Piotr Zamojski
Uniwersytet Gdański

Philosophy for Education – an attempt at exercise in thought*

Streszczenie

FILOZOFIA DLA EDUKACJI – PRÓBA ĆWICZENIA W MYŚLENIU

Niniejszy artykuł jest poświęcony kwestii filozoficznego zaangażowania w problematykę edukacyjną. W odwołaniu do idei Hannah Arendt ćwiczenia w myśleniu oraz do metodologii typów idealnych Maksa Webera dokonuję próby eksploracji sposobów wiązania filozofii i praktyki edukacyjnej. Wyróżniając wydarzenia otwierające poszczególne możliwości rozumienia relacji między filozofią a praktyką edukacyjną, dokonuję rekonstrukcji tych możliwości jako idealnych typów filozoficznego zaangażowania w kwestię edukacji. Każdy z wyróżnionych typów odwołuje się do innego rozumienia filozofii, filozofii edukacji, pedagogiki i praktyki edukacyjnej. Całość wywodu zmierza ku sformułowaniu pokrytycznego typu, który będąc praktykowanym sposobem wiązania filozofii i praktyki edukacyjnej, wymaga refleksyjnego uznania swojej prawomocności.

Słowa kluczowe: filozofia, praktyka edukacyjna, ontoteologia, racjonalność działania, filozoficzne zaangażowanie w problematykę edukacji, po-krytyczna relacja między filozofią a praktyką edukacyjną.

The title, 'Philosophy for Education', may well be a misleading one, since this essay is not about a particular kind of philosophy or a specific philosophical theory that might prove most suitable for education. Instead, it is an attempt to address the problem of being engaged in education in a philosophical way. Hence

---

the guiding question for this inquiry is not 'What philosophy for education?', but rather, 'How can philosophy relate to education?' And on from this, a whole range of other questions that seem to arise from that one: How can we engage in education through philosophy? What can we do for education while 'doing philosophy'? How can we relate philosophical investigations and educational practice? What can we do with philosophical concepts as educational practitioners?

These questions are not new ones. They have been and still are posed (See Carr 1995; Wortham 2011) and we can expect that they will be posed well into the future, since their strength derives from the split between *theorein* and *praxis* at the very beginning of Western Metaphysics (See Arendt 1998 [1958]: 14–15)[1]. The reason for making this attempt then, is not to overcome this distance, to negate it or to deny it. Nor does it claim to supplement or criticize the existing propositions defining possible modes of philosophical engagement in education. It lies rather in the necessity to speak out about the possibility of an engagement that is present, but not yet explicated.

Inspired by Hannah Arendt's idea of *exercise in thought* (Arendt 2006b [1968]), I will not try to present any essential answers or definite solutions. It is an exercise, an attempt, and its nature is, as Arendt puts it, *experimental* (p. 14). Because of this, it does not suppose an overall view, or a review of a disciplinary field, with claims of objective neutrality or ideological legitimacy. It is rather an attempt at *putting the issue on the table* (Masschelein 2011: 531), by relating it to differently experienced events that might open up the horizon of its meaning. Hence, unlike Arendt (2006b [1968]: 14), I do not try '...to discover the real origins of traditional concepts in order to distil from them anew their original spirit which has so sadly evaporated...'. I do not claim that the possibility expressed in the last sections of this paper present 'the real origin spirit' of the relation between philosophy and educational practice, as it does not have to be 'the best'

---

[1] This split is also the origin of one of the most distinguished problems in educational theory, that is the question about the relation between educational theory and educational practice, which at least from the times of J.F. Herbart and F. Schleiermacher is constantly addressed by educationalists (see Kenklies 2012). I will not refer to this extensive discussion deliberately not only because it would need much more to be properly elaborated than this article, but mostly because the 'theory and practice issue' does not overlap completely with the subject of my investigation, that is: the question of the possible ways of philosophical engagement in education. This does not mean naturally that particular standpoints and concepts developed throughout centuries of work on the 'educational theory and practice issue' will not appear substantial for this exercise.

or 'the last' way to conceptualise such a relation. Nevertheless, it is worth formulating.

The result of this exercise is distinction between three ideal types of relation between philosophy and educational practice. Its aim lies in preliminary elaboration (or indication) of a certain possibility for conceptualising such a relation. It is claimed that apart from formulating recommendations for educational practice (instrumental relation), warning educational practitioners against ethical dangers inherent to their doings and giving the intellectual tools for their emancipative reflection (critical relation), there is a possibility to understand philosophical engagement in educational practice as the creation of rationalities of educational action, i.e. the creation of symbolic spaces or meaningful horizons in which education might happen (post-critical type).

Within such an intention however, it is easy to fall into an eschatological trail and substitute a claim for indication with a claim for revelation. As it was already mentioned I will try to avoid such substitution since I am convinced that each of the types distinguished below, with their potential to form our engagement in educational practice brings a specific danger peculiar to them. This prevents any strong normative claim made for any of the presented types.

On the other hand, my intention – as declared above – is not the one of an objective comparison between empirically existing beings. Hence the reference to Max Weber's (2004 [1904]) methodological concept of ideal types, which firstly allows to stress the ideal nature of the analysed types. What I try to do is to understand events in Western history[2] (also the history of thought) as opening up possibilities for relating philosophy and educational practice. However these possibilities are

> ...formed by a one-sided accentuation of one or *several* perspectives, and through the synthesis of a variety of diffuse, discrete, *individual* phenomena, present sometimes more, sometimes less, sometimes not at all; subsumed by such one-sided, emphatic viewpoints so that they form a uniform construction in *thought*. In its conceptual purity this construction can never be found in reality, it is a *utopia* (Weber 2004 [1904]: 387–388).

Indeed, the four ideal types analysed below do not concern existing philosophical or educational theories but the potential possibilities of relating philosophy and educational practice derived from the different traces and threads which are considered while being involved in an exercise in thought. Naturally,

---

[2] Although one must keep in mind that, as pointed out by Weber (2004 [1904]: 396), logic of the ideal-type development does not overlap with the empirical course of historical development.

I do refer to theories (both educational and philosophical), not as examples, however, but as events. Events that open up possibilities for us to think and act. And, it is these possibilities, not the theories, that are my concern here.

