiantis Martino Heideggerio sampratomis, aptariamos dabartinės edukacijos problemos, tendencijos ir galimybės. Edukacijos situacija yra susijusi su platesne mūsų laikotarpio situacija. Todėl šis įprasminimas edukacijai reiškia tiek pavojų, tiek galimybę. Taip pat ir edukacijoje turėtų būti mokomasi mąstyti būti. Edukaciją irgi apibūdina pamatinė buvimas pasaulyje charakteristika ir dvejopa – autentiškumo arba neautentiškumo – galimybė bei pasaulio išnykimo ir detemporalizacijos pavojus. Bus ir antroji šio straipsnio dalis, kurioje bus aptariama šiuometinės edukacijos, kaip ir dabartinių mokslų, pareitis nuo būtų pamiršusios ratio sampratos, taigi ir bandymo atverti „kitą“ santykį su kalba (*logos*) reikšmingumas.

Raktažodžiai: buvimas pasaulyje, edukacija, Heideggeris, įprasminimas, kalba