Secondly, with reference to Weber's concept, I would like to emphasise that since the following types are not empirical, I am not trying to build a map that would objectively describe a particular territory (e.g. disciplinary field of philosophy of education). Although for both Arendt and Weber, research should provide tools for gaining orientation in the world (Arendt 2006b [1968]: 13–15; Weber 2004: 387), in both cases this orientation is not based on positive knowledge about what is present, but rather it is an intelligence for understanding the world, a symbolic capability to cope with the astonishing plurality of that which exists. This capability is developed thanks to sharp, idealised distinctions that do not re-present the world but help us understand what is present. Hence if the following types could be seen as a map, it would be a map developed while *walking along a path of thought* (Masschelein 2010: 47), a map that does not give an overall view of the landscape, and which does not sum up all the possibilities of walking, but is the trace left by thinking. Neither is it a map that gives us assurances about dwelling in the world, but rather it shares the experience of orientation while carrying out an exercise in thought.

Types of relation between philosophy and educational practice

Every relation deals with realms that are not (yet) connected, realms that differ. Hence, relating philosophy and educational practice in a particular way stems from particular understanding of the difference between them. Therefore apart from the general characteristics of each of the distinguished types, and the reference to the events that open up the possibility to conceptualise them, the following analysis concerns also their basic assumptions, that is the understanding of philosophy, philosophy of education, educational theory and educational practice that is appropriate to each of them. Moreover, I assume that each of the distinguished types allows to formulate various answers to the question 'what is education?'. However, simultaneously each of them frames these formulations differently by linking all possible answers with their assumptions. Therefore, describing each type means reconstructing such a frame. The presented analysis concludes in the indication of inherent dangers inscribed in every distinguished type.

Instrumental relation

Undoubtedly the rise of technical civilisation, mostly due to the success of modern science, is one of the most irresistible and common experiences of our times. We deal with the undeniable success of the project to understand knowledge as grasping the causal relationships governing the world of nature that might resemble the relationships between the means and goals of human action (See Bacon 2000 [1620]: 33). It is worth noting that from its very beginning the idea of modern science was linked with the '...plan of preparing men's minds...' (ibid.: 77).

However, if Francis Bacon considered such an educational enterprise with an intention to gain acceptance of the educated public for the scientific method as a legitimate foundation of true knowledge, two centuries later August Comte advocated for '...the complete popularisation [...] of the sciences...', which demanded a 'continuous instruction' for 'all classes, without exception or distinction' (Comte 1903 [1844]: 129). Through such an enlightened demand education was considered as necessary for the *spiritual reorganisation* of social life (ibid.: 146), conducted in order to make the society rational, that is: able to be *wisely ameliorated* (ibid.: 147). Indeed, no more than a few decades later the intensifying impact of such a spirit was already noticed and problematized by Wilhelm Dilthey (1989 [1883]).

Simultaneously, the world of the West changed rapidly and widely by the industrial revolution, within which education became an institutionalised practice that included whole populations. Therefore, it came to lie within the interest of the state, which took the whole sphere of education under its rule, that is governance.

These events interrelate and shape each other, and it is exactly at this plexus that a certain possibility to understand the relation between philosophy and educational practice is opened up.

General characteristics

One can think of an instrumental relationship between philosophy and educational practice when philosophy gives educational practice instrumental guidance, i.e. it answers the question 'what to do?'. The essence of this relation lies in the attitude of application. It is assumed that certain philosophical ideas

can be reduced to certain guidelines which can be applied to educational practice. This is only possible by means of reformulating those ideas into particular guidelines and instructions – regardless of whether they will have a general (or vague) character or, rather they will become methodical recipes which will describe further steps of desirable action *a priori*.

The attitude of application is characterised by an asymmetry between the segments of the relation for which it is essential. The idea designed for application is raised above the domain to which it should be applied. If in this type of relation, philosophy gives practical guidelines to educational practice, then it functions as a legislator for this practice. The instrumental relation is thus a heteronomous relation in which educational practice cannot decide about itself but is given its normativity from the outside. This stems from a distinction between the intention and the action, typical for instrumental reason as a distinction between the goal and the means. This distinctness is not absolute, namely it does not have the character of total isolation. Its logic operates when the discussion of the goal does not concern the means, and the discussion of the means does not problematize the goal. Establishing the goal of an activity happens beyond the sphere of practice, while its projection, understood as a selection of effective/efficient means, becomes a mindless affirmation of an externally imposed goal.

This heteronomy of educational practice in its instrumental relation to philosophy on the social plane means an inequality between legislators and executors. It thus expresses a division into those subjects which articulate goals and those which safeguard them. In accordance with the attitude of application the role of the latter is additionally reduced because the task to reformulate the normative ideas for education into practical guidelines (regardless of their accuracy), is a task within the realm of theory.

Basic assumptions

Philosophy is understood here as a professional knowledge (Pawliszyn 2002), concerning a certain *universum* of mastering indispensable texts. A philosopher's work relies here on exegesis, comparison, confrontation and a combination of texts which create various constellations, leading lines, trends, tensions, etc. From the perspective of an instrumental attitude such a set of texts becomes explicitly related to educational practice at its foundation. Philosophy is thus a ground for educational practice. While such a ground is *de facto* a repetition of philosophy's logic towards itself or, to put it differently: it is an emanation of

the logical characteristics of Western metaphysics which describes its attitude to educational practice on its own terms.

Assuming that philosophy is the foundation of educational practice, philosophy is understood as metaphysics, an idea which searches for a ground, an *arché* – what is primary and the principle (rule) of all that exists.

According to Martin Heidegger's analyses, the basic structure of metaphysics is onto-theo-logy, namely that the primary being is at the same time the last one or, rather that the foundation is simultaneously something ultimate, supreme – it is primal not only in the ontological but also in the normative sense. Metaphysics endeavours towards the unity of One as something primal and supreme:

> The unity of this One is of such a kind that the ultimate in its own way accounts for the primal, and primal in its own way accounts for the ultimate. [...].
>
> The essential constitution of metaphysics is based on the unity of beings as such in the universal and that which is highest (Heidegger 1969: 61)

Therefore, if philosophy as a set of texts considered philosophical is to be a foundation for educational practice, the vision of the world, the human being, social relations, human relations (etc.) contained in this set of texts (or a part of it), become a starting point, a beginning, as well as a certain ideal, a pattern for education. This means that each time a certain philosophical idea (included in a given subset of philosophical texts) has the status of an exponent of the truth, it is at the same time supposed to be the beginning and the highest ideal for all educational practice. This obviously demands an orthodox attitude towards such an ideal/foundation. Thus, philosophy sets norms which cannot be undermined, but which should be realized, incorporated into the body of practice. Also in this sense the highest fulfilment of metaphysics (onto-theo-logy) is technology (Heidegger 1969: 51–52; 2008: 432–436).

As much as philosophy sets the ground and is a certain foundation of reasoning, philosophy of education within this instrumental (or metaphysical) logic will be a practice of the transcription of this foundation into guidelines for a project of educational action. A philosophy of education is thus a type of philosophical expertise which shows the ideas of philosophy as ready for application into practice. In the name of these ideas it sets the aims and rules of education. It tells educational practitioners what they should aim at, what is desired practice and what is not. In this type of reasoning the voice of the philosophy of education is the voice of philosophy applied to education, which "...ask[s] philosophical questions about education..." and therefore "...presents

education as an 'afterword' – as a kind of obligatory last section called 'implications for education'..." (Biesta 2010c: 2).

There are also deeper implications for a theory of education informed in this way by the philosophy of education, i.e. the formulation of a project of educational action, with regard to a particular foundation/ideal. As such it becomes a technical task, evaluated with regard to the efficiency of actions in accordance with this project, to set up procedures or instructions leading to the realisations of goals imposed by philosophy. Educational theory's task will thus be to explore the correspondence between attempted actions and their results. In this way, educational theory is conceptualized in view of positivism as an empirical science, searching for the laws of cause and effect which govern educational reality. Contrary to twentieth century positivism however, it is not exclusively descriptive in nature (see Kołakowski 1972), but due to the attitude of application becomes a technology (becomes prescriptive).

Educational practice is understood therefore as a process subject to control and intentional influence, a manageable process. Moreover, practicing education in this way becomes a purely executive activity which consists of introducing certain guidelines elaborated by educational theory with reference to prior philosophical conclusions. The practitioner's task is thus to act according to authoritative procedures, becoming an executor and not a creator of her own practice.

One should keep in mind throughout all of this, however, that these procedures, whose effects are designed in advance, do concern work with people. To think about educational practice as an application of procedures which are supposed to evoke results assumed beforehand, means to understand education in terms of the technical tooling of 'human material'[3]. Thus, according to instrumental logic, educational subjects are reified and the whole process dehumanizes itself, becoming a purely technical, repetitive procedure for producing the desired effects, derived *a priori* from a philosophical ground. Therefore, although in the instrumental relation education may be explicitly defined in various ways, depending on the claims of philosophy which sets the ground for educational practice, these definitions will be implicitly framed by the logic of production, its means and outcomes.

---

[3] As Thomson (2005: 150) notices with reference to Heidegger's critique of technology, such a view '...strips entities of their intrinsic meanings, distinctive traits, and unique capacities, transforming them into mere resources to be optimized, ordered, and enhanced with maximal efficiency'.

* * *

By arguing that '...the essence of technology [...] is identical with the essence of contemporary metaphysics' (Heidegger 1977: 116) Heidegger claims that technology as a 'mode of revealing' (ibid.: 13) is inscribed in our common contemporary way of dwelling in the world. As he puts it: '[w]hat now *is*, is marked by the dominance of the active nature of modern technology' (Heidegger 1969: 51). This means that the instrumental type of relation which has been analysed, can function as the most persistent, self-imposing understanding of our attempts to engage in education philosophically. However we are not powerless against such a domination, usually countering this instrumental perspective with an alternative developed some time ago.

Critical relation

It was in 1944, during the terror of the War that Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno (1973 [1944]) made one of their most important discoveries. The project of enlightened humanism aiming towards strengthening human capabilities through science-based technology had become reversed by *subjecting* people to an objectified worldview:

> Not only is domination paid for with the estrangement of human beings from the dominated object, but the relationships of human beings, including the relationship of individuals to themselves, have themselves been bewitched by the objectification of mind (ibid.: 21).

This 'objectification of mind' refers to the '...mysterious willingness of the technologically educated masses to fall under the spell of any despotism' (ibid.: XVI). It means that '[r]eason's old ambition to be purely an instrument of purposes has finally been fulfilled' (ibid.: 23). In other words: the sublime project of demythologisation/rationalisation of the world reduces the concept of Reason to its instrumental form. Where the domination of instrumental rationality means losing the capability to judge, renouncing ones autonomy, defining oneself as an executor of externally imposed goals (See Horkheimer 2004 [1947]; Adorno 1950; Arendt 2006a [1963]), and so it points to what Arendt – also with reference to her personal pre-war experiences (2003) – illuminatingly named *thoughtlessness*. By virtue of these insights it seems that it was the way people use their reason, the form of their consciousness and the worldview it

implied, which allowed twentieth century totalitarianisms to happen. Therefore, radicalised by the event of Auschwitz, critical theory developed an idea of critical reason as a movement of negation that never stops, never to be transformed into any kind of positivity (Adorno 1973: 361–368). This invention formed a new paradigm for handling social theory as it opened up a new possibility to relate philosophy and educational practice.

General characteristics

The critical relation between philosophy and educational practice comes from a disagreement over the *status quo* of a given reality[4]. Its source is thus a certain ethical impulse, of going against what is understood as wrong: injustice, captivity, domination, etc. In this sense, the critical relation type will signify a turn of philosophy (as a practice of thinking) against educational practice. In this type, philosophy says what is wrong with educational practice. It is however, not an easy and straightforward negation, typical for technology, which paternally evaluates ineffective work. Such critique stems here not only from ethical, as opposed to technical conditions, and negates these dimensions of social life which are dehumanized. Above all, it expands the perspective from which education itself is seen, as something that cannot be isolated from various sorts of social relations (economic, political, cultural, etc.) as they frame the conditions for its very practice.

What is important is that the relation between education and these conditions is not unilateral or hierarchical, but rather dialectical (see Gadotti 1996): not only does social change force changes in educational practices, but the change of these practices builds social change.

The mutual mediating of social conditions and education signify their functionality towards each other, expressed in the processes of reproduction. That is why their critique requires an instance which would be able to transcend this closed circle of mutually strengthening and reproducing systems. A consciousness capable of critical reflection functions as such an instance.

---

[4] Naturally the term 'critique' also has a different meaning other than the one given by K. Marx, to which I am referring. One may therefore think of a critical type of relation between philosophy and educational practice in various ways, depending on the assumed critical concept. The meaning of the notion of critique has been discussed also in educational theory largely (See: Giroux 1983; Ellsworth 1989; Carr 1995; Gur-Ze'ev 1998; Apple 1999; Masschelein 1997; Masschelein 2000; Biesta 2009; Torres 2012). Although I am not referring to this extensive discussion, the intention of this article (formulation of the post-critical type) can be conceived also in terms of an 'attempt to rethink the critique' (Masschelein 2004: 364).

Naturally, since Marx, it has been known that the conscious as such may participate in maintaining a *status quo* which is repressive towards itself. However, as much as the conscious is equipped with tools which enable us to criticize this *status quo* and to distance ourselves from it, it becomes possible to break the mutually reproducing structures of repression (see Bourdieu, Passeron 1990, thesis 2.1.3), and as a result social change becomes possible. Therefore, in this type of relation, the key issue is to develop and use the intellectual tools of engaging in criticism.

In this situation, the status of the educational subject – especially the educational practitioner – changes considerably, in comparison to the instrumental type. The relation between the legislator and the heteronomous executor is disabled by the imperative of critical reflection. The practitioner becomes a critical creator of her own practice. It is no longer a philosophy 'from above' which criticizes practice, but the practitioners themselves, who use their intellectual tools (among others originated from the tradition of philosophy) as impulses stimulating their own critical reflexivity.

We have to keep in mind, however, that every critique, wishing to say 'no' to something, says 'yes' to something else (Kwaśnica 1990); it includes thus a 'concrete utopia' (Giroux 1983: 242) which is supposed to inspire educational actions, but above all, it is an expression of a certain *conceptual measure* which in the practice of critical reflection refers to education. The intellectual tools used by a practitioner while performing a critical act (developed among others by philosophy) create an intellectual frame of practice engaged in by the critique. Again, philosophy has a fundamental role to play in educational practice, but it is far more subtle than in the previous analysed type.

Hence, it may turn out that on many of its levels, critical thought reproduces instrumental logic (see Ellsworth 1989; Gur-Ze'ev 1998; Maddock 1999) (in the end the emancipated subject may be thought of as an effect of the production process and the means for social change), but we are definitely dealing here with a different type of relation between philosophy and educational practice.

Basic assumptions

In the critical type of relation between philosophy and educational practice it is exceptionally difficult to make a distinction between philosophy, the philosophy of education and the theory of education (pedagogy). It means that we are not dealing here with philosophy as an academic discipline of knowledge, expertise and mastery, but with multiple acts of thinking (Pawliszyn 2002), which

can be initiated and sustained by people not recognised as professional (academic) philosophers. These acts can refer to ideas, notions, theories and texts that are similarly not acknowledged, in the disciplinary view, as philosophical. Nevertheless, such a practice has its own tradition that can be conceived of in terms of a set of texts. However, the tradition of this practice is not its chief area of interest, but rather it functions as a reservoir and a resource of prompts and reminders given to reasoning, each time it is engaged. Tradition is a support for independent thinking, initiated in the face of what is contemporary, and not in the face of tradition.

Philosophy in its general sense would thus be a practice of critical reasoning which understands the social world in its complexity as oppressive and unjust towards its inhabiting and co-creating people. Philosophy is, therefore, a way of thinking being characterized by a powerful ethical sensitivity which expresses its disagreement with reality being dehumanized. The critical reflection which opposes this unethical *status quo* is understood here as an indispensable element of activity for the sake of social change. The tradition of this practice of thinking is conceived of as a palette of ideas, potentially functioning as intellectual tools for critical reflection, or to put it more aptly: as intellectual weapons of struggle for the sake of social transformation.

In this way the philosophy of education and educational theory could be defined here identically as the practice of educational critique. Being involved in a critique of educational practice means to aim at making this practice reflective due to which the technological work of a mindless implementation is transformed into something ethically meaningful, discussed and constructed by the autonomous subject's social practice. However, if the reflection over practice is not to be a simple, tautological repetition, it needs to use intellectual tools which come from the outside, from the theoretical domain (or philosophy). On the level of assumptions, one needs to make a clear distinction between educational practice (as if it were *a priori*, earlier than the theory and in some ways functioning independently of it) and theory (which arises *a posteriori*, as if being an answer to the sins of the practice and with a wish to affect the social world). With time, from this negative attitude towards practice, the theory distils its assumed utopian project as an alternative vision of an ethically desired educational practice and a desired condition of society (see Morrow, Torres 2002: 66–146).

Hence, educational practice is understood in the critical type as a politically important social activity, an area of battle for a just and lawful society. This means the exposition of educational practice as a social hot spot, a neuralgic point in a social system which may serve as its new beginning.

Moreover, this vision of an educational practice itself is far more complex than in the instrumental type. Due to the dialectical relation of education and its social conditions, educational practice is thus a political practice, that is, it happens due to a network of social interactions that take place in a particular historical moment of a particular social reality. It is then viewed as a highly complex, entangled in power relations, contextualized psycho-social process, which cannot be reduced to a process of technical production. In the critical type, the practice of education is an intersubjective action and therefore it is unpredictable, non-algorithmical; it assumes the possibility of dispute between educational subjects that can lead to its auto-redefinition. This changeability stems from the way in which critical relation frames the question of education. Regardless of the object and the subject of critique, as well as its conditions, means and goals, education is linked here with the emancipatory effect of the enlightenment of consciousness, and therefore with faith that changing conscious-ness makes the difference in the social world.

* * *

We now appear to be situated at the point of an ideal type development; the emergence of a new type of relation between philosophy and educational practice which, I assume, already exists and is practiced, but has not yet been explicated[5].

But why should we go beyond the critical relation? Shouldn't we cherish it even more now, in times of neoliberal entanglements and functional reductions of education? Undoubtedly we cannot retreat from our critical engagement in education, but at the same time we cannot deny the existence of serious arguments witnessing the exhaustion of the critical paradigm.

One of the most significant was delivered by Peter Sloterdijk (1988) in his discussion with Adorno's project of negative dialectic. As Sloterdijk argues, persistent and radical critique as a consequent negation is a soil for the growth of cynicism. Uncompromising inquiries aimed at unmasking oppressive social relations leave no place for action acknowledged as ethical. This leads to:

---

[5] Or to put it differently: there are different concepts (constructed in the reference to philosophy), old ones (J. Dewey or P. Freire) and new ones (G. Biesta [2006], J. Masschelein [2011] or T. Lewis [2011]) that cannot be conceived as sets of instructions or formulations for distant utopias. We miss something important if we do understand them in this way. So what are they in relation to educational practice?

...the self-abdication of critique. In utter difference toward all problems lies the ultimate premonition of how it would be to be their equal. Because everything is problematic, everything is also somehow a matter of indifference. (Sloterdijk 1988: XXXII)

When charges are unavoidable and the desired *status quo* is defined in terms of utopia, the consciousness of an agent becomes both enlightened and false (ibid.: 5). This consciousness is '...afflicted with the compulsion to put up with pre-established relations that it finds dubious, to accommodate itself to them, and finally even to carry out their business' (ibid.: 6).

But such a reproduction of unequal and oppressive social relations is not just the effect of a radical critique. As Jaques Rancière argues – in his discussion with Pierre Bourdieu[6] – it is deeply imprinted in the very structure of the critical attitude that sticks to the negated *status quo* and disables our capability to transgress the existing order. As a basis of our actions the critical view re-establishes what is criticised as a point of departure and locates the desired in the distant future (See Rancière 2003: 220–223; Rancière 2010: 11). Hence, critically informed action is conceived as a transition from the criticised *hic et nunc* to the desired future.

Of course this will never happen: nature itself makes sure of it; there will always be delay, always inequality. But one can thus continually exercise the privilege of reducing it... (Rancière 1991: 119)

By acknowledgment of the critique's legitimacy, critically informed action takes the criticised *status quo* for granted, and tries to change what is, into what should be. Because of this, it is based upon the assumptions it aims to overcome. Hence the desired future is delayed *ad infinitum* (it becomes a utopia), and emancipation starts to be an '...indefinite process of coming closer' (ibid.: 120), which means that here and now it reproduces what it tried to change.

In respect to the nineteenth century educational 'experiment' of Joseph Jacotot, Rancière argues that emancipative action cannot be based on truth about inequalities (ibid.: 45) delivered by social critique but on the right assumption – the assumption of equality: *people are of equal intelligence* (ibid.: 18, 101). In the face of critical knowledge such an assumption is an 'illusion' – but 'it works' (Rancière 2003: 185). When one acts on the basis of this assumption one makes

---

[6] It should be acknowledged that this discussion was initiated in the face of the experiences of the post-Bourdieu educational reforms conducted in France (See: Rancière 2003: 220–221; Ross 1991: xii–xiii).

it happen, makes it true (verifies it) by building a relation between equals, and by initiating a chain of interactions defined by this assumption.

It is precisely this re-discovered *intellectual adventure* which opens up a new perspective in understanding the relation between philosophy and educational practice.

Post-critical relation

Threshold

In order to enter the conceptual space opened up by this re-discovery we must redefine some assumptions that govern the worldviews within all the previously distinguished types. It seems to me that the threshold which we have to cross can be recognized from two different sides, functioning as the face and the reverse of the same shift. Our understanding of thinking and acting needs to be changed, namely what 'doing philosophy' and what educational practice actually mean.

Firstly, it would be important to abandon our understanding of thinking (and also philosophy as its practice) in the Latin sense, *contemplari*. As Heidegger points out:

> The Romans translate *teōrein* by *contemplari*, *thēoria* by *contemplatio*. [...] *contemplari* means: to partition something off into a separate sector and enclose it therein. (Heidegger 1977: 165)

Thinking is thus a practice of distinction, categorization, differentiation, etc. However, in order to separate, thinking should be a separation itself, 'a withdrawal from the world' – as Hannah Arendt (1971: 92) stated about thinking in a different context. Separated and separating thinking fosters the creation of a theory which, as separate from acting, sets its ground. Theorizing is then an attempt to elaborate external action, and to shape it according to a certain framework, derived from an area of a different reality. Philosophy as the practice of *contemplari* therefore, cannot enter a different relation with educational practice, other than instrumental or critical relation.

Hence, it seems necessary to start recognizing thinking as included *implicite* in acting, as logic according to which the action acts (Zamojski 2005). In order to

name this thinking, one may follow Giroux's proposal and address to Habermas the idea of a rationality of action (Giroux 1983: 171–204). It needs to be emphasized that Jürgen Habermas understands this concept differently to what I attempt to suggest here. He looks for the conditions in which acting may be accepted as rational. Although Habermas (1984) regards the fact that these conditions are included in communicative action *implicite* (as its universal pragmatics), he simultaneously aims at creating an ideal measure describing a given action as meeting these particular conditions or not (that is as rational or not).

Rather than this, however, we should assume that every action is rational, as it is connected with a certain lifeworld, with certain senses which people give to their place of dwelling[7]. Therefore, it is possible to find a certain logic which governs the actions in each of them. Such logics (rationalities of acting) are numerous and it is difficult, especially in the face of arguments about the complexity and overdetermination of the social world, to expect that they would aim at a certain synthesis. It needs to be assumed that every action runs according to a certain logic, i.e. it is founded in a substantial rationality. Acting in a certain way, we assume its logic, that is we assume a whole set of assumptions towards the world and people, which are evocations of a certain way of thinking (about the world and people), hence they are an expression of a certain rationality.

Or on the contrary: a given way of viewing the world, connected with certain assumptions concerning its and our nature, rules which are applied there, etc., hence connected with the way we think about ourselves, about others and about the world as a whole, results in the fact that all the actions we undertake are marked by the way of thinking characteristic for our lifeworld. Thus thinking creates a horizon upon which we carry out actions and give sense to these actions. The sense of our action is not its effect or activities which we undertake, but the logic which makes it happen.

Contemplari is a way of thinking which has its object, it is a thinking *about* something. It is the intellectual operations which concern something in the world. Their character requires a withdrawal from the world, solitude, from which comes an attempt to integrate with this world to relate with it, to connect. Rationality of action is a way of thinking which is assumed *implicite* in the action,

---

[7] To acknowledge this assumption one may refer to the traditions of ethnomethodology (Garfinkel 1967), phenomenological sociology (Schutz 1970) or phenomenography (Marton 1986).

it is the *logic according to which it works*, the horizon upon which the composed activities have their meaning[8].

Secondly, it would be necessary to abandon understanding action in terms of categories of production, that is, ways which see the sense of the action in its effect, in what the action brings to the world. Then, the action itself is understood as a specific black box which mysteriously transforms the delivered material into a given outcome.

The concept of the rationality of action suggests that action does not produce, but acts. The sense of action is its Being, that is the way in which it happens. This is what Biesta (2010b) recognizes when he draws attention to '...the educational quality of our means' (ibid.: 48). If we assume that students can '...learn from our use of particular means or strategies' (ibid.: 48–49), then the educational sense of educational practice is located in exactly how the action happens, and not in the certain outcomes it is supposed to lead to. Educational action is thus an interaction, something that happens between people. Its sense lies in the quality of this interaction, in how it happens, and not in how it ends[9].

---

[8] Hence it becomes clear that the difference between thinking (as *contemplari*) and thinking in which we act (rationality of action) does not overlap with famous Donald Schön's (1983) distinction between the reflection-on- and the reflection-in-action. Naturally practitioners '...may also reflect *on* practice *while* they are in the midst of it' (pp. 61–62, my emphasis), however it is not the issue of the moment that reflection of the practitioner is set in motion, since reflection as such always stays in the realm of *contemplari*, it is always thinking *about* something, whether it is performed during action or not. The rationality of action – as thinking *in which* one acts – can be the object of reflection (both *on-* and *in-action*), however it is something different, something prior to the very possibility of reflection about action. It refers to the fact that action is not meaningless, that it is intelligent, that it has its own logic. It is a kind of thinking that makes our doings understandable, binds them together, and therefore allows them to be an object of reflection. It goes similar with the phenomenon of knowing-in-action (see pp. 49–54), which is '...a kind of knowing [...] inherent in intelligent action' (p. 50), and so it is always situated in a particular meaningful environment that makes an action intelligent. It is this environment I try to call as rationality of action.

[9] Although, in such a view educational action is not productive in an economic, instrumental sense, paradoxically this doesn't mean that it is unproductive as such. With reference to T. Lewis (2011) inquiry, it could be said that we deal here rather with an *(im)potential* or an *undecidable* 'productivity'. Educational action brings something to the world, but not as a result or an effect, not at the end of itself, but as itself, while it happens. It is productivity *as not* productivity (p. 593), it rather opens future possibilities instead of exhausting them as an actualization of potentiality (p. 589); it makes possible, as it is a space for happening (enowning).

It becomes clear that the threshold which one needs to cross, is what Heidegger referred to as an ontological difference, as a difference between being and the Being of that being.

General characteristics

The post-critical relation of philosophy and educational practice means to understand theory as a rationality of action, namely to see thinking as a horizon of educational practice. If philosophy, as a practice of thinking, enters into a relation with educational practice, it creates a space for it to happen (or en-owning, as Heidegger would say) (Heidegger 1999). It does not indicate to the practice and the practitioners 'what to do?', it is not a set of instructions, it is not a critical measure, or a utopian vision to whose realisation one needs to approximate constantly. Following Jan Masschelein (2004: 49), it could be said that it is simultaneously *poor* and *generous* as 'it gives time and space, the time and space of experience and of thought'. In other words: it is a sign indicating a different beginning (Heidegger 1968 [1954]); an area for acting which gives the possibility to initiate. In this way, educational theory is a kind of explicitly marked empty space which is yet to be filled or managed by educational practitioners. They are not however given any precise procedures that they should follow, or a utopian project they are obliged to realise. They receive instead a rationality for their actions, a sense in which they may plan and carry out their actions.

Filling this gap may take various shapes. The horizon which creates thinking, can be managed in different ways. Therefore, it works as a space in which everyone has a chance *to come into presence in its unique way*[10]. In other words: theory is a text which '...speaks of a possible world and of a possible way of orienting oneself within it. The dimensions of this world are properly opened up by, disclosed by, the text' (Ricoeur 1973: 114). However, understanding the world opened by the text/theory, is already the task of the reader/agent who participates in this world in her own characteristic way. So it is a task for educational practitioner to create her own practice meaningfully, i.e. faithfully to a particular rationality that she acknowledges.

The sense which theory gives to practitioners is a suggestion. The practitioner must reflect upon it, must analyse it, decide about it. It is never singular nor

---

[10] I am referring here to the educational interpretation of Arendt's concept made by Biesta (2006).

finite; it is not the Only one. It always comes in the plural. Thus reflection on the horizon of one's own action may not be stopped, as much as there are constantly new and old propositional rationalities of action emerging.

Still, these senses, similarly to the previous types of relations discussed here, come from outside the practice and try to impose themselves on this practice. However, this always happens in their plurality and their primal insufficiency. Theory has, thus, the status of a *weak thought*, as one may repeat after Gianni Vattimo (1988). It is rather a soil than a foundation; it is a fertilizer for making a foundation for an educational practice, but it is no longer a ground itself. It is the practitioner who 'does the grounding' (Heidegger 1999) for her own practice, while acting according to a certain logic.

Basic assumptions

A lot of what is understood as philosophy and educational practice of the post-critical type has already been discussed here. Let me repeat.

In this type of relation philosophy is a practice of thinking. To do philosophy means to think. It draws upon its Tradition as so many prompts in the act of thinking. The philosophy of education is not just an act of thinking *about* education however, and thus it has no structure of *contemplari*, nor is it trying to create a ground for education. The philosophy of education is just thinking (simply philosophy) *in which* there is a possibility of educational action.

The difference between philosophy and theory is immensely subtle. The practice of thinking, its very moment, is distinct from its record, text which records a given way of thought. Theory is a text, a record of a given practice of thinking. It is a given way in which one thinks and, as such, it is a horizon for educational practice, a sign indicating an inward area of action.

The theory of education is thus something else than educational practice. As in the previous types, it constantly functions as something external to the practice, something that is trying to impose itself on the practitioners. However, this imposition is a far more intimate relation than a directive instruction, a critical warning or a discipline of utopia. The theory offers itself as the logic of the practitioners' action. This means that the sense of practice, or the *telos* of education does not lie in its effects, nor in its curriculum, nor in what justifies it, but in the way it happens (Zamojski 2010: 295–337). The most important concern of educational practitioners is thus what happens between people while they act. Exactly this concern frames the way of understanding old and new answers to the question 'what is education?'. Regardless of what is their

claim on education, in the post-critical type they make sense only if they can be conceived of as the rationalities of action, as symbolic horizons in which there is an opportunity to act meaningfully with others.

What is important, the post-critical character of the relation between philosophy and educational practice does not mean the abandoning of critique! Although it is not a measure or a utopian vision, and it does not exhaust itself in initiating the reflections of practitioners, it emerges as a response to a critically evaluated *status quo*. Nevertheless, this response does not give answers, does not give ready solutions, it does not abolish this *status quo*. It never says 'what to do', nor does it warn against 'what not to do'. This response is thus a reminder (Biesta 2010d; see also Lewis 2011: 594, 596) of what has not been thought, what is forgotten and lost in the currently dominant way of thinking and simultaneously, essentially crucial for education.

The process of reminding relies upon opening up horizons of action which, as a response to the deficiencies of a dominant way of thinking, requires an attempt to create quasi-overall approaches – kinds of Weak Grand Theories which do not claim to be absolute, only or total. Created with a conviction of their weakness, an inherent danger of unconscious exclusions, entanglements and reductions, they still give a proposal for practice to work within a different logic, a different rationality. They promise a new beginning.

Discussion

This exercise in thought aimed at developing some ideal distinctions that could be useful in the discussion on the possible ways of philosophical engagement in educational practice. Moreover, it also formulates a proposition to engage philosophically in education by creating symbolic spaces for it to happen (developing rationalities of action). This proposition arises from the understanding of philosophy as practice of thinking (opposed to discipline of knowledge) and from understanding acting as following a certain logic, as happening of a certain sense (opposed to producing effects). These rationalities of action originate in critical insights into the social *status quo* but they do not point to utopia – they make an offer to act according to a certain logic.

Although it is not easy to disclose the dangers within the possibility that one just starts to recognize, it is clear that the post-critical relation between philosophy and educational practice is very demanding and risky. The post-critical

relation does not give answers that are ready for application into the body of educational practice, it does not give direct warnings against the wrongs of the world, and does not formulate a vision for an ideal future. Instead of this it requires: firstly, to think in a way that could function as the rationality of educational action, and secondly, to act meaningfully or faithfully – with reference to a particular rationality.

The first challenge was indicated already some time ago by Johan Friedrich Herbart, who at the very beginning of his famous work from 1806 [1908] writes:

> The aim of all who educate and demand education is determined by the range of thought [*Gesichtkreis*] they bring to the subject.
> The majority of those who teach have entirely neglected in the first instance to construct for themselves their own range of thought in view of this work (ibid.: 78)

I would like to propose to understand Herbart's *Gesichtkreis* (a *range of thought* or a meaningful horizon for viewing the issue of education) in terms of rationality of action, that is, as a way of thinking, a logic in light of which particular actions performed in concrete situations would make sense as educational unlike others (see ibid.: 78–80).

Following Herbart's call to construct such *ranges of thought* is a challenge because it obviously implies the necessity to define what education is, and what it is not (see ibid.: 84–86). No wonder that – as Herbart notes – *the majority of those who teach have entirely neglected* this challenge. However – what must be stressed in reference to the post-critical type – forming rationality of educational action is not about closing education in frames of a particular definition, it is rather about posing the question on education in the centre of our attention. After all defining the essence of education means establishing an *arche*, the ground for educational practice, which would take us right to the instrumental relation. Reinstalling the One is a path leading to rewrite rationality of action into a set of applicable directions, a sense in which one acts into an answer about what educational practice should be like.

Instead of closing the question on education the post-critical way of relating philosophy and educational practice strives for keeping this question opened and vivid. To keep a question opened and vivid means to seek for an answer that would not be considered as final or ultimate, but as *weak*: born without a claim to absoluteness, uncertain of its own premises, free from the intention to exclude other views, and therefore propositional, open to be inspired, to be contaminated with other ideas, logics etc. (see Vattimo 1988: 121, 159).

The risk of such a weakness lies in its uncertainty, which not only makes the conditions of educational practice unstable, but it is also linked with multiplicity. As noted by Herbart, educational practitioners should construct '...for themselves their own' *Gesichtkreis*. Only a strong, an ultimate answer can pretend to be alone. Weak answers always come in the plural, and for staying weak they need to interact, they need mutual influence, a dialogue. They demand to take the risk of meeting the other and changing themselves.

However this leads to the second challenge brought about by the post-critical type of the relation between philosophy and educational practice. If the rationality of action demands that educational practitioners should act meaningfully, its weakness becomes a problem. How can one be faithful to rationality that is uncertain, unstable, open to changes/contaminations/influences? What does it mean to act meaningfully within a multitude of weak, propositional logics? Is that possible at all? Must we think about some sort of a common ground, an *arche*, an universal measure, an essence that would set an order into this multiplicity? Is there no other way out?

These are the questions that, among others, need to be posed when addressing the issue of post-critical relation between philosophy and educational practice. Naturally they cannot be considered here and so must become a matter of future investigations, which would also concern further assumptions and consequences arising with the distinction of the ideal types preliminary elaborated within this exercise.

References

Adorno T.W. 1950. *The Authoritarian Personality*, Harper, New York.

Adorno T.W. 1973 [1966]. *Negative Dialectic*, transl. E.B. Ashton, Continuum, New York–London.

Apple M.W. 1999. *Power, Meaning and Identity. Essays in Critical Educational Studies*, Peter Lang, New York.

Arendt H. 1998 [1958]. *The Human Condition*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago–London.

Arendt H. 2003. Personal responsibility under dictatorship, in: H. Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgment* (pp. 17–48), J. Kohn (ed.), Schocken Books, New York.

Arendt H. 2006a [1963]. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: a Report on the Banality of Evil*, Penguin Books, New York.

Arendt H. 2006b [1968]. *Between Past and Future. Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, Penguin, New York.

Arendt H. 1971. *The Life of Mind*, Harvest, Harcourt Inc., San Diego – New York – London.

Bacon F. 2000 [1620]. *The New Organon*, transl. L. Jardine, M. Silverthorne, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Biesta G.J.J. 2006. *Beyond Learning. Democratic Education for a Human Future*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder–London.

Biesta G.J.J. 2009. From critique to deconstruction: Derrida as a critical philosopher, in: Peters M.A., Biesta G.J.J. *Derrida, Deconstruction, and The Politics of Pedagogy* (pp. 81–95), Peter Lang, New York.

Biesta G.J.J. 2010a. Why 'what works' still won't work: from evidence-based education to value-based education, *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 29, pp. 491–503.

Biesta G.J.J. 2010b. *Good Education in the Age of Measurement. Ethics, Politics, Democracy*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder – London.

Biesta G.J.J. 2010c. Editorial: Publishing in Studies in Philosophy and Education, *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 29 (1), pp. 1–3.

Biesta G.J.J. 2010d. Education, weakness, existence, the soul and truth: Five reminders about the basic questions of education, *Ars Educandi* vol. VII, pp. 55–69.

Bourdieu P., Passeron J.-C. 1990. *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, trans. R. Nice, Sage Publications, London.

Carr W. 1995. *For Education. Towards Critical Educational Inquiry*, Open University Press, Buckingham – Philadelphia.

Comte A. 1903 [1844]. *A Discourse on the Positive Spirit*, transl. E.S. Beesly. Wiliam Reeves, London.

Dilthey W. 1989. *Introduction to the Human Sciences*, transl. M. Neville, J. Barnouw, F. Schreiner, R.A. Makkreel, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Ellsworth E. 1989. Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy, *Harvard Educational Review* 59 (3), pp. 297–324.

Gadamer H.-G. 2004 [1960]. *Truth and Method*, transl. J. Weinsheimer, D.G. Marshall, Continuum, London – New York.

Gadotti M. 1996. *Pedagogy of Praxis. A Dialectical Philosophy of Education*, transl. J. Milton, State University of New York Press, New York.

Garfinkel H. 1967. *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Giroux H.A. 1983. *Theory and Resistance in Education. A Pedagogy for the Opposition*, Bergin & Garvey Publications, Massachusetts.

Gur-Ze'ev I. 1998. Toward a nonrepressive critical pedagogy, *Educational Theory* 48 (4), pp. 463–486.

Habermas J. 1984. *Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1, transl. T. McCarthy, Beacon Press., Boston, Mass.

Heidegger M. 1968 [1954]. *What Is Called Thinking?* transl. F.D. Wieck, J. G. Gray, Harper & Row, New York.

Heidegger M. 1969 [1955–57]. *Identity and Difference*, transl. J. Stambaugh, Harper & Row, New York – Evanston – London.

Heidegger M. 1977 [1949]. *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, transl. W. Lovitt, Garland Publishing, New York – London.

Heidegger M. 1999 [1989]. *Contributions to Philosophy. (From Enowning)*, transl. P. Emad, K. Maly, Indiana University Press, Bloomington – Indianapolis.

Heidegger M. 2008 [1969]. The end of philosophy and the task of thinking, transl. J. Stambaugh, in: idem, *Basic Writings*, D.F. Krell (ed.) (pp. 431–449), Harper Perennial, London.

Herbart J.F. 1908 [1806]. *The Science of Education. Its General Principles Deduced from its Aim*, transl. H.M. Felkin and E. Felkin, D.C. Heat & Co., Boston.

Horkheimer M., Adorno T.W. 1973 [1944]. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. J. Cumming, Continuum, New York.

Horkheimer M. 2004 [1947]. *Eclipse of Reason*, Continuum, London – New York.

Kenklies K. 2012. Educational theory as topological rhetoric: the concepts of pedagogy of Johann Friedrich Herbart and Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 31 (1), pp. 265–273.

Kołakowski L. 1972. *Positivist Philosophy*, Penguin, Harmondsworth – Middlesex.

Kwaśnica R. 1990. Ukryte założenia trzech krytyk. Przyczynek do samowiedzy pedagogiki przejścia i pogranicza [Hidden assumptions of the three types of critique. A contribution to the consciousnes of the transitive and liminal pedagogy], in: Z. Kwieciński, L. Witkowski (eds.), *Ku pedagogii pogranicza* [*Towards Liminal Pedagogy*], Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń.

Lewis T.E. 2011. Rethinking the Learning Society: Giorgio Agamben on Studying, Stupidity, and Impotence, *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 30 (6), pp. 585–599.

Maddock T. 1999. The nature and limits of critical theory in education, *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 31 (1), pp. 43–61.

Marton F. 1986. Phenomenography – a research approach investigating different understandings of reality, *Journal of Thought* 21 (2), pp. 28–49.

Masschelein J. 1997. For education, *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 31 (3), pp. 505–514.

Masschelein J. 2000. Can education still be critical? *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 34 (4), pp. 603–616.

Masschelein J. 2004. How to conceive of critical educational theory today? *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 38 (3), pp. 351–367.

Masschelein J. 2010. E-ducating the gaze: the idea of a poor pedagogy, *Ethics and Education* 5 (1), pp. 43–53.

Masschelein J. 2011. Experimentum scholae: the world once more... but not (yet) finished, *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 30 (5), pp. 529–535.

Morrow R.A., Torres C.A. 2002. *Reading Freire and Habermas. Critical Pedagogy and Transformative Social Change*, Teachers College Press, New York.

Pawliszyn W. 2002. On philosophy and on expertise in philosophy ("Philosophistics") – a fantastic narrative, *Analecta Husserliana* vol. 77, pp. 297–305.

Rancière J. 1991. *The Ignorant Schoolmaster. Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*, transl. K. Ross, Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Rancière J. 2003. *The Philosopher and His Poor*, transl. J. Drury, C. Oster, A. Parker, Duke University Press, Durham – London.

Rancière J. 2010. On Ignorant Schoolmasters, transl. Ch. Bingham, in: Ch. Bingham, G.J.J. Biesta, *Jaques Rancière: Education, Truth, Emancipation* (pp. 1–16), Continuum, London – New York.

Ricoeur P. 1973. The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text, *New Literary History*, 5 (1), pp. 91–117.

Ross K. 1991. Translator introduction, in: J. Rancière, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster. Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (pp. vii–xxiii), transl. K. Ross, Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Schön D.A. 1983. *The Reflective Practitioner. How Professionals Think in Action*, Basic Books, New York.

Schutz A. 1970. *On Phenomenology and Social Relations. Selected Writings*, ed. H.R. Wagner, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago – London.

Sloterdijk P. 1987 [1983]. *Critique of Cynical Reason*, transl. M. Eldred, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Thomson I. 2005. *Heidegger on Ontotheology. Technology and the Politics of Education*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Torres C.A. 2012. Critical Social Theory: a portrait, *Ethics and Education* 7 (2), pp. 115–124.

Vattimo G. 1988 [1985]. *The End of Modernity. Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Postmodern Culture*, transl. J.R. Snyder, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

Weber M., 2004 [1904]. The 'objectivity' of knowledge in social science and social policy, transl. K. Tribe, in: *The Essential Weber: A Reader*, ed. S. Whimster, Routledge, London, pp. 359–405.

Wortham S. 2011. What does philosophy have to offer education, and who should be offering it? *Educational Theory* 61 (6), pp. 727–741.

Zamojski P. 2005. Myślenie, w którym działamy. (Przeciw kawitacji mitycznej ogólności pedago-giki) [Thinking in Which We Act (Against the cavitation of pedagogy's mythical generality)], *Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny* 4(198), pp. 113–126.

Zamojski P. 2010. *Pytanie o cel kształcenia – zaproszenie do debaty* [Question on the Aim of Education – Invitation to a Debate], Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk.