

HASER

**REVISTA INTERNACIONAL
DE FILOSOFÍA APLICADA**

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ESTUDIOS
ARTICLES

FILOSOFÍA PARA NIÑOS: UN RETO PARA LA EDUCACIÓN ÉTICA Y EN VALORES

PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN: A CHALLENGE FOR ETHICAL AND VALUES EDUCATION

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Resumen: Esta investigación parte de la necesidad colombiana de desarrollar el pensamiento crítico, principalmente en niños de educación básica primaria, como respuesta a la creciente problemática de conflictos escolares dentro y fuera de las aulas. Esto puede ser atendido desde la implementación de Filosofía para Niños (FpN), porque a partir del análisis de situaciones cotidianas, algunas de ellas convertidas en anécdotas, el docente promueve habilidades de pensamiento que las argumentan y las pasan por el matiz de la crítica. Este proceso se puede articular con las innovaciones que pretende tanto la legislación colombiana, como la educación contemporánea, generando conciencia en el estudiante de soluciones por la vía concertada, llegando a acuerdos y conciliaciones que aborden el conflicto.

Palabras clave: Pensamiento crítico, conflicto escolar, Filosofía para Niños, argumentación, conciencia.

Abstract: This research is based on Colombia's need to develop critical thinking, mainly in primary basic education children, in response to the growing problem of school conflicts in and out of the classroom. This can be addressed from the implementation of Philosophy for Children (FpN), because from the analysis of everyday situations, some of them turned into anecdotes, the teacher promotes thinking skills that argue them and get them through the nuance of criticism. This process can be articulated with the innovations that both Colombian legislation

and contemporary education aim, generating awareness in the student of solutions by the concerted way, reaching agreements and conciliations to approach the Conflict.

Key words: Critical thinking, school conflict, Children's Philosophy, argumentation, awareness.

Introducción

Lo que investigué como estudiante de la Universidad Santo Tomás entre los años 2016 y 2017, fundamentó la implementación del programa de Filosofía para Niños (FpN) en algunas instituciones educativas dentro del nivel de Educación Básica Primaria en los municipios de Chía y Cajicá, en el departamento de Cundinamarca, Colombia. Se sugirió la propuesta FpN como una forma de abordar, desde el diálogo argumentativo, la solución de conflictos escolares que afectan la convivencia y, en algunos casos, el bienestar de los estudiantes en la vida cotidiana, con el ánimo de aprovechar la receptividad de los niños y su potencial desarrollo del pensamiento crítico en el análisis de las situaciones problemáticas.

De lo anterior se desprendieron otros objetivos como la asociación de “solución de conflictos del entorno escolar con la propuesta de FpN para el desarrollo del pensamiento crítico en una ética ciudadana”¹. También se persiguió la habilitación de FpN en el plan de estudios de Educación Ética y en Valores como propuesta didáctica al alcance del docente, y la incorporación de “estrategias metodológicas orientadas a la implementación de la propuesta FpN que comprometan a los docentes en su desarrollo, control y seguimiento”².

¹ Primer objetivo específico del Trabajo de investigación titulado en el presente artículo.

² Tercer objetivo específico del Trabajo de investigación titulado en el presente artículo.

Con relación al objetivo de la investigación que incentiva una ética ciudadana, Mathew Lipman en su propuesta de FpN resalta el papel de la ética, aporta una definición de la misma que sin duda es una guía para el educador, permitiéndole desenvolverse con mayor solvencia en el análisis ético de las situaciones problemáticas presentadas entre los niños. La define como:

Rama de la filosofía que pretende comprender la conducta moral. Representa una investigación objetiva y desapasionada sobre problemas y situaciones morales. Su fin nunca es adoctrinar, sino ayudar a las personas a que comprendan con mayor claridad cuáles son sus opciones morales y cómo es posible evaluar críticamente esas opciones³

El descubrimiento de Harry es la primera novela de Lipman que describe la manera como los niños descubren la filosofía. A partir de allí él construye sus conocidos Manuales Docentes, que son su propuesta pedagógica innovadora en el afianzamiento de FpN, debido a que al final de su obra aclara que son:

Instrumentos de razonamiento básicos, técnicas de pensamiento crítico y de lógica formal e informal que los niños podrán aplicar en cursos superiores a problemas específicos de las diferentes áreas... ofrece un modelo de diálogo entre niños y de éstos con los adultos, tanto en el aula de clase como en la vida familiar o en sus relaciones como amigos⁴

Con la intención de enseñar a pensar sobre lo que se memoriza, FpN realiza su aparición en el análisis que los niños pueden hacer acerca del mundo. Con esto, el maestro se obliga a llenarse de conocimientos que le permitan guiar ese pensamiento, participar en el análisis y gestionar la solución del conflicto, acercándose

³ LIPMAN, Mathew: Investigación ética - Manual del profesor para acompañar a Lisa, Ediciones de la Torre, Madrid, 1988, pág. 21.

⁴ LIPMAN, Mathew: El descubrimiento de Harry, Ediciones de la Torre, Madrid, 1988, pág. 72.

positivamente a la formación ético-ciudadana. Adela Cortina, en su artículo *Resolver los conflictos, hacer la justicia*, hace una meditación sobre la forma como el docente aborda la resolución de conflictos desde la ética ciudadana:

Educación en la resolución de conflictos, significa enseñar a la persona a enfrentarlos con la voluntad positiva de no permitir que le arrebaten la capacidad de ser dueña de sí misma. Y es materia indispensable en la educación porque, sin la habilidad suficiente para hacerlo, la persona sufrirá a lo largo de su vida situaciones de dolor inevitables.⁵

Además, ella considera que el rol formativo del maestro no se detiene en la educación para la resolución de conflictos, por el contrario, debe enriquecer el panorama del estudiante desde el conocimiento ético. La ética ciudadana, en su accionar filosófico, le permite a los niños: “encontrar soluciones justas para los que se encuentren implicados. Porque las relaciones humanas se producen entre sujetos que, aun “antes” de saberse en confrontación, se reconocen mutuamente como seres humanos”⁶

Aproximación al contexto educativo

A pesar de los esfuerzos en la enseñanza de la cátedra de Ética, fundamentada en cuestiones como las normas familiares y la escolaridad, a los estudiantes se les dificulta actuar en la vida cotidiana dentro de un ambiente de convivencia sano. Teniendo como punto de partida el hecho que el acto propio afecta directa o indirectamente a las personas que rodean a quien lo ejecuta, aparecen situaciones que en algunas ocasiones generan conflictos.

⁵ CORTINA, Adela: “Resolver los conflictos, hacer la justicia”, en Cuadernos de pedagogía, número 257, Madrid, 1999, pág. 2.

⁶ CORTINA, Adela: Educación en valores y Responsabilidad cívica, Editorial el Búho Ltda, Bogotá, 2005, pág. 151.

La observación de comportamientos especialmente en los niños de grado 5° de primaria genera interés en directivos y maestros, por ser una población que asume el rol de ser la mayor en su nivel y por ser un punto de transición hacia la educación básica y media. Se encuentran en una etapa escolar que solicita un pensamiento crítico y que permite tomar decisiones a partir de una reflexión filosófica adquirida a través de la formación ético-social. Una formación que será incorporada por ellos y que determinará su comportamiento. Por lo tanto, consideramos que es necesario proponer la incorporación de FpN dentro del área de Educación Ética y en Valores, ya que esta disciplina:

Busca fomentar y conservar en los niños y adolescentes la actitud que tienen en común los filósofos con la infancia: la curiosidad por todo lo que les rodea y el no dar nada por sentado. La inacabable cadena de preguntas “¿Y por qué? ¿Y por qué? ¿Y por qué?” que caracteriza una determinada etapa del desarrollo del niño se convierte en modo de vida para el filósofo, y esa es la actitud que se busca salvaguardar⁷

Los niños de este grado han recibido, en los años anteriores, formación en Educación Ética y Valores; de manera que han desarrollado la habilidad de elaborar juicios valorativos frente a situaciones conflictivas que hacen parte de la vida cotidiana. Estos muchas veces pueden calificarse de drásticos, es decir, que asumen la sanción en otros especialmente cuando no les afecta personalmente. No suelen aceptar un término medio en las apreciaciones respecto a los demás, lo que debe ser aprovechado para fundamentar y enriquecer una construcción de juicios asertivos, que incluyan mayor variedad de posibilidades para analizar las situaciones conflictivas, evitando los juicios excesivamente radicales.

⁷ MORENO ARTIDIELLO, Mabel Marta: “Filosofía para Niños y Niñas (FPNN): una oportunidad diferente para pensar en la escuela”, en *Ciencia y Sociedad*, número 43, Santo Domingo, 2018. Pág 27.

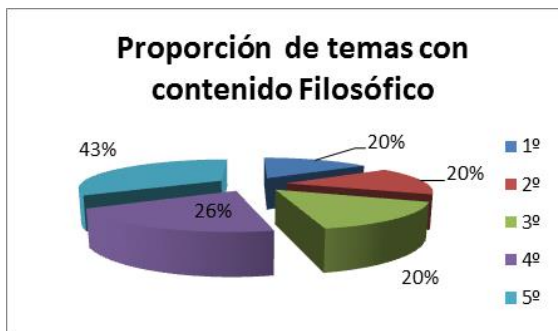
Al observar el plan de estudios en primaria, hay un contenido pre-filosófico que inicialmente aporta conceptualización y acercamiento a la realidad del estudiante, esto se evidencia en la siguiente tabla⁸:

PRIMERO	SEGUNDO	TERCERO	CUARTO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Actos buenos y actos malos. - Me respeto a mí mismo y a los demás. -Cualidades en los demás. - Gratitud - Solidaridad - Paz. - Cuidado con los seres de la naturaleza. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conceptualización básica de la ciencia ética. - Esquema corporal. - ¿Cómo reconocer actos buenos y actos malos? - Acercamiento al concepto de conciencia moral - Valores éticos y morales. - Respeto - Responsabilidad. - Honestidad - Formación de la voluntad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -¿Quién soy? - Normas en mi familia y en mi Colegio. - Conflicto. - Mis deberes básicos para la convivencia social. - Acercamiento al concepto de intencionalidad moral. - Diversidad y pluralidad: respeto, tolerancia, solidaridad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Conciencia -Conciencia de sí mismo. - Deber y norma - Leyes naturales. - Leyes positivas. -Voluntad, temperamento y carácter. -Reconocimiento de los demás -Cuidado del medio ambiente.

Hay temas filosóficos que pueden ser aprovechados por el docente para desarrollar FpN. Estos se presentan a medida que se va ascendiendo de grado. Los contenidos de las asignaturas pertenecientes al área de Humanidades se van complejizando e intensificando, como puede observarse en la siguiente gráfica⁹.

⁸ Adaptación propia con información tomada de los Planes de Estudio de Educación Ética y en Valores del colegio Celestin Freinet de Chía, Cundinamarca (2017).

⁹ Adaptación propia con información tomada de los Planes de Estudio del área de Humanidades del colegio Celestin Freinet de Chía, Cundinamarca (2017).



Por otro lado, al revisar los registros disciplinarios de los estudiantes, se encuentran algunos conflictos escolares considerados típicos por docentes, coordinadores y padres de familia. Entre ellos se observan los relacionados con la transgresión del Manual de Convivencia institucional, coincidiendo con los más reportados por los docentes:

Casos más frecuentes ¹⁰	Porcentaje
- Incumplimiento de tareas.	25%
- Impuntualidad	15%
- Bullying	15%
- Agresividad	15%
- Irrespeto a la autoridad	10%
- Fraude	6%
-Problemas con redes sociales.	5%
- Daños en pupitres	5%
- Faltas leves (pequeños brotes de indisciplina, porte de uniforme)	4%

Lo último que hice para el análisis del contexto educativo, fue una encuesta a 37 estudiantes de Grado Quinto de Educación Básica Primaria. El objeto de la misma fue hacer un diagnóstico de las disposiciones asumidas por los niños frente a los conflictos

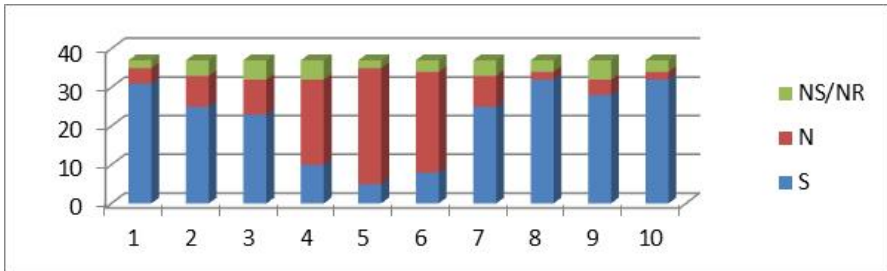
¹⁰ Elaboración propia con información tomada de los observadores estudiantiles.

cotidianos; así mismo, mediante este ejercicio se evalúa la pertinencia del programa de FpN como estrategia didáctica para abordar la solución de conflictos desde el diálogo en comunidad, la reflexión y el análisis.

No.	PREGUNTAS ¹¹	S	N	NS/NR
1.	¿Puedes identificar en tu familia, en el colegio o en tu grupo de amigos cuando hay un problema o conflicto?	31	4	2
2.	Ante los problemas o conflictos ¿tratas siempre de solucionarlos personalmente?	25	8	4
3.	¿Haces reclamos a las personas sobre los conflictos que ellos te generan?	23	9	5
4.	¿Algunas veces has resuelto conflictos con peleas o agresividad?	10	22	5
5.	¿Algunas veces a los conflictos has reaccionado con groserías?	5	30	2
6.	¿Has hecho cosas “contra los demás”, (hablar mal, zancadilla, balonazos, etc.) cuando tienes un conflicto con ellos?	8	26	3
7.	Antes de dar solución a un conflicto ¿has reflexionado sobre la mejor forma de hacerlo?	25	8	4
8.	¿Con tus compañeros te has puesto de acuerdo para solucionar conflictos?	32	2	3
9.	Después de tener un conflicto ¿has analizado el por qué se dio?	28	4	5
10.	¿Les cuentas a tus papás o profesores los conflictos que tienes con los demás?	32	2	3

¹¹ Cuestionario del manejo del conflicto antes de la aplicación de FpN. Allí se especifica en cada pregunta tres opciones de respuesta: S (si) N (no) NS/NR (no sabe, no responde).

Gráfica de barras¹²



Como se observa en el gráfico anterior, los niños identifican conflictos que asocian con actitudes de mala cara, preocupación, discusión, gritos, grosería, aislamiento. Con la respuesta en el interrogante número 2, se muestra la autonomía que el estudiante quiere tener al solucionar personalmente sus problemas. Sin embargo, hay una dificultad en la aceptación de algunas soluciones impulsivas: agresividad, grosería o gestos que los estudiantes intentan explicar de involuntarios cuando realmente no lo son. Se evidencia prevención en las preguntas 3, 4, 5, 6 y 7, un querer dar la respuesta acorde a lo que el docente desea escuchar.

Por otra parte, la respuesta a la pregunta 8 es un indicador que requiere acciones preventivas ofrecidas por FpN, especialmente la comunidad de indagación, ya que en ella se ve la tendencia a buscar soluciones entre sus miembros. En general, la encuesta manifiesta la necesidad de un espacio de diálogo, análisis y reflexión en los conflictos escolares que aparecen en la cotidianidad.

¹² Gráfica de la encuesta, en donde el color azul representa las habilidades que los estudiantes deberían tener para el abordaje de los conflictos.

Manejo del conflicto con FpN

Posteriormente incorporé la propuesta de FpN. Se aplicó el ejercicio de identificar y evaluar algunas situaciones problemáticas para conocer las interpretaciones de los estudiantes, utilizando algunas anécdotas de hechos sucedidos en la institución y otras conocidas como docente, en mi trayectoria pedagógica. Seguido a esto, establecí pequeñas comunidades de indagación para que los mismos estudiantes propusieran soluciones o maneras en las que ellos habrían actuado en circunstancias parecidas; se socializaron las respuestas para analizar las soluciones óptimas que no vulneraran a los demás, lo que contribuyó a la generación de un vocabulario básico que permitió abordar mejor la FpN dentro de dichas comunidades.

En mi experiencia docente, la aplicación de FpN por medio de talleres, me ha hecho sentir comprometido desde el inicio del proceso de preparación de los mismos. Debo pensar y proyectar el ambiente en el que se darán, por ello algunas veces influyen elementos que hacen parte de la decoración del aula de clase, para recrear escenarios externos dados al desarrollo de las anécdotas o narraciones que se utilizarán en las sesiones de trabajo. En la competencia crítica, me interesó realizar un proceso de aprehensión, es decir, una apropiación consciente del conocimiento que se pretende adquirir. Utilizo como punto de partida una narración, algunas veces de la cotidianidad y otras de textos existentes, que permita hacer una serie de preguntas que no solamente constituyen una reconstrucción literal, sino que estimulan el desarrollo del pensamiento crítico cuando son extensivas a actitudes, apropiación de conceptos y afirmación de posturas frente a las situaciones presentadas.

Al analizar los manuales escritos por Diego Pineda para una posterior implementación, novelas como *clínica de muñecas*, *Lisa* y *Harry* tienen en cada pasaje un comentario que aclara los conceptos

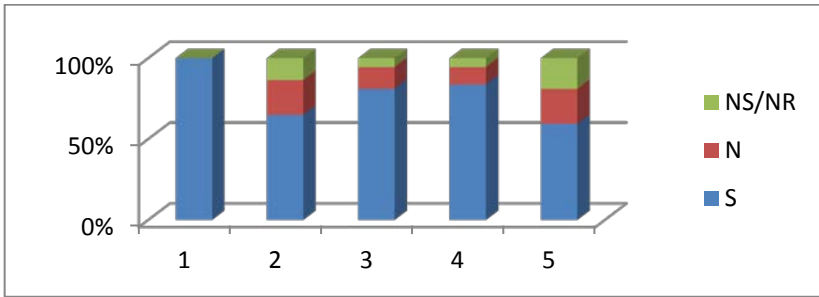
que están implícitos; también hay unos planes de diálogo que son una serie de preguntas orientadoras que ayudan a explorar esos conceptos para identificarlos y distinguirlos, y así poder aplicarlos en ciertos contextos. Finalmente, en dichos manuales hay una serie de actividades de recreación conceptual, allí aparecen actividades lúdicas, corporales y de escritura.

Luego de varias sesiones transcurridas entre septiembre de 2016 y junio de 2017, se aplicó al mismo grupo de 37 estudiantes, del grado quinto de básica primaria, una encuesta que permite observar los avances en las disposiciones y habilidades del pensamiento crítico de FpN.

No.	PREGUNTAS ¹³	S	N	NS/NR
1	¿Consideras que una forma de resolver los conflictos es analizar antes de tomar acciones?	37	0	0
2	¿Crees que puedes construir historias o anécdotas a partir de los conflictos que se presentan en tu colegio?	24	8	5
3	¿Consideras importante el sentarte a dialogar con tus profesores y compañeros los conflictos que hay en tu colegio?	30	5	2
4	¿Consideras que las soluciones que se van dando a cada conflicto se convierten en experiencias valiosas para solucionar otros?	31	4	2
5	¿Podrías hacer un registro de anécdotas valiosas y de soluciones a los conflictos que se presenten en tu curso?	22	8	7

¹³ Cuestionario del manejo del conflicto después de la aplicación de FpN. Allí se especifica en cada pregunta tres opciones de respuesta: S (si) N (no) NS/NR (no sabe, no responde).

Grafica de barras¹⁴



Al revisar el impacto inicial, se evidencia en los niños gusto por la búsqueda de la solución de conflictos por medio del diálogo y el análisis, ello por el ejercicio que se realiza de buscar alternativas y generar las más adecuadas. Llama la atención de los niños la construcción de anécdotas y el reto de registrarlas en un cuaderno o por medio de grabaciones, pues a partir de ellas surgen mecanismos de solución.

En esta encuesta, también incorporaré preguntas abiertas con el fin de identificar de una forma directa su pensamiento crítico en relación con la propuesta FpN. A continuación, se observan algunas respuestas¹⁵ significativas:

¹⁴ Gráfica que arroja los resultados del abordaje de los conflictos por parte de los estudiantes, luego de haber recibido la aplicación de los talleres de FpN. El color azul simboliza el impacto positivo que FpN obtuvo en el grupo.

¹⁵ Pensamiento de los estudiantes frente a la relación de FpN con la resolución de conflictos escolares dentro de una ética ciudadana.

¿Qué es para ti FpN?	¿Cómo la FpN colaboraría en la convivencia escolar?	¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de la clase de ética?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Una filosofía que nos pone a pensar mediante un dialogo. - Nos ayuda a pensar cómo resolver los conflictos en el colegio, en la casa y los grupos. - Filosofía para niños, para mí es una forma de entrar en razón. - Una forma de hacer filosofía a los niños con historias que les ayudan en el futuro. - Filosofía para niños: es una forma de aprender y evitar los conflictos en el colegio y en la vida diaria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Porque en un conflicto se piensa si se puede solucionar. - Pensando antes de actuar. Para que cuando alguien te hace algo no te gane la venganza. - Para saber cómo reaccionar ante problemas de la vida y en un futuro tal vez muy cercano. - Aprender a dialogar y a analizar los problemas. - Me gustaría que colocaran FpN en el colegio. Nosotros como estudiantes aprenderíamos a manejar los conflictos en nuestro colegio. - Nos ayuda a resolver los conflictos y peleas. - Ayudarnos a no pegarnos cuando peleamos. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aprender a convivir con los demás. - Los valores como: respeto, paz, fortaleza y tolerancia. - Nos ayuda a saber cómo debemos actuar. - Los derechos y los deberes. - Aprender a vivir en comunidad. - Que nos enseñan a ser mejores personas en muchas circunstancias o problemas de la vida de cada quien. - Las historias y saber qué es FpN.

Hallazgos con algunas entrevistas

Como investigador solamente realicé dos entrevistas a personas directamente relacionadas con la formación de los estudiantes en el terreno de la ética ciudadana dentro de la misma institución. La primera persona fue la psicóloga escolar Diana Amórtegui, a quien le pregunté cuál era su opinión en relación con la incorporación de contenidos a planes de estudio relacionados con la vida cotidiana del estudiante. Desde su experiencia como orientadora y testigo de algunos procesos curriculares, considera que la cercanía de las materias de corte humanista con acontecimientos cotidianos, desarrolla sensibilidad en el estudiante y lo hace protagonista de su

propia historia; así mismo le permite ser más crítico y argumentativo con las causas y consecuencias de sus propias acciones.

El proceso de crecer y aprender de la propia experiencia y la de los demás, es enriquecedor para la historia personal de vida de los niños y niñas; sin embargo,

Este proceso lleva tiempo y también lleva tiempo formar una comunidad de búsqueda. No puede esperarse en FpN que la comunidad de búsqueda se establezca en una sesión, en una semana, o en un mes. La experiencia intelectual y social se da en el tiempo, y el tiempo que se dedica a trabajar con los niños en un proceso de indagación filosófica. En un momento dado, una comunidad de búsqueda llega a ser una forma de vida¹⁶.

La psicóloga considera que la incorporación de conocimientos que se conviertan en herramientas estratégicas de solución, contribuirían de manera significativa al interior del aula o de la vida escolar. Seguramente traería como consecuencia, mayor satisfacción y atención oportuna de los casos en los cuales priman los acaloramientos u opiniones subjetivas de alguna de las partes que participan o influyen en los conflictos. Así, el estudiante pasa a ser autogenerador de soluciones efectivas.

Respecto a lo anterior, Mónica Velasco quiere resaltar la labor concreta y cuidadosa del docente por incentivar el crecimiento de los estudiantes, pues dentro de los objetivos del programa FpN se ubica el

Desarrollar personas autónomas, capaces de pensar por ellas mismas acerca de cosas que les son importantes. Pero hay que entender correctamente autonomía. Lipman señala que la noción de autonomía debe ser considerada con precaución porque existe el

¹⁶ VELASCO, Mónica: “Filosofía para niños: una alternativa para resignificar la práctica”, en *Sinéctica*, número 8, Guadalajara, 1996, pág. 12.

peligro de que un individuo o grupo autónomo piense sólo para sí mismo ignorando la influencia de otros contextos¹⁷

Cuando le pregunté por las estrategias pedagógicas que deberían estar presentes en la propuesta temática de Ética y Valores humanos para reforzar la solución de conflictos, según su criterio y experiencia de orientación personal, me dijo que resultarían indispensables todas aquellas que contribuyan a reforzar valores como el respeto, la tolerancia, la convivencia y la amistad entre los estudiantes. Resultan muy oportunas aquellas estrategias pedagógicas que orientan el comportamiento y que incentivan a los niños y niñas a desarrollar habilidades de pensamiento que les permitan desenvolverse en análisis de casos, mesas redondas, entrevistas, reconstrucción de anécdotas, elaboración de carteleras, todo esto encaminado a la búsqueda de alternativas, no a desaparecer el conflicto, porque éste hace parte de la dinámica escolar permanente.

El desarrollo de las actividades propuestas por la orientadora escolar para capacitar al estudiante, cobra mayor sentido al articularse con el objetivo de esta investigación, impulsar las habilidades del pensamiento crítico. Mónica Velasco no solo las específica, sino que deja claro que hacen que FpN se concentre en Desarrollar un buen juicio, lo que significa, desarrollar la habilidad de pensar bien, de dar razones fundamentadas en criterios y desarrollar sensibilidad al contexto. Para alcanzar este objetivo, la clase tiene que transformarse en una comunidad de búsqueda donde se desarrollen habilidades de razonamiento y de indagación como:

- Presentar razones para sostener los puntos de vista.
- Preguntar a otros para que expliquen lo que quieren decir.
- Elaborar inferencias a partir de lo que se expone.
- Ser sensible al contexto en el cual se elaboran juicios.
- Emplear criterios consistentes y relevantes.

¹⁷ *Ibíd.*, pág. 8.

- Darse cuenta del propio proceso de pensamiento y poder autocorregirse.
- Demostrar disposición para modificar los propios puntos de vista.
- Formular preguntas relevantes.
- Utilizar razonamiento hipotético.
- Identificar las implicaciones de aceptar o no un punto de vista.
- Poder generalizar en forma justificada.¹⁸

Las anteriores habilidades de pensamiento están presentes inexorablemente en el proceso de toma de decisiones de los niños. Como herramientas cognitivas les permiten hacer un análisis de las situaciones problemáticas, conduciéndolos a tomar cierta distancia de ellas para generar soluciones apropiadas y eficaces. Desde luego, esto se lleva a cabo haciendo uso del dominio de la escucha y del habla, debido a que entre más las dominan, más rápido se adaptarán a la filosofía mediante razonamientos y juicios coherentes. Por ende,

Cualquier niño que es capaz de usar un lenguaje inteligible es capaz de ser educado y de crecer, y por tanto es capaz de la clase de discurso y conversación que la filosofía implica. La meta no es hacer de los niños pequeños filósofos, sino ayudarlos a pensar mejor de como lo hacen ahora.¹⁹

Los pedagogos Dewey y Vygotsky recomiendan FpN, enfatizan en la necesidad de enseñar a pensar y no solo a memorizar. Que los niños recuerden lo que se les ha dicho, no es suficiente, deben examinar y analizar ese material. Pensar es el procesamiento en el que los niños aprenden acerca del mundo con los sentidos, eso también hay que aplicarlo en la escuela. Por ende, en vez de memorizar, a los niños se les deben brindar bases de razonamiento, juicio y formación de conceptos. Ello hace más dinámico el trabajo

¹⁸ *Ibíd.*, pág. 5.

¹⁹ NAJÍ, Saeed: “Filosofía para niños entrevista a Matthew Lipman”, en *Tedium Vitae*, número 2, Guadalajara, 2012, pág. 4.

de la clase y obliga al docente a estar en permanente de actualización, siempre con el ánimo de contribuir positivamente a la madurez del pensamiento.

Sobre la solución de conflictos fundamentada en conocimientos del área de Ética y Valores, la psicóloga piensa que formar en ética ciudadana es el reto del educador contemporáneo. Ve con interés particular la inclusión que se hizo de esta temática y el impacto que su implementación trajo en los procesos de apropiación de conocimientos en los estudiantes, pues a partir allí, se podrá hacer un ejercicio importante de fundamentación para los docentes del área, quienes habrán de comprender que en la dinámica comunitaria formativa del ciudadano en FpN, la inmadurez se vive como un estado de crecimiento positivo del niño.

Además de las habilidades de razonamiento y de las actitudes y habilidades de discusión hay un componente afectivo de gran importancia: el mutuo cuidado de los diferentes miembros del grupo, la disposición de verse transformado por el otro, y el desarrollo de una confianza básica respecto a los otros miembros que ayuda a que cada miembro tome su lugar en el mundo y lo valore. Este componente es una condición para desarrollar la autoestima, y es precisamente lo que hace posible que el niño experimente su inmadurez y su dependencia como una fuerza positiva.²⁰

Como último interrogante de la entrevista con la psicóloga le pedí que enunciara los 3 conflictos más recurrentes en el área de orientación. El primero sería la excesiva dependencia de muchos niños por acudir permanentemente al padre de familia para que sea éste quien resuelva situaciones leves, que podrían solucionarse desde un ejercicio reflexivo. El segundo, entra de alguna manera en contraposición con el anterior, es el temor a la sanción o a ser juzgados por las familias; consiste básicamente en ocultar situaciones problema, lo cual no resuelve, sino que acrecienta el conflicto. Finalmente, el tercero alude al manejo de la mentira,

²⁰ VELASCO, Mónica *op. cit.*, pág. 8.

fraude y evasión de responsabilidades, que requiere de una profunda reflexión ética para llevar al niño hacia el abandono de este proceder.

El acercamiento con los que tienen mayor relación con los niños, me permitió entender mejor la validez de FpN dentro de la investigación. Sustenta la propuesta de generar conciencia en el estudiante para llegar a conciliaciones que aborden el conflicto, cumpliendo con las exigencias de la educación contemporánea, entre las cuales está la participación en una construcción curricular que debe reconocer inicialmente la posición de los niños frente al conocimiento filosófico, la cual se basa en el supuesto de que ellos mismos “tienen una disposición natural para pensar acerca de su vida cotidiana y de los problemas que ésta les plantea y que además están deseosos de darle sentido a su experiencia”²¹

Lo anterior conduce a que desde la práctica docente debería aprovecharse el potencial que tiene hacer FpN para, por una parte, darle prioridad a la aprehensión de habilidades de pensamiento crítico como la identificación y el análisis; y por la otra, se reflexione junto a los niños sobre situaciones cotidianas que les resultan problemáticas, para que sean ellos quienes identifiquen causas, origen del conflicto y posibles consecuencias. Este aprovechamiento pedagógico hace que se remitan al conocimiento filosófico por medios didácticos, encontrando allí las soluciones adecuadas, insistiendo en la postura ética ciudadana constructiva.

El departamento de Orientación Escolar en las instituciones educativas es fuente de consulta y de seguimiento al desempeño de la personalidad de los educandos, por lo que aporta preciada información acerca de los casos en los que se identifican conflictos escolares. Amorátegui los aborda desde la perspectiva psicopedagógica. Este esfuerzo, atendiendo de manera inmediata y oportuna los casos, refleja alternativas de solución por diferentes

²¹ *Ibíd.*, pág. 5.

medios: entrevistas con estudiantes, con padres de familia, remisiones a terapeutas, pruebas y seguimiento. Sin embargo, con FpN su labor no estaría envuelta en un exceso de trabajo, sino que sobre ella recaerían, en mayor medida, los conflictos escolares graves que no se pudieron abordar desde las habilidades de pensamiento de los agentes directamente involucrados.

Lo anterior cobra mayor validez cuando tiene una finalidad moral, que le permite al niño reconocerse a sí mismo y a los demás como sujetos morales que se encuentran en permanente interrelación. Valorar y respetar individualidades, desde una óptica moral, genera una reflexión permanente alrededor de los actos humanos, llevando al niño a estudiar alternativas de solución de diferentes problemas ético-ciudadanos. Pues en la medida en que el niño reconozca y analice cada una de ellas, estará madurando su pensamiento filosófico. No se pueden contemplar las decisiones tomadas a la ligera, sino que es necesario ir más allá; es decir, identificar en un conflicto escolar todas las variables posibles, empleando criterios conscientes y relevantes para optar por aquella que se ajuste a una realidad moral colectiva, en la que todos los implicados manifiesten un estado de satisfacción.

Pasando a la segunda entrevista, el docente de ética Javier Gómez del colegio Celestin Freinet, aportó en gran medida para clarificar los objetivos de mi investigación. Respecto al proceso que él mismo sigue para revisar un plan de estudios, conservando contenidos, formulándolos, y de ser necesario, revaluándolos, afirma que generalmente se acude a la propuesta preestablecida que tiene la institución. Sin embargo, por las exigencias curriculares contemporáneas en cuanto a las innovaciones que se han hecho a los Planes Estratégicos de Educación Nacional, año tras año, es necesario ver la trazabilidad del área de Educación Ética y en Valores Humanos con estas novedades, para luego compararlas con los temas desarrollados hasta el momento. Esto con el ánimo de descubrir la correlación que haya con las otras áreas o asignaturas y

de evitar los contenidos repetitivos que no se ajusten a las necesidades del presente educativo.

La ética, ante todo, es una disciplina filosófica. Al hacer parte la filosofía de las dimensiones del ser humano, no puede ser, de ninguna manera, relegada a una clase de una hora semanal, sino que debe iluminar la convivencia escolar e igualmente las áreas del conocimiento. Estanislao Zuleta, un filósofo y pedagogo colombiano, hace una crítica a la educación nacional:

Además del problema de enseñar resultados, sin enseñar los procesos del conocimiento, existe un problema esencial: en la escuela se enseña sin filosofía y ese es el mayor desastre de la educación. Se enseña geografía sin filosofía, biología sin filosofía, historia sin filosofía y filosofía sin filosofía²²

Al desarrollar el plan de estudios de Educación Ética y en Valores, el docente procura tener en cuenta la visión filosófica que compromete el área misma. Inicialmente hubo dificultad, ya que ésta, de alguna manera, carecía de identidad y se confundía con Religión porque, según la ley colombiana del siglo pasado, se llamaba Educación Ética y Religiosa. Los temas se cruzaban y muchas de las normas que se enseñaban eran llevadas de la mano junto a las prácticas religiosas. Así mismo, ocurrían confusiones con Urbanidad, Cívica y otras disciplinas. El MEN (Ministerio de Educación Nacional) ha publicado innovaciones curriculares que incorporan temas filosóficos, obligando a los niños a tomar posición frente al desarrollo temático. Esta situación exige un pensamiento crítico estructurado, que es precisamente el aporte de FpN dentro del área.

Cuando le pregunté sobre la utilidad de la implementación de contenidos filosóficos en el área de Educación Ética y en Valores,

²² ZULETA, Estanislao: Educación y democracia, un campo de combate, editorial Corporación Tercer Milenio, Bogotá, 1985. Pág. 25.

Javier consideró que ésta se da desde los mismos conocimientos que incentivan en el educando la capacidad analítica, además de su objetividad frente a diversas problemáticas sociales. Estos contenidos lo inducen a ser crítico, asumiendo y afrontando la cuestión central del conflicto. Esto es así, porque uno de los supuestos básicos de la investigación es que los niños son, en potencia, interlocutores racionales competentes, por lo que pueden y deben intervenir en discusiones racionales. Desde ese punto de vista, la filosofía también puede aportarles mucho en su formación. En todos los niveles de escolaridad, con la inclusión de la filosofía en la totalidad del currículo educativo:

El cultivo o la enseñanza apropiados de la filosofía, por la naturaleza misma de la disciplina, implican ya una manera de razonar y de actuar que, podríamos decir, promueve tanto el crecimiento personal e interpersonal como la formación de valores democráticos para la convivencia ciudadana.²³

El docente considera que los contenidos filosóficos introducidos en Ética y Valores, deben pensarse sobre las necesidades detectadas en los grupos desde el año inmediatamente anterior. Esto sin dejar de lado las que permitan identificar las conductas iniciales de los estudiantes, atendiendo al dinamismo que tiene el proceso pedagógico de FpN y a la flexibilidad curricular. De igual manera, son pertinentes en su implementación aquellas necesidades que, en determinado momento, se ajustan a las características especiales de cada curso.

Javier agrega que las estrategias metodológicas de FpN son claves en el proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje, porque ellas se convierten en habilidades de pensamiento crítico óptimas para la vida escolar. Él

²³ VALDÉS HOYOS, Diana: “Filosofía para niños y lo que significa una educación filosófica”, en *Discusiones Filosóficas*, número 16, Manizales, 2011. Pág. 162.

propone reconstrucción de historias, elaboración de grupos de trabajo y conversatorios que aborden un problema, lo analicen y evidencien alternativas de solución pensadas por los mismos niños. Después, le pregunté por los conflictos que pueden ser tratados desde una fundamentación filosófica y que requieren de mayor atención. Él enunció algunos como: fraude, robos, mentira, falsificación de firmas de los padres. Sin embargo, son más comunes: burlas, bullying, cyberbullying, agresiones, peleas y gestos ofensivos. Todos estos pueden ser tratados desde una fundamentación ética que lleven al estudiante a una reflexión sobre su proyecto personal de vida en su rol como ciudadano.

En respuesta a estos conflictos, la comunidad de indagación como herramienta característica de la pedagogía en FpN, no solo aborda, sino que cuestiona algunos conceptos filosóficos, tanto polémicos como problemáticos,

Lo justo, lo verdadero, lo bueno, la amistad, la belleza, el espacio, el tiempo, personas, reglas, derechos, obligaciones, libertad, identidad, mente, conocimiento etc. Las habilidades de pensamiento son trabajadas en las clases, a partir de los cuentos y novelas, con el aporte de las sugerencias y ejercicios de manuales para el profesor, cuyo autor es Lipman.²⁴

Producto del trabajo de FpN con los conceptos éticos anteriormente mencionados, tenemos como rasgos esenciales del pensamiento crítico: lo correcto, lo creativo y lo independiente; al basarse en el buen uso de los criterios y en el perfeccionamiento del razonamiento, es un pensamiento que evalúa y determina todos los elementos implicados en los juicios. Se sustenta en una razón limitada, controlada y contextualizada.

²⁴ ALDANA, Julio: “Comunidad de indagación filosófica. Una alternativa para el fomento de la lectura crítica - reflexiva”, en *Ciencias Sociales y Educativas*, número 2, Santa Ana de Coro, 2017. Pág. 11.

Finalizando esta última entrevista, el docente afirma que el contenido filosófico se puede tomar de varias maneras para abordar los conflictos que suelen presentarse en la vida escolar. Como preventivos en la medida que se anticipan, que solucionan desde el conocimiento y que podrían convertirse en un análisis de lo hipotético antes de actuar; y como base porque ofrecen un espacio de diálogo para llegar a una conciliación.

El docente es el agente que está directamente relacionado con los niños en el aula de clase, está llamado a ser líder, dinamizador y motivador del conocimiento filosófico; sin él, el programa no podría ser desarrollado. Sus cualidades profesionales y compromiso en la construcción del mismo son determinantes para obtener buenos resultados. Él docente del área es quien lo presenta, lo desarrolla, genera discusión entre sus estudiantes y finalmente trabaja con conceptos, a los que el estudiante acudirá como fuente de solución de muchas problemáticas que se generan en su propio entorno escolar, por eso considero fundamental que los docentes que trabajen con los niños deberán recibir una capacitación previa en FpN.

Lipman afirma que “Los niños empiezan a pensar en el pensamiento, a descubrir en un proceso comunitario de búsqueda los principios del razonamiento y a saber aplicar esos principios que van descubriendo a las situaciones de la vida cotidiana”²⁵. Por ende, el maestro debe hacer reconocimiento de esa condición y encargarse de construir casos y anécdotas que puedan aprovechar esa capacidad del niño, orientándolo a tomar decisiones asertivas, en las que el docente consolide habilidades y construya un perfil de estudiante crítico que viva la filosofía.

FpN surgió como respuesta a la carencia conceptual para razonar. El programa, junto a las habilidades de pensamiento crítico que

²⁵ LIPMAN, Matthew, *El descubrimiento...*, op. cit., pág. 72.

Mónica Velasco explicita anteriormente, busca la adquisición del conocimiento filosófico a partir del análisis de casos, desarrollo de manuales y estrategias pedagógicas en las que el maestro mejora la percepción de la realidad circundante y por ende, la madurez en la elaboración de juicios y razonamientos frente a diversidad de situaciones. El estudiante llega a ser parte activa en decisiones o soluciones que se dan luego de acudir a conocimientos previos, que de alguna manera se van actualizando con el desarrollo del programa.

El maestro, en el diario vivir de la institución educativa, está en contacto permanente con los estudiantes. Tiene la oportunidad de conocer muchos de los conflictos que se generan al interior de las aulas, en las horas de descanso e incluso en sus familias. En muchos casos tiene que actuar como juez, en otros tantos como árbitro o mediador. A veces, simplemente de ejecutor de unas directrices trazadas por los Manuales de Convivencia en sus protocolos, que estipulan procedimientos y garantizan el restablecimiento del orden al interior de la institución, dejando inconformidades en algunos de los agentes participantes del conflicto. Esto me motivó a proponer el manejo de las situaciones problemáticas escolares desde un fondo filosófico. Dando al educador un nuevo recurso que, aparte de ser innovador, le permitiría resolver algunas de ellas. Las personas involucradas en una situación conflictiva tomarían una posición activa y responsable en la misma a partir de una reflexión crítica. Esto permitirá llevar un poco de oxígeno al departamento de convivencia escolar que está saturado por los conflictos escolares diarios.

Por lo que se refiere al primer objetivo específico de la investigación, la FpN desarrolla el pensamiento crítico en una ética ciudadana. La norma, como elemento constitutivo de este argumento, debe ser entendida por todos los miembros de la comunidad de indagación, de tal manera que, comprendida con

cierta base conceptual, ella consiga un abordaje justo de los conflictos, que por un lado, garantice su aplicabilidad universal; y por el otro, tenga en cuenta la contextualización de cada caso en particular. Esta dinámica se debe proyectar siempre hacia una vida cotidiana que fortalezca las relaciones interpersonales de los estudiantes.

En el caso de la institución educativa en la que se aplicó el proyecto, se identifica que han ido trabajando según el modelo pedagógico propuesto del PEI (Proyecto Educativo Institucional). En él se mezclan las siguientes propuestas: el aprendizaje significativo y un enfoque Humanista basado en la axiología del Plantel, lo cual facilita la implementación del programa; “entendiendo los valores como cualidades de las cosas, de las acciones, de las personas, que nos atraen porque nos ayudan a hacer un mundo habitable”²⁶. Estas dos opciones preparan al sujeto para que comprenda ciertas prácticas mediante una reflexión continua de las mismas. Tomadas en conjunto, permiten al niño asociar análisis de casos y contextualizarlos desde el momento de la identificación de sus causas. Esto implica no solo conocimiento, sino influencia ético-ciudadana para garantizar el éxito de FpN. Se puede inferir que los estudiantes son capaces de una ejemplificación de contenidos temáticos y hasta de su conceptualización.

El educador debe, en todo momento, estar atento a las posibles innovaciones curriculares. FpN se convierte en una buena razón para ello. Pues por una parte, debe desarrollar y nutrir sus conocimientos filosóficos, buscar en ellos los argumentos que va a presentar al niño para la solución de conflictos en el interior de la institución educativa; y por otra, desarrolla su creatividad en la medida en que debe empezar a ajustar los mismos con la temática propuesta. Podría tomar del programa de FpN las bases

²⁶ CORTINA, Adela, *Educación en valores...*, *op. cit.*, pág. 29.

orientadoras a la innovación, haciendo que coincidan los contenidos con la realidad que caracteriza el colegio, dándole preponderancia al interés que despiertan los casos que resultan más recurrentes en la cotidianidad.

Afinidad con otros resultados

El programa de Filosofía para Niños ha sido estudiado como herramienta educativa para favorecer un clima positivo dentro del aula. Destaco el más desarrollado en Chile desde la década de los 90, el de Matthew Lipman, que enfatiza que además del progreso cognitivo, el cultivo de la filosofía por parte de los niños los dispone hacia una valoración de la diversidad y un respeto a todo sujeto. Los niños que hacen filosofía reconocen personas válidas en sus compañeros de aula, aunque piensen distinto, y buscarán acuerdos a partir de los mejores argumentos que surjan en su comunidad de indagación. La filosofía en los niños los orienta hacia la resolución de conflictos mediante acuerdos con fundamentación racional.

Según lo estudiado en Chile, la argumentación es un proceso cognitivo que tiene al menos tres momentos considerados fundamentales.

El primero es el conflicto. La argumentación surge como respuesta a un conflicto, que interpela a los hablantes a resolverlo a través del uso de la argumentación. El segundo es la reconstrucción colaborativa del pensar. La argumentación grupal promueve la exploración de diversos puntos de vistas, la evaluación de la evidencia o de los fundamentos que los sustentan y la deliberación de cuáles son los mejores argumentos y por qué. A través de esta argumentación las personas comparten sus conocimientos, se desafían mutuamente y logran robustecer sus posturas. Por último, la argumentación

conlleva a examinar las propias teorías y los principios que las sustentan, mejorando la comprensión del proceso de construcción de conocimiento.²⁷

En México, Gonzalo Romero y Amparo Caballero proyectan la FpN como un conjunto sinérgico de responsabilidades para desplegar un cambio en el actuar, brindando al estudiante y al docente la práctica de un trabajo transformador. Se trata de un proyecto educativo encaminado a profundizar en los valores de una relación entre personas que se cuestionan por lo que sucede a su alrededor, respetándose, escuchándose y tomando la palabra, para la creación de un clima social de aula positivo. Por tanto, se toma como “una oportunidad para ahondar en el conocimiento y las habilidades sociales que necesitamos para actuar en el conjunto de la sociedad con sentido crítico, bases para una acción transformadora.”²⁸

En su trabajo de campo, ellos observan la presentación de un mundo violento en las aulas como noticia constante de actualidad. El conflicto se aborda de forma individualista, exclusivamente centrado en el estudiante, pasa por alto que el modo en que se configuran las relaciones sociales y cómo se solucionan los conflictos fuera del entorno de los centros escolares, influye poderosamente en la forma en que el alumnado, a su vez, se relaciona con su contexto social.

Al relacionar la aplicación de FpN con la problemática del párrafo anterior, Gonzalo y Amparo se dan cuenta que la racionalidad de la acción comunicativa consiste en la supresión de las relaciones de fuerza, especialmente las preestablecidas en las estructuras de comunicación que impiden la configuración consciente de los

²⁷ EYZAGUIRRE, Sylvia: “El rol de la filosofía en el desarrollo del pensamiento crítico”, en Puntos de Referencia, número 485, Santiago de Chile, 2018. Pág. 4.

²⁸ ROMERO, Gonzalo & CABALLERO, Amparo (2008). “Convivencia, clima de aula y filosofía para niños”, en Revista Electrónica Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado, número 27, Guadalajara, 2008. Pág. 6.

conflictos y su regulación consensual por medio de la comunicación interpersonal. “La acción comunicativa ayuda a la renovación de la cultura, así como al logro de la solidaridad y al desarrollo de las identidades personales.”²⁹

Referente a los estudios del iraní Mehrnoosh Hedayati, según la tabla³⁰ presentada a continuación, la calificación promedio de los estudiantes en habilidades de comunicación interpersonal, tuvo un aumento notable después del tercer grado. La participación de los niños en la indagación filosófica les ayuda a lograr ventajas específicas tales como el incremento de la participación activa en los comportamientos sociales. El cuestionamiento y la participación grupal tienen numerosas ventajas para los niños, porque este método les permite desarrollar sus habilidades sociales, cognitivas, orales, además de habilidades de relación comunicacional, lo que crea condiciones para enfrentar y superar la timidez.

²⁹ *Ibíd.*, pág. 7.

³⁰ HEDAYATI Mehrnoosh: “Efectos del programa de filosofía para niños a través del método de comunidad de indagación en el mejora de las habilidades de relación interpersonal en estudiantes de primaria” en *Childhood & Philosophy*, número 9, Río de Janeiro, 2009. Pág. 211.

Table 2. Follow-up study of persistence effect of treatment after 4 months

group	Df	T	Paired Differences					Sig. (2-tailed)
			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Std. Error Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	
			Upper Bound	Lower Bound				
Third girls	13	-6/53	-4/06	-8/07	/92	3/47	-6/07	/001
fourth girls	11	-7/50	-5/65	-10/34	1/06	3/69	-8	/001
Fifth girls	10	-4/43	-4/74	-14/08	2/12	7.35	-9/41	/001
Third boy	11	-4/62	-2/62	-7/37	1/08	3/74	-5	/001
fourth boy	11	-4/77	-3/50	-9/49	1/36	4/71	-6/5	/001
Fifth boy	10	-9/39	/87	-2/14	/67	2/24	-6/63	/001

“La filosofía para niños está diseñada para adaptarse a las necesidades de los niños, está presentada en historias que conectan los significados de la vida lógica, estética y moral”³¹. Mehrnoosh Hedayati tiene como objetivo estudiar a los niños y sus reacciones hacia ideas relacionadas con la ética y la política como el respeto a los padres, la libertad, negociación, juicio, igualdad y justicia. Él encuentra que este estudio le da a los estudiantes una oportunidad amplia de acoplar sus propias acciones con sus ideas y de aprender hábitos de pensamiento reflexivo, respetando las ideas de otras personas y colaborando en su evaluación, para perseguir un compromiso saludable, ejercitar el autocontrol y cultivar el buen juicio.

La investigación de Hedayati concluyó que la participación en Filosofía para Niños podría continuar su efecto positivo en la comunicación interpersonal de los estudiantes. Basado en la tabla, las habilidades comunicativas son mucho más palpables al menos

³¹ *Ibíd.*, pág. 203.

después de 4 meses de su aplicación, tanto en mujeres como en hombres, en cada uno de los últimos 3 grados de básica primaria. El estudio para la evaluación del pensamiento filosófico, celebró una hora de FpN durante 16 semanas en el primer año, dejando abierta la posibilidad de hallar otros resultados positivos a mediano o a largo plazo. Como conclusión de estas sesiones se encontró un aumento en la capacidad del estudiante en conductas verbales y no verbales, y una mejora en el razonamiento lógico.

Conclusiones

Filosofía para Niños (FpN), al implementarse dentro de una institución educativa que fundamenta su acción pedagógica en valores, y desde el PEI ofrece un modelo pedagógico humanista. Es una oportunidad, no solo para iniciar al estudiante en habilidades de pensamiento crítico, sino también para la aplicación de las mismas en la búsqueda de soluciones a conflictos escolares que hacen parte de la cotidianidad. Esto, teniendo en cuenta que el programa no deja de ser un elemento significativo de retroalimentación y renovación permanente en el ejercicio de una ética-ciudadana.

La aplicación de las estrategias metodológicas que integran el programa FpN debe ser alcanzable por el docente a cargo, debido a que verificar el cumplimiento del proyecto pasa por su responsabilidad y compromiso ante lo que previamente se ha hecho comprensible para él. Además es él quien le hace seguimiento para identificar los resultados, retroalimentarlos y fortalecerlos, orientando lo que el estudiante demuestra en su cotidianidad escolar frente a sus relaciones interpersonales.

Es pertinente la propuesta de FpN incorporada al Área de Ética y Valores. Ésta introduce diversas estrategias que le permiten al niño descubrir, desde el mismo momento en que se conforma una

comunidad de búsqueda, la importancia del análisis de situaciones problemáticas. La afectación en el conflicto, sea familiar o escolar, puede abordarse inicialmente con la reconstrucción del hecho en forma anecdótica, analizando los casos con la metodología que presentan los textos escritos por Lipman, incluyendo los Manuales del Docente. Habitualmente el niño se identifica con las narraciones o con una lectura orientada por el maestro, lo cual especifica cada situación, motivándolo a cuestionar y cuestionarse, enseñándole a categorizar y a construir un diálogo del que se generan unas conclusiones. En este proceso se gestan habilidades de pensamiento que contribuyen a formar en él un carácter crítico.

Tener la oportunidad de atestiguar los primeros frutos en niños y niñas que poco a poco se van haciendo más críticos y objetivos, reafirma la necesidad de *conocimientos filosóficos* en el aula, pues ellos van dando al niño herramientas cognitivas para argumentar y construir soluciones frente a conflictos escolares. A partir de allí, se construye con ellos una verdadera comunidad de diálogo, donde la intervención de todos los miembros es respetada, es decir, hay un desarrollo ciudadano fundamental para encarar problemas cotidianos, permitiendo una atención oportuna y eficaz por parte de lo que ellos mismos han aprendido con FpN.

Filosofía para Niños (FpN), en el área de Ética y Valores, permite incorporar experiencias significativas que acercan a los estudiantes al análisis de situaciones conflictivas que surgen en la cotidianidad escolar. Los ayudan a la búsqueda de alternativas de solución que satisfagan cada una de las partes implicadas en el conflicto, propiciando hechos donde impere el sentido ético; es decir, el cumplimiento libre y consciente de la norma ciudadana, así como la apropiación de la misma, garantizando la formación de mejores ciudadanos.

Para los docentes del área de Educación Ética y en Valores, este proyecto se convirtió en un reto, puesto que, dentro del contexto filosófico, requiere del ajuste necesario para que se constituya en

un verdadero aprendizaje significativo, al intentar asociar lo que el estudiante ya poseía, con lo que se pretende adquirir. Aterrizado en la ética ciudadana, contribuye a la moralización del individuo, es decir, le permite remitirse al conocimiento filosófico para asumir las diversas problemáticas, pues en principio, corresponden al ambiente escolar, pero estas estarán presentes en su futuro desempeño laboral, familiar y profesional. Debido a esto, se obtiene como resultado un individuo más justo y proactivo en la solución de sus propios conflictos sociales. Todo esto colabora asertivamente en la formación de la conciencia moral.

El conflicto escolar estará vigente en una institución educativa, siempre atrae la atención de quienes integran la comunidad educativa. Ello permite al docente categorizarlos, convertirlos en objeto de estudio de su clase, para desde estos, acudir al conocimiento filosófico con el fin de buscar causas, consecuencias, soluciones, involucrados, alcances, ofreciendo la oportunidad de adquirir madurez del pensamiento en el abordaje de situaciones problema al interior del aula y de la institución, lo que genera estabilidad y mejor clima de trabajo. Esto se ve reflejado en el componente de ambiente escolar, que es un factor tenido en cuenta para la evaluación gubernamental del establecimiento. Filosofía para Niños (FpN), garantiza de esta manera, la participación activa del estudiante en la vida institucional, como ideal que se propone desde la propia legislación colombiana.

En todos los momentos de la vida escolar y en el aula de clases, el trabajo ininterrumpido de FpN se convierte, para el maestro y para la institución, en una buena práctica pedagógica; les permite evaluar frecuentemente el impacto de su implementación. Así mismo, introduce a una reflexión permanente sobre el quehacer del educador y la formulación, o reformulación de estrategias que contribuyan a generar en el estudiante un compromiso ético con sus conocimientos y con el entorno de sus compañeros. Favorece la

solución de conflictos y la formación en valores ciudadanos en la institución donde se aplique el proyecto.

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**PHILOSOPHICAL DIARY AND ONLINE MARATHON AS
CONTEMPORARY FORMATS OF PHILOSOPHICAL
PRACTICE: CARE OF THE SELF IN THE MODERN WORLD**

DIARIO FILOSÓFICO Y MARATÓN EN LÍNEA COMO
FORMATOS CONTEMPORÁNEOS DE PRÁCTICA FILOSÓFICA:
EL CUIDADO DEL YO EN EL MUNDO MODERNO

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Abstract: The article presents two relatively new formats of philosophical practice: a philosophical diary and an online marathon. The authors of the article were developers of both formats; we have tested these forms at the university with a student audience and outside university. As a result of the study, we came

to the conclusion that the philosophical diary can be an effective form of a person's work with the self; along with the psychotherapeutic diary, this is a modern format of practice of care of the self. The online marathon is a format of group practice when you analyze and reflect on various existentials together with the facilitator of the marathon and other participants. Both formats fit into the Internet environment. The final result of our study was the formulation of an original method of philosophical practice, which we called philosophical meditations.

Keywords: philosophy, philosophical counseling, care of the self, modern man, Internet, philosophical diary, online marathon, philosophical meditations.

Resumen: El artículo presenta dos formatos relativamente nuevos de práctica filosófica: un diario filosófico y un maratón en línea. Los autores del artículo fueron desarrolladores de ambos formatos; Hemos probado estos formularios en la universidad con una audiencia de estudiantes y fuera de la universidad. Como resultado del estudio, llegamos a la conclusión de que el diario filosófico puede ser una forma efectiva del trabajo de una persona con uno mismo; junto con el diario psicoterapéutico, este es un formato moderno de práctica de cuidado del self. El maratón en línea es un formato de práctica grupal cuando analiza y reflexiona sobre varios existenciales junto con el facilitador del maratón y otros participantes. Ambos formatos se ajustan al entorno de Internet. El resultado final de nuestro estudio fue la formulación de un método original de práctica filosófica, que llamamos meditaciones filosóficas.

Palabras clave: filosofía, asesoramiento filosófico, cuidado de uno mismo, hombre moderno, Internet, diario filosófico, maratón en línea, meditaciones filosóficas.

Introduction

The French philosopher René Descartes made a fundamental distinction between the world and man, the result of which was a growing confidence in the possibility of an objective description of the world. The Cartesian view of reality has become the ideal of modern science, which is inherited and continues to be reproduced by modern culture in various spheres of human life. Increasingly, in a modern university, the educational process is turning into

activities for the transfer of metered ready-made knowledge, from which subjective elements and inner meanings have been removed. The faith in the power of knowledge is strengthened, it is considered as the only factor in the spiritual formation of the individual. As a result, prerequisites are created for the formation of a mass person, overloaded with information, but separated from himself and spiritual culture. Since training aimed only at the development of intellectual abilities leads to a disruption in the connections between the cognitive, value and emotional-volitional spheres of the personality, which causes the person to be estranged from himself and culture.

The scientific approach indirectly influenced the formation of a person's passive position regarding his being. The attitude to think world without subject leads to the inhumanization of existence, where the subject becomes one of the versions of the thinking object, its existential thinking is replaced by unauthentic, machine. One of the possibilities of opposing the objectivist approach is the background of existential experience and work with it. No matter how a person gets lost in the information flows, he must find the spiritual strength in himself in order to become a shepherd of being (M. Heidegger). In this regard, philosophy can help him. The help is based on a comprehension of the existential experience of man. This comprehension is the process of gathering oneself in parts, in which the individual simultaneously acts as an artist and a work of art, as a gardener and a flower¹.

Philosophy as discipline taught in schools and universities is designed not only to shape the worldview, but also to help students find ways to solve life-meaning issues. In reality, the course of philosophy increasingly resembles the history of the development

¹ APUKHTINA, Nina, MILYAEVA, Ekaterina, PENNER, Regina: "Methods of philosophical practice (philosophical consulting and companionship) for students: an educational experiment. Part I", in *Socium i Vlast*, no. 6 (74), Moscow, 2018. Págs.68-78; 76.

of philosophical thought or a superficial acquaintance with personalities and their individual ideas. Being in the grip of a scientific approach, philosophy is turning into a set of objectified knowledge, based on which it is difficult to build a fruitful relationship with the world. The principle “knowledge exists for the sake of knowledge” preached by such a philosophy only leads one away from the realization of one’s own existence. Today, philosophers, both within the walls of universities and among free thinkers, have a need to return philosophy to its roots, setting an important existential task for it: to lead a person to the comprehension of his own existence, the realization of personal values, the choice of which determines the path of life. Otherwise, we risk losing the spirit of philosophy, leaving only its letter.

Thus, the problem is the return of philosophy to the existential dimension. This can be done through the use of philosophical practices, which, due to their flexibility, are applicable both in institutional education and non-institutional settings. In this study, philosophical diary and philosophical online marathon, carried out in a diary form, as practices of self-awareness and self-care, will be considered as methods of philosophical practice.

The aim of the research is to study the potential of philosophical diary and online marathon as practices of self-awareness and self-care.

Research objectives:

- to describe the technology for maintaining philosophical diary and conducting philosophical online marathon,
- to justify the convenience and effectiveness of using philosophical diary and online marathon for the process of self-awareness and self-cultivation.

Opportunities and prospects of the Internet for practice philosophical practices

The world of modern man is a world filled with a continuous race for the ghost of success, the need to survive in conditions of fierce social competition and an incredible amount of information noise. Among this, there is virtually no way for a person to find himself; the answer to the question “who am I?” is lost. The everyday world may lead to protracted existential crises, the loss of life-meaningful landmarks and the dissolution of man as a whole person in fluid modernity and total consumption. Without value guidelines, a person is immersed in a state of self-forgetfulness, while he may feel longing for a meaningful, eventful life, but does not know how to work with this feeling. One of the ways out of the existential crisis is philosophical practice, which act as a means of self-awareness and self-care. Let us analyze which form of philosophical practice will be more convenient for modern man?

Conventionally, two conceptual approaches can be distinguished that combine numerous philosophical practices: the therapeutic approach and the developmental approach. The therapeutic approach focuses on working with a particular psychological and existential problem. The developmental approach is aimed at reaching an understanding and completing ideas about life, testing them for participation with the help of various intellectual means and building a trajectory of further spiritual growth².

² BORISOV, Sergey: “Theory and Practice of Philosophical Counseling: a Comparative Approach”, in *The Turkish Online Journal of Design, Art and Communication*, 2018. Págs.149-154.

Table 1. Philosophical practices

Therapeutic approach	Developmental approach
Philosophical counseling, G. Achenbach	Philosophical counseling, O. Brenifier
Various forms of art therapy and coaching	Socratic Method, A. Makarov
Deep philosophy, R. Lahav	Philosophical companionship, R. Lahav
Philosophical counseling, L. Marinoff	Philosophical counseling, J. Barrientos

The division into these approaches is very conditional, since the listed practices can solve different problems. They can serve as a tool for preparing thinking for an independent solution of worldview issues and at the same time contribute to solving the psychological and existential problems of the subject.

In the presented practices, direct face-to-face communication, implemented by *hic et nunc*, is mainly used. However, face-to-face communication has spatial and temporal limitations. Is it possible to build a philosophical practice using virtual communication, which does not imply the simultaneous presence of communicants in the Internet space, where the subjects are protected from outside view by certain symbolic barriers? How effective is this practice for a modern person?

Modern man does not think his life without the Internet. If before the network acted as a huge library that helped in finding the right information, now it is turning into a universal tool for organizing the interaction of a wide range of users. The boundaries between the physical and virtual worlds are completely blurred, reality goes into online mode³. Due to the fact that virtual space creates the

³ STILLMAN, David, STILLMAN, Jonah: *Gen Z Work: How the Next Generation Is Transforming the Workplace*, HarperCollins, Glasgow, 2017.

conditions for permanent inclusion, it is used everywhere for communication, entertainment, educational and work tasks, the psychological needs of the individual. If external reality has many limitations, in the virtual space there are favorable conditions for liberation from the prescribed identity, the discovery of new aspects of the personality, and for self-awareness in general. As D. Walter noted, communication in the virtual space often exceeds face-to-face communication, becoming hyperpersonal⁴. Thus, the virtual space provides a unique opportunity for self-knowledge and self-expression. People are sometimes able to better express and perceive the various aspects of their I online than offline, since the very quality of the virtual environment helps to ease the tension in the disclosure of the sides of the personality. Y. Amichai-Hamburger identifies several characteristics of the Internet that contribute to the construction of emotionally safe communication: a sense of anonymity, limitation of physical impact, a high degree of control, ease of access to people with similar interests, accessibility at any time and at any time location, a sense of equality of communicants⁵.

These specific properties of the network contribute to openness, the removal of psychological barriers. According to J. Wiśniewski, online space can even serve as a therapeutic couch or confession, where it is not scary to show weakness and emotional sensitivity⁶. Virtual space is an informal and welcoming environment that is free in nature, which contributes to openness, the convergence of people. In addition, the interaction of people on the network is not limited by spatial and time frames, it provides more opportunities

⁴ WALTHER, J.B. "Computer-mediated communication: Impersonal, interpersonal, and hyperpersonal interaction", *Communication Research*, 1996. Págs.3-43.

⁵ AMICHAH-HAMBURGER, Y. *Technology and Psychological Well-being*, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

⁶ WIŚNIEWSKI, J.L.: *Loneliness On The Net*, Prószyński I S-ka, Warsaw, 2007.

for its implementation, and serves as the basis for choosing a philosophical diary and an online marathon as ways of conducting philosophical practice.

Philosophical diary as an actual format of care of the self

One of the ancient, but still popular formats of human activities for understanding the self is the use of written practice. A diary is usually understood as a set of fragmentary entries that are entered regularly and are most often accompanied by an indication of the date. The diary is a chronicle of external or internal events, which is conducted in the first person. A diary feature is its fragmentation, non-linearity, violation of cause-effect relationships, intertextuality, self-reflection, fundamental incompleteness and the absence of a single concept⁷. Daily notes may contain thoughts about life. They contribute to the comprehension of personal experiences and their attitude to the world. Often keeping diaries is dictated by a person's desire to follow his own spiritual (intellectual) development. In this case, the diary acts as a projection of the author's internal states, on the basis of which self-analysis is carried out for further self-care. Keeping diary entries not only makes a person more susceptible to his own existential experience, but also develops the ability to express his thoughts, feelings in verbal form. In general, the diary helps organize individual experience, leads to the development of self-discipline, which is important for the development of the I. Ancient thinkers were the first to use the diary as a way of self-awareness and self-care. The letters of Seneca, the thoughts of Marcus Aurelius can serve as examples of care of the self, which was aimed at transforming one's own life through comprehension

⁷ ROMASHKINA, M.: "Aspects of the diary genre", in *Bulletin of Bashkir State University*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2015. Págs. 997-1001.

of the self. M. Foucault noted that keeping letters and diaries not only allows the author to understand himself, but also shows how much his actions are consistent with his thoughts, how planned is consistent with what was done. He called the letters and diary entries a “transcript of the trial of conscience”. If in ancient philosophy the emphasis is on the actions that a person should do, in medieval philosophy diary entries take the form of confession, which is aimed at reflective work and spiritual struggle with the baser manifestations of one’s nature⁸. Through confession, a person clarifies for himself his inner state, discovers new truths about the self, and realizes his passions and sins. Confession had a unique communicative situation in which admonition was combined with internal interviewing and self-awareness. Not every diary acquires the features of confession, honesty with oneself does not always imply a prayer reflection and condemnation of one’s own mistakes, but one can see self-realization in every diary. Keeping diary entries allows being more attentive to the inner world. When working with a diary, a person brings up observation about the self, learns to more consciously perceive feelings and emotions and understand the causes of their occurrence. Continuous keeping of a diary allows looking at existential experience from the side, to discover inconsistency of thoughts with reality or to see internal contradictions in views.

In psychotherapy, the diary as a way of self-awareness and self-help was used by the American psychotherapist I. Proffoff. The therapist has proposed a structured diary method that allows to realize the past experience of a person and evaluate future prospects for existence. What is the specificity of a structured diary? A regular diary reflects the external or internal events of a person’s life, which are most often systematized by date; it does not

⁸ FOUCAULT, Michel: “Technologies of the Self”, in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988. Págs.16-49.

have a clear structure, therefore, describing events and related experiences, a person can not always detect patterns of his own thinking and behavior, which often make a person less sensitive to reality and prevent him from living a fulfilled life. I. Progoff's structured diary has a clear structure that facilitates introspection.

I. Progoff's diary is non-linear, divided into several sections. The first section of the diary, "Life Time": a person describes his present in the context of a past and a possible future. He daily records his internal events and conditions and performs an exercise to reconstruct a life story, saturating it with meaning. The second section, "Dialogues", is devoted to human interaction with the world and with his own phenomenological experience. In everyday life, it is difficult to build a full-fledged dialogue. Often one of the participants in the dialogue turns into an object that obeys the will of others. As the second participant in the dialogue, not only another individual can act, but also any aspect of being. Through spontaneous dialogue, the individual reveals something new and meaningful about his own life. In the third section, "The Stream of Symbols", a person makes sense of his dreams and fantasies, as a result of which he discovers existence on a deeper level. His life is becoming multidimensional. In the fourth section "Impersonal Meanings", work is carried out to establish contact with external sources of meaning, which are any expressed cultural experience: art, social movements, spiritual teachings and practices, etc. A person makes sense of himself as part of society; he creates a sense of existence, based on the cultural experience of generations⁹.

Since human problems are solved in philosophy and psychology at different theoretical and methodological levels, it should be determined in what form the practice of philosophical diary can be used, on what principles of keeping a personal diary it can be based

⁹ PROGOFF, Ira: *At a Journal Workshop*, Dialogue House, NY, 1977.

on, how it will differ from a personal diary in psychotherapeutic work.

Firstly, a philosophical diary as well as a personal diary should have a clear structure that facilitates the process of self-awareness. However, this structure should be harmoniously integrated into the natural flow of human life and should not take much time. In the philosophical diary, the structure is created by thematic blocks devoted to various phenomena of being. Each block consists of quotes of the month, week and day, which must be comprehended based on the life experience. In this regard, diary exercises can be compared with the surface of a mirror on which the movements of thought are reflected. Watching them, a person clarifies his own values, intentions, desires.

Secondly, a philosophical diary must be kept every day. Of course, the daily filling of the diary requires patience, self-discipline, but only in this way, the habit of reflexive activity is formed and observation, sensitivity to the realities of existence develops. Developing these qualities and skills helps to establish contact with the guidelines in the life. All this allows a person to know himself better.

Thirdly, the philosophical diary as a way of care of the self sets up a person for the interactive dimension of life. Through diary entries, a person talks to himself, penetrating into the deep layers of his consciousness, better understands himself. This helps a person to get out of the closed world of his own world, to try to look at himself through the eyes of the Other. Having observed himself, he can understand how he builds relationships with himself, with people around him, with the world as a whole. It should be noted that sometimes own existential experience is revealed to the subject through an appeal to cultural experience. This principle of dialogue was laid in the basis of the philosophical diary. The philosophical diary is aimed at establishing contact with one's own experience for the recognition of values and meaning-forming principles of

existence. Based on the acquired knowledge, a person will try to build fruitful relations with the world.

It is worth emphasizing that the occupation of philosophy in a diary format has a serious difference from the introduction of a personal diary during psychotherapeutic work. Any psychotherapeutic practice is aimed at solving specific psychological problems of the client. Philosophical practice involves an appeal to the categorical apparatus of philosophy, to comprehension of individual existential experience from a philosophical position, appeal to the ultimate abstractions, the result of which is the formation, development or strengthening of a person's worldview. Let us explain with a specific example. Philosophy cannot answer the private practical question “Why does no one love me”, but comprehends concepts, “love”, “me”, “Other”. It lays the foundation for constructing a picture of the subject's world, where a person acts as an integral being, who feels his involvement in the world.

The philosophical diary focuses on the study of the inner world, the worldview of the subject. It pays attention to understanding the phenomena of being (love, friendship, loneliness, etc.), without the need to describe the chronicle of life events. The philosophical diary involves working with categories, in the light of which there is an understanding of certain philosophical problems of man. In working with diary entries, the dialectic unity of two principles is realized: on the one hand, the subject, turning to philosophical reflection, is distracted from what is happening in life, correlates emerging thoughts and ideas with one or another intellectual tradition. On the other hand, he always returns to the starting point, to himself. Since the existential problems raised by philosophers are closely related to the worldview of any person, to solve them, everyone should turn to himself, study his worldview principles, values, ideals, which make up a person's personal philosophy and, ultimately, determine his fate. Thus, the peculiarity of maintaining a philosophical diary is the focus on the awareness of one's own

belief system and values, on the formation of a worldview, the development of reflection and self-discipline skills. Often in the process of self-reflection, an individual reveals contradictions in worldview principles or their inconsistency with desires. The individual can also detect inconsistencies in thinking of being. In this case, an inventory of value landmarks should be carried out, determining how much they correspond to the personal worldview. Through maintaining a philosophical diary, a person learns to analyze his mental operations, to observe himself, which cannot but affect the individual's lifestyle. Keeping a philosophical diary is a practice of self-observation, which makes it possible to develop a holistic worldview and come to a conscious life.

The sources of information in the personal diary are observations and experiences of events occurring in life. In the philosophical diary, philosophical aphorisms (quotes), excerpts from texts or philosophical questions of an existential nature act as a material for exercises, which help a person to carry out the necessary reflection on his individual existence. One can know the self through familiarizing with the spiritual experience of other people. Understanding the experience of the Other helps to discover the still unknown depths of own personality. K. Jaspers called this reflexive procedure transcending thoughtful reflection. In this act of thinking, a person goes beyond the boundaries of his I, expanding his ideas about himself, about others, about the world as a whole. In thoughtful reflection, a person leaves from everyday life, plunging into the spiritual realm. He reads the codes of being with the help of poetry, art, religion, philosophy, joining eternal truths, feels his complicity in the work of other people¹⁰. Thus, the philosophical diary is an effective way of self-awareness; it allows to build a deep dialogue on two levels, physical and metaphysical.

¹⁰ JASPERS, Karl: *Way to Wisdom: An Introduction to Philosophy*, Yale University Press, 2003.

“Philosophical Practice for Every Day”: a philosophical diary, between paper and digit

In 2018-2019, together with a group of colleagues and students, we conducted an educational experiment at the university, dedicated to the implementation of philosophical practices in the educational process, the result of which was not only a series of articles¹¹, but also the creative diary “Philosophical practice for every day”¹².

Because today there are already many collections of aphorisms and quotes by philosophers and many are available online, the team of authors decided to move away from a simple set of quotes. Twelve professors of philosophy took part in the preparation of the diary: from professors to assistants who had only recently embarked on the path of teaching. The diary creation hypothesis was the assumption that a modern person living a rich daily life in a metropolis can find time for daily philosophical introspection, if he can find a right form for this.

In the process of working, it turned out that in the youth environment such a daily practice can be done in an accessible mobile form. We were lucky to find initiative young people who helped to realize the idea in a digital format¹³.

¹¹ APUKHTINA, Nina, MILYAEVA, Ekaterina, PENNER, Regina: “Methods of philosophical practice (philosophical consulting and companionship) for students: an educational experiment. Part I”, *Socium i Vlast*, no. 6 (74), Moscow (Russia), 2018. Págs.68-78; MILYAEVA, Ekaterina, PENNER, Regina, SIDOROVA, Ulyana: “Methods of philosophical practice (philosophical counseling and companionship) in the student audience: an educational experiment. Part II. Existential experience”, *Socium i Vlast*, no. 2 (76), Moscow (Russia), 2019. Págs.118-131.

¹² *Philosophical Practice for Every Day*, Publishing Center of South Ural State University, 2019.

¹³ Triple Cube : Philosophical Practice for Every Day (mobile application). URL: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FostERROR.Phil_midis

The diary is an author's selection of texts from 12 topics – love, philosophizing, choice, integrity, etc. – distributed by months of the year. Each topic consists of a piece of text specifying thinking for a month. At the beginning of each week, texts for reflection for a week are presented. Each day begins with a short quote defining the thought of the day. For the reader, several work algorithms are presented. The first is based on the method of E. Fromm, introspection. In this method, the sequence and development of the habit of self-reflection are important. The work begins with the very first text and goes sequentially to the last, the reader does not skip fragments and does not run ahead. One day is equal to one piece of text. It is needed to allocate a certain amount of time (from 15 to 60 minutes), which the contemplative should spend alone with himself. This may be the time before bedtime and a lunch break or a journey in public transport on the way to work or home. The reader is advised to use the most appropriate method of concentration: meditation, deep breathing, affirmations, etc. After that, he should focus on the presented fragment of the month, week, day. If possible, read it aloud, slowly, uttering each word. Read a few more times. Listen to the self. Then answer the questions: “How do the words of the philosopher respond in me? (What harmony can be found between the fragment of the day, week and month?) What do I see behind the words of the philosopher? What do I feel? Can my personal experience, memories of which these words evoked, become important for others? Or become something bigger, more important?” It is recommended to read the fragment again. If a desire arises, the reader can record his thoughts, use a consonant photo or picture, and mark the title of the film or a song. At the end of each week and month, reader can summarize the thoughts, his daily experiences of philosophical practice. According to our idea, with the help of a diary in any format – in paper or digital form – everyone is able to go the philosophical path

on his or her own; and for each, this path will be his own, individual, unique, personified.

Diary “Philosophical practice for every day” in Russian is available on Google Play (TripleCube, 2019). Today this is the only application in philosophical practice available for free to everyone; in the future we hope to prepare an option in English together with those who are interested in this project.

Alone with the self and the world: the experience of philosophical online marathons

The test of the diary “Philosophical practice for every day” led us to the assumption that the practice of philosophy in the format of an online marathon may be interesting to the general public. In this form, various events are held: in a closed or open community on a social network, a key topic is announced, tasks are posted every day and the marathon participants must submit their answers to tasks in the form indicated in it (text, video, photo, audio materials).

We held two philosophical online marathons – in September 2019 and in February 2020 – different in goals, content, composition of participants and duration. Also at the end of the marathon was a session of philosophical meditation via Skype.

Online Marathon “Autumn Watch”, September 2019

The goal of the marathon “Autumn Watch” was a deep acquaintance with the self for further self-cultivation, as well as preparing for the long winter, ontological and spiritual. The duration of the marathon was 15 days, from September 5 to September 19, 2019. The marathon was held in a closed group on the social network VKontakte.ru. Each day, participants were

offered one task, which includes a quote from a philosopher or a fragment of a philosophical text, affecting existentials and philosophical categories. Participants had to leave their answer to the question in the commentary on the post with the task. Discussion of tasks was offered both in a groups chat and in the private chat between the participant and the facilitator.

At the beginning, the number of participants was 15 people, male – 2, female – 13. Age of participants is varied from 21 to 50 years. All participants have higher education, 2 – PhDs.

The format and tasks of the marathon were developed on the basis of work with philosophical diaries, in particular, with the text of Augustine “Confession”, Marcus Aurelius “Meditations”, Michel de Montaigne “Of Experience”, as well as the method of self-analysis by Erich Fromm. The importance of diary can hardly be overestimated, because the personality can appear as a kind of integrity, reflecting and experiencing in this writing practice. The systematic nature of philosophical reflection allows us to develop a constant habit for it, which makes a person more resistant to the chaos of modernity, giving him a supporting rod in the self.

Tasks of the marathon: Acquaintance; Dialectics; Grunt; Stroll; Personality House; Identity; Freedom; Care of the Self; Irony; Practice; Route; Fear; Physicality; Love. The tasks reflected the need to familiarize themselves with the theoretical principles of philosophical studies, as well as appeal to self-reflection carried out by the participant through reading and writing the text, reflection on the basis of what he read and wrote, as well as through communication with other participants in the marathon who have different points of view.

Participants were offered the methodology for working with philosophical quotes: “Read the quote (aloud or to yourself, but as aloud, as if reading to someone else), repeatedly. Try to remember and pronounce the quote, closing your eyes or taking a walk to the window, pouring tea for yourself, leaving the office, walking along

the corridor. What is the most important thing left of this quote in your head? Write down this word or phrase. In the next break after a cup of hot tea or coffee, think about what the phrase or word you read means to you, how they reflect in your mind. Record your conclusion whenever possible”. This method allowed participants to focus on philosophical ideas, taking into account everyday practice.

The format of the article does not allow submitting the full tasks. Therefore, we restrict ourselves to one example.

Figure 1. An example of the task of the online marathon “Autumn Watch”

ОСЕННИЙ ДОЗОР

День 15 Задание 15 Любовь

Любовь – не высшая сила, нисходящая на человека, и не возложенный на него долг: это его собственная сила, благодаря которой он рождается с миром и делает мир понастоящему своим. Подлинная любовь – это проявление плодотворности, и она предполагает заботу, уважение, ответственность и знание. Это не “аффект”, не увлеченность, а активное содействие росту и счастью любимого человека, коренящееся в собственной способности любить. Эрих Фромм «Искусство любить»
Каждый из нас имел опыт любви, любил, был любимым. Каждый из нас может рассказать что такое любовь. И все эти рассказы будут непохожи друг на друга, но в них будет нечто общее – то, что определяет любовь для всех нас. Попробуем найти это.

Задание: поразмышлять над своим пониманием любви. Свой ответ можно основывать на словах философа. Можно сопроводить свои слова цитатой из стихотворения или песни (и даже прикрепить их к ответу). Можно подобрать фотографию или иллюстрацию, которые для вас символизируют любовь. Запишите результат размышления в нескольких предложениях. Ответ оставьте в комментарии к заданию.

SELF. ПРАКТИКА ЗАБОТЫ О СЕБЕ



*Translation of the task

Day 15, Task 15 Love

Mature love is union under the condition of preserving one's integrity, one's individuality. Love is an active power in man; a power which breaks through the walls which separate man from his fellow men, which unites him with others; love makes him overcome the sense of isolation and separateness, yet it permits him to be himself, to retain his integrity. In love the paradox occurs that two beings become one and yet remain two.

Erich Fromm "The Art of Loving"

Each of us had the experience of love, is loved. Each of us can tell what love is. All these stories will be different from each other, but they will have something in common – that which defines love for all of us. Let's try to find it.

Task: reflect on your understanding of love. Your answer can be based on the words of the philosopher. You can accompany your words with a quote from a poem or song (and even add them to the answer). You can choose a photo or illustration that symbolizes love for you. Record the result of reflection in several sentences. Leave the answer in the comment to the task.

It is worth noting that the answers of most participants were filled with both rational reasoning, based on the available baggage of knowledge, and existential experiences caused by both previous life experiences and current day events. We present examples of answers to task 10 about irony:

Participant T: *A fool, according to Diderot, is a person who considers possible only what it is. A man whose world is small and limited by his not too developed perception ... It is difficult to answer the question whether such people are familiar to me. Usually, I divide people into happy and unhappy, interesting (to me) and not. On smart and stupid (in my reading Diderot) I do not share. Perhaps, the fool is I.*

Participant O: *It seems to me that both gullibility and unbelief can be at least attributed to personality flaws. Because of what the world is seething now, what is from real news, what is from fake news. And it is treated only with healthy skepticism. On the other hand, I recall another quote from the famous film that the truth is somewhere nearby. You can spend your whole life and not find it.*

Participant R: *Yes, we are all fools, philosophers and skeptics. Only in different situations – with different fillings. Probably, from time to time it is necessary to have the courage to recognize a fool in yourself, and only then hang labels on the Other*

On the third day of the marathon, one of the participants left (male, 24 years old), motivating it by looking for active discussions on various interesting topics, rather than philosophical reflection. Several participants simply did not complete the assignment, explaining this by workload of daily activities. We were forced to ask them to leave the group, since from an ethical point of view, trying to provide a friendly and comfortable atmosphere for the active participants. Only 6 people (all female) out of 15 successfully reached the end of the marathon, completing the tasks of all 15 days. Those who left the marathon have called “illness”, “forgot”, “there was not enough time” among the reasons that prevented every day from 15 to 60 minutes to philosophically contemplate and reflect.

Here are a few feedbacks from participants who have reached the end of the marathon:

Thanks to the facilitators, I asked some new questions for myself; and thanks to the participants, I looked at my answers from a new angle. I thought about it. I don't know yet what of what I have received, I'll apply for living in the warmth of this fall further, but these fifteen days have already passed noticeably warmer.

Thanks a lot. Think about everything. It's even boring without tasks

Analysis of the participants' feedback allowed us to conclude that the hypothesis – the possibility of philosophizing for a person who does not have special education – was confirmed. We took into account the experience of the first marathon in order to prepare for the next one.

Online Marathon “To Have or to Be”, February 2020

Our main error of the first marathon was its considerable duration, 15 days of continuous philosophical work with the self for an unprepared person torn between everyday worries turned out to be too much. We have reduced the duration to 7 days. Perhaps, with a certain amount of research humor, it can be assumed that if God was able to create the world in seven days in a biblical legend, then a person created in the image and likeness of God will be able to answer complex questions about himself, his place in the world and determine the coordinates for the future. Our second mistake was a large group. In the second marathon we reduced the number of participants. Everyone was presented with a training task: Task No. 0 “Acquaintance”: “Think what is more important for you: to know deeper or to know more? Write your answer in a few short sentences.” Only those who confirmed their desire with a real answer were accepted into the marathon. As well as for the first time, the closed group of the most popular Russian social network VKontakte.ru was chosen. Participants were offered one task daily. The goal of the marathon “To Have or to Be” was a deep acquaintance for participants with their life-meaning foundations and a formed fulcrum in order to be happy today and in the future. The number of participants was 6, male – 2, female – 4. Age of participants varied from 20 to 40 years. All participants have higher education, two – PhDs.

The basis for daily tasks was chosen by the work of the philosopher and psychologist Erich Fromm “To have or to be”. Tasks of the marathon: Acquaintance; Friendship; Flower; Reading; Faith; Authority; Love; Memories.

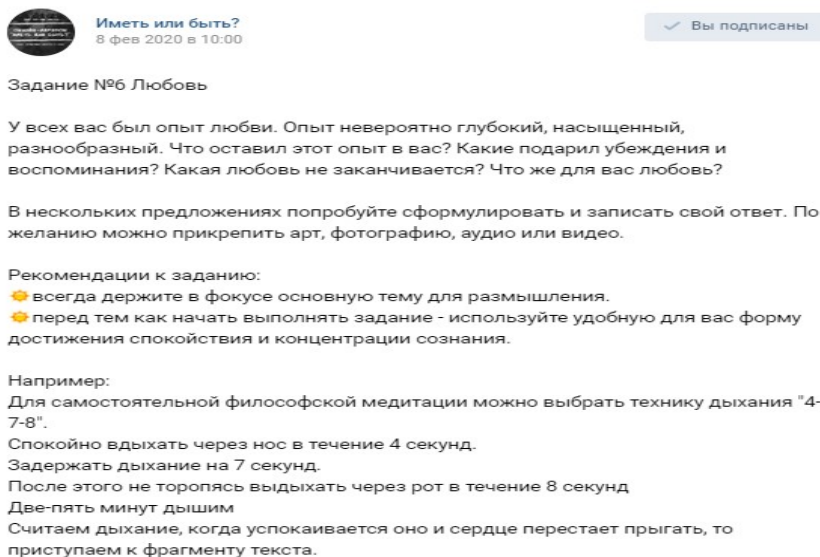
Participants of the marathon should, within 24 hours from the appearance of the task, present the result of their reflection in the form of a comment on the task. Comments were visible to all participants. It was possible to ask each other questions and present

their position in group chat in a gentle manner, but not give advice and not impose their opinions on the interlocutor. Not a discussion, but a live polylogue. It is worth noting that this time the facilitator of the marathon did not present his answers on an equal footing with all the participants. The facilitator summed up each assignment, inviting participants to familiarize themselves with fragments of Erich Fromm's text, which revealed the theme of the day's assignment.

Completing tasks participant needed to find the mode, which is more significant for him – the “have” mode or the “be” mode. It is worth noting that the participants of the marathon, who defined themselves in conversations with the facilitator as “unhappy”, “disappointed in people”, in their answers reflected precisely in the “have” mode, which was especially pronounced in the Acquaintance, Friendship, Authority, Love tasks.

For example, in the task “Love”, the participant M noted that “Love is a painful topic for me. I still endure the lack of parental love; as a result, I don't know how to give and present my feelings” In the task “Faith” the participant M added “I often pray, ask, thank the bright forces for my gift of life”. It is worth emphasizing that at the end of the marathon, the participant M independently noted her orientation to “have” and expressed the position that this is precisely what prevents her from living a full life, feeling whole and belonging to the world. For contrast, a fragment of the response of the participant R to the task “Love”: “This is not attitude to specific people, but attitude to the world in general”.

Figure 2. An example of the task of the online marathon “To Have or to Be”



Иметь или быть?
8 фев 2020 в 10:00

✓ Вы подписаны

Задание №6 Любовь

У всех вас был опыт любви. Опыт невероятно глубокий, насыщенный, разнообразный. Что оставил этот опыт в вас? Какие подарил убеждения и воспоминания? Какая любовь не заканчивается? Что же для вас любовь?

В нескольких предложениях попробуйте сформулировать и записать свой ответ. По желанию можно прикрепить арт, фотографию, аудио или видео.

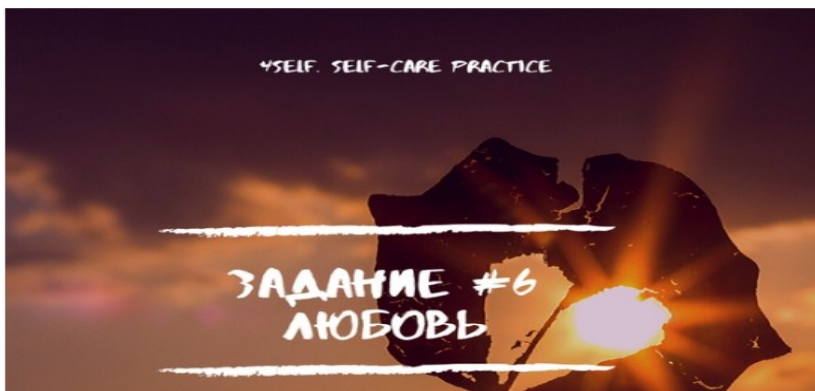
Рекомендации к заданию:

- ☀ всегда держите в фокусе основную тему для размышления.
- ☀ перед тем как начать выполнять задание - используйте удобную для вас форму достижения спокойствия и концентрации сознания.

Например:

Для самостоятельной философской медитации можно выбрать технику дыхания "4-7-8".

Спокойно вдыхать через нос в течение 4 секунд.
Задержать дыхание на 7 секунд.
После этого не торопясь выдохнуть через рот в течение 8 секунд
Две-пять минут дышим
Считаем дыхание, когда успокаивается оно и сердце перестает прыгать, то приступаем к фрагменту текста.



**Translation of the task*
To Have or to Be?
Feb 8, 10 am

Day 6, Task 6 Love

All of us have an experience of love. The experience is incredibly deep, rich, varied. What left this experience in you? What beliefs and memories gave? What love does not end? What is love for you?

In a few sentences, try to formulate and write down your answer. Optionally, you can attach art, photo, audio or video.

Recommendations for the task:

- Always keep focus on the main topic.
- Before you begin to complete the task, use the form that is convenient for you to achieve calm and concentration of consciousness.

For example, for independent philosophical meditation, you can choose the breathing technique “4-7-8”. Inhale gently through the nose for 4 seconds. Hold your breath for 7 seconds. After this, slowly exhale through the mouth for 8 seconds. Breathe for two to five minutes. During meditation your breath calms down and the heart stops jumping, then proceed the task.

Here are a few feedbacks from participants who have reached the end of the marathon:

It was interesting to me. I have not yet fully realized and the days passed so quickly. And every morning I woke up waiting for new assignments. It was a pleasure to spend time with smart, pretty, open-minded people. Learn the opinions of others on the topics of the day. The world is not so aggressive, people are not so dangerous, you can find a common language if you wish.

The marathon was very lively, a lot of interesting tasks. Topics have an immersion in the self, it is interesting to correlate your vision with the participants' vision and, as a result, with E. Fromm's vision. A new depth opens up which needs to be comprehended. What I would like to bring to the marathon is group work, joint work in creating something important and valuable for everyone.

We, as coordinators of the online marathon, made sure that participants overcame persistent psychologisms and moved to a more abstract level, where philosophical categories and principles are applied to the individual existence of a person. The online

marathon allowed participants not only to get acquainted with the practice of care of the self, but to engage in dialogue with each other, to get acquainted with ideas about the world of the Other, who was unknown before. Each participant revealed himself through communication with others using words, signs or things. In everyday life, such an external dialogue is the first stage in a person's acquaintance with himself as a multidimensional being. An internal dialogue in which a person, performing special exercises, determines his life-meaningful guidelines and values attended the online marathon.

Moreover, in the format of entries on a social network, it has become for participants a special means of comprehending the universal in individual experience, that which unites all people. This allowed both the writer and the people reading these notes to find similarities in the understanding of the phenomena of being, and made it possible to look at the existential problem from a different perspective. The value of the philosophical online marathon lies in the friendly and comfortable presence of other people who are also immersed in the process of self-awareness, which creates a special atmosphere of mutual respect and acceptance of the experience.

Conclusion

Personal diary of philosophers allows their followers to touch the author's living thoughts, his perception of the world. The experiences recorded on paper, the lively sound of thought help not only understand the ideas of the philosopher, but see him as a living person with a unique life path; literally, apply his experience to his own, asking himself the same questions and formulating answers to them. The existential experience of the philosopher, presented in the form of diary, is not just a kind of philosophical

knowledge, but represents a real experience of oneself and one's connection with being.

Philosophical practice in the diary and online marathon formats is a movement towards the self with the help of reflection, in a polylogue with others and in a constant internal dialogue with the self. Our experience in conducting marathons and online meetings has helped us formulate an original method of philosophical practice – philosophical meditation.

Philosophical meditation is the combination of 2 key elements: immersion in the self through meditative exercises and going beyond the self with the help of a philosophical text. This method is an original version of philosophical practice in the modern world. World that, in our opinion, needs philosophy.

Currently, we are working on testing philosophical meditations, studying its strengths and weaknesses, finding the possibility of its implementation both in the educational process at the university and in everyday life. But this is a topic for a future study.

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WISDOM AND THE ART OF LIVING IN 8TH GRADE TEACHERS` EXPERIENCES OF PHILOSOPHIZING THE DIALOGOS WAY

LA SABIDURÍA Y EL ARTE DE VIVIR EN OCTAVO CURSO.
EXPERIENCIAS DE LOS MAESTROS DEL PROYECTO
“PHILOSOPHIZING THE DIALOGOS WAY”

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Abstract: This paper discusses teachers` self-reported experiences from participating in a Dialogos philosophizing project over five months, from the perspective of wisdom development. The project involved teachers from 13 upper secondary schools in a municipality in Scandinavia. They were given a course on philosophy and rhetoric over four workshops with five weeks in between. Moreover, they were themselves supposed to facilitate 20 philosophical dialogue sessions with their own 8th grade students during the project. The research methods used were participative observation and analysis of teachers` meta-reflection notes after the last workshop. The paper concludes with that the project did seem to enhance teachers` wisdom. According to the teachers, the students had also become much more reflected due to the project.

Key words: wisdom, Dialogos, philosophical practice, art of living, teacher education

Resumen: Este artículo analiza los informes personales de los maestros que han participado en el proyecto “Dialogos philosophizong”, durante cinco meses, desde la perspectiva del desarrollo de la sabiduría. En el proyecto, participaron profesores de trece escuelas secundarias de un municipio de Escandinavia. Se les impartió un curso sobre filosofía y retórica durante cuatro talleres con cinco semanas de intervalo. Además, se les propuso que ellos facilitasen veinte sesiones con sus estudiantes de octavo curso durante el proyecto. Los métodos de investigación utilizados fueron la observación participativa y el análisis de las notas de meta-reflexión de los docentes. El documento concluye que el proyecto mejoró la sabiduría de los profesores. Según los profesores, los estudiantes se volvieron más reflexivos debido al proyecto

Palabras clave: sabiduría, Dialogos, Filosofía Aplicada, arte de vivir, maestro

Introduction

The art of living a physically, morally and spiritually wise and good life was the core theme of classical philosophy, whether Eastern or Western. The human being was in both traditions understood holistically and as part of a greater whole, whether called nature, cosmos, atman, or the universe. On an individual level, the ancient philosophies were all oriented toward self-formation, self-edification, self-realisation, self-mastery and the like. In a Western context, Pierre Hadot, in his book “Philosophy as a way of life”¹, argues that the schools of Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, the Cynics and the Epicureans were practical philosophies aimed at teaching and enhancing wisdom and human flourishing, though each tradition had a slightly different understanding of these concepts. Similarly in an Eastern context Shri Yogendra, in his

¹ HADOT, Pierre: *Philosophy as a Way of Life. Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2010.

book “Facts about Yoga”², argues that no matter what school of yoga, they were all oriented toward human self-edification and thus wisdom. However, neither the classical Western nor the classical Eastern philosophical schools concerned with the art of living wisely seem to have any significant bearing in modern cultures today, other than as fragments. Does it need to be so, or can wisdom from classical philosophies, both Western and Eastern, show us a way seldomly used in our time? We believe so, and in this paper we show how philosophizing *the Dialogos way*³ through an action research project in public education might enhance the wisdom of participants. We do so by describing and discussing a project carried out over five months in the fall and winter of 2018/2019.

The policy context of this action learning- and research project is the ongoing curriculum reform in education in Norway, in which three interdisciplinary themes have entered the national curricula of primary, secondary and upper secondary education. The themes are *sustainable development, public health and life skills, and democracy and citizenship*, all based in §1 of the Norwegian Education Act (in Norwegian called *formålsparagrafen*⁴). This is the background for a direct invitation from the primary- and secondary education department in a middle-sized municipality in Norway that one of the authors of this paper, Guro Hansen Helskog received. She was asked whether she could teach the 8th grade

² YOGENDRA, Shri: *Facts about Yoga*, The Yoga Institute, Mumbai, (2009) [1971].

³ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

⁴ MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, Government of Norway: *Education Act, 2007*, available in <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/find-document/dep/KD/legislation/Acts-and-regulations/education-act/id213315/> (last access 4th of March 2019), §1.

teachers a course on philosophy and rhetoric so that they would be properly equipped in order to teach their students in these subjects. The topic philosophy and rhetoric would be part of a larger mainly quantitatively oriented project called *Robust*, which was initiated and lead by the University of Stavanger. The project would imply that half of the 800 students in 8th grade in the municipality would be taught a *life skills programme* one hour a week for 20 weeks, while the other half would function as control groups and be taught *philosophy and rhetorics* one hour a week for 20 weeks. The classes in the municipality would be divided randomly between the two programmes.

The municipality had been looking for a teaching approach and material that “took its point of departure in the paragraph of aims of the Norwegian Educational Act, in the overarching part of the curriculum and in competence objectives in relevant subjects for secondary school” [1]. Helskog had already written a series of books for practicing philosophy in schools called *Dialogos*, partly together with the philosopher Andreas Ribe⁵, which could be used directly in the project. *Dialogos* represents an approach to pedagogical philosophical practice that is characterized by a long-

⁵ See i.e. HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Dialogos: filosofi for ungdomstrinnet: elevbok 8. trinn*, [Dialogos: philosophy for secondary school. Students`s book 8th grade], Fag og kultur, Oslo, 2006a. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Dialogos: filosofi for ungdomstrinnet: lærerveiledning 8. trinn*, [Dialogos: philosophy for secondary school guide for teachers 8th grade], Fag og kultur, Oslo, 2006b. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen and RIBE, Andreas: *Dialogos- praktisk filosofi i skolen: elevbok*, [Dialogos: practical philosophy in school], Fagbokforlaget, Oslo, 2008. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen and RIBE, Andreas: *Dialogos-veiledning for lærere og samtaleledere*, [Dialogos: guide for teachers and dialogue leaders], Fagbokforlaget, Oslo, 2009. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

term oriented philosophical process that has the enhancement of wisdom at its core.

In her theory of wisdom, Eeva Kallio⁶, operates with three levels of thinking on the way towards wisdom: Level 1 is absolutism, to be stuck in one's own viewpoint and unable to take various viewpoints into account. Level 2 is a relativistic multi-perspective attitude: one is now able to understand multiple viewpoints, and becomes much more insecure as to the truth of one's standpoints. In the final level, integrative thinking, one understands multiplicity, but tries to integrate diversity into a united stance⁷. However, our stance is that the last level of thinking, if we are to call it wisdom, is an ideal that implies several interrelated dimensions that all have to be present in order to call a person "wise". As an ideal, it needs to be continuously developed and practiced in concrete situations, which are always unique. Thus, it is like a horizon that is always moving away from us as we seemingly move forward. Hence is never reachable once and for all. As outlined and discussed in "Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education"⁸, the six dimensions in the Dialogos map for wisdom-oriented pedagogy- are *the existential-emotional, the relational-communicative, the cultural-historical, the practical-ethical, the critical-analytical* and *the spiritual-ideal* wisdom dimensions. The map has grown out of Helskog's more than two decades of philosophical practice- and practical pedagogical experience in secondary and upper secondary schools, in family relationship education at the Norwegian psychiatric hospital Modum Bad, and

⁶ KALLIO, Eeva (ed.): *Development of Adult Cognition. Perspectives from psychology, education and human resources*. Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2018.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

in higher education, while also drawing heavily on classical philosophical traditions as well as modern philosophical practices. The different wisdom dimensions - which all are also represented in various philosophical movements - are preliminary defined as follows:

The existential-emotional wisdom dimension implies developing self-knowledge in a broad sense, combined with insight in the universal existential human condition. Moreover, it implies understanding of and the ability to cope with one's emotional life as part of developing our fully fledged humanity. Philosophers who were concerned with this dimension were, for example, Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Arthur Schopenhauer Martin Heidegger or Viktor Frankl, just to name a view.

The relational-communicative wisdom dimension implies developing the ability to engage in profound, meaningful dialogue and heart-to-heart communication with others, with the aim of reaching mutual understanding, and thus to engage in the lives of other people in ways that make others and oneself grow. It is also about developing the ability to connect existentially with others, children and adults alike, while at the same time being able to judge when such connecting is inappropriate, and stay within limits that prevents unwanted intrusion into the life world of the other. Martin Buber, with his book "I and Thou" can be mentioned as a well-known representative of and source of inspiration for this dimension, but also Paul Watzlawick⁹.

The cultural-historical wisdom dimension implies developing the ability to see oneself as having become a "self" in interaction with people and traditions that are all culturally and historically embedded, and thus developing a more distant perspective on oneself and the context one finds oneself in. It also involves the

⁹ See i.e. WATZLAWICK, Paul, BEVALIS, Janet B. & JACKSON, Don D.: *Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies and Paradoxes*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, N.Y., 2014.

ability to “read” oneself and others as “text” that is con-text-ualized in history and culture that is particular to that context, but which always has universal aspects. One of the representatives of this dimension would be Michel Foucault, for example.

The critical-analytical wisdom dimension is maybe the dimension that is most systematically practiced in public education as well as in philosophical practices inspired by Oscar Brenifier, Leonard Nelson, and Matthew Lipman and his Philosophy for Children Program (P4C). It involves developing the ability to critique, analyse, conceptualize, compare, synthesize, create abstractions and make arguments. This dimension is deeply rooted in the philosophy of Kant, as well as so-called analytical philosophy with representatives like the early Wittgenstein, Gottlieb Frege or Bertrand Russel.

The next dimension – *the spiritual-ideal wisdom dimension* -- involves developing openness to the dimensions in life that not necessarily can be grasped in analytic language, and which leaves us in awe, wonder and humbleness regarding the limits of what we can know and express explicitly. It also involves the ability to use imagination and create visions and ideals concerning the conditions of living well in a broad sense, necessary for acting in ethically sound ways¹⁰. Inspiration for this dimension is as different as the idea of Bildung first developed by Meister Eckhart and expanded by Hegel and others, the idea of aesthetic education and the art of the ideal developed by Friedrich Schiller. In terms of classical philosophy, Patanjali's classical text on yoga philosophy, and the

¹⁰ See i.e. HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019. Or: WEISS, Michael Noah: “Learning Practical Wisdom? A Guided Imagery for Philosophical Practice on Self-knowledge”, in AMIR, Lydia (ed.): *New Frontiers in Philosophical Practice*, Cambridge Scholars, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2017a.

philosophies of Socrates, Plato and Aristoteles, can also be mentioned as inspiration here.

The sixth and last wisdom dimension in this model is *the practical-ethical*, which implies developing the ability to act with sensibility in concrete situations, ideally doing the right thing in the right way at the right time toward the right people for the right purposes¹¹. This dimension is especially rooted in the virtue ethics of Aristotle, while also Patanjali's yoga sutras are relevant. Here, all the other wisdom dimensions come together in concrete action.

Wisdom in the Dialogos model is thus understood as a polydimensional virtue. It embraces one's relations to oneself, others and the world in a broad sense, including the natural environment and other species, and for the religious person, the transcendent Other¹².

The guiding research question of this project

Concretely, philosophising the Dialogos way over time implies that some sessions will typically focus most explicitly on abstract-analytical dimensions, while others will focus most explicitly on existential-emotional dimensions, etc. A Dialogos dialogue process can also be organized by taking one's point of departure in subject matter, crystallizing a focus point that is then related to the personal

¹¹ See i.e. WEISS, Michael Noah: "Philosophical Mindfulness. An Essay about the Art of Philosophizing", in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*, Vol. 8., 2017b. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

¹² See HELSKOG, Guro Hansen and RIBE, Andreas: *Dialogos- veiledning for lærere og samtaleledere*, [Dialogos: guide for teachers and dialogue leaders], Fagbokforlaget, Oslo, 2009. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

life of participants. From here, there is a movement between phenomenological indwelling, hermeneutical interpretation and analysis in direction of an abstract synthesis, with consensus as a regulative ideal¹³. Based in this understanding of action research on the one side, and of wisdom and wisdom development on the other side, the question we are discussing in this paper is the following: How did teachers experience their own development and the development of their students due to the project, and to what extent might we say that “wisdom and the art of living” are relevant to this development?

Operationalization of the research question

Since, as we have seen, wisdom and the art of living are complex concepts, it appears to be necessary to operationalize these concepts into a simpler and more practice-oriented term. In this respect *phronesis* - that is, practical wisdom - seems to be an appropriate term. For the ancient philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle there were two central aspects of wisdom: *Sophia* and *phronesis*. *Sophia* represents theoretical wisdom in terms of universal principles and natural laws, while *phronesis*, as practical wisdom, is about the awareness to do the right thing in the given situation with regards to living a good life overall¹⁴. Even though Aristotle assumed that *sophia* was superior to *phronesis*, he also thought that developing *phronesis* was more important since it was mandatory to live a good life (the highest good, according to him). Furthermore, to know what to do in a given situation is also of utmost relevance with regards to the art of living - the one who

¹³ Ibidem.

¹⁴ See i.e. WEISS, Michael Noah: “Philosophical Mindfulness. An Essay about the Art of Philosophizing”, in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*, Vol. 8., 2017b.

knows what to do in the given moment, also has an overall idea of how to live life in a good way. In other words, phronesis is about mastering the art of living. Seeing wisdom from this more practical-oriented perspective, it becomes obvious that developing critical-analytical thinking is not sufficient. It takes more than that. And here we come back to the six dimensions in the Dialogos map for wisdom oriented pedagogy, which are the existential-emotional, the relational-communicative, the cultural-historical, the practical-ethical, the critical-analytical and the spiritual-ideal wisdom dimensions¹⁵. We acknowledge the complexity of these dimensions, as well as the complexity of the existing discussion on them and on wisdom in general. For example, we believe that full fledged development towards wisdom ideally requires a balanced development involving all the six dimensions in the Dialogos map for wisdom oriented pedagogy. Nevertheless, we now cut through to an operationalized definition of wisdom and the art of living that we will use in the further course of this article: We assume that development in *one* or *some* of the six dimensions do promote development of the art of living (that is, how to live life well) in general and phronesis in particular (that is, what to do in a given situation, with regards to living life well overall).

Designing the Dialogos project as a cyclic action learning and action research project

The aim of this project was to teach the teachers so that they, in turn, could teach their students, and the project was thus organized in what we can call five action learning rounds. The first round started with a seven hour workshop that would help teachers to get

¹⁵ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

prepared for facilitating five Dialogos sessions with the students, before coming in for a new workshop. The workshop started with a reflection concerning the teachers` experiences of facilitating dialogues with their 8th-graders, before a new series of exercises and dialogues that would prepare them for additional five sessions with their students, was conducted. The procedure was repeated four times. In the last teacher-workshop the meta-reflection was facilitated as a round of sharing experiences orally, followed by a four hours continuous dialogue process based on the text “Forgiveness, Gratitude and the Art of Holding on to the Good”¹⁶. The teachers were encouraged to facilitate this work in their own classes over a period of 4-5 sessions. In this final workshop, Michael Noah Weiss, the other author of this paper, also took part as a co-facilitator.

The meta-reflections served three purposes: One purpose was that the teachers would have the opportunity to reflect upon the philosophical work they had been doing with their students in the five weeks that had passed by since the last teacher workshop. The other reason was that they through their meta-reflection notes had the opportunity to communicate directly what they had on their minds so that it could be taken into consideration in the next round of planning and implementation in the project. The third purpose was that the reflection notes would be the main empirical material in the research part of the action research project. To hand in the reflection notes was voluntary and based on written consent. The project was reported to and approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD).

The pedagogical developmental work was thus designed as a cyclical action learning- and research project. There was a movement from idea, planning, flexible implementation of the plan and reflection over the implementation. Because the teachers as

¹⁶ Ibidem.

well as their students were inexperienced with philosophizing, Helskog found that the best way to train the teachers would be to give them practical experience with exercises which they afterwards could try out with their students again. Hence, she started out with exercises on distinguishing philosophical questions from empirical questions and psychological questions, before moving into exercises with argumentation and reasoning, and reflection upon personal experience.

Starting point situation

Because the project was initiated “top-down” by the municipality, and not “bottom-up” by the teachers and schools, some of the teachers openly expressed that they had not chosen to be part of this project when entering the seminar room on the first day of the project. The teachers had been picked to take part in the Dialogos project because they were all contact teachers in 8th grade. Thus, they were teaching different subjects in the municipality secondary schools. Maths, natural science, Norwegian, English, social studies and “KRLE” (Christianity, Religion, Life views and Ethics) were represented in the repertoire of subjects of the group of teachers.

Therefore, Helskog was surprised when reading the meta-reflection notes after the first full day workshop. All the teachers stated that they had found the first workshop good, both for their own sake and for the sake of their students. This is the most negative comment regarding the outcome:

“Since this is a course that is imposed on us, I came with a rather negative view. The day proved to be interesting. Have learned to pose questions, go into depth, but feel that I have too little experience in such a big topic to be able to create a good dialogue in the classroom”.

These are two more typical comments:

Teacher 1: It has been a good day because I now have a much bigger quiver of exercises that I can use in my own teaching, than I had when I came. I have an increased understanding for philosophy while at the same time looking forward to get started.

Teacher 2: It has been a good day because we have had several engaging and thought-provoking dialogues, many interesting perspectives, many creative and practical lesson examples that can be used both in this project and in other relevant subjects.

Content of the following workshops

The content of the second workshop included reflection upon some basic emotions, reflection upon the characteristics of a dialogue as compared to a debate, and some elements of virtue ethics. The third workshop had a freer form, involving rhetoric (“speech competition”), reflection upon truth, use of criteria and perspectives, as well as contemplation of ethical dilemmas. The final workshop started with a short meditative centering exercise led by Michael Noah Weiss. Further, it took its point of departure in a longer text from Dialogos, showing ways to work philosophically *with* and *from* the text.

How did teachers experience their own development and the development of their students due to the action learning and – research project?

Even if meta-reflection notes were gathered in the beginning of each workshop, for the purpose of this paper we will limit ourselves to look at the experiences of the teachers after 3/4 of the project, which concretely means the meta-reflection notes the teachers wrote at the end of the last workshop. One of our

assumptions is that in order to facilitate philosophical dialogues in a good way, the teachers first needs to have worked on him- or herself. We thus asked:

When you now look back at the workshops and your own process of learning- and self-formation process so far, what is it that still sticks with you, generally?

We wanted to see whether and to which degree the teachers reflected over this premise; that philosophical and dialogical approaches as well as pedagogical philosophical practice require an adult to put oneself, with all one's ideas and views, at stake when engaging in genuine dialogues together with the students.

Two teachers answered that they acquired a broader vocabulary concerning feelings, thoughts and other aspects of human life. Others said that they have learned much about how to talk about difficult topics in the classroom, and that they began to reflect themselves and used topics and examples about how they themselves thought and acted. One answered that he/she discovered that it is hard to philosophize, that it was something unfamiliar and a bit awkward. Others related what we have done in the project to other school subjects: "I feel that I have learned a lot, and that we had – overall – useful interesting sessions. It feels more comfortable now to have philosophical conversations, also in other school subjects."

Some teachers said that they appreciated to go deeper into the topics (in depth learning), and to do so together with colleagues from other schools. One pointed out that he/she "learned a lot about how we as teachers can prepare in order strengthen a philosophical community in the classes we have". Another set him-/herself a goal for the teaching, which the students receive during their 3 years at high school: "Furthermore, I think that one of my/our goals is to make the reflections of the students, which they have over the years

at high school, visible. And the dialogues support that straightforwardly. Moreover, I see the usefulness directly in the sessions with the students. They have aha-moments often.”

Some put emphasis on the linguistic-rhetorical dimension as the most important aspect when philosophizing with the students. Here are two examples: “To be more precise, to go deeper into a term/concept”, and “the value of going deeper into words, problems and situations.” Others emphasize the role of being a so-called “contact teacher” or the relations to the students: “This is my first year as a teacher and in many ways these sessions have made me get to know my students better. Much of this is very relevant regarding the “KRLE”-lessons (A/N: lessons on Christianity, religion, life stance and ethics) and I have used something of this in that context too and integrated it.” One said, “I have now a broader and strengthened set of tools for my work as contact teacher”, and another replied that he/she had become “more comfortable with stepping out of the comfort zone together with the students.”

The second question was formulated as follows:

What will you put forward as the *one* most important concrete experience you as a teacher have made during these weeks?

The purpose of formulating this question in this way was to challenge the teachers to pick out one *concrete* experience. Most of them, however, answered in general terms. As we will see, several indicate that the philosophical dialogues gave them knowledge and skills, which they can take with them into the lessons of their respective subjects.

Only two teachers described concrete experiences. Here is one of them: “We talked about the ability to put words on / express feelings in the class after the smiley-exercise (have drawn it). The students began to discuss differences between gender and the ability to express feelings (“boys don’t cry”) and so on. The

conversation we had based on that, had it that several students came to me afterwards in order to talk about the thoughts they had. Particularly one student (a boy) made a big impression on me when he said “I am not so good in talking about things, but it is a bit as it is with a bun dough that ferments and gets bigger and bigger.” Here is the other one: “The lesson which ended up on the topic of death anxiety and active euthanasia. Specifically challenging and heavy, but important, exciting and informative. In addition, the discussion about the horse vs. the frog was exiting since otherwise passive students engaged quite a lot.”

Among the general descriptions there are some which focus on the students, while others have the focus on the dialogue facilitator. Here are examples of those which are student-oriented and where the teacher is surprised about the students’ contributions: “I am impressed and surprised about how reflected and interested the students are” and “(...) the students are interested and I am surprised about their reflection skills – something which is eventually absent in the subjects as such.”

Furthermore: “The students have asked for these lessons and they have been pretty open concerning sharing their thoughts about the problems posed in these lessons”, and more concrete: “The students are much more efficient in reflecting when they are forced to take a stance and to defend it. They also like that, and this is something I will take with me for my further teaching.” One points out “that the students should sit in a circle / see each other when they have a plenary session” as his/her most important experience. Several expressed being surprised “that some students, who have not been “on track” so much (in other subjects), have contributed positively in these lessons”, and that the most important concrete experiences, which they had, are about incidents where “quiet, shy students have cast off their shield and dared to argue for view points in the group.”

From the meta-reflection notes focusing on the dialogue facilitator, one said that “it is challenging to keep a conversation going”, but another one points out “the importance of posing questions in order to keep a discussion alive. This concerns both philosophy as well as other subjects.” One says that the most important experience was the insight “that I don’t have to prepare ‘like hell’ for such a session, but to be open for the discussion to take its own development.” Another teacher points out “the insight/understanding that seeing things from many perspectives increases in-depth learning,” while another one points out the meetings (with the teacher colleagues) as an important experience in the project: “It is difficult to choose one thing, but it was good to be part of a philosophizing community together with colleagues, as a starting point for the lessons we ourselves had to run in the classes.”

The third question was formulated as follows:

What do you think is the most important learning outcome for your students so far in the project?

Here to a certain degree the teachers answered similarly, but the answers can nevertheless be divided into three categories, where the first is also the one with the most responses:

1. Increased self-insight and insight into others
2. Improved skills (“becoming better at”)
3. Better learning environment

Ad 1. With regards to increased self-insight and insight into others, the following answers are typical: The students have “a better vocabulary when it comes to feelings and thoughts. They have also become aware of the complexity of emotional life and how everything is interconnected”, and “I think it was good that they

heard others' arguments and that this has made them change perspectives now and then." In addition, they thought that it's good to spend time with centering meditations. One writes that he or she "hopes that they see the importance of thinking autonomously, to become aware of one's attitudes, etc.", and another one "that classmates might have other opinions than what one first thought." Another experienced that "some students (...) benefit greatly from this because it offers tools for reflecting on one's own and others' reaction patterns."

Ad 2. When it comes to improved skills, one writes that the students have become "good in listening to each other and in building on each others' statements. They have become better in discussing." Another says that the students still have "many things unresolved, but I appreciate the ability to wonder quite much. To wonder together!" Another one emphasizes that the students have understood that "they think similarly as well as differently about important questions."

Ad 3. When it comes to learning environment one replied that he or she "thinks that they learn more about themselves as well as others, and that this is good with regards to the learning environment too," while another one writes about "improved learning environment and that all dare to participate in conversations in the classroom." A third asserts that the students "have become better acquainted with each other and more open towards sharing personal experiences."

Some teachers have obviously not carried out meta-reflections with the students, and can therefore only have vague assumptions about what the students can take with them, while others point out the unpredictability of dialogues: It is just not possible to tell what sticks with the students. One for example writes that he or she "hopes that they have become better to reflect on something," and another says "hopefully [they still have] reflections and tools to cope with situations in life in a meaningful way." "In spite of that", writes another teacher "all students had thoughts and experiences

which they will, sooner or later, benefit from. They are immature, but they move into the right direction.”

To what extent might we say that “wisdom and the art of living” is relevant to this development?

In the teachers’ responses to the question “What do you think is the most important learning outcome for your students so far in the project?”, three categories have been identified. The first of them, «increased self insight and insight in others», already gives a clue about the developmental process that the teachers and students underwent in this project. They had raised their emotional (self-) awareness, not only in terms of realizing the emotional complexity around the examined topics but also by developing the respective communicational skills in order to put their observed feelings into words. The development of this ability can be called “emotional intelligence”¹⁷. With regards to “the art of living well” (“livsmestring” in Norwegian), this ability appears to be of significant relevance because “people with well-developed emotional skills are also more likely to be content and effective in their lives, mastering the habits of mind that foster their own productivity”¹⁸. Moreover, with respect to emotional self-awareness, also the Socratic “Know thyself” can be brought into account, as a prerequisite for the development of *phronesis* (that is practical wisdom or prudence). According to Aristotle “Anyone can become angry – that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way – this is not easy.”¹⁹ It is *phronesis* that makes

¹⁷ GOLEMAN, Daniel: *Emotional Intelligence*, Bantam Books, Inc., New York, NY, 1995.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 36.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. ix.

the difference here, that is, the awareness to do the right thing in the given situation with regards to living a good life overall²⁰. In other words, what was fostered with the students (and teachers) due to the Dialogos project was emotional intelligence and phronesis. And both of these abilities appear to be of significance with regards to democracy, citizenship and of course the art of living well (livsmestring). Hence in the model of Helskog²¹, *the existential-emotional wisdom dimension* implying developing self-knowledge in a broad sense, combined with insight in the universal existential human condition, seemed to have been enhanced somewhat due to the Dialogos project, both in the teachers and their students. This also implies understanding of and the ability to cope with one's emotional life as part of developing our fully fledged humanity. Other important virtues and skills that were fostered, according to the feedback from the teachers, was learning to listen to and understand each other. This is also reflected in the improved classroom community, which represents the third category of answers on the question. All of these virtues and skills can be called social skills, and it appears to be the dialogical setting as such that supported their development. A dialogue can be understood as a communicative and social setting in the sense of what Matthew Lipman called *community of inquiry*²². As such a dialogue is not a debate or a discussion where the participants compete against each other. On the contrary, a dialogue is an investigative setting, in which the participants examine a question,

²⁰ WEISS, Michael Noah: "Philosophical Mindfulness. An Essay about the Art of Philosophizing", in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*, Vol. 8., 2017b, p. 103f. Also: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

²¹ Ibidem.

²² LIPMAN, Matthew: *Thinking in Education*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, 84.

a topic, a phenomenon together – with the emphasize on “together”. There are no wrong perspectives or opinions in a dialogue, because different and even contradicting point of views only contribute to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, what students learn in a dialogical setting is a role model, so to speak, about how to deal with diversity and different opinions in a constructive manner. When it comes to topics like democracy and citizenship this role model, due to its community-building focus, seems to be of significant relevance. Compared to the dimensions of the Dialogos model, it seems that *the relational-communicative wisdom dimension*, which implies developing the ability to engage in profound, meaningful dialogue and heart-to-heart communication with others, with the aim of reaching mutual understanding, was enhanced. It seems that teachers and students had increasingly begun to engage in the lives of each other in ways that fostered growth. This dimension is also about developing the ability to connect existentially with others, children and adults alike, while at the same time being able to judge when such connecting is inappropriate, and stay within limits that prevents unwanted intrusion into the life world of the other. This was touched upon in the project as well, but it is not possible to interpret whether this ability to judge was enhanced.

Several teachers stated that also those students who normally would be rather quiet or unfocused contributed actively in the philosophical dialogues. One can only guess why this was the case, but the setting of a dialogue differs without doubt from those of a debate, a discussion or a conventional lecture. And when the teachers wondered about how capable their students were in terms of reflectiveness then it has to be asked for the potentials of a philosophical dialogue as a “teaching” strategy in general. Such a dialogue invites the students to become active inquirers on the one

hand²³. On the other, it often encompasses personal, concrete experiences about the topic under investigation²⁴. These experiences are told in a story-like form and then examined by the group without judging the person who told it²⁵. This would be different in a debate or a discussion, and even in a conventional lecture were being right or wrong plays a key role. In addition, the story-like experience-sharing makes it easier for the students to get a deeper understanding of the issue at stake. In addition to their competitive character, a discussion or a debate often deals with ideas in a rather abstract way. The same can be the case in a conventional lecture given by the teacher. Research however shows that conveying information by means of telling stories and sharing experiences represents a much more effective way of learning²⁶. As mentioned previously, most of the teachers had no experience in facilitating philosophical dialogues but they first learned it in this Dialogos project. Some stated that it is not easy to start such a dialogic learning and keep it going in the classroom. At the same time however, several teachers also gave the feedback that the preparation of a Dialogos session would not consume as much time as the preparation of a conventional lecture, while the philosophical dialogues as such still offer the opportunity for “in-depth” learning. In times where teachers have to take on evermore tasks, especially administrative ones, the advantage of reducing preparation time – which is for sure as important as the time of actual teaching²⁷ –

²³ See *ibidem*.

²⁴ See i.e. HECKMANN, Gustav: *Das sokratische Gespräch: Erfahrungen in philosophischen Hochschulseminaren*, Schroedel, Hannover, 1981.

²⁵ WEISS, Michael Noah: “With Life as Curriculum: On the Relevance of the Socratic Method in Norwegian Folk High Schools”, in *Journal of the American Philosophical Practitioners Association*, Vol. 12, Nr. 3, 2017c.

²⁶ See i.e. BOWER, Gordon H. & CLARK, Michael C.: “Narrative stories as mediators for serial learning”, in *Psychonomic Science*, Vol. 14, 1969.

²⁷ See BURDEN, Paul & BYRD, David: *Methods for Effective Teaching*, Pearson, New York, NY, 2018.

while still maintaining high educational standards, should not be underestimated. Furthermore, though in the beginning of the project some teachers experienced it as challenge to run a dialogue, many of them could see the benefits of the training they received. Besides the reduction of preparation time, the skill of posing good questions, for example, was seen as an additional value that contributed to the teaching in other subjects too, as some teachers have remarked. Though it is not new that posing good questions is highly relevant in a teacher's practice²⁸, this project shows *how* teachers can improve this skill. Hence, it is possible to say that teachers worked to enhance *the practical-ethical* wisdom dimension, which implies developing the ability to act with sensibility in concrete situations, ideally doing the right thing in the right way at the right time toward the right people for the right purposes, in this context: exercising good dialogical and pedagogical-philosophical practice. Here, all the other wisdom dimensions come together in concrete action²⁹.

One question focused on the teachers' own development both professionally as well as personally. Here, quite diverse answers were sent back to us. On the one end of the spectrum, some teachers again expressed their difficulty with facilitating dialogues. In this respect one must not forget that the majority of the teachers participating in this course had no philosophical or dialogical training from before. This proves that there is a difference between more traditional teaching methods, and the philosophical and dialogical methods promoted through the Dialogos approach. In this respect one has to ask whether and how the skills and attitudes of those teachers who expressed insecurity would have changed, if they would have received further dialogue training and practice.

²⁸ See *ibidem*, p. 133f.

²⁹ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

However, many of the teachers also stated that they learned a lot due to this Dialogos project, both personally as well as professionally. While some saw the learning outcomes in terms of an extended vocabulary to put existential, emotional and ethical issues into words, others even felt that they have gained the competence to use a dialogical approach in other subjects than philosophy.

Another educational aspect that was appreciated by the teachers was that they could get a deeper understanding of the topics they investigated in the dialogues during their training. This is where *the critical-analytical wisdom dimension* comes in, and this maybe the dimension that is most systematically practiced in public education. It involves developing the ability to critique, analyse, conceptualize, compare, synthesize, create abstractions and make arguments, skills that are also held high in mainstream academic education. However, in the striving to fulfill predefined aims and learning outcomes, it might be reason to suspect that also this wisdom dimension remains underdeveloped, while a more top-down, deductive “copy-didactics” dominates. However, if one wants to facilitate a movement from what Kallio³⁰ calls *an absolutistic level* (being stuck in one’s own viewpoint and unable to take various viewpoints into account) towards a *relativistic multi-perspective level* (being able to understand multiple viewpoints and becoming more insecure as to the truth of one’s standpoints), the critical-analytical dimension is crucial.

All in all, this points not only towards philosophical dialogue practice as a form of “in-depth” learning as well as peer learning³¹, but it more or less confirms what other philosophical practitioners

³⁰ KALLIO, Eeva (ed.): *Development of Adult Cognition. Perspectives from psychology, education and human resources*. Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2018.

³¹ See O’DONNELL, Angela M. & KING, Alison (eds.): *Cognitive perspectives on peer learning*, Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ, 1999.

have contested to be among the learning effects of such dialogues, namely: to gain deeper understanding – not only of the topic but also of others and oneself³². An important aspect in this respect was also mentioned by one of the teachers, when he or she stated that the participating students had so-called “aha” moments more often. Some pedagogues also call such moments “golden moments” and according to them they significantly contribute to a person’s self-formation³³. Might such AHA-moments be interpreted as reaching the final level of *integrative thinking*, where one understands multiplicity, but all of a sudden is able to integrate diversity into a united stance, and see connections one has not seen before?

Some of the responses also related to the more rhetorical dimensions of this project. In general terms, several teachers stated that the project helped them to better connect with their students and they also had the impression that they learned respective communication tools, which were important for them as teachers. At this point however, it has to be said that in the feedback from the teachers one could get the impression that their focus and expectation in this project was to learn new skills. This does not come as a surprise. On the one hand because it appears to be a common assumption that in a professional training one learns skills, knowledge and competences in order to improve one’s professional practice. On the other because the teachers did not participate entirely voluntarily – they were signed up for this course. And under such circumstances it should not come as a surprise that several of the teachers were obviously not too enthusiastic about the project in the beginning. Not to mention that their willingness to open up personally was rather low. Under these circumstances it was surprising how much they nevertheless did in

³² STAUDE, Detlef & RUSCHMANN, Eckart (eds.): *Understanding the Other and Oneself*, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, Cambridge, 2018.

³³ OHREM, Sigurd & WEISS, Michael Noah: *Myndig medborgerskap. Dialog og danning i folkehøgskolen*, Folkehøgskoleforbundet, Oslo, 2019, p. 8.

the end. They seemed to have come to understand that in real dialogical encounters engaging personally is the main key. This, and the ability to philosophise heart to heart, is also a key to personal *Bildung* and the enhancement of wisdom in the Dialogos approach³⁴. And even though the focus of many teachers was still on the use of value in terms of learning tools instead of on developing personally, several of them mentioned a progress in their self-formation. However, it would have been interesting whether the situation as well as the outcome would have been different in this respect, if the teachers would have not only participated voluntarily but with a genuine interest in the subject. Moreover, it would have been interesting to see what would have happened if they were given more time for practice as well as for workshop participation. Learning to philosophise dialogically is one thing. Learning to facilitate philosophical dialogues another. Now, how about the last two wisdom dimensions in the Dialogos wisdom model - *the cultural-historical wisdom dimension* and *the spiritual-ideal wisdom dimension*? As we remember, the first implies developing the ability to see oneself as having become a “self” in interaction with people and traditions that are all culturally and historically embedded. Following this, a more distant perspective on oneself and the context one finds oneself in, is developed, involving also the ability to “read” oneself and others as “text” that is *contextualized* in history and culture that is particular to that context, but which always has universal aspects. The next dimension – *the spiritual-ideal wisdom dimension* – involves developing openness to the dimensions in life that not necessarily can be grasped in analytic language, and which leaves us in awe, wonder and humbleness regarding the limits of what we can know and express explicitly. It also involves the ability to use

³⁴ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

imagination and create visions and ideals concerning the conditions of living well in a broad sense, necessary for acting in ethically sound ways³⁵. It is difficult to claim that any of these dimensions were visible in the meta-reflection notes of the teachers. Does this mean that the dimensions are not relevant to this project at all? We will argue that, no, it is relevant in the sense that the next time we will facilitate a similar project, we will make more efforts to include these dimensions more explicitly, because they are important. Moreover, based in observations, we could sense a change in the attitudes of all the teachers from the first workshop to our last – a change that it is not so easy for teachers themselves to conceptualize and verbalise, as it concerns the deeper structures of their being. At the point of writing the final meta-reflections, they were still immersed in the experience of philosophising, meaning they did not yet have a distance to themselves and their experience. Hence, the reflections of the teachers should be interpreted as preliminary. Based in earlier experiences, their views are likely to change and become more grounded as time goes by, and they get more distance to what they have experienced. Thus, if they were asked to reflect upon the question “What has philosophising (the Dialogos way) done to you?” later down the road, they would probably have been able to see more, and maybe also include explicit reflections upon the latter two dimensions. The process of philosophising seldomly stops when a session or a course is over. Judging by the feedback from these teachers and from others, it continues both as inner dialogues and as dialogues with people around them. And if the outlook and teaching methods of individual teachers are developed, this will have implications also for the smaller and greater context within which they perform their

³⁵ See *ibidem*. And also: WEISS, Michael Noah: “Learning Practical Wisdom? A Guided Imagery for Philosophical Practice on Self-knowledge”, in AMIR, Lydia (ed.): *New Frontiers in Philosophical Practice*, Cambridge Scholars, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2017a.

practices. The question is whether or not it has made a lasting impact. This, we cannot know.

Final comment

In this paper we have given an account of an action learning- and research project with teachers from 12 upper secondary schools in Norway, organized and carried out by Guro Hansen Helskog over a period of five months in the fall/winter 2018/2019, with Michael Noah Weiss participating as a co-facilitator in the last session. Teachers were given a course on philosophy and rhetoric over four workshops with five weeks in between, and were themselves supposed to facilitate 20 sessions with their own students during the project.

The first part of our guiding research question was *How did teachers experience their own development and the development of their students due to the action learning- and research project?* Here, it seems justifiable to conclude that the teachers had acquired a broader vocabulary concerning feelings, thoughts and existential aspects of human life, increased their courage when it comes to discussing such topics with their students, as well as increased their ability to facilitate dialogues with students across subjects. Moreover, it had strengthened their confidence in their role as contact teachers. Their experience of the learning outcome of their students was that they had increased their self-insight and insight into others, improved their listening, dialoguing, wondering and argumentation skills, and made their learning environment better.

This said, our conclusion in the context of this paper is that reflecting upon existential, emotional and ethical experiences, exploring issues in dialogue with others with different viewpoints and experiences than oneself, training the ability to see a topic from different perspectives, argue different stances, and striving to

integrate different viewpoints into a unified stance, does represent a step towards greater wisdom. It also provides life skills, and thus life competences needed when striving to exercise phronesis understood as the art of living well. Thus, wisdom, in the sense of phronesis understood as the awareness to do the right thing in the given situation with regards to living a good life overall is a phenomenon highly relevant to the development of teachers and students, both with regards to teachers who facilitate philosophical dialogues, and with regards to students who participate in such dialogues.

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ON THE URGENT NEED FOR PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICES IN MAINSTREAM EDUCATION TODAY

SOBRE LA URGENCIA DE LA FILOSOFÍA APLICADA EN LA EDUCACIÓN ACTUAL

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Abstract: This essay is written based in a concern of ours that the dominant forms of teaching and learning in education today seem to be more in line with what Aristotle called *techné* and *poiesis* than with *phronesis* and *praxis*. The reason for that appears to be the aim-, skills- and competence-oriented approach in education as well as the quest for scientific “evidence based” practice. Using a reflective practice research approach, the authors take their point of departure in two concrete cases drawn from their lives as associate professors and researchers in teacher education. Some core themes are extracted from the cases and reflected upon critically and philosophically. Among those themes are, i.e., “reflecting freely and personally” vs. “adjusting to given frameworks and meeting required standards”. Other themes are “answering correctly and reaching predefined goals with the least effort” as opposed to “exploring possible answers”, “learning for its own sake” and “searching wisdom” on the other.

Key words: Philosophical practice, pedagogy, Bildung, wisdom, reflective practice research, Dialogos

Resumen: Este artículo se funda en nuestra preocupación de que las formas dominantes de enseñanza y aprendizaje en la educación actuales parecen estar más en línea con lo que Aristóteles llamó *techné* y *poiesis* que con *phronesis* y *praxis*. La causa de esto parece ser una educación orientada a objetivos, habilidades y competencias, así como la búsqueda de prácticas científicas “basadas en evidencia”. Utilizando un enfoque de investigación de práctica reflexiva, los autores comienzan su estudio tomando como punto de partida dos casos concretos extraídos de sus vidas como Profesores asociados e investigadores de la formación del profesorado en la universidad. Los temas centrales de los resultados se extraen de los casos y se reflexionan de forma crítica y filosófica. Entre esos temas se encontrarán, la dicotomía entre “reflexionar libre y personalmente” y “adaptarse a marcos dados y cumplir con los estándares requeridos”, la contraposición entre “responder correctamente y alcanzar metas predefinidas con el menor esfuerzo” y “explorar posibles respuestas”, “aprender por sí mismo” y “buscar sabiduría”, entre otros..

Palabras clave: Filosofía Aplicada, Pedagogía, *Bildung*, sabiduría, investigación de práctica reflexioanda, Dialogos

The not so beautiful risk of education¹ today

This essay is written due to pressing concerns of ours regarding our teaching and research in teacher education in Norway. The concern is that the dominant forms of teaching and learning in education today seem to be more in line with what Aristotle called *techne and poiesis* than with *phronesis and praxis*, due to the prevalent aims-, skills- and competence orientation as well as the quest for scientific “evidence-based” practice. This orientation has become increasingly dominant in mainstream education at all levels since

¹ This subtitle can be read in reference to Gert Biesta’s book *The Beautiful Risk of Education*, which here however receives a different connotation; see BIESTA, Gert: *The Beautiful Risk of Education*, Routledge, London & New York, 2014.

the early 1990s². However, as we will discuss later in this essay, it has roots that at least 250 years back, contributing to the creation of a multidimensional crisis that humanity faces today, caused by what some scholars called *risk society*³. The crisis includes environmental, democratic as well as psychological and physical health aspects, which need to be addressed on both structural, collective and individual levels.

In the field of education all these three levels are met and faced, i.e. in the teacher-student relationship which receives a central mediating role in this respect. When a teacher steps into a classroom or university seminar room, or even when s/he corrects assignments, tests and exam papers, s/he enters into a moral field in which s/he is responsible for the lives and futures of others – both on an individual level, from human being to human being, on a collective level, with the class forming a community, as well as on a structural level, with the individual students in all classes from all schools forming the next generation. How the teacher acts towards others in this three-leveled field has a crucial effect on whether and to which extent the students can unleash their full human potentials, including the ability to live well and contribute to

² HANSEN, Guro: *1990-årenes danningsdiskurs – eller humanismens vilkår i vår tid*. [The Bildungs-discourse of the 1990s – or the conditions for humanistic pedagogy in our age], in NORGES FORSKNINGSRÅD, *KULTs skriftserie*, nr. 55, 1996. And: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Den humanistiske dannelsen og 1990-tallets utdanningsreformer”, in *Norsk Pedagogisk tidsskrift*, 1-2, 2003, p. 20-36. And: DANNESESUTVALGET: *Kunnskap og dannelse foran et nytt århundre* [Knowledge and Bildung in the face of a new century], Universitetet i Oslo, Oslo, 2009. And: BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015.

³ See i.e. BECK, Ulrich: *Risk Society – Towards a New Modernity*, Sage Publications, London, 1992.

solving the mentioned crisis, or not – as individuals, as communities and as a generation. The Danish philosopher Knud Løgstrup has formulated this beautifully in his now almost worn out words from *Den etiske fordring*:

The individual never has anything to do with another human being without holding some of the person's life in his hand. It can be very little, a transient mood, an obviousness that one makes wither, or which one deepens or raises. But it can also be an awful lot, so it simply stands to the individual whether the other person's life succeeds or not.”⁴

(Our modified translation from Danish)

The original idea of pedagogy

Relationships between those who have skills and insight considered worthwhile, and those who do not yet have such skills and insight, i.e. between teachers and students, craftsmen and apprentices or parents and children, have existed as long as humans have inhabited the globe. Hence, it is in some respect possible to argue that pedagogical practices are as old as humankind. Even if pedagogy as an academic discipline is rather new, dating less than 150 years back, it is worthwhile following its roots further back in history, to its philosophical and theological origins in ancient thought, in order to better understand what we actually mean with *pedagogy* and *pedagogical*.

Like philosophy, the study of pedagogy, and the practice involved in being a pedagogue, has its etymological roots in Greek language.

⁴ LØGSTRUP, Knud Eilert. *Den etiske fordring*. Oslo: J.W. Cappelens Forlag a.s. 1997 [1956, 25] 15-16. Original quote “[...] Den enkelte har aldrig med et andet menneske at gøre uden at han holder noget af dets liv i sin hånd. Det kan være meget lidt, en forbigående stemning, en oplagthed, man får til at visne, eller som man vækker, en lede man uddyber eller hæver. Men det kan også være forfærdende meget, så det simpelthen står til den enkelte, om den andens liv lykkes eller ej”

Pedagogy comes from “paideia”, implying the shaping of one’s character through a union of civilization, tradition, literature and philosophy, and a training both of the physical and mental faculties. The ideal was to develop towards an enlightened mature personality⁵.

Pedagogy also has roots in the German term *Bildung*, which we here choose to translate as “edification” – a complex and widely discussed concept in European history⁶. The concept is originally German and flourished in the period 1770-1830. It links back to 16th century Pietistic theology, in which the Christian should seek to cultivate himself in line with the image of God⁷, to medieval and baroque Christian mysticism⁸, and further to the ancient Greek concept paideia and phronesis⁹.

Bildung was first conceptualized by Meister Eckhard (1260-1328) in his theology as man’s self-realization and sanctification as a

⁵ JAEGER, Werner: *Paideia. The Ideals of Greek Culture. Volume I: Archaic Greece: The Mind of Athens*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1967.

⁶ See i.e.: LØVLIE, Lars, MORTENSEN, Klaus P. and NORDENBO, Sven Erik (eds.): *Educating humanity: Bildung in postmodernity*, Blackwell, Malden, Mass, 2003. Originally published as LØVLIE, Lars, NORDENBO, Svein Erik and MORTENSEN, Klaus P. (eds): “Educating Humanity: Bildung in postmodernity”, in *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Special Issue 36/3, 2002. Or: SLAGSTAD, Rune, KORSGAARD, Ove and LØVLIE, Lars (eds.): *Dannelsens forvandlinger. [Transformations of Bildung]*, Pax, 2003, Oslo. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Den humanistiske dannelsen og 1990-tallets utdanningsreformer”, in *Norsk Pedagogisk tidsskrift*, 1-2, 2003, p. 20-36. Or: RISE, Svein (ed.): *Danningsperspektiver: teologiske og filosofiske syn på danning i antikken og i moderne tid*, [Perspectives on Bildung: theological and philosophical views on Bildung in antiquity and in modern times], Tapir, Trondheim, 2010.

⁷ SCHMIDT, James: “The Fool’s Truth: Diderot, Goethe, and Hegel” in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 57.4., 1996.

⁸ GADAMER, Hans Georg: *Sannhet og metode [Truth and method]*, Pax forlag, Oslo, 2010 [1960].

⁹ HADOT, Pierre: *Philosophy as a way of life: spiritual exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, Blackwell, Malden MA, 1995.

being created in the image (*Bild*) of God. Bildung implied an increase of what in German is called *Erkenntnis des Unaussprechbaren*, that is, insight into the unspeakable. In his speeches on teaching, Eckhard argued that people should not think so much about what they should *do*. Rather, they should consider what they *are*, i.e. their being as humans, and not so much their doing as teachers. This, again, was connected to holiness: One should not establish holiness through mere doing, but rather through being¹⁰.

Those who debated enlightenment within politics and pedagogy gave the concept a more secular connotation. They discussed how to achieve an enlightened society based on the ideas of humanism, with Herder as the first who formulated the expression *Bildung zur Humanität* – edification towards humaneness – a foundational pedagogical idea amongst the German neo humanists at the beginning of the 19th century¹¹. These ideas inspired Norwegian educational thinker Frederik Moltke Bugge in the 1830's. He argued that science and education alike should be free from everything but the duty that lay in its purpose, namely *to awaken, nurture and sharpen the thoughtfulness of the young*. He insisted that we cannot discover reality unless we have eyes (language) to help us see. Our ability to see – our gaze – must be sharpened. Only then could it be possible to relate to reality, reflect upon it and criticize (investigate and explore) it. For this purpose, the studies of humanities (i.e. philosophy or literature) were best suited, according to Bugge¹².

¹⁰ BERTHOLD-HEGELHAUPT, Tilman: “Bildung als Erkenntnis des Unaussprechbaren. Über Sprache und Wahrheit bei Meister Eckhart”, *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Pädagogik*, 66 (4.1990), 1990, p. 478-497.

¹¹ MYHRE, Reidar: *Grunnlinjer i pedagogikkens historie*, Gyldendahl norsk forlag, Oslo, 1988.

¹² EVENSHAUG, Trude: “Skolemann versus Stortingsmann. Et blick på 1830-årenes danningsdiskurs”, [Schoolman versus Parliament-man. A look at the

Education – more than acquiring knowledge, skills and competences

A practical pedagogical situation always consists of numerous ethical, existential and philosophical questions and dilemmas that requires that the teacher not only has knowledge of the subject and relevant skills. It also requires self-knowledge, empathic understanding of the other(s), understanding of the wider situation one finds oneself in, as well as understanding of the existential and relational forces playing out in the situation. Not least, it requires imagination and tact or *phronesis* (that is prudence or practical wisdom), because every pedagogical situation is pregnant with seeds for future developments, good or bad ones. To link back to Bugge: It requires the intuitive (spiritual and existential as opposed to critical-analytical and rational) ability to *(fore)see*. At its best, good teaching will nurture *the tree of life* in students¹³, understood as existential, ethical, spiritual and philosophical *mindfulness*¹⁴. This appears to be best enhanced and fostered through various forms of philosophical and dialogical practices¹⁵. However, as the

*Bildungs*discourse of the 1830` s.], Norges forskningsråd, *KULTs skriftserie*, nr. 90, 1997.

¹³ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: Philosophising the Dialogos Way as Nurturing the Tree of Life in us. in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*. Vol. 12, 2021.

¹⁴ WEISS, Michael Noah: “Philosophical Mindfulness. An Essay about the Art of Philosophizing”, in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*. Vol. 8, 2017.

¹⁵ See also: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Dialogos. Filosofi for ungdomstrinnet*, Fag og kultur, Oslo, 2006. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “The Gandhi Project: Dialogos philosophical dialogues and the ethics and politics of intercultural and interfaith friendship”, in *Educational Action Research*, Level 2, 2014, p. 1-20, available in <https://doi.org/10.1080/09650792.2014.980287> (last access 13th of March 2019). Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “*Bildung* towards wisdom through dialogue in teacher education”, in *Arts and humanities in higher education*,

two cases we will reflect upon in this essay indicate, the educational culture today seems to be dominated by forms of instrumental means-aims didactics that are counterproductive to philosophical practices which might nurture such mindfulness.

Research approach and further structure of the essay

Our rather personal essay is both a piece of philosophical and dialogical practice¹⁶, and a piece of reflective practice research¹⁷. The latter was developed as a research approach by Anders Lindseth, who is also known as a pioneer of philosophical practice in Scandinavia. Similar to what is known as the Socratic method by Nelson and Heckmann¹⁸, this form of research starts with concrete cases which are then reflected towards more abstract and general

Level 1, special issue on dialogue edited by ALTHORF, Marije, 2016, available in <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1474022216670609> (last access 13th of March 2019). Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: "Searching for wisdom the Dialogos way", in AMIR, Lydia (ed.): *Practicing Philosophy: Expanding Boundaries, New Frontiers*, Cambridge Scholar, London, 2017. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: "Envisioning the Dialogos way towards wisdom", in STAUDE, Detlef & RUSCHMANN, Eckart (eds.): *Understanding the Other and Oneself*, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, Cambridge, 2018. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, London, 2019. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: "Om Askeladdens metode – eller essayet som erkjennelsesvei og klokskapsdannende skrivepraksis", in ASKELAND, Norunn and BRINCK JØRGENDEN, Iben (eds.): *Kreativ akademisk skrivning*, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, 2019b.

¹⁶ HANSEN, Finn Thorbjørn: *At stå i det åbne. Dannelse gennem filosofisk undren og nærvær*, Hans Reitzels forlag, København, 2008.

¹⁷ LINDSETH, Anders: "Dannelsens plass i profesjonsutdanninger", [The place of Bildung in professions education], in DANNELSESUTVALGET: *Kunnskap og dannelse foran et nytt århundre*, Universitetet i Oslo, Oslo, 2009, p. 21-27.

¹⁸ See i.e. HECKMAN, Gustav: "Six Pedagogical Measures and Socratic Facilitation." Reprinted in *Enquiring Minds – Socratic Dialogue in Education*, Trentham Books, Chester, (1981) 2004.

levels of awareness. The purpose of reflective practice research is to get a deeper understanding of one's own practice (i.e. one's teaching practice) and by that to improve oneself as a practitioner (i.e. as a teacher). This means that our point of departure are concrete cases from our practice as university lecturers and researchers in teacher education. The cases have left us with a rather unpleasant feeling that something is not right – a feeling which Lindseth calls *experience of discrepancy*¹⁹. Our aim in this essay is to investigate what this feeling or intuition might be about, in order to formulate it in more general, theoretical and philosophical terms. Our essay is thus at least roughly structured according to Lindseth's suggested structure for reflective practice research projects²⁰: We begin by narrating two concrete cases drawn from our lives as associate professors and researchers in teacher education at the University of Southeastern Norway. This represents the first phase of the research procedure called *concrete reflection*. In the next phase of our research, called critical reflection, we extract some core themes that have become important to us in our joint reflection upon the cases. Central questions in this phase will be: Why caused these cases such puzzlement with us? How can we understand them? What is at stake in them? Why do we feel that something is wrong not only in these cases, but in the larger educational culture that we are living, working and educating students in? Then, in the last phase, called *theoretical reflection*, we reflect upon the themes in more general

¹⁹ See i.e. LINDSETH, Anders: "Dosenten i et FoU-perspektiv. Refleksiv praksisforskning som en vei mot dosentkompetanse", in BACHKE, Carl Christian & HERMANSEN, Mads (eds.): *Å satse på dosenter. Et utviklingsarbeid*, Cappelen Damm Akademisk, Oslo, 2020, p. 83.

²⁰ LINDSETH, Anders: "Dosenten i et FoU-perspektiv. Refleksiv praksisforskning som en vei mot dosentkompetanse", in BACHKE, Carl Christian & HERMANSEN, Mads (eds.): *Å satse på dosenter. Et utviklingsarbeid*, Cappelen Damm Akademisk, Oslo, 2020, p. 75–101.

terms, drawing on philosophical perspectives and research literature that we have found relevant in our attempts to “open up” and shed light on the themes we have extracted from the cases.

Original reflection

In this phase we begin with a concrete reflection upon two concrete cases that are understood as particular examples and expressions of cultural –historical and, more or less, universal patterns and structures that will be explicated later in the essay. The first case is from Weiss` teaching practice where he taught pedagogy to younger undergraduate teacher students during the last year²¹. As undergraduates, these students have finished upper secondary school not so long ago. The second case comes from Helskog`s reflective practice research involving a dialogue with a student who was in the transition between high school and university.

Case 1

Over the last two semesters of teaching pedagogy to undergraduate students, Weiss has observed that a genuine interest in the lectured content and subject matter was almost absent with many students in his classes. Already in the first weeks of the semesters, it turned out that they were first and foremost interested in information concerning the final exam, in order to direct their effort directly towards this target: “How will you test this theory in the exam? What is the correct answer? How do we reference this and that publication correctly?” These were typical questions that were frequently asked in the classes. The students showed a similar

²¹ Helskog has written about similar experiences from teaching students in post graduate teacher education in Helskog 2019b.

attitude towards the other tasks and assignments, which they had to fulfill during the semester. For example, one of the assignments was a small research project. First, they had to gather empirical data and then they had to write a paper about it. Their major concern when carrying out this project was to apply the research methods correctly and then fitting the gathered material into the structure of an academic paper, which in this case was the so-called IMRaD structure (Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion). When supervising the students in their projects, it often turned out that they had written great texts containing their own genuine thoughts and reflections on the topic of investigation. Finally, however they did not dare to include these texts in their articles because they were afraid that this would not fit into the expected structure and format. Weiss became aware of that when trying to invite the students for a discussion and in-depth reflection on their work. The students simply tried to avoid this discussion because they were not used to this kind of self-reflection. Some felt insecure, while several were not interested in reflecting upon their work nor themselves as researchers. Many simply assumed such a reflection to be unnecessary in order to produce a paper that would meet the required standards.

In the middle of the semester then, when students were still working on their research projects and still asking questions about the final exam, the corona virus broke out in Europe. Due to the imposed lockdown in Norway, all lecturing and supervising, had to be done online. And here another interesting aspect of the phenomenon came to the fore. Only few students attended the online sessions. To a certain extent this could be explained away. Some had their children at home since the kindergardens and schools were closed. Others had to see how they could maintain their income and were therefore working more shifts in their part-time jobs than normal. Nevertheless, fifteen percent of them would attend online lectures. This was also the case in a Dialogos

workshop on dialogical and philosophical practice that we, the authors, held together with this group of students. Here, we also experienced that some students disappeared from the session and went offline when they were asked to reflect and philosophize together in small groups, while they came back when we were lecturing for the whole class. At the same time Weiss and the rest of the teaching staff received many emails from the students in this period, which – how else could it be – were filled with questions about the requirements for the final exam. How might we understand that students – with a few great exceptions – did not prioritize the learning process, and seemed to be uninterested in the content, but kept asking about aims and assessment? How can this kind of student behavior be explained?

Case 2

Having been a teacher at all levels of education from secondary to higher education, and having developed the Dialogos approach to pedagogical philosophical practice as an alternative to “main stream” didactics, Helskog has always been concerned about what is going on in schools. The second experience is thus from a research dialogue she had with a student at a school in Norway as part of a reflective practice study. During the dialogue, the student had shown her a text she had written when she was a 10th grade student, as well as the assessment criteria and her teacher’s actual assessment. The text was an analysis of the short story “Karen” by Alexander Kielland²². The story had made an almost life changing impression on the then sixteen year old girl. Her eyes were sparkling when summarizing the content of the short story. She expressed deep fascination of how the author had composed the

²² KIELLAND, Alexander: “Karen”, in *To novelleter fra Danmark*, Gyldendal, Oslo, 1882.

story, and by how he had created symbols and parallel stories. She told Helskog how she had read the story over and over again, and how the deeper dimensions of the text rose from between the written lines, so to speak. How was it possible that a then 33-year-old man born in the mid-1800s, could use words and create a story that touched her and made such an impression on her, a 16-year-old girl born 152 years later? Thus, despite the list of criteria and recipe-like instructions given by the teacher, with one of them being that the analysis should be strictly objective and neutral, she had decided to take a risk. She included the two first verses from a poem by the equally famous Norwegian author Johan Sebastian Welhaven in a final remark, to express how much the story had spoken to her. The verses go as follows²³:

Digtets Aand (Welhaven 1844)	The Spirit of the Poem (Welhaven 1844)
Hvad ei med Ord kan nævnes I det rigeste Sprog, Det Uudsigelige, Skal Digtet røbe dog.	What cannot be expressed in the richest Language The Inexpressible Shall the poem still reveal
Af Sprogets strenge Bygning, Af Tankeformers Baand Stiger en frigjort Tanke, Og den er Digtets Aand	From the rigourousity of language From thoughtforms` bond Rises a freed thought, and This is the Spirit of the poem

²³ The poem is not easily re-written from 1844-Norwegian to English as it has a form and contains rimes and rhythm that simply cannot be translated directly, but Helskog has anyway given it a poor try.

However, the teacher did not approve of her choice, as students were not supposed to include any subjective elements. Thus, her creative attempt in the final remark section pulled down the overall impression of the text, the teacher argued, who had assessed the analysis by using a scheme ranging from high, via medium to low achievement of objectives, based in the criteria. The student's performance was assessed in the lower range of the high achievement section, which is of course good, but the only critical remark of the teacher concerned the student's creative and essayistic attempt to close up the text.

Critical reflection upon the cases

The reason we have chosen these two cases is the so-called *experience of discrepancy*²⁴ between what we believe good teaching and learning should be, and what these cases express. Well aware that we here take a normative stance, and that two small cases are not sufficient to generalize directly to an entire culture. However, the two cases are just two examples among many experiences each of us have of the same phenomenon. These experiences have left us with the feeling that something is not right, and that this feeling is urgently important. We thus use the cases as empirical “windows” to argue that we are in urgent need of philosophical practices in mainstream education today.

If we compare the two cases, there are some obvious differences. However, we see these differences as two sides of the same problem, pointing to our concern from different angles.

²⁴ See i.e. LINDSETH, Anders: “Dosenten i et FoU-perspektiv. Refleksiv praksisforskning som en vei mot dosentkompetanse”, in BACHKE, Carl Christian & HERMANSEN, Mads (eds.): *Å satse på dosenter. Et utviklingsarbeid*, Cappelen Damm Akademisk, Oslo, 2020, p. 83.

Reflecting freely and personally vs. adjusting to given frameworks

In case 1, Weiss is the teacher trying to make students reflect freely and personally upon their experiences, while the students are looking for ways to fit into a given framework. In case 2, it is the other way around. The teacher is expecting students to adjust to the given framework of “objectivity”, while the student in this case is taking the risk of including some free and personal reflections on how she experienced reading the story and what the story had done to her. Hence, the theme *reflecting freely and personally vs. adjusting to given frameworks* is one of the themes that has become important to us.

Being forced to stick to predefined criteria and to cut off creativity

In case 2, we meet a young student who experiences deep personal transformation and *Bildung* or edification while working with the short story “Karen” – an experience that developed unexpectedly and spontaneously, and that she felt a need to go further into. However, the teacher wanted her to stick to the predefined criteria, cutting off the creative initiative and also motivation of the student, thus making her scared of including personal reflections in her texts also later. Her way of engaging with the short story was not right according to the expectations of the teacher. The student was supposed to be strictly critical-analytical and “objective” in her paper, while her experience of working with the text, which had existential, emotional and spiritual as well as ethical dimensions, were not only uninteresting for the teacher, but outside the task. In our reflection upon the case, we have wondered whether the teacher had really understood what the student had done, which was rather advanced.

Wanting predefined criteria and avoiding self-reflection

If this second case is an example of the educational culture that the teacher students in case 1 have grown up in, then at least one reason for their obsession with the final exam, their fear of failure and thus their hesitation to participate in discussions, becomes rather obvious. They are simply used to predefined aims, criteria and frameworks, and thus clear expectations from the teachers. When they are asked to reflect upon themselves, or to engage in the practice of (philosophical) dialogue with others, they become insecure. Such activities do not have clear aims and learning outcomes, but require the students to think for themselves. However, the student in case 2 was not allowed to think freely for herself, as it also appears to have been the case in the educational past of the students in case 1, who were looking for clear expectations and set structures.

Moreover, it seems that the students had not been given sufficient room to wonder about the content of good literature, nor of the mystery of words coming to life in human beings several generations after their author died, which fascinated the student in case 2, but which students in case 1 seemed to never have experienced. Rational and measurable aims and formal structures seem to have been more important in their education than existential, ethical and spiritual content. Hence, the art of teaching in these cases appears to have been reduced to *techné*, as Aristotle called it. That means to the instrumental instructions of predefined techniques and skills – in these cases the skills involved in the analysis and writing of non-subjective, non-creative, texts.

Answer correctly and reach the goals with the least effort

Some would say that the student behavior in case 1 is perfectly normal student behavior. They just want to pass their exams, for

obvious reasons. In our understanding, this explanation would be far too simple. When investigating and reflecting upon the first case in terms of a learning practice, certain aspects come to the fore, like trying to *meet the required standards*, to *answer correctly* and also to *reach the goals with the least effort* (in this case, passing the final exams and fulfilling the tasks and assignments during the semester). Even here, some would still say that these aspects are a natural part of taking an education. However, with this point, underlying assumptions about how we see and understand education in general are beginning to surface. Hence, other themes that emerge from this case are the relationships *between personal and analytical*, and *between subjective and objective*, and *between creativity and rationality*.

Curiosity, to learn for its own sake, to take a critical stance towards what one is taught and told, and a genuine interest in and an authentic wondering about the subject matter are notably absent in the first case, and it is not encouraged in the second. Nevertheless, if we leave out these aspects from our understanding of education, and even worse, if a teacher is not fostering and challenging them with his or her students, education as such is reduced to nothing but a mechanical exercise, so to speak. Personal involvement and engagement have vanished. That this is a problem was already brought up by Rousseau in his novel *Emile*²⁵. In this novel he offers a critique of existing culture, while exploring an educational model where the student Emile is supervised by his tutor without losing his natural inner drive.

²⁵ ROUSSEAU, Jean-Jacques: *Emile- or on Education*, Penguin Books Ltd., London 2007 [1756].

Theoretical and philosophical reflection

What seems to have been at stake in the previously presented educational experiences of the students in the two cases, is, among other things, the denial of authenticity, of not being understood and not being allowed to engage personally with the content taught, let alone express themselves existentially.

The denial of authenticity

On the one side, with the teacher in case 2, we find the not-reflected use of authority, the lack of ability to tune in to the perspective of the student, and the lack of will to understand what the student had tried to do. On the other side, with the students in case 1, it is the culture of education that they had been brought up in, and which had been forming their ways of thinking and learning, as well as their models of teaching.

Techné vs. phronesis

Plato is known for having criticized the type of education offered by the Sophists²⁶. The Sophists were masters of speech. They were teaching away techniques of persuasion and rhetoric, and they were known for talking people into something that they themselves were not even convinced of, but they did it nonetheless because they were paid for it. The difference between the ideal of education of Plato and the one of the Sophists was pointed out by Shaun Gallagher in the following way:

Rhetoric, as practiced by Sophists such as Gorgias, is a collection of purely formal techniques used to impress those who listen. As a formal technique it

²⁶ See GALLAGHER, Shaun: *Hermeneutics and Education*, Suny Press, Albany, NY, 1992.

does not manifest moral involvement and concern for student, subject matter, or truth. If we define art (a term that in English once signified “learning”) as a practice that manifests such moral concern, then for Plato education has more to do with art than with formal, unconcerned *techné*²⁷

It appears to be this difference between acquiring formal techniques on the one side and involvement and concern for student, subject matter and “truth”, on the other, which shows the challenges and difficulties of the two cases. In this regard, Gert Biesta’s article in 2015 “How does a competent teacher become a good teacher?”²⁸ can be mentioned. In short terms, Biesta assumes that acquiring various competences and skills during one’s studies, does not make a teacher student a good teacher. Even if these competences and skills are mastered outstandingly. Here it has to be mentioned that Biesta’s understanding of competence-oriented teaching and education is quite similar to what Gallagher described as the acquisition of formal techniques. Both authors refer to two of the three forms of knowledge as explicated by Aristotle, which again can already be found with Plato: *techné* and *phronesis* (the third one would be *epistēmē*). Both *techné* and *phronesis* represent forms of practical knowledge. However, while *techné* can be understood as the skills required in order to produce something, *phronesis* is the awareness necessary in order to do the right thing in the given moment with regards to living a good life overall²⁹. In other words, while the former can be understood as know-how knowledge, the latter is often translated with the term prudence or

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 198f.

²⁸ BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015.

²⁹ See i.e. WEISS, Michael Noah: “Philosophical Mindfulness. An Essay about the Art of Philosophizing”, in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*. Vol. 8, 2017.

practical *wisdom* and has a moral connotation. Since both *technè* and *phronesis* are forms of practical knowledge, they relate to actions and activities and it is here where the key to the answer on Biesta's question ("How does a competent teacher become a good teacher?") can be found.

*"The Eichmannisation of education"*³⁰

Techné is related to a form of activity which is called *poiesis*, while *phronesis* relates to a type of activity called *praxis*. The difference between these two types of activity is the goal that is pursued with the respective activity. *Poiesis* is any form of activity that has the goal beyond itself. For example, building a house is a typical *poietic* activity, since the building process is not the final goal of the activity. Rather, it is to live in that house. *Praxis* on the other hand is any form of activity which has the goal within itself. Listening to music, going for a walk in the woods are examples of *praxis*. Both, listening to music and going for a walk, are done for their own sake, because one simply enjoys them. There is no further goal or purpose which would lie beyond these activities. Now, the same could be said about teacher practice: It is a form of *praxis*, and one is practicing as a teaching because one simply enjoys that. For some, this understanding of being a teacher might sound a little bit weird or even pathetic. Isn't the goal of education in general to make one's students acquire competences, skills and knowledge through teaching? In other words, isn't teaching clearly a *poietic* activity? If it would be, then it would be about nothing more than applying effective techniques in order to make one's students acquire other techniques sufficiently. Maths, for example, would then be about applying certain techniques as teacher in order

³⁰ HANSEN, Finn Thorbjørn: *At stå i det åbne. Dannelse gennem filosofisk undren og nærvær*, Hans Reitzels forlag, København, 2008.

to make ones' students acquire techniques of calculation and so on, and that is it. One does not need any personal involvement or moral concern for the student, for the subject matter nor for the truth" for that kind of activity to work out. And it is exactly this approach to learning and teaching that is meant with "The Eichmannisation of education"³¹ – a term coined by Finn Thorbjørn Hansen. The term means to blindly and unreflectedly follow school orders, educational principles and teaching rules. The point here is that even if everything is done right, that is, done in alignment with the respective orders, rules and principles, it would still never be good.

Doing good

It is here where Aristotle's explicated idea of praxis, derived from Plato, comes in. Plato thought that all human beings have the same highest goal in life and that is living a good life. Though we all have different ideas of what the good life is, we all try to pursue it. Living in a good way, however, was not meant in terms of egoistic self-realization. Rather, it was meant in terms of *doing good*. And here the double meaning of doing good comes to the fore. On the one hand, it relates to expressions like "I am doing well," "I am doing better now" etc. and on the other it also refers to expressions like "doing good to others," "making things better," "improving a situation". Interestingly, all these forms of doing do not so much relate to activities of production ("I am doing this and that"), rather they refer to *ways of being* and *becoming* in the sense of developing. Here it also becomes clearer why the term that Aristotle used to signify the good life, namely *eudaimonia*, is often translated with *human flourishing* and not simply with *happiness*. Furthermore, in one way or another, all these previously mentioned expressions have an ethical connotation. They address a

³¹ HANSEN, Finn Thorbjørn: *At stå i det åbne. Dannelse gennem filosofisk undren og nærvær*, Hans Reitzels forlag, København, 2008.

fundamental personal and moral involvement in whatever we are doing and they can be summarized by the question “How are we all doing in the situation that we find ourselves in?” Here again, this question addresses two sides of the same coin: It relates to *how* we are *feeling* about the situation, but also, *what* we are *doing*. If we are going for a walk or listening to music, because it does good to us, then this can be called *praxis* as we have seen. If we see teaching as an activity that we perform because it does good to us and our students, then this can also be called *praxis*. For it is an activity that has the goal in itself: It does good to everyone involved. However, as teachers we certainly will find ourselves performing certain teaching practices, where not everyone involved feels good about it. Then we want to *improve* that practice, we want to *make it better* - we want to *become* better. We are doing so by reflecting about the respective teaching practice, we find potential improvements and then ... we practice, we reflect over our practice, then we practice again, and so on. Until we have reached a level of practice, where everyone involved feels good about it. Here the teacher can be compared with a piano player. The piano player enjoys playing, but it is through reflection that he or she can realize room for improvement. So, he or she continues to practice, in order to become better. The art of improvisation – an art necessary for a good piano player – surely comes only through regular practice, for example. The same can be said about teaching, where improvisation is of significant relevance too. One can only learn to teach well by practicing good teaching, and not by merely acquiring competences. In other words, it is a form of practical knowledge (or even wisdom) that is fostered by practice and which can be called *phronesis*: The awareness of doing the right thing in the given situation with regards to living a good life overall³².

³² WEISS, Michael Noah: “Philosophical Mindfulness. An Essay about the Art of Philosophizing”, in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*. Vol. 8, 2017.

Adapted for the context of teaching, phronesis might be defined as the awareness of doing the right thing in the given teaching situation with regards to having the students and oneself enjoying the teaching – only then a room for curiosity, critical thinking, a drive to explore etc. can be unleashed.

The search for wisdom – the original goal of education

According to Pierre Hadot in his book *Philosophy as a way of life. Spiritual exercises from Socrates to Foucault*³³ all the ancient schools of philosophy agreed that philosophy and the activity of philosophizing involves the individual's love of and search for wisdom. Even though their understanding of how to develop towards wisdom differed, they all agreed that wisdom first and foremost implies a state of perfect "peace of mind" or "soul", accompanied by a comprehensive view of the nature of the whole and of humanity's place within it. Furthermore, they agreed that attaining to such *Sophia*, or wisdom, represents the highest Good for human beings. However, according to their common assumption, most people live unwise lives most of the time, characterized by unnecessary forms of suffering and disorder. The cause of this suffering and disorder is being unaware of the powers of unregulated passions, that is, of unregulated desires and exaggerated fears. Hence, people are held back from truly living, these schools agreed, according to the interpretation of Hadot³⁴. Therefore, in order to truly live, people need to develop their wisdom, a stance that has a parallel in the Indian Yoga philosophy. Here it is argued that a person's capacity to deal effectively with his or her emotions, listen to the guidance that these emotions give, harness their energy, and channel their powers into healthy

³³ HADOT, Pierre: *Philosophy as a way of life: spiritual exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, Blackwell, Malden MA, 1995.

³⁴ Ibidem.

motivation, communication, and behavior, is a hallmark of a healthy individual. Failures in one or more of these areas will lead to various forms of breakdown in the wellbeing and psychological functioning and health of the person³⁵.

Both the teachings in the Academy of Plato and in the Lyceum of Aristotle, were oriented towards wisdom development as a remedy against suffering and disorder both in personal and political life³⁶. Developing the insight and skills involved in wise living was thus a core interest of the pedagogies of all the ancient schools of philosophy, and in fact, until the eighteenth century, moral theory and practice were largely Aristotelian in character, if we are to accept MacIntyre's analysis in *After Virtue*³⁷. The idea was that there are certain qualities of mind and character (virtues) which should guide people in their daily lives. Practical wisdom was one of them. Moreover, in the Christian tradition, there was a corresponding list of vices or “deadly sins”³⁸ signaling failure in life. Moreover, it was generally agreed that human beings had a purpose (telos) which involved the cultivation of the virtues in order to become both a good person and a good citizen, the one being necessarily connected with the other.

Never again Auschwitz

Today, wisdom as a virtue worthwhile pursuing, is rarely studied by scholars of pedagogy, nor used as an ideal for pedagogical practice.

³⁵ YOGENDRA, Shri: *Why Yoga?*, The Yoga Institute, Mumbai, 2007 [1976].

³⁶ HADOT, Pierre: *Philosophy as a way of life: spiritual exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, Blackwell, Malden MA, 1995.

³⁷ See MACINTYRE, Alistair: “After Virtue”, in *Tijdschrift Voor Filosofie*, 46 (1):, 1981, p. 169-171.

³⁸ See also BRUNSTAD, Paul Otto: *Klokt lederskap: mellom dyder og døds synde*, [Prudent leadership: between virtues and deadly sins], Gyldendal, Oslo, 2009.

Neither is wisdom at the center of academic philosophy nowadays. However, in the face of the global situation today, with increasing tensions between states and within states, and with rising rightwing policies and nationalist agendas, Adorno's concern as expressed in his article "Education after Auschwitz" from 1967 seem disturbingly relevant³⁹. After the Second World War one could have expected a revitalization of the *Bildung* tradition, he claims. This did not happen. Adorno could not understand why this had been given so little attention, claiming it shows that the monstrosity had not penetrated people's minds deeply enough. This, Adorno argues, is itself is a symptom of the continuing potential for the recurrence of what happened in Auschwitz, as far as peoples' consciousness and unconscious is concerned. Despite the beautiful traditions and thoughts that Germany and Europe had been built upon, the «Endlösung» was made possible due to modern infrastructure and means of transportation, concentration camps organized as giant factories with industrial mass killings and medical experiments. Adorno's strong claim is that

Every debate about the ideals of education is trivial and inconsequential compared to this single ideal: never again Auschwitz. It was the barbarism all education strives against. One speaks of the threat of a relapse into barbarism. But it is not a threat—Auschwitz was this relapse, and barbarism continues as long as the fundamental conditions that favored that relapse continue largely unchanged.⁴⁰

Yet the barbarism was carried out by well-educated and trained doctors and nurses, engineers and lawyers, many of them probably performing their jobs to the best of their abilities. Education, as it had developed from the Enlightenment period on, had not

³⁹ ADORNO, Theodor W.: *Education after Auschwitz*, 1967, available in <http://josswinn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/AdornoEducation.pdf> (last access 14th of May 2019)

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

prevented them from taking part in the barbarity. Rather, it had contributed to making it possible. And if we are to accept Hannah Arendt's interpretation⁴¹, even Adolf Eichmann was a normal, rather boring bureaucrat performing his perceived duties well, with the motive to advance his career. He was neither sadistic nor perverted. Rather, he was “terrifyingly normal”, thoughtlessly performing his evil deeds without evil intentions. His disengagement from the reality of his evil acts – his thoughtlessness – was, according to Arendt, the main problem of his wrong-doing. Eichmann never realized what he was doing because he was unable “to think from the standpoint of somebody else”:

The longer one listened to him, the more obvious it became that his inability to speak was closely connected with an inability to *think*, namely, to think from the standpoint of somebody else. No communication was possible with him, not because he lied but because he was surrounded by the most reliable of all safeguards against the words and the presence of others, and hence against reality as such⁴².

A pedagogical argument that can be extracted from Arendt's analysis is thus that a main purpose of education is to secure that students develop the ability to think from the standpoint of somebody else, and to engage in communication that opens up and reveals reality as it is.

Bildung vs. Halbbildung

During the last decades we have seen a return of the themes of *Bildung* in the cultural reflection and debate concerning education

⁴¹ ARENDT, Hannah: *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, Penguin Books Ltd., London, 2011 [1963].

⁴² *Ibidem* p.49

and politics, especially in the Nordic countries⁴³. In his classical 1969-essay «Ein utdana mann og eit dana menneske»⁴⁴ the Norwegian philosopher Jon Hellesnes claimed that current forms of education makes *Bildung* or self-formation, or what we in this paper refer to as edification, increasingly impossible. While education implies becoming qualified for certain functions in society, *edification* is a never-ending process involving the development of understanding and wisdom, requiring forms of reflection that go beyond and in between specific academic subjects. It includes our perceiving of subjectivities and our horizons of understanding, from which we see, understand and act. A “seeing” practice is an edified practice, and an education that loses contact with the everyday world, with practice and politics, becomes an education without edification. However, Hellesnes states, scientific, technical and instrumental reason has invaded areas of life where it does not belong. It leaves human beings “half-edified” because it separates concrete life and abstract thinking, practice and theory. Competence oriented approaches to teaching both at lower and higher levels of education is in danger of leading to such “half-edification”, or “half-education” (*Halbbildung*) as Adorno called it⁴⁵. For instance, and as previously mentioned, in dialogue with Hannah Arendt’s text on Eichmann, the Danish

⁴³ SLAGSTAD, Rune, KORSGAARD, Ove and LØVLIE, Lars (eds.): *Dannelsens forvandlinger*. [Transformations of *Bildung*], Pax, 2003, Oslo, p. 377.

⁴⁴ The difference between «utdanning» and «danning», or between being «utdannet» and being «dannet» is not easy to conceptualize in English. Self-formation. See HELLESNES, Jon: "Ein utdana mann og eit dana menneske: framlegg til eit utvida daningsomgrep." [An educated man and a man of *Bildung*: draft for an extended conception of *Bildung*], in DALE, Erling Lars (ed.): *Pedagogisk filosofi*, Gyldendal, Oslo, 1992 [1969], p. 79-103.

⁴⁵ ADORNO; Theodor. *Theorie der Halbbildung* (1959). In: *Gesammelte Schriften*, Band 8: *Soziologische Schriften 1* Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M. 1972, S. 93–121.

professor in philosophical practice, Finn Thorbjørn Hansen⁴⁶, talks about what he calls an “Eichmannization of Education”, brought forward by the dominant ideology of competence. In this ideology, there is a one-sided focus on the epistemological and rational dimension in supervision and teaching. The concept of competence that is now dominating in education, is, according to Hansen, almost totalitarian and oriented towards the knowledge seeking dimension of education. It does not have a sufficient understanding and view for the phenomena in life that cannot be rationalized, secularized or mastered by human reflexivity and pragmatic will and action, he argues. The skilled and knowing gaze can be “the dead gaze”, as opposed to “the lively and wondering gaze”, and the language of competence an “external language” that keeps us distant to ourselves. The pedagogical argument of Hansen is thus, amongst others, that schools and higher education institutions should also provide the space needed for students to develop their existential enlightenment, or their enlightenment of being⁴⁷, in addition to learning how to think from the standpoint of the others. With Meister Eckard: Students and teachers need to develop insight in the unspeakable.

As one of the pioneering “pedagogues” of the Enlightenment, Jean Jaques Rousseau claimed to be the inventor of childhood, with his novel *Emile*⁴⁸. In the novel, Rousseau discusses pedagogy through a fictional narrative in which a teacher is educating and supervising young Emile. Rousseau’s aim seems to be to suggest a pathway in five stages – a *methodos* – for how to give a human being the physical-bodily, existential, mental and moral capacity and foundation needed in order to live a good and happy life in

⁴⁶ HANSEN, Finn Thorbjørn: *At stå i det åbne. Dannelse gennem filosofisk undren og nærvær*, Hans Reitzels forlag, København, 2008.

⁴⁷ Translated from Danish “tilværelsesoplysning”

⁴⁸ ROUSSEAU, Jean-Jacques: *Emile- or on Education*, Penguin Books Ltd., London 2007 [1756].

harmony with oneself, other human beings and with nature and society. In order to succeed, the educator must be critical towards forces and societal conventions and traditions, and instead cultivate the “pure”, “natural” and “innocent” in each child and student. Rousseau’s pedagogical thinking is however paradoxical, as expressed in the famous formulation that man is born free and everywhere he is in chains.

The disintegration of pedagogical practice

Rousseau’s pedagogical novel, along with others of his writings, inspired many to engage in pedagogical philosophizing in the years to come. Kant was one of them. Amongst Kant’s works on pedagogy are his lectures held at the University of Königsberg in the 1770s and 1780s, published in 1803 under the title *Über Pädagogik*⁴⁹, in which negative pedagogy or what Løvlie calls “The freedom of paradox”⁵⁰ is central. Kant’s practical advice for teaching is expressed as pedagogical paradoxes such as “discipline the child, but don’t make his mind slavish; impose rules on him but remember to allow for his free judgment; praise him but don’t foster his vanity; constrain him but let him savour his freedom”. Inspired by, yet also critical to both Rousseau and Kant, Friedrich Schiller’s “Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man” from 1795 was a direct attempt to influence educational policies of its time, written as a series of letters to the Prince of Schleswig-Holstein-Augustenburg, who were reforming education. In letter III, Schiller writes⁵¹:

⁴⁹ Helskog has read this Norwegian translation: KANT, Immanuel. *Om pedagogikk*. Oslo: Aschehoug. 2016 [1803].

⁵⁰ LØVLIE, Lars: "The freedom of paradox", in Waks, Leonard J. (ed.): *Leaders in philosophy of education: intellectual self-portraits*, Sense Publishers, Dordrecht, 2014, p. 175-195.

⁵¹ I have studied the text most thoroughly in Norwegian translation, but have

The course of events has given a direction to the genius of the time that threatens to remove it continually further from the ideal of art. For art has to leave reality, it has to raise itself bodily above necessity and neediness; for art is the daughter of freedom, and it requires its prescriptions and rules to be furnished by the necessity of spirits and not by that of matter. But in our day it is necessity, neediness, that prevails, and bends a degraded humanity under its iron yoke. Utility is the great idol of the time, to which all powers do homage and all subjects are subservient. In this great balance of utility, the spiritual service of art has no weight, and, deprived of all encouragement, it vanishes from the noisy Vanity Fair of our time. The very spirit of philosophical inquiry itself robs the imagination of one promise after another, and the frontiers of art are narrowed, in proportion as the limits of science are enlarged.⁵²

To be blamed for this condition are according to Schiller's analysis, amongst other, an over-emphasis on reason (implying a critique also of Kant) and its ignoring of sentiment. The words of Schiller in the previous quote is strikingly relevant also in our own time, dominated as it is by matter and market, by necessity, utility and rationality. In the last two decades this problem has become increasingly pressing, as technical and instrumental reason from the 1990's on took hold of the way we manage educational systems, influencing also the content and methods of teaching and assessment, and the understanding of learning⁵³. This has led to a

used the British public library pdf-version for this citation: <http://public-library.uk/ebooks/55/76.pdf>

⁵² SCHILLER, Friedrich von: *Om menneskets estetiske oppdragelse i en rekke brev*. Solum, Oslo, 1991 [1795].

Schiller, Friedrich von: "Letters upon the aesthetic education of man", 1795, available in <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/schiller-education.asp> (last access 12th November 2014).

⁵³ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: "Den humanistiske dannelsen og 1990-tallets utdanningsreformer", in *Norsk Pedagogisk tidsskrift*, 1-2, 2003, p. 20-36. Or: BIESTA, Gert: "How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education", in

disintegration, fragmentation and specialization in academic, educational and thus moral life. For instance, in *After Virtue* MacIntyre⁵⁴ argues that both the language and practice of morality have disintegrated. Moreover, as a unifying concept of thinking and doing in relation to human conduct, the concept morality has become almost meaningless. Also, the language and practice of pedagogy has disintegrated and both are suffering from fragmentation and specialization. This process seems to have caused confusion amongst practicing pedagogues, especially since there is an expectation that pedagogical practice and teaching should rely on scientific evidence⁵⁵. But what kind of evidence, when research results are not only overwhelming, but also contradictory? And if moral conduct is essential to pedagogical practice, how can pedagogical practice be “evidence-based” without becoming technical, and instrumental?

Many seem to have lost sight of the moral core of pedagogical practice, a core that can only be reflected upon and contemplated through forms of open and non-conclusive philosophical practices, as opposed to pedagogies taken the form of techné and poiesis. Moreover, many seem to have lost insight in the fundamental questions that were guiding not only the ancient Greeks, Meister Eckhardt and the humanist pedagogical thinkers of the enlightenment, but also thinkers of other traditions in the world, such as the Indian Yoga tradition and the Buddhist tradition. These were questions such as: How does a human being become human?

HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015.

⁵⁴ MACINTYRE, Alistair: “After Virtue”, in *Tijdschrift Voor Filosofie*, 46 (1):, 1981, p. 169-171.

⁵⁵ See BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015.

What is a good life? What is right action? What is the relationship between emotions and reason? Between existence and rationality? Between mind and body? How can human beings overcome suffering and disorder in life? What is wisdom, and how can human beings become wise? These are questions important to philosophical practice, as discussed for instance by Weiss⁵⁶ and Helskog⁵⁷. The latter, for instance, has developed the Dialogos approach – a multidimensional approach to philosophical practice in mainstream education that has the search of wisdom at its core. Her book *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education – between critical thinking and spiritual contemplation* can be read as an attempt to give philosophical practitioners, teachers and teacher educators theoretical perspectives as well as text samples and exercises that can be used for practicing philosophy across all levels in education⁵⁸.

⁵⁶ WEISS, Michael Noah (ed.): *The Socratic Handbook. Dialogue Methods for Philosophical Practice*, LIT publishing, Vienna, 2015.

⁵⁷ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, Routledge, London, 2019a.

⁵⁸ See HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Dialogos. Filosofi for ungdomstrinnet*, Fag og kultur, Oslo, 2006. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “The Gandhi Project: Dialogos philosophical dialogues and the ethics and politics of intercultural and interfaith friendship”, in *Educational Action Research*, Level 2, 2014, p. 1-20, available in <https://doi.org/10.1080/09650792.2014.980287> (last access 13th of March 2019). Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “*Bildung* towards wisdom through dialogue in teacher education”, in *Arts and humanities in higher education*, Level 1, special issue on dialogue edited by ALTHORF, Marije, 2016, available in <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1474022216670609> (last access 13th of March 2019). Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Searching for wisdom the Dialogos way”, in AMIR, Lydia (ed.): *Practicing Philosophy: Expanding Boundaries, New Frontiers*, Cambridge Scholar, London, 2017. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Envisioning the Dialogos way towards wisdom”, in STAUDE, Detlef & RUSCHMANN, Eckart (eds.): *Understanding the Other and Oneself*, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, Cambridge, 2018. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between*

Pedagogical practice as an open-ended practice

Philosophical questions such as the ones mentioned above are still relevant to the lives of human beings in all ages across the world today. They can best be treated through dialogical and philosophical practices because they cannot be answered once and for all. Every human being and every generation needs to answer them for themselves. Not striving to answer them, however, might lead to the type of non-reflectivity and loyalty that lead to the barbarism of Auschwitz, to refer back to Adorno⁵⁹. Only open-ended practices can give human beings the flexibility of mind and the ability to take the perspectives of others needed, for instance in life skills, democratic citizenship skills and sustainable living skills – three of the core themes running through the newly reformed Norwegian curriculum for primary, secondary and upper secondary schools. Most important: Such practices are good in themselves, serving one's inner life and *being* while preparing for morally good action.

Summary and final remarks

We began this essay by stating our concern that there is an urgent need for philosophical practices in education today. Taking our

Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation, Routledge, London, 2019a. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Om Askeladdens metode – eller essayet som erkjennelsesvei og klokskapsdannende skrivepraksis”, in ASKELAND, Norunn and BRINCK JØRGENDEN, Iben (eds.): *Kreativ akademisk skriving*, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, 2019b. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Fragmentering og disharmoni – eller helse og livsmestring?”, in *Prismet* 1, 2019c, p. 53-61.

⁵⁹ ADORNO, Theodor W.: *Education after Auschwitz*, 1967, available in <http://josswinn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/AdornoEducation.pdf> (last access 14th of May 2019).

departure in two cases, the first from Weiss` work with younger teacher students, the second from Helskog`s reflective practice research in the field of education, some core themes were extracted and reflected upon both critically and theoretically. A case in reflective practice research, however, is never clear cut, because it is taken from real life situations that are constantly evolving. We thus close this essay by taking each case one step further.

At the end of the semester in case 1, Weiss had a talk with two students of the described class. He asked them why they were so concerned about meeting the required standards, to answer correctly, to reach the goals with the least effort and so forth. In short, their answer was because this is how they learned to learn during their years at school. When Weiss replied that this is interesting, because their class would be among the first generation who grew up with the so-called competence aims (an educational framework coming into force in the 1990s). For a moment they were baffled, and they left the session with wondrous minds.

As to case 2, three years after the incident described, and at this point in her final year of high school, the student told Helskog she had a similar experience when working on an analysis of the short story “Hills like white elephants” by Ernest Hemingway⁶⁰. This time the text was included in an assignment in her English class. The student had read the story over and over again, not understanding anything to begin with, then experiencing that “the spirit” of the story gradually was released and rose from between the few lines of the story. She had been completely mind blown and left in awe and wonderment about the almost mysterious workings of words on a piece of paper, written by one human being and brought to life in another, the two living almost 100 years apart.

⁶⁰ HEMINGWAY, Ernest. Hills like White Elephants. 1927. Retrieved 30.05.2020 from Hills Like White Elephants.rtf (weber.edu)

The student had asked her Norwegian teacher at the time to read the story, asking how such a text would have been assessed if it was written by a student. The teachers' response was that she did not think most teachers would understand what the student would have done. The teacher speculated that nowadays, Norwegian teachers mostly commented on text structure, and not on content, meaning that a teacher probably would not read the content thoroughly enough to uncover the deeper meaning of the story, even if it had the qualities of Hemingway's. Like the students in case 1, the teacher in case 2 had been rather baffled.

We as philosophers call this state *aporia*. The development in the two cases indicate that something new might emerge. This is also where *the freedom of paradox*⁶¹ shows itself. In both cases a door to a possible different kind of understanding had opened up, giving us at least *some* hope that teaching and learning in the future will include philosophical and dialogical practices that can baffle and redirect, serving *the good life* for teachers and students alike.

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⁶¹ LØVLIE, Lars: "The freedom of paradox", in Waks, Leonard J. (ed.): *Leaders in philosophy of education: intellectual self-portraits*, Sense Publishers, Dordrecht, 2014, p. 175-195.

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PHILOSOPHISING TOWARDS WISDOM AS NURTURING THE TREE OF LIFE IN US

PHILOSOPHISING TOWARDS WISDOM ENTENDIDO COMO
ALIMENTACIÓN DEL ÁRBOL DE LA VIDA QUE RESIDE EN
NOSOTROS

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Abstract: In this essay the author poses the hypothesis that the metaphor “to philosophise is to nurture the Tree of life in us” is a better metaphor than “to philosophise is to cease living” when it comes to conceptualizing what people might experience when philosophising the so called “Dialogos Way”. First, the author outlines different usages of the Tree of life metaphor. In line with reflective practice research methodology, she then explores how the metaphor corresponds to the Dialogos approach as a process- and wisdom oriented form of philosophical practice. Further, through original reflection, she narrates six examples from her experience as a philosophical practitioner. From this, six themes are extracted through critical reflection: aha-experience, peak-experience, heart-to-heart synchronization, life-guiding concepts, plateau experience and pluralism. The themes are then reflected upon theoretically and generally. Summing up, the participants seemed to have experienced forms of psychological growth rather than psychological suffering and “death” through participation in Dialogos dialogue series or workshops. The author concludes that even though the long term aim of philosophy might well be to cope with death, and even though philosophising might imply practicing “dying” through letting go of one’s more or less well founded opinions and stances, this might

lead to a new “birth” and thus to psychological growth rather than psychological suffering and death, supporting the initial hypothesis.

Key words: Philosophical practice, Philosophising the Dialogos Way, Tree of life, Wisdom, Education, Reflective practice research

Resumen: En este artículo, la autora plantea la hipótesis de que la metáfora “filosofar es nutrir el árbol de la vida en nosotros” es mejor que “filosofar es aprehender la vida” cuando se trata de conceptualizar lo que las personas pueden experimentar una filosofía entendida como “Dialogos way” (camino dialógico) hacia la sabiduría. La autora describe diferentes usos de la metáfora del árbol de la vida y explora cómo ésta se alinea dentro del enfoque *Dialogos* como una forma de Filosofía Aplicada orientada al proceso. Más tarde, se utiliza una metodología y estructura de investigación de práctica reflexiva para narrar ejemplos de Filosofía Aplicada del autor. De ahí, se inferirán seis temas por medio de una reflexión crítica: la experiencia “ajá”, la experiencia límite, la sincronización de corazón a corazón, los conceptos que guían la vida, la experiencia de meseta y el pluralismo. Posteriormente, se reflexiona teóricamente sobre estos temas. Los resultados señalan que los participantes del trabajo parecen experimentar formas de crecimiento psicológico en lugar de sufrimiento psicológico y “muerte”. La autora concluye que, en este sentido, aunque el objetivo a largo plazo de la filosofía podría ser afrontar la muerte, y aunque filosofar podría implicar practicar la “muerte” mediante el abandono de las opiniones y posturas más o menos fundadas, esto podría llevar a un nuevo “nacimiento” y, por lo tanto, al crecimiento psicológico más que al sufrimiento psicológico y la muerte; en consecuencia, se apoya la hipótesis inicial.

Palabras clave: Filosofía Aplicada, Philosophising the Dialogos Way, árbol de la vida, sabiduría, Educación, investigación de práctica reflexiva

Introduction

In his essay «To philosophise is to cease living», Oscar Brenifier¹ takes his point of departure in Plato`s words that those who apply themselves to philosophy in the proper way, are doing no more nor less than to prepare themselves for the moment of dying and the

¹ BRENIFFIER, Oscar: “To philosophize is to cease living”, available in ob-cl.pdf (buf.no) (last access January 25th, 2021).

state of death. From this, Brenifier proposes that if to philosophise is learning to die and learning how to die, it cannot be done except than by practicing dying. To him, this means that to philosophise is actually dying, in order to acquire a real experience of death. In practice, it implies “to overturn established ideas and induce uneasiness, at the risk of a bad conscience, a sort of psychological suffering and death”. For instance, when forcing people to take opposite stances through his method of philosophising through antinomies², he causes confusion and sometimes anger and shame in many of his participants. This can be psychologically painful. It sometimes forces people to turn their thinking upside down and inside out, and to let go of some of their more or less narrow opinions and poorly grounded stances. To some, it is a shocking experience, a form of killing of the ego, as it forces people to give up a piece of their identity, because people often identify with their opinions³.

In this essay, I will take a slightly different stance. I agree with Brenifier that coming to terms with one`s own mortality in such a way that one can face death with a peace of mind similar to that expressed by Socrates in the Apology⁴, might well be a long term outcome of philosophising. I also agree that the search of truth involved in philosophising, most likely implies overturning (some of) one`s established ideas and opinions. However, I disagree that this necessarily needs to imply “a sort of psychological suffering”, i.e. imply for instance anger or shame. On the contrary, the “death”

² BRENIER, Oscar: “Philosophising through antinomies”, available in <http://www.practiques-philosophiques.fr> (last access February 11th 2016).

³ My interpretation both from reading Brenifier`s writings and from experiencing and studying his practice since 2005.

⁴ PLATO: *The Republic*, available in <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.html> (last access August 21th 2015)

of one's opinions, stances and pieces of identity might lead to a "psychological new birth" and "growth". To nurture such growth does not imply that there must have been a painful "death of the ego" before the growth takes place. On the contrary. The transition between the death of an opinion, or even the transcendence of a world view, can happen through the smooth flow of dialogical exchange over time. In genuine dialogical encounters, people necessarily transcend their existing egos when taking the perspectives of others, critically examining these as well as their own perspectives. In the process, an expansion and deepening and some times change of their horizons of understanding and thus identities necessarily will take place. At least for a period of time after such a gentle dynamic of "psychological deaths" and "new births", people might even experience a sense of uplifted wellbeing and fulfillment. Hence, for this reason as well as for others, I will argue that the metaphor "philosophising is to nurture the Tree of life in us" is a better metaphor than "philosophising is to cease living" when trying to understand what people's experiences of philosophizing the Dialogos Way over some time.

The Tree of life – from archetype to research methodology

So far, I have not come across anyone who has used the Tree of life as a metaphor in literature about philosophical practice. This is rather strange, the Tree of life being an archetype that can be found in most cultures and spiritual traditions, indigenous as well as Judeo-Christian-Islamic, Hindu-Buddhist and Daoist. For instance, in the Judeo-Christian tradition we meet the metaphor of the Tree of life already in Genesis 2, 9: "The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye

and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”⁵.

Murphy's book *Tree of Life. An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*⁶ has served as an introduction to the wisdom literature of the Bible since the early 1990s. It includes the Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and Wisdom of Solomon. Another example is Rabbi Lawrence Troster who uses the metaphor in his article *Preserving the Tree of life: Wisdom Tradition and Jewish Sustainability ethics*⁷. In the Christian tradition, the Revelations 22 even ends with a reference to the tree of life:

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

While the Tree of life is a widely used metaphor in Judaism and Christianity, it has a slightly different value in the Quran, where there is only one tree mentioned, namely the Tree of immortality:

"Abu Hurayrah: The Prophet Muhammad said: "In Paradise is a tree in the shade of which the stars course 100 years without cutting it: the Tree of Immortality."⁸ Another variant of the Tree of life metaphor is also found in the more than 5000 year old Indian Yoga tradition, however as a tree growing upside down: "There is an

⁵ Retrieved 28.12.2020 from Genesis 2 NIV - Thus the heavens and the earth were - Bible Gateway

⁶ MURPHY, Roland: *Tree of Life. An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*, Doubleday. New York, 1990.

⁷ TROSTER, Lawrence: «Preserving the Tree of life: Wisdom Tradition and Jewish Sustainability Ethics». In: *Religions: A Scholarly Journal*, Volume 2012, Issue 1, p. 43-49

⁸ WHEELER, Brannon: *Prophets in the Quran: An Introduction to the Quran and Muslim Exegesis*. Bloomsbury Publishing, London, 2002, p. 24.

eternal tree called the Ashvattha, which has its roots above and its branches below”⁹.

However, the Tree of life is not only an archetype in spiritual traditions. It is also used as a biological model and research tool. As such, the common belief is according to Gontier¹⁰ that the Tree of life is first used by Charles Darwin in *On the origin of Species*¹¹ to explore the evolution of life and describe the relationships between organisms. However, she demonstrates that tree diagrams as we know them today, are the outgrowth of ancient philosophical attempts to find the “true order” of the world, and to map the world “as it is” (ontologically), according to its true essence. The tree archetype was according to her used to describe everything BUT biological evolution. Philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle, inspired by Egyptian and Asian religions, began to develop logical systems of classification based on the tree archetype, she argues. Their goal was to find order and stability of knowledge in an ever-changing, continuous world of plenty.

The Tree of life diagram is today most commonly used to describe biological evolution and relationships, according also to Schramm and colleagues¹². They argue that “reading evolutionary trees is seen as a major challenge for biologists in learning about evolution and its applications in research”. They subsume the skills needed for such reading, interpretation, and construction under the term “tree-thinking,” which they divide into “tree-reading” and “tree-

⁹ DEUSSEN, Paul: *Sixty Upanishads of the Veda*. Volume 1, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1997, p 269-273.

¹⁰ GONTIER, Nathalie: *Depicting the Tree of Life: the Philosophical and Historical Roots of Evolutionary Tree Diagrams*. In *Evo Edu Outreach* 4, 515–538 (2011).

¹¹ DARWIN, Charles: *On the Origin of Species*. Random House, USA, 1859/2003.

¹² SCHRAMM, Thilo, SCHACHTSCHNEIDER, Yvonne & SCHMIEMANN, Philippe. «Understanding the tree of life: an overview of tree-reading skill frameworks». in *Evo Edu Outreach* 12, 11. 2019.

building.” Another example is Fisler et al.¹³, who in the paper *The treeness of the tree of historical trees of life* compare and categorize historical ideas about trees showing relationships between biological entities, using «the hierarchical structure of the tree to test the global consistent of similarities among these ideas». They define treeness as “the degree to which shared features among entities fit to a rooted hierarchical non-cyclic connected graph (a «tree»)”.

The Tree of life metaphor is also used in other forms of research. For instance, Vivian Estrada in her paper *The Tree of life as a Research Methodology*¹⁴, proposes a methodology based on some of the values and concepts embedded in the *Ceiba* or the “Tree of Life” in her own Maya Indigenous culture. This brings us to the methodological approach in this particular essay.

Methodology

Danish historian of philosophy of science Kjørup¹⁵ makes a distinction between three forms of knowing, namely knowing as results of empirical research, knowing as scholarship built on the studies of for instance classical philosophy and literature, and knowing as awareness raising. It is this latter form of knowing we know (sic!) from the inscription over the entrance to the temple of Delphi: Gnothi Seauthon – know yourself. We also know it from Socrates as we meet him in the dialogues of Plato, in which he

¹³ FISLER Marie, CRÉMIÈRE Cédic, DARLU, Pierre, LECOINTRE, Gauillaume. «The treeness of the tree of historical trees of life». In *PLoS ONE* 15(1) e0226567, 2020.

¹⁴ ESTRADA, Vivian: “The Tree of life as a Research Methodology”. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 34, 2005, 44-52.

¹⁵ KJØRUP, Søren: *Menneskevitenskapene. Bind 1. Humanioras historie og grundproblemer*. Roskilde universitets forlag. Roskilde, 1996/2008.

claims that «the unexamined life is not worth living»¹⁶. In this tradition knowledge is thought of as something we are born with and have access to, and which can be brought to consciousness for instance by the Socratic method. This is for instance why we are able to grasp mathematical principles, which we can not see in the empirical world. Still, we can understand them with our minds. Norwegian philosopher Lindseth¹⁷ brings forward one variant of knowing as awareness raising, namely an experience based form of research which he calls *reflective practice research*. He argues that experience based knowing is not so insecure as some claim, not the least because one through experience is capable of becoming aware of and disclose when self-interest or convenience is the base of one`s action. We can sense that something is right or wrong, good or less good, and disclose when experience based knowing is nothing less than uncritical conformism. It demands a critical vigilance towards habitual beliefs and practices, he argues. This vigilance is promoted and enhanced through a phenomenological basic attitude and method. This attitude can also be compared to the attitude emphasised by Barad¹⁸. She argues for an onto-epistemological perspective in which being and knowing is integrated: We know because we are already embedded in the world. Such a perspective makes critical and theoretical reflection upon one`s own experiences and practices valuable, as it might increase the critical awareness also of other practices and theories. In line with the methodology of Lindseth above, I have chosen to reflect

¹⁶ PLATO: *Apology*, available in The Internet Classics Archive (last access April 30th 2020).

¹⁷ LINDSETH, Anders: “Forskningens vei – Fra livserfaring til en observerbar verden og tilbake til livets virksomheter. I Halås, Catrine Torbjørnsen, Ingrid Gåre Kymre & Kari Steinsvik (red.). *Humanistiske forskningstilnærminger til profesjonspraksis*. Gyldendal Akademisk, Oslo (Norway), 2017 p. 15-37)

¹⁸ BARAD, Karen: “Posthumanist performativity: Toward and understanding of how matter comes to matter”. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28, 2003, 801-831.

upon experiences from the process of developing the Dialogos approach to philosophical practice, followed by six examples of participant feedback after participating in a workshop or dialogue series. Much of my research can be categorized as action research, and has had an emergent design, that is, a growth design compatible with the Tree of life metaphor. As such, the Dialogos development- and research process from the mid-90s till now can in itself be viewed in light of the Tree of life metaphor. More important in this essay, however, is the Tree of life as a metaphor that can help describe what is going on inside of and between individuals participating in philosophical dialogues over some time. Therefore, in this essay I will use a reflective practice research approach rather than an action research approach.

Further structure of the essay

The essay is further structured as follows: In the next section, I narrate aspects of the Dialogos development process that can be directly linked to the metaphor of the Tree of life. Then I narrate six examples of people`s experiences from philosophizing “the Dialogos Way” with me. Both is done in a form that can be compared to Lindseth`s notion “original reflection”: I have tried to find words to experiences that Lindseth conceptualizes as experiences “that could not be forgotten because it disturbed or made a special impression». Lindseth connects the narration of the experience to the Greek *parrhèsia* – a form of truth telling that implies speaking from the heart, directly from the guts, without paying attention to rhetorical demands or political correctness. This is the first step in Lindseth`s model for reflective practice research. The next step is what Lindseth calls “critical reflection”. Here I have chosen to focus on six themes or qualities that became important to me in the reflective process, namely *aha-experience*, *peak-experience*, *heart-to-heart synchronization*, *plateau*

experience and *pluralism*. The themes are reflected upon in through what Lindseth calls “theoretical reflection”. Here, the experiences are brought into dialogue with theoretical and philosophical perspectives and concepts. The aim of the essay is not to create generalizable knowledge in line with other forms of research, but rather to *open up* the examples and thus the Dialogos approach. Through this, the argument that philosophising the Dialogos Way might be understood as nurturing the Tree of life in us, in contrast to Brenifier’s view that to philosophise is to cease living, is also supported.

Introductory reflection section: The Dialogos Tree of life in creation

Most of my life, also when I called myself an atheist, I have had the impression that I often am *given* what I need to develop my understanding or conduct my work effectively and even effortlessly. Some would call it coincidence, others synchronicity, others again divine leadership. Here, I will narrate three such experiences, which all had the form of what I in the theoretical reflection section call “aha-experiences”, or even “peak-experiences”.

When working with my book “Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education –Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation”¹⁹ an illustration caught my attention. It was an illustration of Proverbs 3:18, named *Wisdom is the Tree of life*²⁰. It pictured a human being standing on a book, with the Tree of life enlightening the body, connecting the individual and the

¹⁹ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen. *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*. Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

²⁰ See the illustration to FJÆRLI, Olav: «Guddommelig visdom». Available in Guddommelig Visdom (bibelfelleskapet.net) (last access June 25th 2020)

universal, the person and the cosmic surroundings. This interrelatedness and connectedness was emphasized also by classical Greek philosophers²¹. For instance, Marcus Aurelius²² speaks about the “ruling faculty” in us and in the universe, expressing the interrelatedness between the individual, other humans and the universe:

Hasten to examine thy own ruling faculty and that of the universe and that of thy neighbour; thy own that though mayest make it just: and that of the universe, that thou mayest remember of what thou art a part; and that of your neighbour, that thou mayest know whether he has acted ignorantly or with knowledge, and that thou mayest also consider that his ruling faculty is akin to thine.

Also the Indian yoga tradition, which basically is a philosophy of life, the interrelatedness between the individual, nature and our cosmic surroundings, interrelatedness is focused. For instance, in an interview I had in 2019 with Yogic guru Hansaji Yogendra, the director of the oldest Yoga institute in the world, she expressed the interrelatedness between humans and nature as follows:

A tree brings what? Wood. No, I would not say a tree is wood. I would say the tree is part of my lung, because then I breathe, I am breathing. Taking oxygen. Breathing out carbon dioxide. Tree is taking carbon dioxide, throwing oxygen. So my lung is my tree, and I have to see that the tree is part of me²³.

²¹ HADOT, Pierre: *Philosophy as a way of life: spiritual exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, Blackwell, Malden MA, 1995.

²² AURELIUS, Marcus: *The Meditations*, available in The Internet Classics Archive <http://classics.mit.edu/Antoninus/meditations.9.nine.html> (last access Oct. 31st 2020).

²³ The interview with Director Hansaji Yogendra was conducted in 2019 during one of my stays in India in the years 2017-2020, as part of my efforts to better understand Indian philosophies of life and education.

Related to the mentioned illustration, the “ruling faculty” of Aurelius and the “lung as our tree” of Hansaji, might well be compared to the metaphor of “the tree of life in us”, connecting us to everything and everyone around us.

The title of the illustration, as well as the illustration itself, struck me as one of those mind blowing aha-experiences of discovering connections that I had not seen before. Wisdom had been a key concept for me since the mid1990s. From the beginning, my work with pedagogical philosophical practice has been guided by the following three questions

- What is wisdom?
- What might a pedagogical approach that can contribute to the awakening of people’s longing and search for wisdom look like?
- Is it possible to create such an approach, and if yes, how?

Already the first book in the Dialogos series²⁴ ended with an invitation to students to reflect upon their work with Dialogos based in the meta reflection question *Can we become wiser/more prudent when we philosophise together?* However, not before this moment had I connected wisdom to the metaphor of the Tree of life. If philosophising the Dialogos way is about searching wisdom together, it can thus also be understood as nurturing the Tree of life in us.

Intuition at work

This aha-experience made me think about how the name of the approach – Dialogos – was not chosen rationally from a list of possible names. I had discussed some alternatives with my editor at the time, *Agora* being one of them, but I was not satisfied with its

²⁴ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Dialogos: filosofi for ungdomstrinnet: Elevbok 8. Trinn*. Fag og kultur, Oslo (Norway), 2006.

connotations to arenas for fighting or bargaining. Then, one morning in 2004 I simply woke up with the word *Dialogos* filling my mind. I did not know the meaning of the word at the time, nor how it all of a sudden had entered my consciousness. What I intuitively did know, however, was that this was the perfect name for the approach that I was about to develop. The word consists of two parts – *dia* which means through, and *logos*, which has many different meanings. In ancient Greek times, the order of the universe would be called the *logos*. The order of logos and language were intricately related to one another, as shown by the fact that the word *logos* does not only refer to the order in the world. It also translates as reasoning, logic, wisdom and language, as Norwegian theologian Notto R. Thelle²⁵ made me aware of when sending me the three beautiful texts he had written for the third book for students in the Dialogos series, each representing wisdom perspectives respectively in Islam, Buddhism and Christianity. In the text “In the beginning was wisdom – a conversation with Jesus” he points to the fact that logos is the Greek word used in the opening words of the gospel of John in the New Testament²⁶. Thelle had changed the word (logos) to wisdom:

In the beginning was Wisdom, and Wisdom was with God, and Wisdom was God. He was with God in the beginning. (...) In wisdom was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it (see Thelle 2008).

Wisdom – the word – logos refers to Jesus in this passage. Being in the midst of a process of moving from a rational-atheist worldview towards a spiritual-religious one, I was mind blown by this

²⁵ THELLE, Notto Roald: I begynnelsen var visdommen. En samtale med Jesus. In: Helskog, Guro Hansen and Ribe, Andreas: Dialogos- Praktisk filosofi I skolen. Elevbok. Fagbokforlaget, Bergen (Norway), 2008 p.200-201.

²⁶ JOHN 1.1-57, available in John 1 NIV – The Word Became Flesh – In the – Bible Gateway (last access June 20th 2020).

discovery too. It was close to a *peak-experience* (see the theoretical reflection section).

Dialogos as a journey in the Tree of life

Further down the road I chose to describe the Dialogos approach as a form of pedagogical philosophical practice aimed at nurturing our inner lives and relationships by *searching wisdom* together from different angles. For the purpose of illustrating wisdom as a multi dimensional concept, I developed a map consisting of six dimensions: The critical-analytical, the spiritual-ideal, the existential-emotional, the relational-communicative, the cultural-historical, and the practical-ethical wisdom dimensions²⁷. When my good colleague and partner in philosophising, Michael Noah Weiss, first saw the model, he made me aware that it looked very much like the Jewish Kabbalah. Looking it up through Google, I was astonished and baffled once more. Not only was the visual similarity striking. The way Rabbi Shaoni Labowitz²⁸ describes the “journey in Kabbalah” in his book “Miraculous Living: A guided journey in Kabbalah Through the Ten Gates of the Tree of Life”, is close to my experience of what developing the Dialogos approach had done to me (see the epilogue in Helskog 2019) and what the experience of philosophising “the Dialogos Way” had done to many of the participants over the years (see the next sections of this essay). Labowitz writes that

²⁷ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen. *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*. Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

²⁸ LABOWITZ, Shaoni: *Miraculous Living: A Guided Journey in Kabbalah Through the Ten Gates of the Tree of Life*. Touchstone, New York (USA) 1998, p.22.

When I journeyed the path of the Tree (of life), my life changed. What had been chaotic became simpler; what has been confusing became clear; what had become dissonant became ordered, and what had been sadly ordinary became sacred and extraordinary, (...) This path is referred to in ancient kabbalistic teachings as the journey through the Ten Heavenly Gates of the Tree of life” (p. 22).

Thus, to me there is an unintended yet fascinating connection between the ancient and contemporary Trees of life, and how I through the work with this essay have come to understand philosophising the Dialogos Way as nurturing the Tree of life in us.

Nurturing the Tree of life by experientially connecting the personal and the universal

Concretely, philosophising the Dialogos Way invites people to reflect upon and/or analyze important topics involved in the art of living through collaborative and dialogical thinking. What characterizes the Dialogos approach is, amongst other that it has “the will to wisdom” as a core virtue. It intends what philosophy literally means, namely *philo-sophia*, meaning the love of and search for wisdom. As we have seen, this “wisdom” might be understood as the “Tree of life” in us. Moreover, the Dialogos approach to philosophical practice is mainly developed for pedagogical, philosophical and dialogical work in *groups*, focusing on more or less long term open-ended processes that gradually (and hopefully) will lead to personal growth and expansion of consciousness and wisdom in multiple dimensions and directions in line with the “Dialogos Tree of life” above. Such processes might include different philosophical exercise- and dialogue formats, such

as Philosophy for Children (P4C)-inspired philosophising²⁹, Socratic dialogue inspired philosophising³⁰, contemplative philosophising³¹, Daimonic Dialogues³², Oscar Brenifier-inspired philosophising³³, or comparative dialogues³⁴. However, regardless of dialogue formats included, the essence of philosophising the Dialogos Way is *connecting subject matter to personal life* and vice versa on the one side, and profound encounters between participants in *heart to heart dialogues* with each other about shared subject matter on the other. For instance, when working with one of the many topics and exercises created³⁵, such as the

²⁹ LIPMAN, Matthew: *Thinking in Education*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (England), 2003.

³⁰ NELSON, Leonard. "The Socratic Method" in SARAN, René and NEISSER, Barbara (eds) *Enquiring Minds –Socratic Dialogue in Education*. Trentham Books, Chester, 1922/2004; HECKMAN, Gustav: "Six pedagogical measures and socratic facilitation." In SARAN, René and NEISSER, Barbara (eds): *Enquiring Minds – Socratic Dialogue in Education*, Trentham Books, Chester, 2004/1981. 107–120; Krohn, Dieter: "Theory and practice of Socratic dialogue". In SARAN, René and NEISSER, Barbara (eds): *Enquiring minds: Socratic dialogue in education*. Stoke on Trent, UK: Trentham Books, 2004, p. 15–24.

³¹ LAHAV, Ran: *Handbook of Philosophical-Contemplative Companionships: Principles, Procedures, Exercises*. Loyev Books, Hardwick, VT (USA), 2006.

³² WEISS, Michael Noah: *Daimonic Dialogues - Philosophical Practice and Self-formation. A Research Report on a Series of Philosophical Guided Imageries Carried out at a Norwegian Folk High School*. LIT Publishing, Vienna, 2021 (in press).

³³ BRENIFFER, Oscar: "Philosophising through antinomies", available in <http://www.pratiques-philosophiques.com/en/english/texts/46-antinomies> (last access February 11th 2016).

³⁴ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen. *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*. Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

³⁵ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen. *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*. Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019; Helsen, Guro Hansen and Ribe, Andreas: *Dialogos- Praktisk filosofi I skolen. Elevbok*. Fag og kultur, Oslo (Norway). 2008.

topics “care for our neighbors”, “sustainable development” or “forgiveness”, questions concerning one’s individual responsibility, and the limitations of this, could be extracted, formulated, argued and reflected upon. By this, connections are made between content and concept, the personal and the universal, the concrete and the abstract, and the private and the public, the contextual and the universal. Participants can gradually see how their lives are immersed in complex cultural, historical and social structures, while at the same time connecting to themselves on a deeper level. This process will, when evolving at its best, nurture wisdom (and thus the Tree of life) in participants. However, only afterwards can we look back and try to make sense of the process and its “fruits”. In this essay, I have picked six “example fruits³⁶” that will be in focus. This leads us to the next original reflection section.

Original reflections: Six example fruits

In this section I will narrate six example fruits drawn from the process of trying out the Dialogos approach in pedagogical philosophical practice in the period 2005-2020. I have chosen the example fruits because they have made deep impressions on me, and profoundly impacted my further work. Moreover, they are examples of what might be *possible* fruits of a philosophical process. Fruits II, III, IV, and VI, are already analyzed in other publications³⁷, however then in different contexts and in dialogue

³⁶ The choice of «fruit» as a main metaphor in this section is of course directly linked to the metaphor of «the Tree of life».

³⁷ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: "The healing power of Dialogos dialogues: Transformative learning through dialogical philosophizing." *Open Journal of Social Sciences* 2 (11) p.79-83; HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Moving out of Conflict into Reconciliation. Bildung through Philosophical Dialogue in Intercultural and Interreligious Education”. *Educational action research* 3:340-

with other theoretical perspectives. Fruit I and V are not described elsewhere. Together, the fruits also document aspects my own development as a philosophical practitioner, researcher, and wisdom oriented educator and pedagogue during these 15 years.

Example fruit I: This is magic!

It was summer more than a decade ago. About ten participants from four countries were sitting closely together in the garden house at my farm in south eastern Norway. I begun the workshop Friday afternoon with the question: “Where are you in your life at the moment, and do you have a question? Formulate it simply in once sentence, and put it in your pocket. We will return to it at the end of the workshop on Sunday”. They did not share their thoughts nor their question with others. We then spent the entire weekend exploring a variety of philosophical questions and exercises using dialogue formats inspired mainly by Socratic dialogue as I had met it in Germany³⁸. By the end of our workshop on Sunday night, I asked the participants to pull out their personal question notes from their pockets, and see whether they had come closer to an answer to their question or not. One of the participants got astonished looking at his/her note. “This is magic!” s/he exclaimed. “We have been working on my question all through the weekend!” The others agreed. They all had gotten new insights with regards to their personal question, even though it was never spelled out publicly. Speaking to the person a few days later, he/she claimed that the workshop “made everything change”.

362. HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Searching for wisdom the Dialogos way”. In AMIR, Lydia, *Practicing Philosophy: Expanding Boundaries, New Frontiers*. London: Cambridge Scholar, 2017.

³⁸ KROHN, Dieter: “Theory and practice of Socratic dialogue”. In SARAN, René and NEISSER, Barbara (eds): *Enquiring minds: Socratic dialogue in education*. Stoke on Trent, UK: Trentham Books, 2004, p. 15–24

Example fruit II: Never ending horizon

It was spring a couple of years later. We had finished the “Gandhi project” five months earlier, and the students were invited to share how they now saw the experience of participating in the Dialogos dialogue series in the fall. We had met every Wednesday for ten sessions, each lasting 1,5 hours³⁹. One of the participants expressed his experience this way:

When we started the project, it was as if I was trapped inside of a ring. It was narrow inside of me. When I encountered a problem, whether it was at school or in life in general, I stopped. I did not go further. I gave up. Then during the project it was as if something exploded inside of me, like an atomic bomb. It was as if I was looking into an endless horizon. Now, when I encounter a problem, whether in general life or in school work, I do not stop anymore. I know there is a way, and I continue.

Of course, also other activities in his life during these months might have contributed to his experience, and it is not likely that the project deserves all the credit, even though he does so himself.

Example fruit III: Classroom full of light

A couple of months after the completion of the Gandhi Project I was asked by the principal at the school to try out philosophical

³⁹ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “The Gandhi Project: Dialogos philosophical dialogues and the ethics and politics of intercultural and interfaith friendship”. *Educational action research* 1-20, 2014; STOKKE, Christian and HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: Promoting dialogical democracy. Dialogos philosophical dialogues as an approach to intercultural and interfaith dialogue in *education*. *Studies in interreligious dialogue*, 2-04, 2014, HELSKOG, Guro Hansen and STOKKE, Christian: “Enhancing relational spirituality. Dialogos dialogues in intercultural and interfaith education”. *Studies in interreligious dialogue*, 2-04, 2014.

dialogues with a class ridden by severe conflict⁴⁰, giving some of the students stomach aches, making them not sleep at night, making their grades drop and making them want to drop out of school. After each dialogue, students wrote anonymous meta-reflection notes, helping me decide what topic and which dialogue format to choose next. After the ninth dialogue, the students had chosen to philosophise upon the question “what is happiness”? They were sitting on their tables in a circle, and I asked them to find a personal experience of when they themselves experienced to be happy. When the turn came to one of the students most severely affected by the conflict, she looked at the others, and said that she was happy now because the conflict was over, everybody were friends and she looked forward to go to school every morning. Another student wrote the following in her meta-reflection note:

The conflict was like (excuse the expression) hell in the beginning, and it did not get any better (...). As time past by it became “brighter” here in the classroom, and the positive energy took over. Today it is like *blue sky* here in our class. [It is] wonderful to come to school to meet good friends and a classroom full of light. During the dialogue I felt comfortable, and I have not been afraid to say what I think and feel. The thought that we will soon be separated gives me stomach ache. Now I really like it here! We are laughing together, work and discuss together without any negative attitudes. I have learned a lot of new things [during the dialogue] today. I see things and think about things in many and different ways.

Of course, it is not possible to claim that the Dialogos project was the only reason the conflict dissolved. Also the work of the class teachers in between the philosophical dialogues were important. But there are reasons to believe that the topics of the dialogues, as

⁴⁰ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Moving out of Conflict into Reconciliation. Bildung through Philosophical Dialogue in Intercultural and Interreligious Education”. *Educational action research* 3:340-362.

well as the activity of philosophising upon personal experience in relation to text material and concepts, were crucial in the reconciliation process between the students in the class.

Example fruit IV: “...even though forgiveness is the best you can do in Islam”⁴¹

The next fruit stems from one of my regular classes in post graduate teacher education in Norway. We philosophised upon the topic forgiveness, and a Muslim student told a story from his own life experience as a teenage refugee in Norway, which we analyzed and reflected upon. One and a half year later I asked him if he would allow me to write about the dialogue. “If you want to, we can meet, and I will tell you some more”, he said. We thus met in my office. He then told me that this single dialogue and the concept forgiveness had made him reflect upon his upbringing and schooling in Afghanistan, compare Afghan and Norwegian culture, and see his family relations as well as politics in Afghanistan in a new light. He had made forgiveness an ideal which he tried to live by, though admitting it was difficult, and that he was not always able to “even though forgiveness is the best you can do in Islam”, as he expressed it.

Example fruit V: Walking on air

The fifth example is provided by a participant in a three day international Dialogos workshop a few years ago. In an e-mail sent the day after the workshop she expressed that

⁴¹ See HELSKOG, Guro Hansen. *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*. Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

Since I arrived home yesterday morning I can't land yet. I feel walking on air and even the despair over the political situation in my country can't erase this feeling. I think the workshop filled me up with a load of positive energy

One year later I asked her again, to see if she had changed her impression. However, her expressions are rather consistent: “The Dialogos workshop was a truly dialogical experience for me. Three days of workshop charged me mentally and emotionally for many days afterwards”.

Example fruit VI: Different students- different inner movements

The sixth example involves ten students in a 30 ECTS course on Intercultural understanding and religion at the University of South Eastern Norway, which started with a 10 ECTS module on philosophical dialogue. Upon completion of the last dialogue session of the module, students were asked to describe their development as shortly as possible, preferably in one word or two. This is what they wrote⁴²:

⁴² HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Searching for wisdom the Dialogos way”. In Amir, Lydia, *Practicing Philosophy: Expanding Boundaries, New Frontiers*. London: Cambridge Scholar, 2017.

*Table 1. Students' development, according to them*⁴³

Student	From:	Towards:
Eric	Interested	Knowledgeable
Elinor	Accepting other views	Understanding other views
Eckhart	Nothing on the ground	Flower that almost bloomed
Evan	The accordance	The analysis
Eva	Closed	Open
Evelina	Exhausted, insecure	Energized, embraced, and curious
Emily	Closed opinions and shallow thinking	Open-mindedness
Erica	Debating communicator	Dialogical communicator and listener
Esther	Open	Accepting
Edward	Insecure, troubled	Trust in myself, relaxed – troubles dissolved

Critical reflections

In this critical reflection section it is in its place to point to the fact that all examples except for two (III and IV) are drawn from Dialogos workshops or dialogue series in which participants participated voluntarily. Either the participant was an adult who had travelled far to spend a weekend philosophising the Dialogos way (example I and V), they were students who had accepted the

⁴³ The students are anonymised and given a name beginning with an E. The research is reported to and approved by NSD (Norwegian Centre for Research Data).

invitation to take part (example II) or they had signed up for a teacher education course involving philosophical dialogue (example IV). Hence, they were not for instance teachers who were more or less forced by their leaders to participate⁴⁴, nor students being drawn into philosophical dialogues as part of the mandatory activities in their teacher education program.

Degrees of inner movement

In the latter cases, participants are not likely to experience such deep and profound inner transformation and growth as the participants in the chosen example fruits in this essay did. One reason might be that non-voluntary participating teacher students and voluntary international workshop participants are likely to come to the Dialogos process with very different attitudes. While there are reasons to expect some participants in the first group to be hesitant, skeptical and/or resistant, most individuals represented in these examples have participated because they were interested to begin with. This might be an important reason why they experienced their states of minds so profoundly changed due to the Dialogos process.

When beginnings are challenging

In my experience, a challenge is that when working with teacher students and practicing teachers, they often expect to be given models and tools that they can apply directly with students in the

⁴⁴ WEISS, Michael Noah and HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “‘They often have AHA-moments’: how training teachers to philosophize the Dialogos Way with their students can promote life skills and democratic citizenship in education”. Available in *Educational Action Research*, 2020 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09650792.2020.1811744> (last access 25.01.2021)

classroom. They do not necessarily see the need to work with themselves and their attitudes and ways of being in the world, in order to avoid becoming instrumental. In addition, they often do not participate voluntarily, which sometimes makes it difficult to unleash the full potential of the philosophical process. Therefore, I often enter the room with certain presumptions explicated on the basis of almost two decades of action- and reflective practice research⁴⁵. These include the following:

- Some participants need time to let go of resistance
- Some participants need time to move from an argumentative to a dialogical way of communicating
- Some participants fear being wrong, and need time to develop the confidence needed to engage in open explorative inquiry
- Some participants need time to open themselves up for genuine heart to heart communication with others
- Some participants need time to move from chatter towards inner silence
- Some participants link aims, learning and assessment in an instrumental way, needing time to discover the power and beauty of dialogue, expanded understanding and self-development for its own sake

So, even though a main presumption is that the Dialogos process is likely to be best if it starts directly in the personal realm, it is usually wise to find a balance between fulfilling participant`s pragmatic expectations and challenging them to start philosophising the Dialogos way. As stated in the introduction section, the essence of philosophising the Dialogos Way is

⁴⁵ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen. *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*. Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019

connecting subject matter to personal life and vice versa on the one side, and profound encounter between participants when engaging in *heart to heart dialogues* with each other about shared subject matter. Through fostering experiential dialogical relationships between the individual participants and the topic and thus the world around them, an inner movement and edifying process towards increased wisdom is promoted.

Six themes

In the examples all participants had experienced a profound inner movement. However, the movements seemed to have been slightly different in each example, and were thus differently verbalized by the participants. I have thus conceptualized six themes that also implies a categorization of possible outcomes or states of minds following a Dialogos process. The themes are as follows:

1. Aha-experience
2. Peak experience
3. Heart-to-heart coherence
4. Life guiding concept
5. Plateau experience
6. Pluralism

Theoretical reflection section

The six themes were conceptualized in dialogue mainly with the philosophy of Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss⁴⁶, and the theories of Abraham Maslow⁴⁷ and Rollin McCraty⁴⁸. These

⁴⁶ NÆSS, Arne and HAUKELAND, Per-Inge: *Livsfilosofi*. Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, 2005.

⁴⁷ MASLOW, Abraham: *Religions, values, and peak-experiences*. Stellar Books,

theories were chosen because they could help me interpret and understand aspects of what the different participants had expressed.

Aha-experience

In the critical reflection section I indicated that it is usually wise to find a balance between fulfilling the diverse pragmatic expectations of participants, and challenging them to start philosophising the Dialogos way. This is what I tried to do when I in the beginning of the workshop in example fruit I asked participants to write a personal question and put it in their pocket. Some of the participants in this workshop were deeply fascinated by rational-logical ways of philosophising at the time. This is why I begun the workshop Friday afternoon asking participants individually to think about their life at the moment, and formulate a question, without sharing with the others. I had the hypothesis that participants would intuitively and indirectly be working with their question anyway. My pragmatic facilitation move was thus to try out an indirect way of connecting the subjective and the objective realms in this particular workshop. Hence, we did not use the personal questions explicitly, but we did work with personal examples in two six hour Socratic dialogues, combined with rational philosophical exercises. My hypothesis was confirmed at least for the one participant in example 1. S/he had found (at least a preliminary) answer to his/her question. The Dialogos process thus seemed to have resulted in an

USA, 2014/1964.

⁴⁸ McCraty, Rollin: "The intuitive heart". In CHILDRE, Doc., MARTIN, Howard, ROZMAN, Deborah and McCraty, Rollin: *Heart Intelligence. Connecting with the intuitive guidance of the heart*. Waterfront Press, USA, 2016; McCraty, Rollin: "The Energetic Heart: Biomagnetic Communication in and between people". In ROSCH, Paul J. (ed) *Bioelectromagnetic and subtle energy medicine*, second edition, London and New York: Routledge, 2015.

inner movement or transformation which can be compared to what McCraty⁴⁹ calls an *implicit, intuitive process*. The theory says that if we work on a problem, one that is not quickly solvable, and which we may eventually put on a shelf (or in this example in the pocket) for a while, our brain can still be working on it subconsciously. The insight can then, so to speak, pop into the conscious mind of the person as an intuitive insight – an “aha” or “Eureka” moment. This seems to be close to what had happened to the participant in example fruit I.

Peak experience

The participant in example fruit II describes an experience that goes beyond the experience of the participant in example fruit I. While the person who experienced fruit I only had participated in a workshop over the weekend and was baffled by an aha-experience, the person having experienced fruit II had participated in a Dialogos series over 12 weeks. The series was finished five months before we met for the post-project interview. This means that the philosophical dialogues had worked in him for several months, and what he told about his experience is more comparable to what Maslow⁵⁰ call “peak experiences”. Peak experiences, “ecstasies” or “transcendent” experiences were earlier considered supernatural revelations. However, according to Maslow, they are perfectly natural and common, and they can be investigated empirically, as he has done. In the beginning of his studies, Maslow expected most

⁴⁹ McCraty Rollin: “The intuitive heart”. In CHILDRE, Doc., MARTIN, Howard, ROZMAN, Deborah and McCraty, Rollin. *Heart Intelligence. Connecting with the intuitive guidance of the heart*. Waterfront Press, USA, 2016, 43-44.

⁵⁰ MASLOW, Abraham: *Religions, values, and peak-experiences*. Stellar Books, USA, 2014/1964 p 33.

people to be “non-peakers”, and only a few to have had peak-experiences. However:

(...) as I gathered information, and as I became more skilful in asking questions, I found that a higher and higher percentage of my subjects began to report peak-experiences. I finally fell into the habit of expecting everyone to have had peak-experiences and of being rather surprised if I ran across somebody who could report none at all. Because of this experience, I finally began to use the word “non-peaker” to describe, not the person who is unable to have peak-experiences, but rather the person who is afraid of them, who suppresses them, who denies them, who turns away from them, or who “forgets” them”

According to Maslow, such peak experiences are the universal core of every known high religion. It has been seen as “the private, lonely, personal illumination, revelation, or ecstasy of some acutely sensitive prophet or seer”. The hypothesis of Maslow, which I have come to share due to my work with the Dialogos approach in multicultural and multi religious contexts⁵¹, is that to the extent that all mystical or peak-experiences are the same in their essence and have always been the same, all religions are the same in their essence” (Ibid: 34). This essence was phrased in terms of whatever local and particular conceptual, cultural, philosophical and linguistic framework the different mystic seer or prophet had available at the time.

⁵¹ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen. “The Gandhi Project: Dialogos philosophical dialogues and the ethics and politics of intercultural and interfaith friendship”. *Educational action research* 2014, 1-20; HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Moving out of Conflict into Reconciliation. Bildung through Philosophical Dialogue in Intercultural and Interreligious Education”. *Educational action research* 3:340-362

Heart-to-heart synchronization

The participant in example III expressed joy and happiness that the relationships between the students in her class no longer were ridden by conflict, using the metaphors “hell” to describe that situation in the beginning, and “bright”, “light”, and “blue sky” to describe the situation towards the end of the Dialogos process. She also claimed that she was now looking forward to go to school every day, which is a profound change from the beginning of the process, where students wanted to quit school due to the unbearable situation in the class.

Her metaphors indicate that there is a new atmosphere in the class that can be compared to what Morris⁵² calls *heart-to-heart bio-communication*. A study showed that people trained in heart coherence could energetically facilitate heart coherence in other people who were physically close, but not touching. There was a heart rhythm synchronization between people. The authors of the study concluded that this was evidence of heart-to-heart synchronization across subjects. This again lends credence to the possibility of heart-to-heart bio-communication. In an earlier study from 1996 researchers had discovered that when an individual is in a state of heart rhythm coherence their heart radiate a more coherent electromagnetic signal to the nervous system of other people (and also animals). They found that the heart radiated a magnetic field that was almost 100 times stronger than the magnetic field produced by the brain. This field could be detected several meters away from the body of the individual.

Interpreting the Dialogos process from the perspective of this research, it is possible to indicate that there had been a process of heart-to-heart synchronization going on, moving the students out of

⁵² MORRIS, Steven M. “Facilitating collective coherence: Group Effects on heart rate variability coherence and heart rhythm synchronization”. *Alternative Therapies in Health and medicine*, 16 (4), 2010 p.62-72

a “dark” conflict modes characterized by fear, anger and hatred, towards “light” and “bright” relationships created by friendliness, collaboration and laughter. Could it be that when students listened to each other’s stories of caring and being cared for, of rulefollowing and their thoughts about Thelle’s interpretations of the wisdom respectively of Buddha, Muhammed and Jesus, a sense of togetherness and love began to grow amongst the students, who initially were in deep conflict? My heart as a dialogue facilitator obviously played a role here, but so did the hearts of each and every one of the students.

Without knowing about the heart synchronicity research before working with this particular essay, I have actually used the expression “philosophising heart-to-heart” as essential to the Dialogos approach⁵³:

If personal problems dissolve, it is probably because people’s inner obstacles dissolve. They experience to be seen, heard, received and understood, and opposite, they experience seeing, hearing, receiving and understanding others and the subject matter. At its best, they experience communication heart-to-heart, in an open and honest way. For most participants, this is a powerful experience that goes far beyond conceptual schemata and formulations. For some participants, it is life changing. It is an experience unlike any other experiences they have had in their lives. When it happens, it is as if they have been given an unexpected gift.

It seems that much of the power of the Dialogos approach lays in the synchronizing of heart-to-heart bio-communication, to use the expression of McCraty.

⁵³ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen. *Philosophizing the Dialogos Way Towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*. Routledge, Abingdon-on-Thames, 2019.

Life guiding concepts

The participant in example fruit IV claimed that after the philosophical dialogue on forgiveness, this concept had become life guiding for him. To borrow the words of Maslow⁵⁴, he had been able to bring experience

back into philosophy and psychology as an opponent of the merely abstract and abstruse, of the a priori, of what I have called “helium-filled words”. It must then also be integrated with the abstract and the verbal, i.e. we must make a place for “experientially based concepts”, and for “experientially filled words”, that is for an experience-based rationality in contrast to the a priori rationality that we have come to identify with rationality itself.

The participant had filled the concept “forgiveness” with experiential content during the philosophical dialogue as well as afterwards, thus making it not only meaningful to him. The concept had, so to speak, become an ethcial compass needle in his life.

Plateau-experience

A slightly different theme came to the fore when I reflected critically upon example V (“walking on air”). I found it comparable to what Maslow⁵⁵ calls “plateau experiences”. The plateau experience is according to him a state of consciousness that implies “a form of witnessing, an appreciating, what one may call a serene, cognitive blissfulness which can, however, have a quality of casualness and of lounging around”. The plateau experience is

⁵⁴ MASLOW, Abraham: *Religions, values, and peak-experiences*. Stellar Books, USA, 2014/1964 p.11

⁵⁵ MASLOW, Abraham: *Religions, values, and peak-experiences*. Stellar Books, USA, 2014/1964, p. 13

more voluntary than peak experiences, and they also have an ethical (noetic) and cognitive element. This not always the case of peak experiences, which can be purely emotional, he argues. The possible plateau-experience of this participant did not seem to have cognitive and ethical elements.

While “the peaker” according to Maslow is in danger of becoming anti-rational, anti-empirical, anti-scientific, anti-verbal and anti-conceptual, the “plateauer” will have a healthy, humble and realistic openness to the mystic, in realization that we don’t know much. S/he will also modestly and gratefully accept gratuitous grace as well as that which must be seen as plain good luck, according to him.

Pluralism

Brenifier⁵⁶ argues that philosophising is about ceasing to live (at least for a moment), and that philosophising is solely about rational and logical thinking. This brings us to the sixth and last theme that I will theorize upon, namely what Arne Næss⁵⁷ calls *pluralism*. The pluralism of Arne Næss` is a stance that holds that there are several sides to an issue, and that it is important to use different perspectives and multiple “torches” when shedding light on a situation. This makes it possible for people with different feelings, attitudes and convictions towards an issue to come together around a cause such as the deep ecology movement founded by Næss himself in the 1970`s. “Deep” here means to go “down to the fundamental premises of what we value in life”, Næss states. On this deeper level of our value judgments there is diversity and lack

⁵⁶ BRENIER, Oscar: «To philosophize is to cease living», available in ob-cl.pdf (buf.no) (last access January 25th, 2021).

⁵⁷ NÆSS, Arne and HAUKELAND, Per-Inge: *Livsfilosofi*. Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, 2005.

of consensus amongst us. If there was concensus, it would be a sign of alignment of our intellectual and emotional lives, which is not good (Næss and Haukeland 2005: 16).

This stance is especially relevant to understand differences in the forms of inner movement expressed in the examples, not the least by the ten students in example fruit VI. They had attended the same course on philosophical dialogue, but they conceptualized their development, i.e. their inner movement from beginning to the end of the course, quite differently. This shows that even though there are profound heart-to-heart synchronization and communication developing through a good Dialogos process, the individual students are present in the dialogues in their own unique ways, experiencing their own unique forms of growth and their unique individual fruits. If we accept this stance as plausible, it is a strength that a couple of students described their inner movement through the course as a movement from insecure, exhausted and troubled towards energized, embraced, curious, while another couple of students described their process as an inner movement from closed, opinionated and shallow towards open-minded. Yet another student had developed from a debating communicator towards a dialogical communicator and listener, while another claimed to have moved from “accepting other views” to “understanding other views”.

Moreover, it seems that an existential community had developed in the midst of the diversity of participants, making possible a plurality of individual “journeys in the Dialogos Tree of life” to evolve, to return to the guiding metaphor of the essay.

General reflections

In the next sections, I will shortly reflect upon three general issues or attitudes that I have found to be essential for the person who wants to facilitate Dialogos processes that can nurture wisdom or “the Tree of life” in participants.

Possibilism as a basic attitude

Philosopher Arne Næss, being a mountain climber, exemplifies his possibilist life stance by telling about his experience of being trapped at a mountain shelf in a very steep mountain side⁵⁸. With the choice of either trying to find a way and risk falling down and be killed, or starving and thirsting to death at the mountain shelf, he chose to try to find a way. He tried climbing upwards to the right, ending in nothing, but discovering a possible route to the left, which he successfully tried. To him this was a bold confirmation that there are always possibilities present, even though the situation seem completely hopeless. As a life philosophy, possibilism implies the insight that all conclusions, also scientific, are in principle insecure. Even though one for ages have held a certain mathematical law for evident, the next generation might revise it all. Hence, it is possible to be strongly convinced about this or that, without claiming that it is true⁵⁹. Or as Dewey formulates it: “For endeavor for the better is moved by faith in what is possible, not by adherence to the actual”⁶⁰. Similarly, the young student in example

⁵⁸ NÆSS, A. and HAUKELAND, P-I. (2005), *Livsfilosofi*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget. 13-15

⁵⁹ NÆSS, A. and HAUKELAND, P-I. (2005), *Livsfilosofi*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, p. 13-15

⁶⁰ DEWEY, J. (1934). *A common faith*. New Haven. Conn.: Yale University Press, p. 14

fruit II expressed that he did not stop when meeting hindrances in life or at school anymore, because he knew there was a way.

Transferred to the practice of facilitating Dialogos workshops or dialogue series, a possibilist attitude is helpful in order to have faith in the process of gradually creating movement *in* and *between* participants, also in situations where there is resistance, or where one seems to be stuck.

Taking emotion into account

Philosophers throughout the ages have tended to be suspicious of feelings, desires, or emotions. They are to be controlled and suppressed, and it has been claimed that desires are an obstacle to thinking and thus to philosophising. Indeed, desire is found at the heart of the philosophical dynamic, as Brenifier⁶¹ puts it. *Philosophia* is pivotal to all kinds of philosophising, not the least to a Dialogos process. A common trait of how participants describe their experiences and personal development of participating in a Dialogos process, is that they describe how the rational and logical thinking processes made them *feel*. This is an aspect that can be interpreted with the help of Arne Næss` Spinoza inspired view⁶². According to Næss, all progress in things essential to humans, are driven by emotions. However, emotions are ambiguous. They can be an inspirational source to insight, wisdom and meaning in life, but they can also be a source to the opposite, i.e. to destructive and self-destructive attitudes and actions. Friendliness and love are positive feelings that activate our human nature, while negative feelings like hatred, envy and arrogance passivate us, he argues. Næss also claims that our emotional condition can be characterized

⁶¹ BRENIER, Oscar: «To philosophize is to cease living», available in ob-cl.pdf (buf.no) (last access January 25th, 2021).

⁶² NÆSS, Arne and HAUKELAND, Per-Inge: *Livsfilosofi*. Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, 2005.

as a stable *key tone* for a shorter or longer period in life. This tone can be positive or negative, and more or less intensely and strongly so, making a person something between what I metaphorically speaking chose here to call “light minded” or “dark minded”. It is important to note that this can be a tone dominating a period in life, and not a tone characterizing someone’s personality. That would be to take it too far. With this in mind, a third metaphor is also possible, namely the “grey minded” person who over (some) time is indifferent and without any emotional engagement and initiative at all. Such a person is likely to become a burden to his or her surroundings, according to Næss. In some cases, such a person might be comparable to Maslow’s “non-peaker”. As Maslow⁶³ formulates it:

Any person whose character (or Weltanschauung, or way of life) forces him to try to be extremely or completely rational or “materialistic” or mechanistic tends to become a “non-peaker”. That is, such a view of life tends to make the person regard peak-and-transcendent experiences as a kind of insanity, a complete loss of control, a sense of being overwhelmed by irrational emotions, etc.

While Maslow points to the rational, materialistic or mechanistic oriented person as a non-peaker, in my interpretation comparable to resistant participants who are unable to “go with the flow” of wisdom seeking dialogue, Brenifier⁶⁴ argues that desires or emotions becomes obstacles to philosophising when they make people abandon *truth* in order to seek more immediate satisfactions, such as power, glory, wealth, knowledge, and lust. What Maslow’s peaker seem to have in common with Brenifier’s truth seeking philosopher, is flexibility of mind. Yet, I would assume Maslow

⁶³ MASLOW, Abraham: *Religions, values, and peak-experiences*. Stellar Books, USA, 2014/1964 p. 36

⁶⁴ BRENIFIER, Oscar: «To philosophize is to cease living», available in ob-cl.pdf (buf.no) (last accessed January 25th, 2021).

would agree with me that this flexibility can be understood through a growth-metaphor rather than a death-metaphor.

However, it can never be an instrumental *aim* of philosophical practice to for instance turn a “non-peaker” into a “peaker”, to use the expressions of Maslow, or to turn a “knowledge seeker” to a “truth seeker”, to use the expressions of Brenifier. People must find their own ways, in line with the pluralist stance argued earlier. Yet if they engage truly *dialogically*, and thus both emotionally and rationally – i.e. with their whole being, transformation *is* likely to occur, in some way or other, unique to every person. It seems that this was the case for the participants having experienced the example fruits narrated in this essay.

The deeply personal as the deeply universal

It is also worth mentioning that the life-stances of participants in the examples were diverse. They were respectively a) cultural-catholic, b) practicing Catholic with a background from a Buddhist majority country, c) ethnic Jew born in Russia living in Jerusalem, d) practicing Muslim born in Afghanistan living in Norway, as well as e) a variety of Christian, atheist and agnostic stances amongst the eight European, one Asian and one Latin-American students in the last example. Despite their different world views and life philosophies, religious, or non-religious, they experienced comparable personal transformations due to the philosophical dialogues. How can we understand this?

Again, it is worth borrowing perspectives from Maslow. The original religious questions can be studied, described and investigated in a scientific (and philosophical) manner, because they are deeply rooted in human nature, he argues. The questions are common to all of mankind. The difficulty begins with the traditional attempts to *answer* the questions. This is where different world views and different religions have come to

conclusions that are unacceptable to others. As Maslow puts it: «Though the answers were not acceptable, the questions themselves were and are perfectly acceptable, and perfectly legitimate». I see this as an argument for philosophising the Dialogos Way in multi cultural and multi religious context inside and outside education. Investigating questions together that are relevant to us all, regardless of our religious and cultural backgrounds, is valuable in itself. More importantly, if the process also leads to the slightest increase in epistemic humility and openness across cultural and religious divides, it is even more worth the time and effort, because then it also might pave the way towards peaceful relations more broadly speaking. This is a reason in itself why we are in urgent need of philosophical practices in main stream education across the globe⁶⁵.

Summary and final remark

I began this essay by posing a slightly different hypothesis than Brenifier. I agreed with him that philosophising implies overturning (some of) one's established ideas, that this implies a form of psychological "small death" as our opinions and stances are often dear to us and part of our identities. However, I disagreed that philosophising necessarily needs to imply "a sort of psychological suffering", arguing that the initial "death" of one's more or less narrow opinions and poorly grounded stances leads to a new "birth" and psychological growth rather than suffering. The reason I gave was that in genuine dialogical encounters we necessarily transcend our existing egos when listening to other people, striving to see from their perspective, critically examining their ideas, as well as our own ideas. In the process, an expansion

⁶⁵ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen and WEISS, Michael Noah. "On the urgent need for philosophical practices in main stream education today. *HASER. Revista Internacional de Filosofía Aplicada*, no 12, 2021, pp XX-XX

and deepening of our horizons of understanding and thus identities necessarily will take place. At least for a period of time after such a gentle dynamic of “psychological deaths” and “new births”, we might even experience a sense of uplifted wellbeing and fulfillment.

Then followed an overview of different usages of the Tree of life metaphor, and a description of how the metaphor corresponds to the concept Dialogos and to Dialogos as a process oriented form of philosophical practice. Using a reflective practice research methodology and structure, I organized the paper in three main sections: In the original reflection section, I narrated six examples from my practice. In the critical reflection section, I presented six themes that I reflected upon in the theoretical reflection section. The themes were respectively aha-experience, peak-experience, heart-to-heart synchronization, life-guiding concepts, plateau experience and pluralism. The question is now whether or not I am justified in arguing that the metaphor “philosophising is nurturing the Tree of life in us” is a better metaphor than “philosophising is to cease living” when it comes to conceptualizing what people might experience when philosophising the Dialogos Way. Summing up, neither of the participants in the examples had experienced their transformations of opinions, stances or views of life as “forms of death”, nor of “psychological suffering”. Rather, most of them had experienced their transformation positively as leading to forms of (individual-psychological or collective-relational) growth.

To navigate as a philosophical dialogue facilitator in the midst of people’s different backgrounds and starting points, gradually creating heart-to-heart encounters between them, as well as helping them connect experiences and concepts, isn’t necessarily easy. The facilitator needs to be awake and aware, paying attention not only to what is said, but also to what is emerging underneath and between what is said, acting intuitively and tactfully in ways that

nurtures the flow and growth of wisdom and thus the Tree of life in participants. This can not always be understood conceptually. However, when being truly present in the situation, the body of the facilitator is likely to register what is going on, making him or her able to respond in adequate ways, without damaging the integrity of participants.

There are of course always risks that the facilitator makes not so wise facilitation moves (needless to say, I have done so an endless number of times myself). A not so wise facilitation move could make hesitant participants even more resistant, even more argumentative, even more fearful of being wrong, or even more closed in their communication and ways of engaging with other participants. It is thus pivotal to begin the Dialogos process in a way that does not scare people away, while gradually challenging them to let go of fear and resistance, and instead start engaging openly and dialogically with the subject matter as well as with each other.

A “wise” facilitator would ideally be able to set a process in motion that in the long run can lead towards human flourishing and wisdom in a broad sense, unique to every particular individual, yet universal in the sense that it is connected with the shared reality of people, nature, things and phenomena in the universe. Such a process would imply to nurture the Tree of life or *logos* in participants, as seem to have been the case for the participants in the six examples in this essay. Their outcome-experiences are rather rare, however *possible* side-effects of philosophising the Dialogos way. It is this rareness that has made them unforgettable for me as a philosophical dialogue facilitator and educator.

To conclude, I believe I am justified in claiming to have supported the initial hypothesis of this essay: “Philosophising is nurturing the Tree of life in us” is a better metaphor than “philosophising is to cease living” when conceptualizing what people might experience when philosophising the so called “Dialogos Way” towards

wisdom. Even though the long term aim of philosophy might well be to cope with death, and even though philosophising might imply practicing “dying” through letting go of one’s more or less well founded opinions and stances, this might lead to “new births” and to psychological growth rather than psychological suffering and death, thus nurturing the tree of life in us.

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TOWARDS A NEW PEDAGOGY IN HIGHER EDUCATION¹

HACIA UNA NUEVA PEDAGOGÍA EN LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR

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Abstract: In this essay the authors argue the need for a new pedagogy in Higher Education (HE). Our hypothesis is that the predominant focus today is on instrumental systems meant to measure the “quality” of education, subjecting the HE-teacher to goal management and frameworks that limit didactic possibilities. However, acting wisely and solving challenges across professions in an increasingly unpredictable world, requires attitudes, knowledge, skills and understanding that cannot unambiguously be defined in advance. Using a reflective practice and action inquiry research approach, the authors reflect upon experiences and research involving the Dialogos approach to philosophical

¹ The title of the first version of this article received by HASER was “Philosophical Practice, Pedagogy for the Unforeseen and Edification in Higher Education”.

practice, new research findings in pedagogy for the unforeseen and data from the completion of a PhD course for employees from four faculties in higher education. We argue that higher education should focus on open-ended and creative approaches to teaching that includes philosophical practices and reflective “samhandling” across disciplines. All higher education study programmes should to some extent train students for unforeseen events in life and society.

Key words: Higher education, Bildung, Philosophical practice - the Dialogos Way, Pedagogy for the unforeseen.

Resumen: En este artículo, los autores defienden la necesidad de desarrollar una nueva pedagogía en la Educación Superior. Nuestra hipótesis es que el enfoque predominante en la actualidad está influido por sistemas instrumentales destinados a medir la “calidad” de la educación. Así, se esclaviza al docente de Educación Superior dentro de la gestión de objetivos y de marcos que limitan sus posibilidades didácticas. Actuar con sabiduría y resolver los desafíos de las profesiones en un mundo es cada vez más impredecible y, por ello, requiere actitudes, conocimientos, habilidades y competencias hermenéuticas que no pueden definirse de forma inequívoca de antemano en la formación. Utilizando la práctica reflexiva y el enfoque de investigación-acción, reflexionamos a partir de las experiencias e investigaciones que involucran el enfoque “Dialogos” a la Filosofía Aplicada, de nuevos hallazgos de investigación en Pedagogía y de los datos de un curso de doctorado para profesionales de cuatro facultades de Educación Superior. Argumentamos que la educación superior debe centrarse en enfoques de enseñanza abiertos y creativos que incluyan prácticas filosóficas y un manejo reflexivo en todas las disciplinas. Todos los programas de estudios de educación superior deberían, en cierta medida, capacitar a los estudiantes para acontecimientos imprevistos en su vida y en la sociedad.

Palabras clave: Educación Superior, Bildung, Filosofía Aplicada, Dialogos Way, Pedagogía para lo imprevisto.

Introduction

This article is based in pressing concerns of ours on the one side, and our attempts to understand and handle them on the other. Our concerns are both theoretical and practical. Our worry is that didactical models and practical pedagogies of higher education

seem to be developing in increasingly limited competence oriented, instrumental and technical (in the Aristotelian sense of *techne* and *poiesis*) way, leading to fragmentation and disintegration, amongst other.

We begin our article by explicating this worry. In the second part, we attempt to understand our concerns and propose a different perspective by tracing some roots of the concerns in the history of pedagogy, more specifically by relating them to the European traditions of *Bildung* (edification) and to the Aristotelian notions of *phronesis* and *praxis*. In part 3 we explore and reflect upon our attempts to handle the concern practically. Concretely, we have included philosophical and dialogical practices in an interdisciplinary Phd-level course for colleagues from all four faculties at the University of South Eastern Norway. This means that our teaching approaches during the course includes ways of facilitating edifying and wisdom oriented pedagogies for the unforeseen², in line with the Dialogos approach³. We conclude that philosophical practices and pedagogies for the unforeseen are good alternatives to linear didactical models when it comes to preparing university teachers and their students for good action in an open and unpredictable future.

Methodology and structure of the paper

Our research approach in this article can be compared to the reflective practice research approach of Anders Lindseth⁴. Lindseth

² TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo/Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015.

³ HELSKOG, Guro: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, London/New York, Routledge, 2019a.

⁴ LINDSETH, Anders: "Svarevne og kritisk refleksjon. Hvordan utvikle praktisk kunnskap? ", in MCGUIRK, James & METHI, Jan Selmer (eds.): *Praktisk*

recommends that reflective practice research, which is essentially phenomenological and hermeneutical, takes its point of departure in an experience that has made an impression. This experience should be narrated through what he calls *original reflection*, before some core themes are drawn out through critical reflection. These themes are then, finally, reflected upon theoretically and philosophically. In our essay, however, we have chosen to start with the explication of some concerns of ours. The concerns have emerged through the years as a *feeling* that something is insufficient and not right regarding the models, theories and didactical structures that are domination higher education pedagogies in our time. In part 2 of our article we explicitly formulate these concerns. Then, in the part 3, we reflect critically and theoretically upon them in more general terms, drawing on philosophical perspectives and research literature that we have found relevant in our attempts to “open up” and shed light on our concerns on the one side, and propose a way to handle them on the other. In Part 4, we narrate one of our experiences of acting upon our concerns, namely through developing and teaching a phd-level course for some of our colleagues representing all four faculties at our university: Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, USN School

kunnskap som profesjonsforskning, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2014; LINDSETH, Anders: “Refleksiv praksisforskning”, in HALÅS, Cathrine Torbjørnsen, KYMRE, Ingjerd Gåre & STEINSVIK, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske forskningstilnærminger til profesjonspraksis*, Oslo, Gyldendal Akademisk, p. 243-260, 2017a; LINDSETH, Anders: “Forskningens vei – Fra livserfaring til en observerbar verden og tilbake til livets virksomheter”, in HALÅS, Cathrine Torbjørnsen, KYMRE, Ingjerd Gåre & STEINSVIK, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske forskningstilnærminger til profesjonspraksis*, Oslo, Gyldendal Akademisk, p.15-37), 2017b; LINDSETH, Anders: “Dosenten i et FoU-perspektiv. Refleksiv praksisforskning som en vei mot dosentkompetanse”, in BACHKE, Carl Christian & HERMANSEN, Mads (eds.): *Å satse på dosenter. Et utviklingsarbeid*, Cappelen Damm Akademisk, Oslo, 2020, p. 75–101.

of Business, Faculty of Technology, Natural Sciences and Maritime Sciences, and Faculty of Humanities, Sports and Educational Sciences. In this part we also draw upon meta-reflections from course participants, which then provide a second-person viewpoint. What we can call “the intervention and practice research process” can also be compared to the developmental action inquiry of William Torbert and colleagues⁵. Torbert distinguishes between first-person action inquiry, second-person action inquiry and third-person action inquiry, also making distinctions between the subjective first-person voice, the intersubjective second-person voice and the objectivity-seeking third-person voice⁶. Reason and Bradbury⁷ suggest that the most compelling and enduring kind of action research will engage all three strategies: first-person research is best carried out in the company of friends and colleagues who can provide support and challenge. Such a company may evolve into a second-person collaborative inquiry process, as it has for us when working with this article. The collaboration has strengthened the course itself, since originally, we had quite different, however compatible, positions within the science and philosophy of education. The strengthening force lies in the synergy of integrating different stances into a new integrated whole.

⁵ TORBERT, William: *Creating a Community of Inquiry: Conflict, Collaboration, Transformation*, London, Wiley Interscience, 1976; TORBERT, William: *The Power of Balance: Transforming Self, Society, and Scientific Inquiry*, London, Sage, 1991; TORBERT, William & Taylor, Steven: “Action Inquiry: Interweaving Multiple Qualities of Attention for Timely Action”, in REASON, Peter & BRADBURY, Hilary (eds.): *The Sage Handbook of Action Research*, London, Sage, 2nd edition, p. 239-251, 2008.

⁶ TORBERT, William: *Creating a Community of Inquiry: Conflict, Collaboration, Transformation*, London, Wiley Interscience, 1976.

⁷ REASON, Peter & BRADBURY, Hilary (eds.): *The Sage Handbook of Action Research*, London, Sage, 2nd edition, 2008.

Our concerns

We have already stated our worry that the pedagogies of higher education seem to be developing in an increasingly instrumental and technical way, not the least due to the increasing dominance of aim oriented, competence-based and so-called concept- or programme based approaches⁸ in the pedagogies of academia. However, such approaches are not sufficient to cover education to handle unforeseen events. Our point here is that while traditional didactical models focus on ways of planning how to learn by presupposing clear learning goals and an inner causal interaction between factors like aims and content, goals cannot be defined and articulated clearly in advance concerning unforeseen events⁹.

On the limitations of the constructive alignment approach

One example of such a technical approach in higher education pedagogies is the so called “constructive alignment” (CA) and “Structure of the Observed Learning Outcome” or the SOLO-model¹⁰ which is dominant in higher education systems nowadays. Constructive alignment emphasizes the correlation between learning outcomes, assessment and learning activities. Following this model, every academic course would start with a definition of what the student shall have learned (learning outcome) when the course is passed, how the outcomes will be assessed and finally what kind of teaching- and learning activities which need to be used in order to reach the predefined learning outcomes.

⁸ ARMSTRONG, Michael: *Armstrong's Handbook of Strategic Human Resource Management*, London, Kogan Page Ltd, 7th edition, 2020.

⁹ TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo/Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015.

¹⁰ BIGGS, John Burville & TANG, Catherine: *Teaching for Quality Learning at University. What the Student Does*, New York, McGraw Hill, 4th edition, 2011.

Constructive Alignment has gained an international standing as a quality development tool in higher education despite the fact that the system is based on *one* source¹¹. For instance, NOKUT, the Norwegian body for quality in education, uses this model as a system for measuring educational quality in higher education. Both before and during the corona pandemic, several webinars on the constructive alignment model (in Norwegian “samstemt undervisning”) were held for teaching staff at higher education institutions in Norway.

However, the constructive alignment model is problematic in several respects. First, the model is at risk of making the educational process instrumental, one-dimensional and unidirectional, closing the necessary space for “edificational experiences”. Second, it makes the qualities implied in edification difficult to develop, as it becomes more important for students to reach the predefined aims and learning outcomes, than to develop a critical and self-reflective relationship to the knowledge and skills¹². Third, students will not easily learn virtues needed for action in an unpredictable world, such as wisdom and patience¹³, courage and judgment¹⁴, and appreciation of learning in the present¹⁵. All in all, the constructive alignment approach is at risk

¹¹ ANDERSEN, Hanne Leth: “Constructive alignment og risikoen for en forsimplende universitetspedagogikk [Constructive alignment and the risk of a simplifying university pedagogy]”, in *Dansk universitetspedagogisk Tidsskrift*, 9, 2010, pp. 30-35.

¹² See HELSKOG, Guro & WEISS, Michael Noah: “On the Urgent need for Philosophical Practices in Main Stream Education”, in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*, 1, 2021.

¹³ BRUNSTAD, Paul Otto: *Klokt lederskap. Mellom dyder og dødssynder [Wise leadership. Between virtues and mortal sins]*, Oslo, Gyldendal akademisk, 2009.

¹⁴ TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil. (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015.

¹⁵ SAEVEROT, Herner & TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil: “Time, Individuality, and Interaction: A Case Study”, in HOWARD, Patrick, SAEVI, Tone, FORAN,

of creating what Finn Thorbjørn Hansen¹⁶ have called an “Eichmannisation of Education”¹⁷. Eichmannisation of Education is characterized by blindly and unreflectedly following orders, principles and rules, like Eichmann who claimed that he was only doing his duty when making possible the massacres of the second world war¹⁸. The point here is that even if everything is done competently and right, that is, done in alignment (sic!) with aims, orders and bureaucratic rules, or in our context here: the respective aims and principles in the constructive alignment model, it would still not necessarily be good in a moral sense. This brings us to the notions of competence and competence-based approaches to teaching, which are widely used in curricula at all levels of Norwegian education today.

On the limitation of competence-based approaches

In the analysis of Biesta¹⁹ learning and competence are necessary but insufficient features of good teaching practice. With regard to the practical implementation of the idea of competence in the field

Andrew & BIESTA, Gert (eds.): *Phenomenology and Educational Theory in Conversation. Back to Education Itself*, London/New York, Routledge, 2020.

¹⁶ HANSEN, Finn Torbjørn: *At stå i det åbne. Dannelse gennem filosofisk undren og nærvær [To stand in the open. Formation through philosophical wonder and presence]*, København, Hans Reitzels forlag, 2008.

¹⁷ See also HELSKOG, Guro & WEISS, Michael Noah: “On the Urgent need for Philosophical Practices in Main Stream Education”, in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*, 1, 2021.

¹⁸ MAHRDT, Helgard: “Å tenke om det uforutsigbare med Hannah Arendt [Thinking about the unpredictable based on Hannah Arendt], in: TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015, p. 132-153.

¹⁹ BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher?: On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, West Sussex, John Wiley & Sons, 2015a.

of teacher education (in our context the field of university teacher education) he sees a number of problems. Some of them can be outlined as follows:

1. Any attempt to draw out in full detail what teachers should be competent in, runs the risk of generating lists that are far too long and detailed, reducing teacher education to a tick box exercise focusing on whether the individual students have managed to achieve the goals, easily leading to a disjointed curriculum and an instrumental non-collaborative approach to teaching and learning.
2. Competences are always oriented towards the past and the present because it is only possible to describe what a teacher needs to be competent at in relation to situations that are already known. Hence, a competence-based curriculum for (university) teacher education would tie the student too much to a particular interpretation of the current situation, rather than preparing them sufficiently for meaningful action in an unknown and unpredictable future.
3. Good teachers does not only need to be good at doing all kinds of things (which is what competence is about in Biesta`s interpretation)

The most important limitation of competence based approaches to teacher education is however, according to Biesta²⁰ the fact that good teachers need to be able to judge which competences should be utilized in always concrete situations in which they work. Hence, he suggests that while competences is a *necessary* condition for good teaching, it can never be a *sufficient* condition, because good teaching requires judgment about what an educationally desirable course of action would be in *this* concrete situation with

²⁰ BIESTA, Gert: "How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher?: On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education", in HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, West Sussex, John Wiley & Sons, 2015a.

these concrete students at this particular stage in the educational trajectory. It requires *phronesis*, or practical wisdom. The difference between a competent teacher and a good teacher is thus according to Biesta that the good teacher is able to make judgements about what is educationally desirable. The good teacher has become excellent, i.e. existentially and morally wise as well as competent; a *phronimos*.

Thus, good teaching can not be reduced to competence, nor to reaching predefined aims that can be measured in tests and exams. The instrumental means- aims orientation implicit in the constructive alignment approach, and the forms of knowledge implied in edification, can be traced to the two forms of knowledge as explicated by Aristotle, which again can be traced to Plato: *techné* and *phronesis*. Both forms of knowledge represent practical knowing, but while *techné* can be understood as skills in order to produce something, *phronesis* is the awareness necessary for doing the right in the right moment towards the right people at the right place, with regards to living a good life overall²¹. Hence, while *techné* can be understood as know-how knowledge, *phronesis* is often translated as prudence or practical *wisdom*. As depicted by

²¹ ARISTOTLE. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Retrieved 11.02.2020 from The Internet Classics Archive Nicomachean Ethics by Aristotle (mit.edu); see also HELSKOG, Guro: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2019a; WEISS, Michael Noah: “Phronesis – The Backbone of Philosophical Practice?” in STAUDE, Detlef & RUSCHMANN, Eckart (eds.): *Understanding the Other and Oneself*, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, Cambridge, 2018; WEISS, Michael Noah: “Philosophical Mindfulness. An Essay about the Art of Philosophizing”, in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*, 8, 2017; WEISS, Michael Noah & HELSKOG, Guro (2020): “ ‘They often have AHA-moments’: how training teachers to philosophize the Dialogos Way with their students can promote life skills and democratic citizenship in education”, in *Educational Action Research*, 2020.

Biesta²², *techné* is related to skills and thus to what Aristotle calls *poiesis*, an activity which has the goal beyond itself, while *phronesis* implies a type of activity called *praxis* by Aristotle. *Praxis* implies activity which has the goal within itself, such as learning for its own sake.

On the risk of increased fragmentation and disintegration

The implementation of the constructive alignment model is further at risk of contributing to increased fragmentation and specialization in academia. Following its line of didactical thought, sciences, disciplines, subjects and professions is at risk of limiting their scope to disciplinary specialities, thus creating professional competence based subcultures that become closed to the horizons of understanding represented by other disciplines and professions. The consequence can be that insight and knowledge that can not directly be connected to the internal professional or disciplinary knowledge and competence is considered second range or irrelevant. When this happens, there is a danger that institutes and faculties are on their way towards what Majken Schultz and Mary Jo Hatch²³ calls a form of narcissism where the profession or the organization repel, neglect or overlook the value of exchanging knowledge and understanding with other than themselves. Instead, the institutes, faculties and institutions close themselves up in their already existing identity, profession and culture.

²² BIESTA, Gert: "How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher?: On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education", in HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, West Sussex, John Wiley & Sons, 2015a.

²³ SCHULTZ, Majken & HATCH, Mary Jo: *The dynamics of organizational identity, Human relation*, London, Sage Publications, 2002, p.990-993.

Critical-theoretical reflection upon our concerns

In the previous three sections we have explicated some of our concerns regarding the development of cultures and practices in academia. We are by no means alone with our concerns, nor are the concerns new, even though they have taken different forms throughout history. Historically, the roots to our worry can be traced to the political and pedagogical debates of the enlightenment period featuring philosophical thinkers like Rousseau, Herder, Schiller, Goethe, Kant and Hegel, and further again to ideas of Indo-European antiquity^{24;25;26;27;28}. Moreover, our worry has roots in a returning debate in academic life in Norway for more than 50 years. This is where we will take our point of departure in the following, bringing forward the themes of Bildung/edification towards wisdom and of dialogue and philosophical practice as

²⁴ LØVLIE, Lars, MORTENSEN, Klaus Peter and NORDENBO, Sven Erik (eds.): *Educating humanity: Bildung in postmodernity*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 2003. Originally published as LØVLIE, Lars, NORDENBO, Svein Erik and MORTENSEN, Klaus Peter (eds.). Education Humanity: Bildung in postmodernity. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, Special Issue*, 36, 3, Autumn 2002.

²⁵ SLAGSTAD, Rune, KORSGAARD, Ove & LØVLIE, Lars (eds.): *Dannelsens forvandlinger. [Transformations of Bildung]*, Oslo, Pax, 2003.

²⁶ RISE, Svein (ed.): *Danningsperspektiver: teologiske og filosofiske syn på danning i antikken og i moderne tid [Perspectives on Bildung: theological and philosophical views on Bildung in antiquity and in modern times]*, Trondheim, Tapir, 2010.

²⁷ STRAUME, Ingerid (ed.): *Danningens filosofihistorie [The history of the philosophy of Bildung]*, Oslo, Gyldendal akademisk, 2013.

²⁸ STEINSHOLT, Kjetil & DOBSON, Stephen (eds.): *Dannelse: introduksjon til et ullent pedagogisk landskap [Bildung: introduction to a vague pedagogical landscape]*, Trondheim, Tapir, 2011.

ways to promote wisdom, in our context in higher education pedagogies.

Bildung- or edification towards wisdom

In his classical 1969-essay “Ein utdana mann og eit dana menneske”, which can be translated “An educated man and an edified human being”, Norwegian philosopher Jon Hellestnes²⁹ claimed that current forms of education in his time makes *Bildung*, or what we in this paper translate as *edification*, increasingly impossible. By *Bildung* or edification (“danning” in Norwegian) Hellestnes is using a complex and widely discussed concept in European history, various versions of the concept having been used as critical concepts in a scholarly fight against materialist and market oriented trends in education since the Enlightenment period. Hellestnes` places the distinction between education/educated and edification/edified within this historical discussion. While education and becoming educated implies becoming qualified for certain functions in society, edification and becoming edified is a life long and never ending process involving the development of deep understanding and wisdom, according to Hellestnes. Education need to give space for edification, which requires forms of reflection that goes beyond and in between university subjects. Moreover, it includes the perceiving subjectivity and the everyday world that is always the point of departure for education as well as for scientific work. An education that loses contact with the everyday world becomes an education without edification, or *Bildung*. The challenge, Hellestnes argues, is that technical reason is

²⁹ HELLESNES, Jon: “Ein utdana mann og eit dana menneske. Framlegg til eit utvida daningsomgrep”, in *Pedagogikk og samfunn*, Bergen, Filosofisk institutt, Universitetet i Bergen, 1969.

invading the academic and educational field³⁰. As argued in Helskog and Weiss forthcoming³¹, there is thus an urgent need for philosophical practices at all levels of education in our time. Along with Hellesnes, Lars Løvlie³² and Anders Lindseth³³ are among the Norwegian scholars that have spent much of their academic life analysing and critiquing dominant trends in science and education from the humanistic perspective of edification. Both were central when scholars from the Universities of Oslo and Bergen, and the University College of Bodø in 2009 delivered their report looking critically at the “quality reform”, “Bologna Process”

³⁰ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen (2003): “Den humanistiske dannelsen og 1990-årenes utdanningsreformer”, in *Norsk Pedagogisk Tidsskrift*, 1, 2, pp. 19-33, 2003; BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher?: On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, West Sussex, John Wiley & Sons, 2015a.

³¹ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen & WEISS, Michael Noah: “On the Urgent need for Philosophical Practices in Main Stream Education”, in *HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice*, 1, 2021.

³² LØVLIE, Lars: “Verktøyskolen [The tool school]”, in *Norsk Pedagogisk Tidsskrift*, 3, pp. 185–198, 2013; LØVLIE, Lars: “Dannelse og profesjon [Education and profession]”, in INNSTILLING FRA DANNELESUTVALGET FOR HØYERE UTDANNING: *Kunnskap og dannelse foran et nytt århundre*, An independent selection of individual institutions in Norwegian Higher Education, 08.10.2009.

³³ LINDSETH, Anders: “Dannelsens plass i profesjonsutdanninger” in INNSTILLING FRA DANNELESUTVALGET FOR HØYERE UTDANNING: *Kunnskap og dannelse foran et nytt århundre*, An independent selection of individual institutions in Norwegian Higher Education, 08.10.2009; LINDSETH, Anders: “Personlig dannelse”, in HAGTVEDT, Bernt & OGNJENOVIC, Gorona (eds.): *Dannelse. Tenkning, modning, refleksjon*, Oslo, Dreyers forlag, 2011.

and “Lisboa strategy”³⁴. The report investigated the conditions of academic edification understood as critical reflection and ethical understanding across university studies.

In his contribution to the report, Anders Lindseth writes that “within all education, edification is a challenge”³⁵. The student should not only become able to reproduce knowledge, but also acquire a personal, reflected and critical relationship towards this knowledge. The acquisition implies formation of the student in which he or she finds her place in relation to the knowledge. Such personal acquisition is edification or *Bildung*, Lindseth argues, a position that has a parallel in Lars Løvlie’s contribution to the report³⁶. Edification, Løvlie writes, describes a personal trait, characterized as an attitude, a disposition, a character or a virtue. This personal trait is materialized in the story we expect modern people to be able to give about themselves. We can of course focus on the content (the “what”) and methods (the “how”), but this gives little meaning without a clear reference to the individuals involved in the educational situation, he argues. The *who* of teaching and learning becomes important, in addition to its what, how and why. Løvlie places edification in the cross sections between philosophy and pedagogy, with self-formation or self-edification as the primary ideal. Edification thus implies pedagogical reflection and

34 DANNESESUTVALGET: *Kunnskap og dannelse foran et nytt århundre [Knowledge and Bildung in the face of a new century]*, Oslo, Dannelsesutvalget, Universitetet i Oslo, 2009.

35 LINDSETH, Anders: “Dannelsens plass i profesjonsutdanninger [The place of Bildung in professions education]” in INNSTILLING FRA DANNESESUTVALGET FOR HØYERE UTDANNING: *Kunnskap og dannelse foran et nytt århundre*, An independent selection of individual institutions in Norwegian Higher Education, 08.10.2009.

³⁶ LØVLIE, Lars. “Dannelse og profesjon [Bildung and profession]”. In *Kunnskap og dannelse foran et nytt århundre*, 28-38. Oslo, DANNESESUTVALGET, Universitetet i Oslo, 2009.

mindfulness, and with the words of Hellesnes³⁷: When education is edifying, it enhances wisdom. One becomes edified through reflection and problematizing of one's subjectivity, including one's knowledge and practices, and of the daily world who is always ground and the point of departure for the professional, academic and scientific world. An education that loses touch with the daily world, and thus with the personal lived life, practice and politics, is an education without edification, Hellesnes argues, a position that is developed further in theory and practice by Helskog³⁸.

The basis of the critique of Danningsutvalget, in which Lindseth and Løvlie contributed with their understandings of edification, was a critical stance towards the “quality reform”, “Bologna Process” and “Lisboa strategy” after the turn of the century. The basis of our paper is in addition a critique towards the earlier mentioned competence-based and so-called concept- or programme based approaches³⁹, which have gained increasing dominance in the pedagogies of academia. In an attempt to cut through the concept's different historical meanings and connotations in order to create a working definition in the context of teacher education, Helskog has chosen to understand *Bildung* – or edification - as holistic self-education towards wisdom, modelled in the six dimensional map for wisdom oriented pedagogy⁴⁰. Edification is

³⁷ HELLESNES, Jon: “Ein utdana mann og eit dana menneske. Framlegg til eit utvida daningsomgrep”, in *Pedagogikk og samfunn*, Bergen, Filosofisk institutt, Universitetet i Bergen, 1969.

³⁸ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2019a.

³⁹ ARMSTRONG, Michael: *Armstrong's Handbook of Strategic Human Resource Management*, London, Kogan Page Ltd, 7th edition, 2020; See also LAI, Linda: *Strategisk kompetanseledelse [Strategic competence management]*, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2013.

⁴⁰ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, London

according to this understanding never limited only to knowledge storage, or to changing one's rational points of views or one's opinion about an issue. Rather, it involves transformation of one's entire being in direction of increased ability to judge, and deeper understanding and wisdom in a broad sense. Wisdom is and should remain an utopian ideal – a horizon that moves away as the individual expands and deepens his or her understanding, while developing epistemic humility, self-insight and insight in their own knowledge and limitations.

Dialogical and philosophical practice

In her articles “*Bildung towards wisdom through dialogue in teacher education*”⁴¹ and “*Searching for wisdom the Dialogos Way*”⁴², Helskog explores the edifying potential of philosophical practices in teacher education. In the first article, she thinks with Norwegian philosopher Hans Skjervheim⁴³, who distinguishes two basic models of pedagogy:

1. Pedagogy understood as technique, art, craft and transmission of predefined knowledge, with “to affect” as basic metaphor

and New York, Routledge, 2019a.

⁴¹ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “*Bildung towards wisdom through dialogue in teacher education*”, in *Arts and humanities in higher education*, 18, 1, 2019, special issue: The Art of Dialogue, edited by ALTORF, Hannah Marije, pp. 76-90. First published online, October 18, 2016.

⁴² HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “*Searching for Wisdom the Dialogos Way*”, in: AMIR, Lydia (ed.): *New Frontiers in Philosophical Practice*, London, Cambridge Scholars Publishing Ltd., 2017.

⁴³ SKJERVHEIM, Hans: “*Eit grunnproblem i pedagogisk filosofi [A foundational problem in pedagogical philosophy]*”, in SKJERVHEIM, Hans: *Deltakar og tilskodar og andre essays*, Oslo, Tanum, p. 226-245, 1976.

2. Pedagogy understood as based in a romantic, biological understanding of the human being, with “free growth” as a basic metaphor.

In their ideal-typical forms, both these pedagogical models are un-dialogical and one-sided, Skjervheim argues. In the first, which we above have related to the constructive alignment model, the teacher is the *subject* while the student is the *object*, whom the teacher can affect in the direction of specific pre-defined outcomes. The model of teaching thus become (probably unintendedly) authoritarian top-down formation of the student. The second model is seemingly contradictory and supposedly a “bottom-up” model of pedagogy, in which the young person is free to develop her inner dispositions. As a pedagogical model, however, it does not work, because teaching and pedagogical guidance of the young, in our context into a given profession such as the teaching, nursing, engineering or management profession, is necessary. In the first model, the teacher *openly* affects and forms the students through techniques and predefined knowledge, while in the second model, the teacher *subtly* affects and forms the students through manipulation, at the same time seducing them to think they are allowed to grow freely. Thus, none of the pedagogical models grants the students the space and freedom necessary for *edification* to occur. Such processes call for a third model of pedagogy, Skjervheim argues, namely a dialogical and philosophical model. Skjervheim uses the practice of Socrates as described in the dialogues of Plato as an example of the third model. Socrates simultaneously affects *and* lets the young develop freely, in Skjervheims interpretation. This third pedagogical model - the Socratic - is dialectical, and it takes into account the difference between *doxa* and *episteme*, between mere opinion and true insight. Skjervheim labels this dialectical pedagogical model of education *psychagogy*, or soul guidance through words.

Similarly, during a full Dialogos process, experiences, ideas and concepts are explored through dialectical movements, and wondered upon from logical, emotional, experiential, existential and spiritual starting points and perspectives. Socratic dialogues, guided imageries, pro-con argumentation, philosophical walks, mind-body exercises as well as art-, text- and emotion based dialogues and -essay writing might be among the exercises included⁴⁴.

At each moment of a philosophical dialogue, the teacher or facilitator needs to be alert in order to be able to channel the ongoing philosophical and edificational process. This can in one moment imply encouraging participants to argue from divergent or opposite viewpoints, at other moment to contemplate in silence. This cannot be planned in advance.

The written form of Skjervheim`s third pedagogical model is the personal essay⁴⁵. The word “essay” derives from French *essai*, meaning “self-attempt” or “self-trial”. Finn Thorbjørn Hansen, in his attempts to develop a new university pedagogy in Denmark⁴⁶, argues that a teacher, a counsellor or other professionals who do

⁴⁴ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2019a.

⁴⁵ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Om Askeladdens metode. Essayet som erkjennelsesvei og vidsomdannende skrivepraksis”, in ASKELAND, Norunn & JØRGENSEN, Iben Brinch (eds.): *Kreativ akademisk skriving [Creative academic writing]*, Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 2019b.

⁴⁶ HANSEN, Finn Torbjørn: *At stå i det åbne. Dannelse gennem filosofisk undren og nærvær [To stand in the open. Formation through philosophical wonder and presence]*, København, Hans Reitzels forlag, 2008; HANSEN, Finn Thorbjørn. *Kan man undre sig uden ord: udvikling af en alternativ universitetspædagogik på Designskolen Kolding. [Can one wonder without words: Development of an alternative university didactics at Designskolen Kolding]*. Ålborg: Ålborg Universitetsforlag. 2014; HANSEN, Finn Thorbjørn. *Det personlige essay som en filosofisk praksis. Skriftserie for Barnevernets utviklingscenter i Nord-Norge*, nr. 3. 2007.

not know or wonder about their own philosophical standpoint or values – i.e. ones views on humanity, the world and the good life, and on philosophical concepts like care, integrity, love, respect, confidence, authenticity, etc, will never grow to become a master of his profession. A master, Hansen argues, has learned to know his or her point of departure well enough to realize how little he or she actually can know, master and control. It does not require competence development, but rather a particular sense of self-cultivation, i.e. *Bildung* or edification. The master has learned to step aside and let the world come to him, requiring an attitude that is fundamentally wondering. Hansen lists twelve characteristics of the personal essay, arguing that each point reflects what goes on in philosophical practice⁴⁷:

1. The essay creates an intimate relation between reader and writer and displays and exercises the essayist's inner dialogue.
2. The tone is personal, honest, confessional, teasing and playful, while also revealing vulnerability.
3. The essayist is a good storyteller.
4. The form is one of pushing borders, exploring, self-testing (and in the end also self-developing).
5. The voice is not private but personal, pointing towards the general.
6. Shows scepticism to dogmas and “great ideal thoughts”, but humbleness towards the world and the “insignificance” of oneself, and sees the great in the small and ordinary.
7. The essayist is in the service of comedy rather than tragedy, i.e. uses humour and irony and exercises a heroic self-investigation with a twinkle in his eye.
8. Moves from the individual to the universal and back.

⁴⁷ HANSEN, Finn Thorbjørn: “Det personlige essay som en filosofisk praksis”, *Skriftserie for Barnevernets utviklingscenter i Nord-Norge*, 3, 2007.

9. May also move back through history and traditions in order to meet “the great masters” whom he frequently quotes, but in a playful manner and only as part of the development of the essayist’s own train of thought (does not give grounds with reference to authorities, but “colours” his own statements).
10. The method is a non-academic and “non-methodical method”, depending on what may occur to the essayist during his journey and what serves him best at the moment in his investigation of the concrete subject that is in focus.
11. Typical of people in their mid-life and later, who restrain themselves by looking back at their actions and the choices they made.
12. The essay is an existential way of life, an attitude, philosophy and a kind of philosophical reflection that relates to philosophy understood as life form and not a theoretical discourse.

The philosophical dialogue and the personal essay both represent philosophical practices that falls under Skjervheim`s third model of pedagogy: The dialectical. The “learning outcomes” of dialectical processes involved in philosophical dialogues and essaywriting is unpredictable and in the open, and cannot be planned in advance in terms of for instance constructive alignment and competence-based approaches. With their emphasis on measurable learning outcomes and learning activities that will lead to the predefined aims, these models are closed and restricted to what can be predicted and controlled. Thus, they fall under Skjervheim`s first model of education, namely that of techne and poiesis, as also discussed by Biesta⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ BIESTA, Gert: *The Beautiful Risk of Education*, London/New York, Routledge, 2014.

Pedagogy for the unforeseen

As with philosophical practices, all teaching- and learning processes imply a risk⁴⁹. One simply can not know what the result of the process will be, and a lot can happen that is not planned for. This risk is the very basis for pedagogy for the unforeseen, in which three pedagogical elements are central⁵⁰:

- a) Alertness regarding productive moments
- b) Hermeneutical suspiciousness regarding the consistency of ones discipline
- c) Preparedness for unexpected future events.

Ad a) Alertness regarding productive moments

Central in pedagogy for the unforeseen is the capability of utilizing productive moments. If something in a teaching session happens as a surprize or unexpectedly, or something does not go as planned, this can be used creatively as an opportunity for bringing forth edifying experiences. This can happen if the teacher takes the opportunity to break out, think freshly and creatively, trying out ways of teaching and learning that has not yet been practiced within the discipline or the institution⁵¹. Hence, the teacher who is open to the unforeseen, needs to have qualities similar to that of a philosophical practitioner as understood in the Dialogos

⁴⁹ BIESTA, Gert: *The Beautiful Risk of Education*, London/New York, Routledge, 2014.

⁵⁰ TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015.

⁵¹ TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015.

approach⁵². The philosophical practitioner is able not only to secure “free growth” by going with the flow of the philosophical process as in the “free growth” metaphor of Skjervheim. He or she is *also* able to make facilitation moves that directs the dialogue in a fruitful direction in line with the “affect” metaphor of Skjervheim, thus enacting a *dialectical* or Socratic pedagogy that is alert for potentially fruitful moments.

Ad b) Hermeneutical suspiciousness regarding one`s discipline

By hermeneutical suspiciousness we mean an open, yet critical interpretative and investigative approach to one`s academic discipline regarding uncovering insecurities, insufficiency and unclarity in for instance models, theories or descriptions. This can have consequences for how the discipline should be taught to students or described to the research community, and further influence understandings of what “good” quality of education is, and how this is evaluated and “measured”⁵³. Compared to philosophizing the Dialogos Way, this would imply interpretation and critical reflection through analysis, comparison, synthesis, conceptualization and problematizing, key elements in Brenifier`s⁵⁴ understanding of philosophizing. Relevant philosophical questions could be: “What do I hold as true in my discipline?” “What is the limitations of this truth?” “What is held as true in my profession, more generally?”

⁵² HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2019a.

⁵³ TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015.

⁵⁴ BRENIFIER, Oscar: *A quick glance at the Lipman method*, 2008. Retrieved February 9th 2016 from <http://www.practiques-philosophiques.fr>.

Ad c) Preparedness for unexpected future events

A third approach to pedagogy for the unforeseen concerns the preparedness and development of knowledge in society regarding risk and unwanted events such as for instance ideology conflicts, terror and challenges related to climate change and sustainable development. The key question is⁵⁵: How can such events be prevented, and how can such unexpected events (also positive) be used in teaching? To prepare students for good action in unpredictable surroundings, education for the unforeseen also needs to include elements such as improvisation and ‘samhandling’. ‘Samhandling’⁵⁶ is a Norwegian word that equates, but in our context is not identic, with English words like interaction/social

interaction/collaboration/cooperation/coordination/join forces with/joint action/teamwork. Recent basic research by Torgersen⁵⁷ implicates that ‘samhandling’ is one of the most distinct predictors for handling unforeseen events. Samhandling under risk and unpredictable conditions presupposes emphasize on other factors

⁵⁵ TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil & SAEVEROT, Herner: “Ny pedagogikk for det uforutsettes tidsalder? [New pedagogy for the unforeseen age?]”, in TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015, p. 17-27.

⁵⁶ See also TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil: “Samhandling Under Risk (SUR) – Theoretical Foundation as a Common Frame of Reference”, in TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *‘Samhandling’ [Interaction] Under Risk - A Step Ahead of the Unforeseen*, Oslo, Cappelen Damm Akademiske, 2018, p. 19-38. A short definition of ‘samhandling’: “Samhandling is an open and mutual communication and development between participants, who develop skills and complement each other in terms of expertise, either directly, face-to-face, or mediated by technology or manually” (p.26). The relationship between participants at any given time relies on trust, involvement, rationality and professional knowledge.

⁵⁷ TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *‘Samhandling’ [Interaction] Under Risk - A Step Ahead of the Unforeseen*, Oslo, Cappelen Damm Akademiske, 2018.

than what is the case for samhandling when conducted under predictable conditions. Extracting knowledge out of disorder in information and surroundings, shared leadership, the avoidance of organizational narcissism, and collective acceptance for swift trust and loss of control are among the elements in good samhandling under risk. This is maybe where the different orientations of pedagogy for the unforeseen and philosophical practice becomes most visible, even though the attitudes needed for wise action under such circumstances can be enhanced through philosophical practices both in preparation for such events, and in the reflection upon such events when they have happened. “What is good action under pressure?” “How can I be wise in a chaotic situation?” “What are the limits of my responsibility?” could be questions explored both before and after such events.

Edification through philosophical practice as a pedagogy for the unforeseen?

While educating for the unforeseen requires pedagogies that are open to an unpredictable future⁵⁸, models and concepts that are currently dominating higher education didactics are insufficient for this purpose. The pedagogical approach in pedagogies for the unforeseen should according to Saeverot⁵⁹ be *indirect*, and make use of “invisible methods”, which implies minimum use of defined blueprint solutions, and a conscious use of unclear learning content. The Dialogos approach to philosophizing towards wisdom⁶⁰ is an

⁵⁸ Barnett, Ronald: “Learning for an unknown future”, in *Higher Education Research & Development*, 23, 3, 2004, pp. 247–260.

⁵⁹ SAEVEROT, Herner: *Indirect Pedagogy. Some Lessons in Existential Education*, Boston & Rotterdam, Sense Publishers, 2013.

⁶⁰ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2019a.

approach that encompasses such features⁶¹. Joint investigation of phenomena implied in the *art of living* is at the core of the Dialogos approach. Of course, the art of living also implies the art of acting well, under risk and pressure as well as when a productive moment appears. Hence, philosophical practice may well be included as an approach to teaching for the unforeseen in most disciplines.

However, not all pedagogical approaches that can be included in Pedagogy *for* the unforeseen are philosophical, even though experiences *from* such pedagogies can be reflected upon through different forms of philosophical practices. Critical reflection upon experience will take the past as material, enlightening the experience while opening up to the here and now and to the future. The relationship to pedagogy for the unforeseen is thus indirect and hidden, as called for by Saeverot.

This brings us to part 3 of our essay, where we reflect upon our attempts to handle our concerns and act upon them through our joint curriculum development and -teaching of an interdisciplinary phd-level course for our colleagues from all four faculties at our university.

Acting upon our concerns in pedagogical practice in HE

Reflections such as the ones we have formulated in part 2 forms part of the background when we, the authors of this essay, have had the opportunity to develop and facilitate a phd-level course for our colleagues at the University of Southeastern Norway. The participants have so far been colleagues who do not have a doctoral degree, but who are working to become acknowledged as having

⁶¹ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: “Bildung towards wisdom through dialogue in teacher education”, in *Arts and humanities in higher education*, 18, 1, special issue: The Art of Dialogue, edited by ALTHORF, Marije, 2016, pp. 76-90.

competence that equals a phd, and be granted the title of associate professors (in Norwegian called “førstelektor”). They can then work further to be acknowledged as docent professors. However, from the year 2020/2021 the course is opened to those who are working to qualify as professors with phd as well, because they too need to document the ability to reflect theoretically upon their pedagogical practice. By the end of 2020, 55 colleagues will have completed the phd-level course, earning 10 ECTS.

Developing the curriculum

The university board and the programme committee of the so called “førstelektorprogram” had named the course they invited us to develop “Pedagogisk kompetanseutvikling og utdanningskvalitet”, which can be translated “Pedagogical competence development and quality of education”. Hence, two of the concepts previously criticized in part 1 of this essay, were given us as a seemingly unescapable framework. The programme committee had also made the decision that the course should include the following three themes:

1. Pedagogical philosophy (which associate professor Guro Hansen Helskog was invited to be in charge of),
2. Didactics with a focus in e-learning (which professor Andreas Lund was invited to be in charge of)
3. Pedagogical professionalism (which professor Glenn-Egil Torgersen was invited to be in charge of).

Helskog was granted the responsibility of leading the curriculum development work in our group of three scholars, and later be head teacher of the courses. Now, how did we set up the course and give it a content that would address our previously described concerns in a constructive way? Before starting the developmental work, the first we did was to specify the themes so that they better fitted our

respective pedagogical perspectives and practices, while indirectly addressing our concerns:

1. Pedagogical philosophy and ethics with an emphasis on edification through self-reflexivity and dialogical approaches
2. Didactics with an emphasis on e-learning and digital methods of teaching
3. Pedagogical professionalism with an emphasis on innovation, including pedagogy for the unforeseen.

We thus kept the concepts chosen by the programme committee, while framing the course with notions reflected upon in part 2 of our essay, namely notions such as *edification*, *self-reflexivity*, *dialogical approaches*, and *pedagogy for the unforeseen*. The intention was to make sure we organized and taught the course in such a way that it altogether would lead the participants through an edifying process. In the syllabus we included articles written by scholars drawn upon in this essay, such as Hellesnes, Løvlie, Lindseth and Biesta, as well as literature on philosophical practice, essay writing and pedagogy for the unforeseen.

Setting up the course

We began the course with an introduction to pedagogical philosophy that was inspired by the German Socratic Dialogue approach— which participants also read - in line with the Dialogos approach. First, participants philosophized upon personal experiences based in the philosophical question “What is good higher education pedagogy?” Then, upon reading different parts of the literature chosen for the theme (which has also been thoroughly referred earlier in this essay), including Hellesnes, Skjervheim, Løvlie and Lindseth, participants introduced each other to this literature, and reflected critically upon it, also in relation to their own practice and experiences.

The purpose of beginning the course this way was to set in motion the edifying process that was supposed to be enforced throughout the rest of the course. Because the participants came from different faculties representing very different knowledge regimes, such as kinder garden pedagogy and engineering, economy and nursing, literature and optometry, law, mathematics and geology, the perspectives represented in the course were diverse, expanding the horizons of understanding of each participant – including us as course facilitators. Hence, the diversity of participants was used as a resource in the course, making possible the bridging of institutional and academic divides through joint reflection, dialogue and “samhandling”. In order to contribute to participants’ awareness of relationships and critical potential concerning the uniqueness of the disciplines, as well as their limitations and possibilities in inter-disciplinary relationships, students studied Phenix’⁶² analytical concepts “synthetic coordination” and “analytic simplification”, amongst other. As part of the philosophical-pedagogical and critical educational (Bildung) dimension, emphasis was placed on raising awareness of relationships between the disciplines’ possible inherent structures on the one hand, and interdisciplinarity on the other. Participants were also encouraged to reflect upon these relationships’ significance for development and innovation of new and creative curriculums and renewal of pedagogical practice within their own higher education subject and professions. Through this, our purpose was to contribute to edifying integration as opposed to encyclopaedic fragmentation. This also implied combining dialogical reading of course literature with oral and written philosophical reflections throughout the course. The reflections were based in personal HE-teaching experiences as well as in the

⁶² PHENIX, Philip: “The Dicipines As Curriculum Content”, in GRESS, James & PURPEL, David (eds.), *Curriculum. An Introduction To The Field*, Berkeley, McCuthan Publishing Corporation, p. 139-148, 1988.

literature, done individually as well as through philosophical dialogues and interdisciplinary group work, in line with principles in the Dialogos approach to wisdom oriented pedagogy⁶³ and pedagogy for the unforeseen⁶⁴.

The foundational principles in these approaches transcend the limitations of the constructive alignment approach and of competence-based approaches, while promoting *samhandling* and thus unification and integration (as opposed to fragmentation and disintegration) between people belonging to different professions and academic disciplines. In their final exam, participants are supposed to write a personal essay in which they put themselves as university teachers “at trial”. This leads us to part 4 of our paper, in which we bring in the perspectives of participants in the course. How have they experienced their personal journey with regards to the notions? With the written permission of participants, we have drawn out some excerpts from their final essay in the course, in which they were also supposed to reflect upon their experiences and “outcome” of the course through meta-reflections. Their meta-reflections are categorized under five dimensions of edifying processes already discussed in the critical-theoretical part of our article. The categories are as follows:

1. Edification through philosophical self-reflection
2. Edification through inter-disciplinary ‘samhandling’
3. Edification as development of pedagogical pronesis
4. Preparing students for the unforeseen
5. Towards edification-oriented pedagogical practices

⁶³ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2019a.

⁶⁴ TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015.

Meta-reflections from participants

With written permission from course participants, we have extracted key reflections from exam essays and final evaluations. The reflections are categorized under the five dimensions of edification listed above. However, because it is impossible to include all reflections, we have chosen four or five examples under each category. We have chosen to let the reflections speak for themselves.

Edification through philosophical self-reflection

One claims that “I reflect more upon my own role in relation to students than I did before”. Another emphasises increased awareness about his or her horizon of understanding and role as a university teacher: “My role as an educator and my framework of preferences have been challenged, and I have become more conscious about what I do, how and when”. A third example is the participant who claims that the course has “provided an opportunity to take a step back and lift ones eyes above the context one usually is in. It was useful for me that reading tasks were set in advance, because I was forced to immerse myself in literature that was new to me and which I would not have trace don my own. This has given me new perspectives and challenged my ‘truths’ about teaching and reminded me of how important it is to be curious and in motion”. A forth writes that he or she “hopes that the reflection processes I have been in, and the new discoveries that I have made during the course in pedagogical competence development and educational quality, will make me a better teacher in my subject and a better supervisor within my profession”. A fifth participants claims that “the expectations in my academic community is mostly about being professionally good, while lecturing, supervision, relations, ethics and reflection is under prioritized. By participating

in this course I have gained insight and knowledge that I did not have before”.

Edification through inter-disciplinary ‘samhandling’

A participant puts emphasis on his or her development of awareness regarding developing an inter disciplinary perspective through ‘samhandling’: “The collaboration between others across disciplinary divides has been important in order to understand quality of education as superior preferences across academic disciplines”. Another claims to have been inspired by getting to know how other professions solve their pedagogical responsibilities: “There are many ways to solve ones mission as a teacher, and it was inspiring to discuss improtatn pedagogical questions with academic staff that work in different subjects and in completely different ways”. A third saw the potential of interdisciplinary ‘samhandling’ across faculties: “It was especially fruitful that we had to make use of each other`s competences and collective resources. However challenging, the instructions have been very useful in order to avoid taking the usual paths. The sessions has given room for dialogues across disciplines and faculties about superior structures and values”.

Edification towards pedagogical phronesis

One participant claims that the course has lead her to “reflect more about what is demanded of prudence and practical wisdom (phronesis) to be a good teacher of language and literature in teacher education”. Another claims that he or she has wondered about “the meaning of practical wisdom (phronesis) both when it comes to the qualification of students and of myself as a professional university teacher”. Her or she is underlining that through practical wisdom “the importance of ethical reflection and the ability to act with good professional judgment, which is

essential in the practical action competence of the child welfare worker” is brought explicitly to attention. A third participant reflects upon the necessity of being open and questioning towards the unknown: “(...) I now see that I to a greater extent need to take an investigative approach toward phenomena that are unknown”. A fourth example is the participant who claims that he or she has experienced that “My belief that critical reflection as a foundation is extremely important for students who are entering a profession where care, play, learning and edification is part of professional practice” is strengthened.

Preparing students for the unforeseen

One example is the participant who stated that “I have earlier not been very conscious about the fact that we are educating students for the unforeseen. This has been a great inspiration for developing the themes that our studies in economy consist of. Even if the ideas involved in pedagogy for the unforeseen is relatively simple, this is not necessarily something one would think about when standing in front of students”. Another participant reflected upon characteristics of a university teacher who is focused on developing students’ preparedness for future unforeseen events, stating that “alertness for signs of what is emerging of both good and bad, of opportunities and risks” is among the virtues needed». Moreover, a third participant stated that “I have had my eyes opened for the value of creating pedagogical situations that challenge students for good action in unfamiliar situations. Before I related this more to first aid training courses and crisis management, but now I see that this can be useful in many academic subdisciplines”. A fourth participant claimed that “It is easy to related the unforeseen to unwanted events with adverse consequences for individual, society and nature. However, what might be even more important is to

identify signs of positive unforeseen events, seize them and develop them to the best of our world”.

Towards edification-orientated pedagogical practices

One participant states that “I experience that the course structure has emphasized the edifying process as an ‘arena for learning’ ”, while another emphasises that “the written assignments have been different in content and form, and thus given different approaches and opportunities for reflection, both individually and in groups”. This has lead him or her to “try out new forms of teaching, to tune in to supervision in different ways than earlier, and to secure that the dialogues with students are held in personal, authentic but yet academically anchored ways”. A third participant emphasises that “in encounters with students I have now become more aware of how their edification is enhanced through scholarly demands and feedback”. Further, a fourth participant states that the course has given inspiration to judge and further develop his or her pedagogical practice, saying that he or she wants to “praise the exiting choice of course literature and the structure with assignment and presentations in groups in the sessions. I experience it as useful when one later is to evaluate one`s own pedagogical practice, and make judgments about the forms of assessment one should use in ones own courses”. These elements are also emphasised by a fifth participant, who claims that the phd-course has given him/her inspiration and motivation to

“...have as a goal that my students should gain true insight, develop curricula and teaching practices that has high relevance for practice, see theory and practice in relation to each other, to facilitate student active forms of learning, and waking students from slumber through unforeseen events in the classroom, and to a greater extent integrate digital methods in teaching practice”.

Summary and final comment

We began this article by describing our concerns that didactical models and practical pedagogies of higher education seem to be developing in increasingly limited competence oriented, instrumental and technical (in the Aristotelian sense of *techne* and *poiesis*) way, leading to fragmentation and disintegration, amongst other. We then reflected critically and theoretically upon our concern by tracing some roots of the concerns in the history of pedagogy, more specifically by relating them to the European traditions of *Bildung* (edification) and to the Aristotelian notions of *phronesis* and *praxis*. In part 3 we described our attempts to handle our concerns practically through the development and teaching a phd-level course for university teachers from all four faculties at our university. The course was set up with the purpose of setting in motion a process of edification. Concretely, we included philosophical practices as ways of facilitating edifying and wisdom oriented pedagogy for the unforeseen⁶⁵, ⁶⁶, preparing university teachers and their students for good action in an open and unpredictable future. Philosophical practices and pedagogies for the unforeseen, which both have the characteristics of indirect and “hidden” dialectical and thus Socratic teaching methods, were the main approaches used in the course.

Based in our concerns, theoretical reflections, practical-pedagogical trials and feedback from course participants, we have two concrete suggestions for teaching practice in higher education:

⁶⁵ HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education. Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2019a.

⁶⁶ TORGERSEN, Glenn-Egil (ed.): *Pedagogikk for det uforutsette [Pedagogy for the Unforeseen]*, Oslo, Bergen, Fagbokforlaget, 2015.

- 1) The staff, both scientific and administrative, should focus less on traditional aims and objectives as indicators of learning outcomes and quality. Instead, higher education should focus on open edificational and creative oriented approaches to teaching that includes philosophical practices and “samhandling” across disciplines.
- 2) All higher education study programmes should to some extent train students for unforeseen events in society, while explicating possible contributions and limitations to different scenarios.

Edification oriented teaching sets inner and relational existential movements in motion. Such motions are created through the existential encounters between the individual and the content, and between the individuals who take part in the pedagogical situation. Hence, *the edifying process itself* comes to the foreground, while the aims and methods are pushed to the background, which is what gives edification oriented pedagogical practice their critical tilt towards logical-instrumental aims- and learning outcome oriented practices. As participants meta-reflection notes indicate, we seem so far to have succeeded quite well in creating a course that has edification at the centre. However, we continue to develop this particular course as well as our teaching practice in general, both based in feedback from participants, as well as in critical reflection upon our own experiences with teaching the course. This means that none of the three courses we have facilitated so far has been equal, as we keep trying out new pedagogical approaches and new ways to include philosophical practices in the course. For instance, this year we have had an increased focus on ethical reflection.

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REFLECTIVE PRACTICE RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

INVESTIGACIÓN DE PRÁCTICA REFLEXIONADA EN LA EDUCACIÓN DE MAESTROS

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Abstract: In this essay the approach of reflective practice research, as introduced by the philosopher Anders Lindseth, is outlined and its relevance for teacher education is discussed. For that purpose, central theoretical as well as methodological aspects of this research approach are presented and further investigated. By means of illustrative case studies, examples are given on how this approach can be of use for teacher students in order to develop research competence, on the one hand. On the other, this essay examines how a teacher can reflect his or her own practice, in terms of self-studies, in order to learn from experience and to develop towards so-called *phronesis* (practical wisdom or prudence).

Keywords: Reflective practice research, teacher education, teacher student, philosophical practice, phronesis

Resumen: En este artículo, se describe el enfoque de la investigación práctica reflexiva del filósofo Anders Lindseth y se discute su relevancia para la formación del profesorado. Para ello, se presentan y se investigan a fondo los aspectos teóricos y metodológicos centrales de este enfoque de investigación. Por medio de estudios de casos ilustrativos, se dan ejemplos de cómo esta aproximación es de utilidad para los estudiantes de educación para desarrollar la competencia investigadora. Asimismo, este trabajo examina cómo el maestro

puede reflejar su propia práctica, en términos de autoestudio, para aprender de la experiencia y desarrollarse hacia la llamada *phronesis* (sabiduría práctica o prudencia).

Palabras clave: investigación de práctica reflexiva, formación docente, alumno docente, Filosofía Aplicada, *phronesis*

Introduction

Background

Today, in many European countries it is part of the curriculum that teacher students acquire research skills during their studies; not only to be able to write their master thesis, but also to be able to contribute to innovation processes and educational projects in the school system. Unlike a conventional researcher, a teacher has a genuine inside-perspective on teaching practice, and hence, possesses valuable resources in terms of first-hand experiences and insights that seem to be vital in order to innovate the education system and to further develop teaching practices¹. Therefore, acquiring research skills as teacher students appears to be highly relevant for school development as such.

One of the approaches that fosters research in the context of teaching practice is so-called reflective practice research. The term was coined by Anders Lindseth², a pioneer of *philosophical*

¹ See TILLER, Tom: “Lærerstudenten som forsker” in LEMING, Tove, TILLER, Tom & ALERBY, Eva (eds.): *Forskerstudentene – Lærerstudenter i nye roller*, Cappelen Damm Akademisk, Oslo, 2016, p. 16.

² LINDSETH, Anders: “Refleksiv Praksisforskning”, in Halås, Catrine Torbjørnsen, Kymre, Ingjerd Gåre, Steinsvik, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske Forskningstilnæringer til Profesjonspraksis*, Gyldendal Akademisk, Oslo, 2017a, p. 15-36.

practice in Scandinavia³ and professor emeritus at the Center for Practical Knowledge, at Nord University in Norway, where he contributed important works to the field of nurse education.

According to Lindseth, there is a certain form of knowledge embedded or enclosed in one's own experience, which is fundamentally different from theoretical or factual knowledge, but nevertheless essential for one's professional practice – no matter whether you are a teacher, a nurse, a physician etc.⁴. This knowledge can be unleashed by reflecting on your own experiences as a professional, as a practitioner, so to speak. In other words, the goal of reflective practice research – as the name already indicates – is to reflect on one's own practice in order to improve it, to become better at it⁵. Improvement in this case, however, does not indicate an increase of smartness, effectiveness or cleverness. *To become better*, in the context of reflective practice research, rather relates to goodness in a more ethical sense, as we will see in the course of this essay (this aspect will be further explicated in 2. *Theoretical framework* in this essay).

If we assume that research is essentially concerned with the development of knowledge, then developing practical knowledge can of course be understood as a form of research too. Developing such knowledge through reflection on practice is not necessarily new. John Dewey, the founding-father of experiential learning⁶ is

³ LINDSETH, Anders & SVARE, Helge: "Samtalens plass i et menneskeliv", in *Samtiden*, nr. 3, 2002.

⁴ LINDSETH, Anders: "Forskningens vei – fra livserfaring til en observerbar verden og tilbake til livets virksomheter", in HALÅS, Catrine Torbjørnsen, KYMRE, Ingjerd Gåre, STEINSVIK, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske Forskningstilnærminger til profesjonspraksis*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, 2017b, p. 27.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 244.

⁶ DEWEY, John: *Experience and Education*, Touchstone, New York, NY, 1997.

known for his saying “learning by doing”, which actually read “learning through reflection on doing”⁷.

To a certain degree, also the Community of Inquiry concept by Mathew Lipman⁸ points into a similar direction: A Community of Inquiry can be described as a form of *discovery learning*, where investigating a topic together with others in a group is at the center (with the emphasis on “*together*”). The different perspectives that come to the fore in such a group investigation are often based on personal experiences and support a deeper understanding of the examined topic.

Furthermore, also so-called *philosophical practice* appears to be an influential approach with regards to reflective practice research. In philosophical practice the central method of investigation – the research method, so to speak – is dialogue⁹. And here it has to be mentioned that the term method derives from the term *methodos*, which consists of two words: “*meta*” and “*hodos*”. “*Meta*” can be translated with the English word “*over*”, and “*hodos*” with the term “*way*”. In that sense a *methodos* is nothing else than “*a way over to something*”, a way of reflection¹⁰. In other words, by means of a *methodos* we can reflect over something that we did in order to make it as good or even better next time – and this does not only include products but also practices – for example teaching practices – and our way of life in general.

⁷ PATRICK, Felicia: *Handbook of Research on Improving Learning and Motivation through Educational Game: Multidisciplinary Approaches*, Information Science Reference, Hershey, PA, 2011, p. 1003.

⁸ LIPMAN, Matthew: *Thinking in Education*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p. 84.

⁹ WEISS, Michael Noah (ed.): *The Socratic Handbook. Dialogue Methods for Philosophical Practice*, LIT publishing, Vienna, 2015.

¹⁰ See LINDSETH, Anders: “Being Ill as an Inevitable Life Topic. Possibilities of Philosophical Practice in Health Care and Psychotherapy”, in Weiss, Michael Noah (ed.): *The Socratic Handbook. Dialogue Methods for Philosophical Practice*, LIT, Vienna, 2015, p. 46f.

And last but not least, so-called participatory action research has to be mentioned. It essentially represents a form of research that is understood not to be done *on* or *for* but *with* people¹¹. With people who are directly concerned with the problem or issue under investigation. A basic assumption in this particular action research approach is that those who are concerned with a problem, also possess a genuine knowledge about it. One could call it tacit knowledge, which an outsider, like an external researcher, never would have. The purpose of participatory action research then is to “harness” this knowledge and make it an integral part of the research process.

What distinguishes reflective practice research from participatory action research, is mainly that the latter appears to be more problem-solution oriented. The former is more concerned with deepening one’s understanding of a practice and through that deepened understanding, developments are put in motion. Reflective practice research can lead to solutions but it is not solution-oriented in the first place, instead a research process based on this approach can first and foremost be seen as a form of self-reflection. That is, reflective practice research puts the focus on the practitioner and his or her practice, intending that he or she investigates him- or herself with the prospect of gaining self-knowledge and in that way becomes better as a professional¹².

¹¹ REASON, Peter & BRADBURY, Hilary: “Introduction. Inquiry & Participation in Search of a World Worthy of Human Aspiration”, in REASON, Peter & BRADBURY, Hilary (eds.): *The Sage Handbook of Action Research*, 2nd ed., Sage, London, 2008, p. 1.

¹² LINDSETH, Anders: “Refleksiv Praksisforskning”, in Halås, Catrine Torbjørnsen, Kymre, Ingjerd Gåre, Steinsvik, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske Forskningstilnærminger til Profesjonspraksis*, Gyldendal Akademisk, Oslo, 2017a, p. 244f.

The guiding research question

With that background, the guiding research question of this essay can be formulated as follows: “*What are essential theoretical and practical elements of reflective practice research?*”

In the course of this essay this question will be examined with the focus on teacher education. The writings of Lindseth will form a central resource in this investigation, just as relevant literature related to teacher education. In addition, my personal experiences and reflections as a teacher educator, who frequently works with this approach, are also taken into account.

Overview

In order to find possible answers to the guiding question of this essay, we will take a closer look at central theoretical implications of reflective practice research in section 2. *Theoretical framework*. In the section 3. *Method*, the methodological dimension of this research approach will be outlined. In section 4. *Illustrative case studies*, three case studies are presented in order to give concrete ideas on how reflective practice research can be and has been conducted in teacher education. In section 5. *Discussion*, both the theoretical implications, the methodological dimension as well as the presented cases are discussed. Finally, in section 6. *Concluding remarks*, possible answers on the guiding research question are suggested and concluding remarks are made about reflective practice research when carried out in teacher education.

Theoretical framework

As the name already indicates, reflective practice research represents a form of research on practice. How *practice* can be

understood in more theoretical terms and what it implies to reflect on it – especially with regards to teacher education and teaching practice – will be investigated in the in the present section.

In his same-named article, Biesta poses the question “How does a competent teacher become a good teacher?”¹³. A key assumption in this article is that a teacher education which solely focuses on the acquisition of competences, is in danger to turn into nothing but a tick box exercise¹⁴. The purpose of teacher education then would not be more then to check whether the students achieved everything on the list or not. Though Biesta acknowledges that a teacher student necessarily has to acquire competences, he also claims that these competences would never be sufficient for a student in order to practice what could be called *good teaching*¹⁵. In that respect he presents the formula “good teaching = competences + judgement”¹⁶.

Praxis vs. poiesis

In order to understand what Biesta means with the term judgement, we have to take a closer look at a specific concept from Aristotle about two fundamentally different modes of action¹⁷.

The first one is called *poiesis*: *Poiesis* signifies any activity, which has its goal beyond itself¹⁸. For example, the goal of building a

¹³ BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in: HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015, p. 3-20.

¹⁴ See *ibidem*, p. 4.

¹⁵ See *ibidem*, p. 5.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ ARISTOTLE: *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1980, p. 141f.

¹⁸ STAUDE, Detlef: “The Path of Consideration. Philosophical Practice in

house is not the building process as such, rather the goal is to live in this house. Therefore, *poiesis* is concerned with what can be called *how-to-do knowledge* (or simply *know-how*), which Aristotle called *techné*. Therefore, *poiesis* can also be understood as some kind of *making-action*, since it is based on knowing how to make things, so to speak¹⁹.

Praxis on the other hand is the kind of activity which has its goal within itself, so to speak²⁰. Simple examples for *praxis* are listening to music or going for a walk – we listen to music or go for a hike because we simply enjoy these activities, and that is it. In other words, *praxis* is about *well-being*, however not just in the simple sense of *being happy* or *being satisfied*²¹. *Praxis* is oriented towards the promotion of human flourishing, which Aristotle called *eudaimonia*. In contrast to *poiesis*, as some sort of *making-action*, *praxis* represents a form of *doing-action* as well as *good action*, since it is concerned with *what is to be done* in a given situation (that is, it is concerned with *what would be good to be done* in that situation. As such, *praxis* is not about *how-to-do knowledge* in the first place, but rather about *what-to-do knowledge*, which Aristotle

Dialogic Life Accompaniment” in Weiss, Michael Noah (ed.): *The Socratic Handbook. Dialogue Methods for Philosophical Practice*, LIT publishing, Vienna 2015, p. 42f.

¹⁹ CARR, Wilfred: “What is an Educational Practice”, in *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 21.2., 1987, p. 163-175.

²⁰ STAUDE, Detlef: “The Path of Consideration. Philosophical Practice in Dialogic Life Accompaniment” in Weiss, Michael Noah (ed.): *The Socratic Handbook. Dialogue Methods for Philosophical Practice*, LIT publishing, Vienna 2015, p. 42f.

²¹ BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in: HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015, p. 15.

called *phronesis* (a term often translated with *practical wisdom* or *prudence*²²).

Phronesis in teacher education

Before examining the term *phronesis* closer, let us first refer the concepts of *praxis* and *poiesis* to what is commonly understood by the term *teaching practice*. With the previously outlined concept of *praxis*, teaching practice appears to receive a new and different connotation. By distinguishing *poiesis* and *praxis* we become aware that teaching practices cannot only be about reaching goals which lie beyond these practices. In concrete terms, teaching at school cannot only be about having pupils acquiring knowledge, skills and competences, or preparing them in order to get good grades – as some sort of goals to which the activity of teaching is nothing but a means. Understanding teaching practice in this way, turns it into a *poietic* activity and it would not deserve the term practice anymore.

Teaching practice in the sense of *praxis* however, implies that “the ultimate orientation of all education should be the well-being and flourishing of our students”²³. With this in mind we can return to

²² HANSEN, Finn Thorbjørn: “The Call and Practices of Wonder. How to evoke a Socratic Community of Wonder in Professional Settings”, in WEISS, Michael Noah (ed.): *The Socratic Handbook. Dialogue Methods for Philosophical Practice*, LIT publishing, Vienna, 2015, p. 217-240. Or: HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education: Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*. Routledge, Abingdon, 2019. Or: HØJLAND, Michael: *Udvikling af lederes praktiske visdom – med særligt fokus på et kropsligt forankret lederskab*, 2019. Or: WEISS, Michael Noah: “Phronesis – The Backbone of Philosophical Practice?” in STAUDE, Detlef & RUSCHMANN, Eckart (eds.): *Understanding the Other and Oneself*, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, Cambridge, 2018, p. 4-17.

²³ BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in:

Biesta's initial question about the difference between a competent teacher and a good teacher. This difference lies in the – acquired, or not-yet-acquired – ability to “make judgements about what is educationally desirable. For this teacher needs practical wisdom (phronesis)”²⁴. In other words, *phronesis* can be seen as the ability to do the right thing in a given situation – i.e. the concrete teaching situation – with regards to human flourishing, that is, *the good life* overall²⁵. That is, as a *phronetic* teacher my overall intention is to foster the flourishing of my students, in whatever I do in my teaching, instead of mere having them reach predefined learning targets. In concrete terms, this is what defines the difference between a competent and a good teacher.

Furthermore, as for example Gallagher has pointed out, *phronesis* cannot be taught, it can only be learned²⁶. It can only be learned since it comes through self-knowledge – “know thyself” as Socrates put it. And self-knowledge cannot be taught²⁷. And in order to gain self-knowledge, self-reflection is required, that is, a reflection of my own experiences, my attitudes, my actions and finally, my practices. And it is here, where the starting point of reflective practice research (and also *phronesis*) is to be found: in reflecting on my own practices (as a teacher, nurse, physician

HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015, p. 18.

²⁴ Ibidem.

²⁵ WEISS, Michael Noah: “Phronesis – The Backbone of Philosophical Practice?” in STAUDE, Detlef & RUSCHMANN, Eckart (eds.): *Understanding the Other and Oneself*, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, Cambridge, 2018, p. 4-17.

²⁶ GALLAGHER, Shaun: *Hermeneutics and Education*, Suny Press, Albany, NY, 1992, p. 198.

²⁷ See ibidem.

etc.)²⁸. In this respect it becomes evident why Lindseth distinguishes two types of practice research, namely instrumental practice research and reflective practice research²⁹. While the first one is about generating *how-to-do* knowledge (*techné*), the second one is concerned with *what-to-do* knowledge (*phronesis*), that is, finding orientation in one's professional conduct³⁰.

The virtuosity of the teacher

As indicated in the previous section, reflective practice research is rooted in philosophy in general and in virtue ethics in particular. If we assume, as many Ancient philosophers like Plato or Socrates suggest³¹, that practical wisdom is *virtue*, then virtue comes with experience – “experience is the fruit of years” claimed Aristotle³². Like a musician who develops his or her virtuosity by practicing, it appears to be the same with a teacher intending to develop *phronesis*. It comes with practice and experience, and the reflection on experience. Consequentially, such a virtue-based approach in teacher education represents an approach that aims at “the formation of educationally virtuous professionals”³³. And reflective

²⁸ See LINDSETH, Anders: “Forskningens vei – fra livserfaring til en observerbar verden og tilbake til livets virksomheter”, in Halås, Catrine Torbjørnsen, Kymre, Ingjerd Gåre, Steinsvik, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske Forskningstilnæringer til profesjonspraksis*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, 2017b, p. 243-259.

²⁹ See *ibidem*, p. 246.

³⁰ See *ibidem*.

³¹ GALLAGHER, Shaun: *Hermeneutics and Education*, Suny Press, Albany, NY, 1992, p. 198f.

³² ARISTOTLE: *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1980, 1142a 6-7.

³³ BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in: HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015, p.

practice research can be seen as one of several ways to foster such formation, so to speak³⁴.

Method

In the following section, the methodological dimension of reflective practice research as well as several of this dimension's key aspects are presented. This section will be based on both Lindseth's writings on the subject as well as on experiences that I gained when supervising teacher students in reflective practice research projects.

The research process

In principle, the actual research process in reflective practice research can be outlined in the form of three steps:

- 1) making experiences,
- 2) reflecting on these experiences, and
- 3) trying to gain (self-)insight into one's practices and experiences.

Important methodological aspects are self-observation, and also observing others and then referring the observed to one's own practice. Here, both forms of observation are meant in a more phenomenological sense³⁵. In this respect and in reference to Ricœur³⁶, Anders Lindseth introduces an important term with

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³⁴ LINDSETH, Anders: "Forskningens vei – fra livserfaring til en observerbar verden og tilbake til livets virksomheter", in Halås, Catrine Torbjørnsen, Kymre, Ingjerd Gåre, Steinsvik, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske Forskningstilnærminger til profesjonspraksis*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, 2017b, p. 244.

³⁵ See *ibidem*, p. 249f.

³⁶ RICŒUR, Paul: *Sprogfilosofi*, Vinden, København, 1979, p. 86.

regards to the second step of research process, called *concrete reflection*³⁷.

Concrete reflection and experiences of discrepancy

Concrete reflection means that the respective practitioner, i.e. a teacher, a nurse etc., tells or writes about an experience (a “phenomenon”, so to speak) and then subsequently asks what this experience might essentially be about³⁸. Here it can turn out that the experience represents a so-called *experience of discrepancy*, that means, that the practitioner has the – often intuitive – impression that something in what he or she experienced does not “feel right”³⁹.

Let me give a simple example from teaching practice: One plans a lesson with great care and has the impression that he or she is well prepared. When the lesson is then hold, it is far from what the teacher had expected. Wondering about the question “What has happened?” can then be the point of departure for telling and reflecting the experience.

In general, by means of such experiences of discrepancy one can get a better understanding of oneself, one’s attitude, values and of how one *is*, so to speak, and how one is *doing*. In this process of self-reflection, it appears to be mandatory that one truly intends to get to the bottom of these sometimes quite personal matters. Without an honest and authentic approach to self-reflection, self-knowledge in the sense of a development towards *phronesis* does not seem to be possible.

³⁷ LINDSETH, Anders: “Forskningens vei – fra livserfaring til en observerbar verden og tilbake til livets virksomheter”, in Halås, Catrine Torbjørnsen, Kymre, Ingjerd Gåre, Steinsvik, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske Forskningstilnærminger til profesjonspraksis*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, 2017b, p. 247.

³⁸ Ibidem.

³⁹ See ibidem.

Parrhesia

With respect honesty and authenticity when performing self-reflection, Anders Lindseth refers to the Greek term of *parrhesia*, which in English is often translated with *truth telling*⁴⁰. Truth telling here can be understood as some sort of experience-sharing and story-telling, making reflective practice research a narrative-based approach. As mentioned previously, telling about one's experiences or writing them down is a central part of the research process. This part of the research can already be understood as a form of reflection – Ricoeur called it concrete reflection⁴¹, as mentioned previously. And concrete reflection is seen to be essential for the subsequent *critical reflection*, as will be explained later⁴².

Best practices

By introducing the term *experience of discrepancy*, one might get the impression that only negative experiences can be investigated by means of reflective practice research. This, however, is not the case. Also positive experiences or so-called *best practices* can be examined by means of this research approach⁴³. As the name already indicates, best practices signify practices, which were performed excellently. Why they went so well can be investigated by means of reflection. In this way one can become aware of

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 259.

⁴¹ RICŒUR, Paul: *Sprogfilosofi*, Vinden, København, 1979, p. 86.

⁴² LINDSETH, Anders: "Forskningens vei – fra livserfaring til en observerbar verden og tilbake til livets virksomheter", in Halås, Catrine Torbjørnsen, Kymre, Ingjerd Gåre, Steinsvik, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske Forskningstilnæringer til profesjonspraksis*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, 2017b, p. 248.

⁴³ WEISS, Michael Noah & OHREM, Sigurd: "Philosophical Practice as Action Research. The Socratic Method at Norwegian Folk High Schools" in *HASER – International Journal for Philosophical Practice*, Vol. 7, 2016, p. 161.

central aspects which are important when carrying out a similar practice in the future. At its essence, this seems to be what developing practical wisdom is to be about, namely, to reflect good and bad experiences and see what one can learn from them (about oneself).

Research format

Another important aspect with regards to the methodology of reflective practice research, appears to be the structure of a research paper. In principle, various formats appear to be suitable in this respect. Lindseth once suggested a research design consisting of (a) *concrete reflection*, that is, describing one's experience in the form of a case, (b) *critical reflection*, where one reflects on the essence of the described experience (a guiding question here can be "What is at stake in this experience?"), and (c) *theoretical reflection*, where the author discusses the insights from the concrete and the critical reflection in the light of relevant theories⁴⁴.

However, also other formats are possible, for example essay writing. In my experience even the so-called IMRaD structure has turned out to be useful. Though, as a philosopher, I am principally critical towards this format, it can give a teacher student a clear idea of how to turn his or her teaching experience into an academic narrative. The format itself usually consists of (1) an *introduction*, sometimes (2) a part on *theory*, (3) a description of the used *methodology*, i.e. self-observation, (4) a presentation of *results* in terms of different cases, and (5) the reflection and *discussion* of these cases as well as concluding remarks.

⁴⁴ LINDSETH, Anders: "Dosenten i et FoU-perspektiv. Refleksiv praksisforskning som en vei mot dosentkompetanse", in BACHKE, Carl Christian & HERMANSEN, Mads (eds.): *Å satse på dosenter. Et utviklingsarbeid*, Cappelen Damm Akademisk, Oslo, 2020, p. 97f.

In the following three cases are presented in order to give illustrative examples about how reflective practice research can be and has already be done in teacher education.

Illustrative case studies

Anders Lindseth presents several projects from PhD and Master students in his publications on reflective practice research⁴⁵. However, not only for graduate students this approach seems to be suitable when conducting research. For undergraduates too, it proved to be an appropriate way in order to become familiar with both research activities as well as with one's professional practice. Over the last years I had the opportunity to supervise about 60 teacher students who carried out projects following a reflective practice research approach. These projects were mainly bachelor theses, R&D projects, and early research papers. In the following I will present three projects in the form of illustrative cases, which have been conducted by students when working on their bachelor thesis. For reasons of research ethics, the cases have been anonymized.

Case 1

The first project was carried out by two students who investigated the question "How can we use formative assessment in order to foster pupils' learning?" With this project they intended to become more aware of their own formative assessment practices. By using their own teaching experiences, they wanted to gain insight about how to improve or change these practices. In the course of the project, they examined three teaching situations. The first of them

⁴⁵ See i.e. *ibidem*.

is about assessing process-oriented writing in terms of giving feedback and practicing teacher-student dialogues. The actual process of investigation was a so-called meta-reflection⁴⁶. Here, the two students reflected on what they said in the respective teaching situation, how they said it and how the pupils responded to it. In terms of outcomes, the students presented insights about how to improve communication when practicing formative assessment.

The second teaching situation examined in this project was about a lesson in which the two students employed what is called station teaching. It was a math lesson, and in their thesis they reflected on their own station teaching approaches in order to figure out whether and why (or why not) they would foster so-called cognitive accommodation processes by means of station teaching. They asked themselves, when they would manage to help their pupils to transcend their current cognitive schemes and when they would not, and why. The insights then, were of more personal nature on the one hand (that is, what did the students learn personally). On the other they were also formulated in more generalized terms, so that they could be of help for other teachers too, when using station teaching.

The third teaching situation dealt with so-called cooperative learning. Here the teacher students examined their own attention (or the absence of attention) and the respective consequences this had on the learning process of their pupils. In the meta-reflection of this case the students became aware of different aspects of their attention and how they could keep it best in teaching situations.

All in all, this bachelor thesis illustrated how teacher students can reflect on themselves and their own teaching practice – not only to improve it, but to grow and develop as professionals. As the topics

⁴⁶ See Weiss, Michael Noah& Helskog, Guro Hansen: “‘They often have AHA-moments’: how training teachers to philosophize the Dialogos Way with their students can promote life skills and democratic citizenship in education” in *Educational Action Research*, 2020, p. 7f.

of the three examined teaching situations show, it often are what one might call “little details” that are investigated by means of reflective practice research. However, in the course of such investigations it turns out that these details are not so little, but in fact essential in order to learn to succeed with certain practices.

Case 2

In another bachelor thesis a student investigated the question: “When do I have the impression to be a good role model for my pupils?” In this thesis too, the student examined three specific experiences which were related to her role as a teacher. The first was about a visit in the public swimming pool with her own kids. Suddenly and unexpectedly, the teacher met some of her pupils there and she realized that for her pupils she cannot be a different person with a different attitude (involving lower ethical standards, i.e.) outside school.

The second experience dealt with a situation where the teacher student once accidentally broke a classroom rule (by walking into the classroom with brown shoes). She realized that the way she would deal with the situation was decisive in order to keep her integrity as a teacher towards her pupils.

The last experience examined a situation which occurred on a daily basis at the school. It was when the kids had lunch break and when they could go out in the school yard. Almost all of them needed her help with putting on their jackets, gloves and boots etc. The student then describes how often she was tempted to lose her temper in that situation. Luckily this never happened since she always recognized that this would jeopardize her being a good role model. What she realized here was the relevance of so-called stoic calm when being a teacher.

In summary this bachelor thesis reflects on the relevance of a teacher’s ethical attitude in everyday situations at the school.

Furthermore, it points out the significance of a teacher's prudence (that is, *phronesis*) and how it can be further developed by reflective practice research.

Case 3

The last bachelor thesis that is present here in the form of an illustrative case, dealt with the question "When do I, as teacher, use good learning strategies for pupils with very poor eyesight?" In order to find possible answers on it, the two students who wrote this thesis too, examined three teaching situations.

The first one investigates ways of how to teach a pupil with almost no eyesight to count and to calculate. For that, a teacher piled up plates, for example one pile with four plates and one with six plates. The pupil could then count the number of plates on each pile by touching (and hence counting) each plate. When the two piles then were put together to one, the pupil could do the same procedure again, and learn that $4 + 6 = 10$ (and in that way learn to calculate).

The second and third teaching situation were about lessons on the solar system for which the teacher had prepared styrofoam balls in different sizes (illustrating the different sizes of the planets), and then hanging them on the ceiling of the classroom, like a downscaled micro model of the solar system. In this way all pupils, also the one with poor eyesight, could learn about the size and position of each planet in the solar system.

In their bachelor thesis, the students concluded that they did not only learn how to adjust their teaching practice for pupils with poor eyesight, but that they also learned how they could integrate tactile sense into their teaching in general in order, for example, to foster abstract thinking.

When it comes to the development of *phronesis* in teacher education by means of reflective practice research, then these three

presented cases (4.1.-4-3.) seem to tell us that reflecting on the details of a respective teaching situation and how one might respond to it, are essential in the learning process of a teacher student. Furthermore, these three case studies are not merely about acquiring technical skills in teaching situations (in terms of *techné*). Rather they are about raising awareness on how one *is* and how one *is doing* as a teacher in his or her own teaching practice, and how one can improve and develop as a teacher – not only by acquiring theoretical knowledge, but rather, by generating practical knowledge.

Discussion

As mentioned in the introduction, the guiding question of this essay reads “What are essential theoretical and practical elements of reflective practice research?”. This question will now be at the center of the discussion carried out in this section.

As one could already see in the introduction, reflective practice research differs from other forms of research, basically in terms of its intention. This intention is not only about practitioners becoming researchers (like in participatory action research⁴⁷), or about practitioners reflecting their experiences (like in experiential learning⁴⁸). Rather this research approach intends to foster a practitioner’s capacity of self-reflection. The question that comes up here, is whether reflective practice research still deserves the

⁴⁷ REASON, Peter & BRADBURY, Hilary: “Introduction. Inquiry & Participation in Search of a World Worthy of Human Aspiration”, in REASON, Peter & BRADBURY, Hilary (eds.): *The Sage Handbook of Action Research*, 2nd ed., Sage, London, 2008, p. 1.

⁴⁸ PATRICK, Felicia: *Handbook of Research on Improving Learning and Motivation through Educational Game: Multidisciplinary Approaches*, Information Science Reference, Hershey, PA, 2011, p. 1003.

name *research* – or, as has been criticized by some, whether this approach rather resembles a form of therapy⁴⁹? In response to that critique, one can righteously claim that the Socratic “Know thyself” and the Socratic dialogues of Plato, which took their point of departure in everyday life experiences, can be understood as the source of origin of Western science and research as such. In other words, reflective practice research appears to be in line with the tradition of Western philosophy. Furthermore, in addition to its obvious phenomenological and hermeneutical elements, reflective practice research follows an approach similar to those known from the academic discipline of philosophical practice. In this discipline, the investigation of one’s philosophy of life or one’s work philosophy is in the focus⁵⁰. Consequentially, reflective practice research – *in terms* of research – can be seen as a form of philosophical investigation. And if research in general is understood as a practice that produces new knowledge, then reflective practice research generates practical knowledge. In this respect Lindseth’s differentiation between *factual* and *orientational knowledge* can be brought into account, where the latter represents our ability to find orientation, i.e. in life, in one’s profession etc.⁵¹. Self-knowledge obviously represents a form of

⁴⁹ See LINDSETH, Anders: “Forskningens vei – fra livserfaring til en observerbar verden og tilbake til livets virksomheter”, in Halås, Catrine Torbjørnsen, Kymre, Ingjerd Gåre, Steinsvik, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske Forskningstilnæringer til profesjonspraksis*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, 2017b, p. 246.

⁵⁰ See i.e. HELSKOG, Guro Hansen: *Philosophising the Dialogos Way towards Wisdom in Education: Between Critical Thinking and Spiritual Contemplation*. Routledge, Abingdon, 2019. Or: WEISS, Michael Noah (ed.): *The Socratic Handbook. Dialogue Methods for Philosophical Practice*, LIT publishing, Vienna, 2015. Or: LAHAV, Ran: *Stepping out of Plato’s Cave. Philosophical Practice and Self-Transformation*, Solfanelli, Chieti, 2016.

⁵¹ LINDSETH, Anders: “Refleksiv Praksisforskning”, in HALÅS, Catrine Torbjørnsen, KYMRE, Ingjerd Gåre, STEINSVIK, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske*

orientational knowledge, which often offers direction in one's self-development as a professional, i.e. as a teacher. This direction is about a path of improvement, it is about a way of becoming better – not only in the sense of *how* we are doing something (that would be about *technè*) but in the way *who we are* as professionals (which is about our *phronetic quality*⁵²). In this respect, especially the second of the presented cases can be mentioned, which investigated a teacher's professional attitude. By means of this case, we can make out an existential as well as ethical dimension as important aspects of investigation in reflective practice research. It appears to be this existential and ethical dimension that makes this research approach a virtue-based approach. Whether the development of a teacher's virtuosity can and should be a part of educational research can of course be put into question. However, when we remember Biesta's "How can a competent teacher become a good teacher?" then the answer to the question, whether virtuosity should be part of educational research, appears to be clear and of utmost importance in teacher education. In other words, when the goal of reflective practice research is to become better as a practitioner, then this has to be understood in the sense of developing towards prudence, and not simply in the sense of an increase of smartness, effectiveness or cleverness. Rather, it is the practitioner as a *human* being that is addressed here.

In the course of this essay, it was suggested that a competent teacher can become a good teacher through self-reflection and subsequent self-knowledge. However, after supervising about 60

Forskningstilnærminger til Profesjonspraksis, Gyldendal Akademisk, Oslo, 2017a, p. 17.

⁵² BIESTA, Gert: "How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education", in: HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015, p. 18.

students in reflective practice research projects, my impression was and is that the intention of self-reflection and gaining self-knowledge appears to be quite challenging for some students. Often, in the course of such projects, students would drift away from their self-reflective perspective into a more observational perspective. That is, they would not observe themselves in their teaching practices anymore, but they would rather focus on the actions and reactions of their pupils. There is nothing wrong with such a perspective, of course. However, this – often unintended – change of perspective appears to be the turning point where a true *praxis* can turn into mere *poiesis*. With a *poietic* perspective we are tempted to acquire techniques and skills in order to find solutions and quick fixes for certain problems in the classroom. And for sure, one cannot and should not deny the importance of finding solutions to concrete problems, of generating how-to strategies and of *know-how* in education. However, this is not what reflective practice research actually was developed for⁵³. It is not about acquiring *techné*, it is not about generating *how-to-do* knowledge in the first place. Rather, in the context of teacher education, it intends the development of *phronesis* in the sense of the awareness or mindfulness⁵⁴ of a teacher by which he or she can foster human flourishing with both his or her pupils and him- or herself⁵⁵. In an

⁵³ LINDSETH, Anders: “Forskningens vei – fra livserfaring til en observerbar verden og tilbake til livets virksomheter”, in Halås, Catrine Torbjørnsen, Kymre, Ingjerd Gåre, Steinsvik, Kari (eds.): *Humanistiske Forskningstilnæringer til profesjonspraksis*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, 2017b, p. 243.

⁵⁴ WEISS, Michael Noah: “Philosophical Mindfulness. An Essay about the Art of Philosophizing” in HASER – International Journal of Philosophical Practice, Vol. 8, 2017.

⁵⁵ BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in: HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015, p. 20.

educational context, this kind of human flourishing seems to be relatable to what is called self-formation, which in ancient Greece was called *paideia*⁵⁶. *Paideia*, as the origin of the word *pedagogy*, can be understood as the cultivation of the human being and it once signified the development of existential and ethical attitudes, values and their practice.

It is clear that teaching practice, understood as a *praxis*, receives a different connotation in contrast to *poietic* actions. Teaching practice seen in the light of *praxis* is about good actions in the sense of wise actions. And these wise actions can be summarized by the quality or the capability of the teacher, in order to do the right thing in the given situation with regards to living a good life overall (which of course does not only involve the (work) life of the teacher but also those of his or her pupils.) Such a perspective – in terms of human flourishing – on education in general and teacher education in particular, is ultimately connected with the virtuosity of a teacher, as it seems. And virtuosity, in the sense of *phronesis* and self-knowledge, cannot be taught, as pointed out previously. Finally, each teacher (student) has to develop towards *phronesis* on his or her own; but in order to offer a supportive framework for that task, reflective practice research appears to be a viable option, so to speak.

Concluding remarks

In this essay we took a closer look at the intentions of reflective practice research which is a form of research that puts the focus on the researcher, in terms of self-reflection. The guiding question, “What are essential theoretical and practical elements of reflective

⁵⁶ HADOT, Pierre: *Philosophy as a Way of Life. Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2010, p. 102.

practice research?” can now find at least some temporary answers. The research process of projects in teacher education can be described in three steps: 1) making experiences in the classroom, 2) telling or writing about these experiences and then reflecting on them, and 3) trying to gain (self-)insight into one's own teaching practice. In the course of this essay, it was pointed out that self-insight and self-knowledge can be acquired through experience. Subsequently, this can lead to the development of *phronesis*, that is, practical wisdom. Practical wisdom differs from pure practical knowledge since it does not deal with *how-to-do* knowledge. Rather – in educational contexts – it deals with the question “What to do in a given teaching situation with regards to human flourishing?” and it requires self-knowledge⁵⁷. For teacher students, the prerequisite self-reflection can appear to be new and different from what they know from their previous studies. Nevertheless, reflective practice research in terms of self-studies appears to offer a fruitful way, not in order to educate solely competent teachers but in order to support teacher students to become good⁵⁸.

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⁵⁷ BIESTA, Gert: “How Does a Competent Teacher Become a Good Teacher? On Judgement, Wisdom and Virtuosity in Teaching and Teacher Education”, in: HEILBRONN, Ruth & FOREMAN-PECK, Lorraine (eds.): *Philosophical Perspectives on Teacher Education*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex, 2015, p. 3-20.

⁵⁸ Ibidem.

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**COMENTARIOS, INFORMES
Y ENTREVISTAS**

***STUDIES, REPORTS AND
INTERVIEWS***

PRÁCTICA FILOSÓFICA CON ACCIONES CORPORALES

PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICE WITH CORPORAL ACTIONS

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Resumen: En este artículo brindaré algunos elementos y perspectivas respecto a cómo es posible la realización de prácticas filosóficas a través de acciones corporales. Para entender esto y poder llevarlo a cabo primeramente debemos entender algunos presupuestos y principios generales en torno a una comprensión amplia de la filosofía y la práctica filosófica. Luego de asentar estas bases, me concentraré en tres grandes formas de realizar acciones corporales como parte del trabajo que se realiza en la práctica filosófica. La primera tiene que ver con la captación sensorial del otro. De esta manera enriquecemos enormemente el caudal de elementos que utilizamos para el trabajo con los demás y el desarrollo de hipótesis de trabajo. Un segundo tipo de acciones corporales que podemos incorporar en la práctica filosófica, tiene que ver con la realización de acciones corporales por parte del filósofo práctico. En este caso utilizamos nuestra acción, gesticulación y expresiones como modo de propiciar, profundizar e intensificar procesos filosóficos que se desarrollen a través del diálogo o de cualquier forma. Por último, una tercer forma de inclusión de la acción corporal en el devenir filosófico intersubjetivo, tiene que ver con solicitar la realización de acciones corporales específicas a los otros o de realizarlas en conjunto con ellos. La variedad de posibilidades y de rutas posibles en este caso es inmensa, pero he aquí un potencial indiscutible para el trabajo filosófico con otros, que se construye en principio a partir de la captación de la circunstancia y del proceso filosófico que se venga desarrollando. En cada caso estaré considerando una

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visión amplia de la práctica filosófica que incluye la labor de la consultoría filosófica, la filosofía con/para para niños, los talleres filosóficos y la filosofía aplicada en organizaciones.

Palabras clave: práctica filosófica, acciones, acciones corporales, consultoría Filosófica, Filosofía para Niños, filosofía con niños, talleres filosóficos, filosofía en organizaciones.

Abstract: In this article I will provide some elements and perspectives regarding how it's possible to carry out philosophical practices through corporal actions. To understand this and to be able to do it out first, we must understand some general assumptions and principles around a broad understanding of philosophy and philosophical practice. After laying these foundations, I will focus on three great ways of performing corporal actions as part of the work that is done in philosophical practice. The first has to do with the sensory uptake of the other. In this way we enormously enrich the flow of elements that we use for working with others and the development of working hypotheses. A second type of corporal actions that we can incorporate into philosophical practice has to do with the performance of bodily actions by the practical philosopher. In this case, we use our action, gestures and expressions as a way of promoting, deepening and intensifying philosophical processes that are developed through dialogue or in any way. Lastly, a third way of including corporal actions in intersubjective philosophical interactions has to do with requesting the performance of specific corporal actions from others or performing them in conjunction with them. The variety of possibilities and achievable routes in this case is immense, but here we have an indisputable potential for philosophical work with others, which is built in principle from the grasp of circumstance and the philosophical process that is developing. In each case I will be considering a broad vision of philosophical practice that includes the work of philosophical counseling, philosophy for/with children, philosophical workshops and applied philosophy in organizations.

Key words: philosophical practice, actions, corporal actions, philosophical counseling, Philosophy for Children, philosophy with children, philosophical workshops, philosophy in organizations.

Introducción²

Para comenzar con estas ideas, tengo que referir a algunos elementos epistemológicos de manera algo general. Muchas veces se piensa que la filosofía se define por el pensar, hacer uso del lenguaje, hacer buenas preguntas o desarrollar nuestro “pensamiento crítico”. Ciertamente todas estas cosas pueden sin duda ser parte de la filosofía, tocan diversos ámbitos de lo que esta es o puede hacer pero no abarcan, ninguna de ellas, lo que la filosofía es. Me atrevo a hacer afirmaciones tan fuertes desde el inicio porque tengo la certeza de que nadie (o casi nadie) desea un quehacer filosófico que se refugie únicamente en el marco del “pensar”. A todos nos interesan las ideas cuando se relacionan con el mundo en que vivimos. Aunque las preguntas puedan ser sumamente importantes y gran parte de la filosofía y la práctica filosófica se nutra de ellas, ellas solo generan, en un principio, pensamiento. Una pregunta puede sin duda moverme a actuar, pero solo si primero la decodifico, la analizo y luego tomo una decisión. Únicamente a partir de entonces es que una pregunta se relaciona con una acción. La acción es una cosa distinta a la pregunta, posterior pero no implicada en la primera. Quiero decir, la pregunta es de sumo valor, pero sin tanta dificultad podríamos imaginarnos circunstancias en donde lo importante -es actuar-, no preguntarnos

² La forma de citado de este texto corresponde a un posicionamiento respecto a la lectura y a la relación con las fuentes. Todas las fuentes referidas en el cuerpo del texto aparecen con el nombre de la obra y del autor originales, pero con el lugar y fecha de escritura de la primera edición. Esto tiene que ver con el concepto destacado por el filósofo Enrique Dussel de *locus enuntiationi* (lugar de enunciación) de la obra en cuestión, lo que brinda al lector una referencia acerca de quién, dónde y cuándo afirmó aquello que aquí se menciona. Esto se realiza con la función de comprender el origen de las ideas desde un marco concreto, real e histórico y no solo como pensamientos desprovistos de localización. Posteriormente en el apartado final de bibliografía se referencian las ediciones consultadas con la fecha, lugar y editorial o referencia respectiva.

y justamente esa acción o reacción diferente a la pregunta podría ser la cosa más trascendente y filosófica que pudiera realizarse. En palabras del gran pedagogo Paulo Freire: “debo utilizar todas las posibilidades a mi alcance, no solo para hablar de mi utopía, sino para participar en prácticas coherentes con ella”³.

Finalmente nadie creería a un “teórico” de la justicia que no es justo en sus acciones a un teórico de la amistad que no puede tener ningún amigo. ¿Cuál de estos personajes es el que nos interesa? Aunque la importancia de la teoría es innegable, evidentemente su único valor está dado gracias a la posibilidad de que nosotros tenemos de vincularnos con “las cosas a las que la teoría refiere”. Hablar sobre la justicia o la amistad tiene sentido gracias al amplio grupo de acciones justas o amistosas que existen o podrían existir. Con el lenguaje y el pensamiento crítico es una cuestión bastante similar. De nada me sirve su existencia sin que los sujetos accionen y transformen su modo de vida. ¿Para que hablar o pensar sobre “el encierro”, “la coherencia”, “la armonía”, “la violencia”, “la hospitalidad”, “el acontecimiento”, etc. si estos no están o pudieran estar en el mundo?⁴. Si así fuera, la filosofía simplemente podría hablar sobre “cualquier tema” y no tendría entonces ningún interés social.

Pero la filosofía nace, y no solo eso, se realiza en conjunto en el mundo de nuestras acciones corporales así como de toda la procesualidad viva que somos. Atraviesa nuestra vida como coherencias procedimentales, como corrientes de interconexión,

³ Freire, Paulo: *Pedagogía de la indignación. Cartas pedagógicas en un mundo revuelto*, Siglo XXI, Buenos Aires, 2012, p. 39.

⁴ A esto mismo refería el lógico mexicano Raymundo Morado cuando afirmaba que la lógica es una ciencia pero a la vez un arte, y es un arte porque debemos aplicarla también en la vida cotidiana. (Esto en relación al video publicado recientemente por la Academia Mexicana de Lógica: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wrMuY-9WMc> (consultado el 25 de marzo de 2020).

como cursos de existencia que se relacionan con el sentido que podemos dar y vivir en nuestro devenir humano. La filosofía pasa, sucede -dentro del juego-⁵, no solo en nuestra mente. Así puede decirse que la filosofía existe o está presente en distintos ámbitos de nuestra vida, y lo más lógico es que lo esté más en unos que en otros. A veces nos encontramos con niveles filosóficos casi cercanos a cero, otras veces la filosofía irrumpe con gran vigor en la vida nuestra y en el entorno. Pero incluso aunque parezca que algo que alguien hace no tiene nada en absoluto de filosófico, basta ver con un poco más de cuidado para notar que todo los actos que realizamos poseen, aunque sea, un grado mínimo de filosofía, al menos en forma “germinal”⁶. Esto es importante para la consultoría filosófica o la práctica filosófica en general, ya que nosotros trabajamos con todo tipo de personas y situaciones. También es cierto que un acto posea siempre una dimensión filosófica en forma germinal no significa que la persona, grupo o sociedad en cuestión desee o finalmente logre manifestar esa posibilidad filosófica. Eso depende de muchos factores y uno de los principales es la voluntad y determinación de nuestros invitados a la práctica filosófica. La filosofía no es *a priori* de facto, es un *a priori* siempre como posibilidad.

El punto es que este gran centramiento o interés que la filosofía ha tenido por los procesos de pensamiento y o del lenguaje, ha

⁵ Husserl, en este mismo sentido, proponía una re-consideración de la *doxa* para la *episteme* (Husserl, Edmund: *La crisis de las ciencias europeas y la fenomenología trascendental*, Crítica, Barcelona, 1991, p. 164), Merleau-Ponty decía que la filosofía no era el reflejo de una verdad previa sino la “*realización de una verdad*” (Merleau-Ponty, Maurice: *Fenomenología de la percepción*, Planeta, España, 1994, p. 20).

⁶ Evidentemente no puedo ahondar aquí en estas ideas, si se quisiera profundizar en ello invito a consultar: Sumiacher, David: “La filosofía como una expansión de la vida y los procesos”, en Sumiacher, David: *Prácticas filosóficas comparadas*, Novedades Educativas/Editorial CECAPFI, Buenos Aires, 2020, pp.121-132.

arrastrado también a la práctica filosófica a una tendencia análoga. Las acciones corporales han sido casi olvidadas en la práctica filosófica y a veces incluso en la vida misma de los filósofos. Pero las acciones corporales tienen un gran potencial, un potencial insustituible. Desde esta perspectiva, una acción es una vinculación con la exterioridad⁷. Estas, a su vez, pueden ser de carácter activo o receptivo. Activo cuando infrinjen, transforman, afectan el entorno y receptivas cuando, utilizando los sentidos, perciben el mundo. Al mismo tiempo, además de las acciones corporales existen las acciones discursivas, sobre las que bastante se ha analizado, por ejemplo un representante predilecto en el tratamiento de esto es John Austin⁸. Este tipo de acción se compone básicamente del decir y el escuchar según sea activa o receptiva. Pero más allá de las acciones corporales y las acciones discursivas no hay ningún otro tipo de acción existente dentro de las posibilidades del humano tal como hoy lo conocemos. Como de las acciones discursivas ya se ha hablado mucho, se conoce bastante y también son muy utilizadas dentro del campo de la filosofía y la práctica filosófica, dediquémonos a pensar qué sucede y cómo podemos utilizar el gran potencial de las acciones corporales para este quehacer. Adentrémonos a pensar cómo la acción corporal puede beneficiar o enriquecer el trabajo de la consultoría filosófica, los talleres filosóficos, la filosofía con/para niños o la filosofía en organizaciones.

⁷ Este tipo de ideas pueden consultarse en: Sumiacher, David: "Acts, processes, thought and action in philosophical practice", en Amir, Lydia: *New Frontiers of Philosophical Practice: Expanding Boundaries*, Cambridge, UK, 2017, pp.142-160.

⁸ Uno de sus clásicos textos sobre el tema es: Austin, John: *Cómo hacer cosas con palabras*, Ediciones Paidós, Barcelona, 1982. También en general esto puede investigarse relacionándose con toda la gama de teorías contemporáneas de la lógica informal, teoría de la argumentación o pensamiento crítico.

El primer nivel que aquí voy a presentar consiste en observar o percibir a nuestro(s) interlocutor(es) y los actos que realiza(n) para hacer uso de estas percepciones dentro del proceso de la práctica filosófica. La sensibilidad a las expresiones de la subjetividad del otro es en general una de las capacidades más importantes de aquel que se dedica a hacer este tipo de labor. Dentro de ella está la captación de gestos o movimientos, es decir, acciones corporales efectuadas por nuestro consultante, grupo o personas de la organización con la que estemos trabajando. Entrenando esta sensibilidad, y logrando captar estas acciones como parte de la procesualidad significativa en el otro, puedo luego hacer diferentes cosas. No siempre una vez que observe una actitud o acción interesante, será el momento de enunciar algo respecto, en ocasiones solamente se trata de retenerlo para externarlo después, conectado con otros elementos que puedan dar más fuerza argumentativa a la circunstancia o al proceso filosófico que se esté trabajando. Pero si tienen significatividad, tarde o temprano, esos elementos observados tienen que ser utilizados por el consultor o filósofo práctico, más aún si estos se repiten y se vinculan a algo similar a lo que Ran Lahav llama “patrones”⁹.

Como sea, este es el primer nivel de acercamiento con las acciones corporales en la práctica filosófica, es el nivel en donde el filósofo práctico observa las acciones corporales del otro y las utiliza, las piensa y conecta con el proceso de construcción de hipótesis; o las devuelve -cuestionando lo que el otro hace-: “¿Por qué cuando

⁹ Véase el Cap 4 de Lahav, Ran: *Saliendo de la caverna de Platón*, Loyev Books, Vermont, 2016. Es complejo en este espacio realizar una comparación entre las ideas de este interesante pensador israelí y esta propuesta. A resumidas cuentas, no son -únicamente- los patrones de Lahav el parámetro para tener en cuenta o no una acción corporal respecto a un proceso filosófico. Existe una serie de procesos filosóficos de carácter creativo que no tienen que ver directamente con los patrones, porque no reflejan una dimensión de límite o restricción para el sujeto y sin embargo reportan una gran significatividad.

estaba diciendo lo que dije cambió la forma de su mirada?”, “¿Por qué elevó/le tembló la voz?”, “¿Por qué sus brazos comenzaron a moverse más ampliamente cuando me expresó ese punto?”. Mi perspectiva no adhiere a la idea del “lenguaje no verbal”. Para mí el lenguaje siempre es un proceso compuesto, es decir, una actividad combinada en donde hay una cosa que refiere a otra cosa. Todo lenguaje es una acción (expresión, enunciación o palabra escrita) que refiere a un pensamiento como movimiento hacia sí. Todo el lenguaje es acción o recuerdo de acciones (pronunciación, movimiento de la mano o recuerdo de esos sonidos imágenes que uno mismo u otros han realizado), pero esto siempre se realiza con la intención de provocar un pensamiento como un movimiento hacia sí, esta es siempre es su finalidad. Esto es complejo y no se puede explicar extensamente en este espacio.

Existe el lenguaje natural u orgánico, en donde las acciones poseen algún tipo de vinculación lógico-orgánica con aquello a lo que refieren (como cuando un perro muestra los dientes que -pretende- que se le “entienda” que ha morder si se le acercan, este es lenguaje orgánico porque el perro exhibe los mismos elementos que utilizaría para morder para dar a entender eso al otro, aunque todavía no esté mordiendo o quizá nunca muerda). Este es el lenguaje orgánico en donde existen dos elementos (el mostrar y el sentir/pensar que el otro realiza al ver o percibir lo que se muestra) y también existe el lenguaje creado por los seres humanos que es el que opera por medio de signos arbitrarios¹⁰. Sin embargo, los ejemplos que antes daba de la persona que mueve los brazos o sube el tono de voz no son en sí casos de “lenguaje no-verbal” o “lenguaje orgánico” en mis propios términos, porque no

¹⁰ El concepto de arbitrariedad introducido por Saussure en el campo de la lingüística en el siglo XX, es uno de los descubrimientos más importantes para comprender al lenguaje. Sobre esto mucho se podría decir... Éste no es un texto dedicado al lenguaje, pero me veo obligado a mencionar algunos aspectos mínimos para poder avanzar.

necesariamente se hacen con la intención de dar a entender alguna cosa. Solo se hacen, y significan en la medida en que todo lo que hacemos significa. No todo es “lenguaje” si entendemos que el lenguaje es algo que pretende generar alguna otra cosa. El Siglo XX se ha entusiasmado tanto con el lenguaje que ha hipotasiado todo tipo de ideas bastante curiosas al respecto¹¹. En este caso, los movimientos que acompañan a las palabras de la persona que nos acompaña son solo la expresión de las emociones y sentimientos que dichas expresiones verbales, al ser enunciadas, generan en el hablante y que yo puedo percibir porque posiblemente tienen cierta fuerza o magnitud que me permite verlas, que se externen.

Las expresiones verbales del hablante poseen un conjunto de emociones (pensamientos intuitivos) que pueden ser captados por el consultor o filósofo práctico de cierta pericia. Por tanto de lo que se trata aquí es de la utilización de nuestra parte, de acciones corporales de tipo receptivo (percepción) para la captación de las intuiciones del otro, de aspectos emocionales que son movimientos hacia sí, pero que tienen una gran significación en todo lo que está pasando. Este es el primer uso de las acciones corporales que quiero destacar en este texto, que el filósofo perciba al otro y saque provecho de esa percepción. Los contenidos de las percepciones son útiles porque no están presentes en los contenidos discursivos que el otro enuncia, podrían ser claves insustituibles para el desarrollo de un curso de sentido filosófico que de otro modo se podría escapar perdiéndose grandes oportunidades. No basta que el filósofo práctico escuche, también debe oír, ver, oler y sentir, el sentir finalmente es posiblemente una extensión sumamente

¹¹ Yo podría llamar a todo “lenguaje” igual que puedo poner cualquier nombre a lo que “realizamos en general”, pero eso no significa que todo lo que hacemos sea igual u opere de la misma manera. Llamar a las expresiones faciales o corporales “lenguaje no verbal” puede ser bastante problemático porque podría dar a entender que tienen significados ocultos o, peor aún, confundirnos completamente respecto a entender las cosas que tenemos delante.

compleja y refinada del -tocarnos- a nosotros mismos como insinúa Antonio Damasio¹². La percepción del otro es un primer nivel entonces muy importante para el desarrollo de cualquier práctica filosófica, aunque esto posiblemente valga también para todo tipo de disciplinas que impliquen el trabajo con otros como la psicología, educación, sociología, recursos humanos, etc. Este tipo de habilidad debe entrenarse y estudiarse tanto como nuestra capacidad analítica y crítica para la escucha.

Hemos hablado de un primer nivel, el consultor o filósofo práctico percibe. Un segundo nivel es que el consultor o filósofo práctico accione activamente, intervenga en el mundo. El pasaje de lo receptivo a lo activo (de percibir a hacer) normalmente no es tan fácil. Esto es porque lo activo implica a lo receptivo y no al revés, lo activo es un proceso más complejo y elaborado. Por ejemplo, yo no puedo introducir una aguja en el portaguja (que normalmente tiene agujeros para ello), si no veo dónde está el agujero, cómo está posicionado el portaguja, en dónde está la aguja, etc. Puedo ver el porta-agujas y la aguja sin la necesidad de realizar ninguna acción corporal activa, pero no hay forma de que coloque la aguja sin percibir lo que estoy haciendo (además de hacerlo), siempre la acción corporal activa requiere de más procesualidad. Si anesthesiara mi brazo y mi mano (por lo que no sentiría el movimiento que hago) y si además me vendara los ojos, no tendría forma de saber si mi brazo está o no colocando la aguja en el lugar correspondiente. La acción corporal activa requiere de auto-percepción de la acción, este es un principio básico de la acción corporal. Por tanto la acción corporal de carácter activa es siempre más compleja y más difícil de realizar tanto para el consultor o filósofo práctico como para el consultante, individuo, grupo u organización con la que se esté trabajando.

¹² Algo parecido a cuando dice “*el cerebro es la audiencia cautiva del cuerpo*” (Damasio, Antonio: *Sentir lo que sucede*, Editorial Andrés Bello, Chile, 2000, p. 171).

Pero veamos qué tipo de acciones corporales activas podemos realizar nosotros desde nuestro rol de trabajo. Aquí me estoy refiriendo a todo tipo de gestos corporales, acciones con mi entorno, caras o expresiones. El funcionamiento de esto es interesante porque en este caso estoy realizando ciertas cosas *para que sean percibidas*. Es posible que yo efectivamente posea los sentimientos que dan o darían pie a tales movimientos de mi rostro, manos, mirada, gestos, etc. Pero yo en estos casos los exacerbo a propósito por el efecto que generan. No puedo ver yo directamente mis caras porque no estoy normalmente frente a un espejo, pero tengo la percepción y la memoria de mis músculos a partir de otras veces que los he movido de esa manera. También observo las reacciones que estos generan en el/los otros. Entonces la percepción de mis caras o gestos es indirecta, pero puedo ir dándoles un curso y esto me permite mantenerlas y darles matices. ¿No podría pensarse que esto una manipulación? Para nada. Todo lo que yo hago en la práctica filosófica es un ping-pong de reacciones e interacciones. ¿Acaso las preguntas de un filósofo lipmaniano, nelsoniano, breniferiano o lahaviano son inocentes? De ninguna manera. Todas ellas se realizan con la intención de generar un efecto. No para que el otro piense como yo pienso o haga lo que yo quiero que haga, pero sí para mover al otro de su “autoculpable minoría de edad” como le llamaba Kant; para sacar al otro de la comodidad del pensamiento cristalizado, cerrado o rutinario. ¿Era Sócrates “auténtico” en todas sus reacciones e interlocuciones? Es difícil decir que Sócrates no sabía acerca del efecto de su exacerbado asombro que en ocasiones terminaba en aires sumamente cínicos. Así, Pierre Hadot le atribuye la capacidad de “fingir haberse enamorado”, lo que se relaciona con ese acercamiento aparentemente “inocente” sobre las cosas, lo que permitían darse cuenta de todo lo que se ignoraba en relación a la

vida o a los conceptos que se indagaban¹³. Enfatizar ciertos gestos o exagerar determinadas acciones corporales en la medida en que son percibidas por el otro y no únicamente “porque se sientan”, esto refiere también al arte de la práctica filosófica¹⁴.

Muchas veces lo único que hago es aumentar un poco la sensación que naturalmente una circunstancia dentro de la práctica filosófica me genera y utilizo las mismas “fibras” de lo que a mí mismo me pasa para producir esa reacción. Esto puede pasar, por ejemplo, si yo aumento un poco el asombro que demuestro o la incomodidad que me pueda producir cierta contradicción. En verdad hacer este tipo de cosas requiere de un profundo autoconocimiento porque se trata de utilizar estratégicamente nuestras propias tendencias¹⁵. Este tipo de reacciones “exageradas voluntariamente” podrían ser de mucha utilidad para las personas con las que estamos trabajando y ayudarlas a ahondar en ciertos puntos de gran importancia gracias a esta reacción performativa. Otras veces, debo ir más allá aún y traer

¹³ Así lo explica el autor francés: “El amor irónico de Sócrates consiste pues en fingir haberse enamorado. En la ironía dialéctica Sócrates actuaba de manera similar, planteando sus preguntas, intentando que su interlocutor le comunicara su saber o su sabiduría. Pero de hecho, lo que descubría el interlocutor en ese juego de preguntas y respuestas era su incapacidad para poner algún remedio a la ignorancia de Sócrates...” (Hadot, Pierre: *Ejercicios espirituales y filosofía antigua*, Siruela, Madrid, 2006, p. 95.).

¹⁴ A esto mismo refiere uno de los lógicos más destacados de México, el filósofo Ariel Campirán, cuando dice que: “El modelaje es una estrategia que consiste en ‘hacer ver’ al otro a través de variadas acciones inspiradas en el espejo, un desfile de modas, o simplemente en el aparador. El instructor o alguien del grupo modela, cuando actúa (imita, sobreactúa, exagera, repite varias veces, ironiza, etc.) para hacer notar algo” (Campiran, Ariel: *Habilidades de pensamiento crítico y creativo*, Universidad Veracruzana, Xalapa, s/f, p. 31).

¹⁵ Esto mismo propone por ejemplo mi colega australiana Narelle Arcidiacono en lo que ella llama “dramatic philosophy”, una propuesta sumamente interesante inspirada en el “teatro orgánico” de Grotowsky y en distintas vertientes de la filosofía para niños y la consultoría filosófica. Puede revisarse algo de bibliografía al respecto al final de este texto.

desde lo profundo de mí alguna reacción que tal vez no me sea tan natural presentar en ese momento. Por ejemplo, algunas veces, al trabajar con adolescentes, y este es un ejemplo que cito a menudo, los jóvenes no desean que se les ponga una “atención tan minuciosa”. Si uno se muestra excesivamente interesado por saber de ellos y “entenderlos”, esto les genera rechazo y distancia ya que debido a su edad desean principalmente que se los acepte sin analizar demasiado. Sin embargo, la labor filosófica muchas veces requiere de un análisis cuidadoso de lo que se dice o hace, por tanto uno debe asumir una postura de cierto “desinterés”, aunque esta no sea nuestra actitud más espontánea. Este pequeño “forzamiento” de uno mismo, permite que el o los otros se abran de una manera espontánea y mucho más natural, mejora los vínculos y finalmente nos permite posiblemente arribar a resultados sumamente diferentes.

En general, este segundo uso de las acciones corporales remite a entenderlas como provocaciones o interpelaciones¹⁶ hacia el otro. Pero estas interpelaciones no son nada más una simulación o un forzamiento de nosotros mismos. Si así lo hiciéramos, seguramente nuestros interlocutores captarían esta falsedad o autoimposición y tendríamos un resultado más perjudicial que beneficioso. Lo importante es poder hacer uso de nuestros propios recursos para construir una acción de modo que, aunque esta sea generada para producir un efecto, sea a la vez una interpelación auténtica. Y esto es así porque surge del auténtico deseo de que el otro pueda profundizar y conocerse más a sí mismo. En el budismo a esto se lo llama “medios hábiles”, en donde se dice que el Buda da forma a su enseñanza según las capacidades del discípulo, la época y la

¹⁶ Quien hace uso de este concepto retomado de Levinass para el campo de la filosofía para niños es el profesor José Ezcurdia (Ezcurdia, José: *Filosofía para niños, la filosofía frente al espejo*, UNAM/Ítaca, México, 2016).

circunstancia¹⁷. A veces un gran maestro parece estar furioso pero tal vez no lo está de esa manera, a veces parece tranquilo aunque en su interior estallan miles de tormentas. Los llamados "sabios" de las distintas épocas y tradiciones sin duda utilizaban esta forma de la acción corporal conscientemente producida en función de sus efectos, porque sabían de la importancia y gran alcance que tenía. Hoy la práctica filosófica sin duda puede y debe también enriquecerse con este tipo de posibilidades.

El tercer tipo de uso para las acciones corporales dentro de la práctica filosófica que quiero destacar, tiene que ver con solicitar a nuestro consultante, huesped, grupo u organización con la que se esté trabajando, que pueda realizar por sí mismo acciones corporales. Esto incluye también el realizar acciones junto con ellos. Las acciones que el otro podría hacer pueden ser percepciones o intervenciones (acciones corporales de carácter activo); pero en este caso el filósofo práctico ha diseñado o diseña en el curso del trabajo una propuesta para que el otro realice cosas que van más allá del análisis o el discurso, aunque por supuesto pueden combinarse con ellos. En el antiguo México en las escuelas filosóficas de los mexicas (llamadas *Cálmecac* o *Tepochcalli*) los *tlataminimes* (sabios o filósofos de esta tradición), utilizaban permanentemente este tipo de ejercicios o prácticas:

En esta forma es como los *tlataminime* cumplían su misión de "hacer sabios los rostros ajenos". Y si recordamos, lo dicho acerca de la serie de actos o "costumbres" exteriores guardadas en el *Cálmecac*, veremos que su inflexible rigidez, lo que pudiera llegar a describirse como dureza, iba precisamente dirigida a dar reciedumbre al aspecto dinámico de la personalidad: *al corazón*. Por medio de esa serie de actos y penitencias disciplinadas, se forjaba el "querer humano", capaz de controlarse a sí mismo. Parece, pues, que lo que buscaban los *tlataminime* con su

¹⁷ Puede verse Nichiren Daishonin "Enseñanza, capacidad, tiempo y país" disponible on-line en <https://www.nichirenlibrary.org/es/wnd-1/Content/7> (último acceso 21 de marzo de 2020).

educación en los *Calmécac* era perfeccionar la personalidad de sus discípulos en sus dos aspectos fundamentales: dando sabiduría a los rostros y firmeza a los corazones¹⁸

Así también pasaba en diversas escuelas helenísticas como la escuela estoica o el Jardín de Epicuro. Quienes ingresaban allí se sometían a una ardua disciplina de vida que implicaba el hacer todo tipode cosas y ciertos tipos muy especiales de coordinaciones o coherencias en el curso de sus acciones. Nuestros colegas de aquel entonces, vislumbraban sin lugar a dudas la importancia e irremplazable efecto que genera la realización de acciones corporales para el desenvolvimiento de un proceso filosófico.

Evidentemente, la variedad de acciones corporales que podríamos solicitar o proponer a nuestro visitante o grupo en una sesión de prácticas filosóficas podría ser de la más amplia variedad. Un tipo de trabajo interesante tiene que ver con solicitar percepciones, pedir que el otro mire, toque, huela, escuche o deguste. Esto podría hacerse con objetos específicos que seleccionemos en el momento en función de lo que está sucediendo o que tengamos preparados para la sesión. Desde hace varios años realizo consultorías filosóficas utilizando objetos y resulta bastante interesante por las posibilidades creativas que se dan a partir de la manipulación y el pensamiento analógico. Claro que aquí se trata de una combinación de acciones corporales de carácter activo y receptivo. También es muy interesante crear vinculaciouones perceptivas con diversos contextos que propicien tendencias interesantes en el proceso. Estos contextos pueden estar cerca del espacio en donde estamos trabajando o pueden concertarse previamente con el individuo o grupo para la generación cierto tipo de trabajo. El solo hecho de dialogar en un lugar distinto puede generar una gran diferencia debido a la percepción que opera en forma simultánea a un diálogo

¹⁸ Leon-Portilla, Miguel: *Filosofía náhuatl*, UNAM, México DF, 1993, p. 228-2299..

o razonamiento. Por supuesto que también podemos solicitar el -hacer- de manera activa todo tipo de cosas como parte del trabajo de la sesión. Esto puede hacerse solicitando que el otro haga cosas delante nuestro durante la sesión (sea que hayamos preparado o no tales solicitudes) o a través de -tareas- filosóficas que complementen el trabajo que se realice en los encuentros. Más adelante daré algunos ejemplos de esto. También realizando acciones corporales de manera activa junto con el otro. Esta última posibilidad es sumamente interesante.

Otra clasificación útil para vislumbrar la gran cantidad de posibilidades en todo esto, es la distinción entre acciones corporales críticas y creativas¹⁹. Realmente hay mucha diferencia entre unas y otras. Intentaré explicarlo con un ejemplo: si solicitamos a una persona con la que estamos trabajando, que se acerque a sus familiares en situaciones cotidianas, pero que en lugar de hacer todo tipo de cosas para complacerlos -como supongamos suele hacer-, solo se mantenga quieta y centrada en su desenvolvimiento individual. Aquí, tenemos un claro ejemplo de una acción corporal crítica que podríamos introducir en un trabajo de consultoría filosófica para tratar el tema²⁰, por ejemplo, de la

¹⁹ Puede verse Sumiacher, David: "Critical and Creative Philosophical Practices", en *Journal of Humanities Therapy*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Chuncheon, 2016, pp. 39-70. Aquí se presenta una perspectiva muy amplia de trabajo, no solo considerando las acciones corporales sino todo los diferentes tipos de procesos de la práctica filosófica en sus vertientes críticas o creativas.

²⁰ Las acciones corporales críticas son sumamente importantes también en el ámbito de la filosofía con organizaciones, pueden ocupar un lugar vital, ya que las organizaciones suelen ser ámbitos en donde operan reglas y objetivos, así como generalmente se vinculan con el mundo del trabajo. No puedo entrar aquí a fondo en las características sistémicas de lo crítico así como lo he venido estudiando, pero el trabajo, las metas, el "deber", el ganarse la vida, etc. todos esos son aspectos que se vinculan a los crítico. También por supuesto se pueden hacer infinidad de cosas creativas en una organización, aquí solo estoy hablando de cierta tendencia.

complacencia con los demás. Si por el contrario, yo estuviera con un grupo de personas, abordando este mismo tema (la complacencia a los demás), pero quisiera tratarlo por medio de acciones corporales de carácter creativo haría otro tipo cosa. Podría invitarlos a jugar un juego con un objetivo a cumplir -supongamos, resolver un juego de ingenio- pero deberíamos resolverlo de distintas maneras. Primero muy centrados en nosotros mismos, en segundo lugar apoyándonos mutuamente, en tercer lugar apoyándonos exageradamente. Luego de hacer estos juegos analizaríamos y profundizaríamos sobre distintos puntos, pudiendo continuar con otros juegos que continúen trabajando sobre este mismo eje o haciendo otro tipo de cosas, dependiendo esto de la sesión.

En cualquiera de los dos casos (el ejercicio con la familia y el juego con el grupo) yo no estoy “buscando mostrar cómo es que se vive o debe vivir el aspecto de la complacencia con los demás”. La práctica filosófica no opera como algunas versiones un poco superficiales del coaching, que pretenden mostrar con la acción corporal de manera literal cierta ruta pre-definida. Para nosotros, las acciones corporales son experimentos, cumplen la misma función que una pregunta solo que operan multidimensionalmente. Cuando se hace una pregunta en la práctica filosófica, nosotros no sabemos la respuesta o no importa tanto -lo que nosotros sabemos-. Escuchamos la respuesta del otro y a partir de allí construimos con ese material. Ahora sucede exactamente igual, no siempre invitamos a la realización de una cierta acción corporal porque ella “muestre lo que se debe hacer”. Algunas veces, por el contrario, lo hacemos por su carácter problematizador. A esto lo he llamado problematización con acciones corporales y resulta sumamente interesante en el campo de la filosofía con o para niños o en todo tipo de prácticas filosóficas por su carácter provocador y revelador de significados.

Lo importante sobre todo, es nuestra habilidad para diseñar estas propuestas, que es una capacidad análoga a la de diseñar buenas preguntas²¹. Las acciones corporales que invitamos a realizar son dispositivos de procesamiento que se engarzan a la procesualidad existente dentro de la o las personas con las que trabajamos. Si el filósofo práctico es alguien preparado para captar ese tipo de magnitudes de proceso, entonces puede imaginar con facilidad qué tipo de acción corporal activa proponer. Podemos, en ocasiones, y con algo de práctica, diseñarlas durante la sesión misma, y luego de unos minutos de escuchar y ver al otro, proponerlas directamente, así como un buen coordinador de talleres filosóficos de cualquier tipo puede improvisar preguntas. Pero también podemos planearlas y por supuesto que las sesiones en la práctica filosófica deben ser planeadas. A veces, debido a cierta hipostación de la idea de la mayéutica, algunas personas piensan que nada puede ser planeado o preparado, pero esto es solamente una visión bastante idealista del asunto. Que exista una planeación no implica por supuesto un direccionamiento total. No es el tema de este texto la planeación, pero en muchas ocasiones existe una especie de “tabú” con el direccionamiento, cuando la buena práctica filosófica, o el buen

²¹ Para todo esto es fundamental darnos cuenta con quién estamos trabajando y preguntarnos sobre las personas de manera constante antes y durante el proceso. Eso nos permite reconocer qué tipo de actividad están los demás dispuestos a hacer. Hay personas a las que le encantan los juegos, otras con las que, incluso por el contexto mismo de trabajo, sólo se pueden realizar ejercicios. Algunas veces es interesante trabajar con objetos, otras cambiar radicalmente el contexto. A veces nuestras acciones han de ser sumamente desafiantes y disruptivas otras apenas se salen de lo que normalmente se suele hacer. También es importante captar la visión de las cosas que tienen las personas con las que nos encontramos trabajando para definir el curso de actividades a hacer o proponer. Para el trabajo de la práctica filosófica en el sector salud por ejemplo entender o profundizar sobre cuál es el concepto de fondo al contexto de trabajo es igualmente fundamental para saber qué tipo de disposición tomar y de ejercicios o acciones corporales sugerir. Sobre esto último puede verse Arrigoni, Fabrizio y Nave, Luca: *Come in cielo così in terra*, Edizioni Unicópoli, Milano, 2013.

diálogo, es siempre un encuentro de direccionamientos que ya existen y no la ausencia de ellos. De todas formas, siempre puede suceder que, en base a la circunstancia, lo que hayamos planeado deba ser cambiado por completo. Pero eso no significa ese planear haya sido en vano, de allí la famosa frase de Gilles Deleuze que dice que la filosofía al final de cuentas es solo una larga preparación. Planear significa también cuidar, significa pensar en el otro antes de estar ahí, dedicarle tiempo a los demás y dar importancia a lo que hacemos. En muchas ocasiones, sin dedicar excesivas cantidades de tiempo, podemos diseñar muy fructíferas e interesantes propuestas de acciones corporales que terminen generando una significación inusitada.

En todo esto, nuestra captación empática-proyectiva es fundamental, es la misma capacidad que nos permite darnos cuenta si una pregunta estará o no fuera de lugar en un diálogo. También es importante nuestra capacidad para comprender eso que estamos proponiendo, nuestra elocuencia, pasión y la confianza que podamos asentar con aquella o aquellas personas con las que estamos trabajando. Todo eso favorece el lograr que ellos hagan cosas que incluso nunca habían hecho antes. Cuando sean acciones de este tipo, muy recomendable es que el filósofo práctico realice esas acciones en conjunto con las personas, para quitarles el miedo y el pudor que muchas veces genera la acción. Esta es una forma muy interesante de desenvolvimiento del trabajo con acciones corporales dentro de la práctica filosófica²². Es como acompañar a

²² Algunos ejemplos claros en donde esto sucede es cuando se hace una actividad filosófica en un museo o en un lugar histórico, por ejemplo, pero no solamente en estos contextos. Las caminatas filosóficas, pueden usarse como medio para experimentar en conjunto con las personas una percepción renovada respecto de lo que significan los lugares en donde viven o trabajan cotidianamente. Es interesante y fructífero trabajar las caminatas filosóficas desde la visión de las acciones corporales. En un taller filosófico con reclusos o niños de la calle, por ejemplo, podría ser sumamente importante el realizar tareas manuales, producción de objetos para vender, etc. junto con ellos, como parte del trabajo de

alguien a ver el amanecer, como cuando el maestro zen medita junto a sus discípulos o como cuando los que vivían en el Jardín de Epicuro comían en comunidad. Se trata de empatizar con los sentimientos y la “sintonía” de la circunstancia en conjunto con las personas, vivir la experiencia junto a los demás²³.

Para finalizar, quiero recalcar el hecho de qué así como los pensamientos o palabras desligadas del mundo son vacías y carentes de impacto filosófico; de la misma forma las acciones corporales que no posean un marco de reflexión o diálogo son igualmente huecas y superficiales. Las relaciones que hemos de trazar entre el pensamiento y la acción deben ser nutridas a lo largo de todo el proceso de la práctica filosófica. Para esto podemos intercalar momentos de unas cosas y de las otras. Luego de realizar cualquier tipo de acción corporal, tenemos que preguntar de manera abierta por la experiencia, de modo que las personas puedan expresarnos libremente lo que sienten y piensan y poner en palabras los actos y procesos que anteriormente vivieron. Posteriormente, puedo ir entrando en mayores precisiones y profundizaciones a través del diálogo, todo depende del tipo de sesión y proceso que esté trabajando y con que acometido lo haga²⁴. También por supuesto puedo crear ámbitos de reflexión

las sesiones. El -acompañar- a las personas a hacer cosas que tengan un significado profundo que se engarce con los sentidos filosóficos que se vienen construyendo, puede tener una significación sumamente trascendente y transformar por completo los diálogos y ambientes posteriores.

²³ Otro autor y colega que desde hace tiempo viene trabajando este tipo de enfoque es el español José Barrientos, quien lo aborda desde el concepto de la experiencialidad. Puede verse en la bibliografía algunos textos del autor.

²⁴ También puede darse el caso de ciertos trabajos con acciones corporales dentro de la práctica filosófica, para los cuales uno tenga que esperar cierto tiempo para dar lugar al momento de conciencia, diálogo, análisis, etc. Podría ser que los procesos que se estén desarrollando, sean sumamente importantes, pero la persona aún no tenga la capacidad de verlo o darse cuenta. Esto debería ser identificado a partir de signos que demuestren dicha dificultad y tratarse

durante la acción misma, indagando o hablando acerca de puntos interesantes o pertinentes para el proceso.

Generalmente los extremos no son favorables. Para las personas muy proclives a la acción será mejor el pensamiento, para las personas demasiado pensantes hemos de crear valiosas interrupciones en forma de acción corporal dentro del proceso. Ninguno de los dos elementos es tampoco renunciable. Así como no podemos aprender a andar en bicicleta leyendo un libro, ni leer un libro sin tomar el objeto en donde están las letras y palabras y acercarlo para poder verlo; ningún ser humano puede renunciar o realizar cosa alguna, desligándose de los actos y procesos hacia-sí o aquellos de vinculación con la exterioridad. Para poder trabajar con todo esto, el filósofo práctico debe disponerse a sí mismo por completo, sin escatimar ninguna posibilidad, utilizando todas sus acciones y recursos en pos de profundizar en el quehacer filosófico. Solo este tipo de actitud de total entrega, nos permite abordar un campo de trabajo tan amplio y llegar a niveles de interacción de valor filosófico. ¿Es esto fácil de realizar? Posiblemente no. Seguramente ha de requerir una gran disposición y trabajo consigo mismo de parte del filósofo práctico. Esto en verdad es un valor agregado, pues nos asegura que no estamos cayendo en una labor meramente mecánica o superficial. La práctica filosófica es una apuesta para que la filosofía sea parte de esta sociedad y por ello los filósofos prácticos debemos prepararnos profundamente para poder llevar a cabo tan digna tarea. Lo bueno, finalmente, es que las dificultades con que nos encontremos darán testimonio de que lo que podamos obtener realmente vale la pena.

entonces con sumo cuidado. Podrá notarse como la consideración de las acciones corporales dentro de la práctica filosófica abre un abanico enorme de posibilidades y enriquece profundamente nuestra “caja de herramientas”.

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RESEÑAS BIBLIOGRÁFICAS
REVIEWS

BISOLLO M., *Pensieri stupefacenti. La prevenzione filosofica delle tossicodipendenze*, Lindau, Torino, 2020. 206 pp.¹

La prevención de comportamientos arriesgados y en particular, del consumo, abuso y dependencia de estupefacientes, es un ámbito de la filosofía en el que se ha profundizado poco aún.

En Italia se ha publicado recientemente, en la editorial “Lindau”, un libro dedicado a este tema *Pensieri stupefacenti. La prevenzione filosofica delle tossicodipendenze* de la filósofa Maddalena Bisollo. El texto se desarrolla como una presentación teórica y práctica de la asesoría filosófica y de la *Philosophy with children*, entendidas en particular como formas de filosofía práctica preventiva, ya sea en el ámbito escolástico, que

en contexto terapéutico y educativo.

Es conocido desde hace tiempo, en ámbito sanitario, que la prevención no es solo un tema puramente biomédico: va más allá, a la dimensión psicosocial y a los estilos de la vida. Con mayor motivo, esto vale para la prevención en el campo de la drogadicción, que es un problema multifactorial.

“La ricerca contemporanea è consapevole della necessità di integrare dimensioni e prospettive complesse dell’essere umano: biologica, psicologia e sociale”² y es por ello fundamental adoptar una perspectiva que se oriente al hombre “come totalità integrata, che aggiunge esplicitamente anche il riferimento alla dimensione spirituale”³

¹ Reseña-estudio realizado por Carlos Muñoz Novo (Universidad de Salamanca – Universidad de Milán)

² Trad: la investigación contemporánea es consciente de la necesidad de integrar dimensión y perspectivas complejas del ser humano: biológica, psicológica y social.

³ Trad: como totalidad integrada que añade explícitamente la referencia a la dimensión espiritual.

(Baleani, Scapellato, 2014, p.45).

Además los “comportamientos arriesgados” no son solo acciones en grado de comprometer a corto o largo plazo el bienestar físico, psicológico y social del individuo, son fundamentalmente comportamientos dotados de sentido: están fundados en un sistema de creencias y de valores que hacen referencia a un contexto específico e implican decisiones y elecciones tomadas con la intención de alcanzar determinados objetivos y resultados, es decir, expresan *una visión del mundo* muy concreta.

Es decir, ¿qué actividad tiene la función de indagar juicios, creencias, valores y razones si no la práctica de la filosofía? ¿No es la filosofía la que nos socorre cuando estamos delante de cuestiones que tienen que ver con el sentido y el significado?

El libro de Bisollo traza, sobre todo, un marco teórico necesario, dentro del cual se coloca la práctica de una filo-

sofía preventiva en modo tal de definir *qué* filosofía sea adapta a entrar en el mundo de la prevención de las dependencias.

Estamos acostumbrados a pensar en el filósofo como un estudioso dedicado a un trabajo de investigación intelectual en las universidades y a la filosofía solo como una actividad académica o como una asignatura escolar y una historia del pensamiento, un elenco de nombres, de razonamientos lógicos y de conceptos en el índice de un manual.

Pero la filosofía no es solo esto. El *Movimiento internacional de filosofía aplicada* – en modo particular a partir de los ochenta del siglo XX – propone una filosofía viva y activa, capaz de interceptar las preguntas, los dilemas, las necesidades concretas del ser humano y de promover la exploración, a través del ejercicio de nuestra capacidad dialógica, reflexiva y crítica, utilizando la tradición filosófica y sus instrumentos para

sostener a cada uno en el propio camino de autoconsciencia y de búsqueda de un mayor bienestar.

Una filosofía muscular

En modo particular, Bisollo habla de una “filosofía muscular” es decir encarnada, sensible y en grado de tonificar “los músculos del alma”. Un pensamiento que se mueve “en el horizonte de un conocimiento vivo que no se deja atrapar por estructuras lógicas si no que pone la lógica al servicio de la vida para que se pueda abrir como el buen tiempo” (2020, p.34). Se trata además de un filosofar práctico y en movimiento: “La filosofía muscular e una filosofía que se *mueve* fuera del mundo académico para dar respuesta a las necesidades concretas de los individuos que encuentra; es una filosofía que no pasa por encima de la existencia si no que la toca en el corazón; es a fin de cuentas, capaz de sensibilidad y respeto del otro y de sus diferencias” (ibid).

Se configura además como una *cura* que no se dirige directamente a sanar las heridas de aquel que sufre, si no que debe ser entendida según la acepción greca de *epimeleia*, aquel *tener cura* que para los antiguos significaba “cultivar el ser para hacerlo florecer”.

La metáfora muscular proviene de la antigua filosofía estoica, según la cual nuestros sufrimientos se deben a un debilitamiento del alma que necesita tonificarse. “El dolor es una relajación del alma” decía Cleantes y “así como la fuerza del cuerpo depende del justo tenor de los nervios, así la fuerza del alma es el justo tenor en el juzgar, en el actuar y en el no actuar” (Reale, 2002, p.253).

La filosofía estoica como cura del alma se dirige en particular a una músculo específico, sede del alma: el corazón. El músculo cardíaco, en constante y rítmico movimiento, es el lugar del hegemónico, es decir, la parte nuclear del alma que produce las representa-

ciones, los acuerdos, las sensaciones y los impulsos (como es evidente, allí donde se encuentran las pasiones está también la razón).

Por este motivo, según Bisolillo, podemos admitir que la filosofía sea “una cura de nuestro modo de pensar que es a la vez una cura del modo de ser y de sentir”, la cual “no solo cura las enfermedades del alma si no que predispone el alma a la salud, manteniéndola en el justo tono; la filosofía da vigor y fortifica” (2020, p.38).

Se trata de un ejercicio de nuestras capacidades del juicio que al mismo tiempo entrena el corazón, es decir nuestra dimensión afectivo-emocional

Esto no se debe confundir con la idea que la filosofía esté preparada para curar el malestar psicológico o psiquiátrico (algo que obviamente corresponde a la psicología o a la psiquiatría); más bien, en el reconocimiento de que los conflictos, dilemas o preguntas filosóficas puedan conec-

tarse con diversas respuestas emotivas (por ejemplo preguntas que tienen que ver con el sentido de la vida pueden producir elevados niveles de ansiedad, tristeza, perplejidad u otras respuestas emotivas intensas y profundas [Raabe, 2006, p.201]) y con la posibilidad de que el entrenamiento filosófico tenga repercusiones a nivel emocional y pueda ayudar a “aliviar los sufrimientos del alma”, según la conocida afirmación de Epicuro.

La prevención en los colegios

Pre-venio (lat.), vengo antes. Prevenir significa llegar antes y actuar de tal manera que se pueda eliminar o al menos reducir el riesgo que algo suceda. Prevenir la drogadicción en los colegios significa venir antes que ella se presente. Significa además actuar sobre los factores de riesgo que favorecen el consumo y el abuso – que, si se repite, genera dependencia – de sus-

tancias psicotrópicas con objetivos no terapéuticos.

Hay más. La prevención en los colegios se realiza a través de la educación. Creer en la prevención significa confiar en la posibilidad de educar antes, de educar a tiempo. Allí donde educar no significa solo informar, dar nociones.

El significado original y etimológico de la palabra “educación” viene del latín *ex - ducere* que significa literalmente “conducir fuera”, es decir, liberar, iluminar algo que está escondido. La educación pasa a través de la información pero no se reduce a ella.

Para prevenir educando es muy importante dar a los alumnos nociones fundamentales, aunque eso solo no basta: es además esencial enseñar a los alumnos a reflexionar con competencia. Es necesario enseñar a reflexionar sobre las drogas y sobre el (alcohol) y sobre sus efectos psicológicos, físicos y sociales. Pero sobre todo se trata de enseñar a reflexionar para

pensar atentamente en la propia relación con las posibilidades del consumo de las sustancias estupefacientes – por desgracia muy extendida en el mundo juvenil – y sostener una relación dialógica y crítica de la relación que con el consumo tiene el grupo de coetáneos.

Es necesario reflexionar sobre la importancia de la edad, de la necesidad de ser reconocidos por el grupo, de no quedarse “solos”, en relación a la decisión fundamental de si consumir o no estupefacientes; sobre la cuestión de sentir que se “tiene necesidad de una ayuda” para conectar, para construir amistades, para divertirse en una fiesta, para subir la moral; sobre el significado mismo de la diversión y de la transgresión; sobre la necesidad de no pensar a los problemas y posponer – al menos por algún día – la necesidad de resolverlos o de pensar a todo lo que implican. Dicho en una frase: es necesario dar a los alumnos la capacidad de reflexionar so-

bre la visión del mundo que está en la base del deseo y del desfase.

De este modo uno no se concentra solo sobre las nefastas consecuencias que llevan al consumo y al abuso de drogas, si no en las causas, que tienen mucho que ver también con el contexto socio-cultural en el que vivimos: “solo allora la droga può apparire per quello che è: non una dipendenza ormai diffusa su larga scala nel mondo giovanile e non solo, ma un sintomo, se non addirittura un tentativo disperato di rimedio a un disagio che pare impossibile poter sopportare⁴” (Galimberti, 2007, p.76).

Las horas de clase pueden ser mucho más que un espacio y un tiempo dedicados a la transmisión de nociones y al desarrollo del propio actuar: pueden ser la ocasión, como

⁴ Trad. Solo entonces la droga aparece como lo que es: no solo una dependencia difundida a gran escala en el mundo juvenil, no solo un síntoma, si no un tentativo desesperado de solución para un desasosiego que parece imposible soportar.

subraya Recalcati, de “visitare un altro luogo, un altro mondo, essere trasportati, catapultati in un altrove, incontrare l’inatteso, la meraviglia, l’inedito⁵” (2014).

Esto es posible, especialmente, cuando el profesor (o el facilitador) asume una actitud filosófica que sepa dirigirse a los alumnos, no como si fueran recipientes vacíos que hay que llenar de conocimientos si no como personas fecundas, siguiendo un proceso de aprendizaje que no se funda sobre el modelo de “un vuoto da riempire – le teste vuote degli allievi, dentro le quali di deve versare il cemento del sapere – quanto di un vuoto da aprire⁶” (Ivi, p.43).

La prevención filosófica en los colegios empieza así: no con una lección *ex – cathedra*

⁵ Trad. visitar otro lugar, otro mundo, de ser transportados, catapultados a otro lugar, encontrar lo inesperado, la maravilla, lo inédito

⁶ Trad. un vacío que llenar – las mentes vacías de los alumnos, dentro de las cuales se debe verter el cemento del saber – cuanto un vacío que abrir.

con la cual la clase es adoc-trinada, si no con un ejercicio de *epoché*. Se crea el espacio, se hace el vacío. Solo en ese momento es posible desarrollar un pensamiento dialógico y creativo.

El filósofo libera a los jóvenes de la falsa ilusión de poder recibir todo el saber del experto de turno, para estimularlos a asumir, sobre todo, el placer de la búsqueda.

El método elegido para la prevención de los comportamientos arriesgados se llama EMPA.RA (empatía radical), que se inspira en el ejercicio escéptico dell'*antitetiké dynamis* (el arte de contraponer los argumentos). Se propone a la clase un texto escrito por Bisollo, en el que el joven protagonista se enfrenta a la necesidad de tomar algunas decisiones respecto al consumo de estupefacientes. Los alumnos son invitados a posicionarse en relación de estos comportamientos y luego, en grupo, trabajarán para encontrar buenos argumentos que soporten su propia tesis y la

antítesis (los grupos se ejercitan en entender el punto de vista de los otros grupos, trabajando la empatía, que no tiene que ver solo con el sentir, si no también con el pensar).

En el texto de Bisollo se pueden encontrar una serie de ejemplos prácticos para la aplicación del método y los resultados obtenidos en distintos grupos y clases.

La prevención terciaria

La prevención terciaria es el tipo de prevención que tiene mayor afinidad con la cura.

Se trata de hecho de un tipo de actuación que viene después que el problema de la drogadicción se haya manifestado, con la finalidad de evitar complicaciones y acentos negativos. En modo particular, crea las condiciones para evitar las recaídas.

En este contexto, la asesoría filosófica y las prácticas filosóficas constituyen intervenciones muy válidas y capacitan a las personas para apren-

der nuevos “mezzi attraverso i quali può non solo essere più capace di affrontare i problemi futuri, ma anche prevedere, anticipare e perciò evitare quei problemi, o prevenire il loro ripresentarsi”⁷, como ya explicó el filósofo de fama internacional Peter Rabe (2006, p.196).

En particular, la actuación de Bisollo en el contexto de las comunidades terapéuticas, se ha desarrollado a través de encuentros de asesoría filosófica individual con los internos y a través de grupos, mediante la utilización de las llamadas “videoprácticas filosóficas”.

En el contexto de las drogadicciones, el asesor filosófico no tiene la labor de atacar la dependencia como tal, ni tampoco de ayudar a curarse clínicamente. El asesor filosófico se dispone a sondear, junto con el interno, aquel te-

rreno “de este lado” de la drogadicción que aún permanece en gran parte por examinar cuando se ha ya procedido con la desintoxicación farmacológica o con la reeducación comunitaria. Lo que no significa olvidar o “girar” el problema, más bien conocerlo en una determinada perspectiva.

Se trata en primer lugar de reconocer y tener presente la componente esencial, aunque también la componente cultural del consumo o del abuso de sustancias estupefacientes, tan difundido en nuestra sociedad.

En segundo lugar parece necesario e imprescindible prestar atención a las palabras del drogadicto, prestando profunda atención a ellas, en la riqueza y en la imprevisión de la relación vis-à-vis. También en este caso, el filósofo no focaliza toda la atención sobre le problema de la dependencia, para “tratarla” en algún modo. Cierto, el hecho que la dependencia sea central en la experiencia del

⁷ Trad: medios a través de los cuales puede no solo ser más capaz de afrontar los problemas futuros, si no también a prevenir, anticipar y por ello a evitar aquellos problemas, o prevenir que vuelvan a presentarse

usuario y por ello no se deja a un lado sin considerarla: más bien tendrá que ser entendida e indagada prestando atención, en primer lugar, a la visión particular del mundo en la que malestar nació y se enraizó poco a poco y a la relación con la sustancia que asume, poco a poco, un papel dominante, por ello al final esta sustancia pasa a ser el único objeto capaz de saciar la vida.

Tiene mucha importancia proceder a indagar críticamente los significados y las cuestiones éticas que están en la base de la dependencia, a menudo el daño ético y espiritual que el toxicodependiente sufre es muy profundo y merece más consideraciones al respecto.

Naturalmente, la práctica filosófica, no puede en este caso entenderse como una “fría” actividad intelectual si no como una práctica sensible, para que se realice plenamente como aquel discurso enamorado que solo puede ser definido como filo-sofia.

El filósofo no meterá prisa a los razonamientos, respecto a los ritmos del interlocutor, sabrá escuchar para aprender a comprender, teniendo paciencia para que los pensamientos y reflexiones sean integradas poco a poco a la existencia, a menudo con fatiga.

En cuanto a lo que tiene que ver con los grupos de las videoprácticas filosóficas, éstos están declinados en forma de CinePhilò y de los LEP-Laboratorios de estética práctica.

¿Por qué hay que utilizar imágenes en el contexto de la prevención terciaria de las dependencias?

Somos a menudo inducidos a recibir las imágenes de la televisión y del cine “pasivamente”, casi dando por sentado que su única función sea divertirnos y distraernos. O, aún peor, no hacernos pensar. Una práctica filosófica que se dirija al cine y a las imágenes, intenta producir un cambio de perspectiva: la imagen constituye el pre-texto para pensar

y con ello no solo no distrae de la reflexión si no que la promueve.

La capacidad de la imagen de mover el pensamiento es reconocida ya por Aristóteles: en la *Poética* la imagen se define *philosophòteron*, “la cosa más filosófica”. La imagen es la cosa más filosófica porque en su parecido con la realidad no muestra solo un hecho si no que lo representa, estimulando la imaginación y con ella la pregunta sobre la reflexión.

“È fonte di piacere guardare le immagini (*eikonas*), perché coloro che contemplan le immagini imparano (*manthanein*) e ragionano (*syloghizestai*) su ogni punto⁸” (Aristotele, 1998).

Si es cierto, como decía G. Anders, que el consumo mediático nos lleva a “tragar” acríticamente las sustancias preconfeccionadas de los patrocinadores y de las transmi-

siones, se trata ahora de recuperar la capacidad de masticar con placer lo que nos viene propuesto, lo que se nos ofrece mediante una imagen.

Recordando que las obras cinematográficas son a todos los efectos (al menos potencialmente) filosóficas (Curi, 2000), el asesor filosófico puede usarlas creativamente para estimular la reflexión del grupo, con la ventaja de poder llegar, incluso, a aquellos que no están particularmente acostumbrados a leer filosóficamente: es suficiente que los participantes estén bien preparados para ver una película y se puedan sorprender.

A través de la proyección de películas diversas, - a menudo no pertenecientes a lo que la crítica predominante del “gusto” define la “alta” producción cinematográfica -, y la propuesta de un enfoque filosófico, la relación con las imágenes de la película para los participantes en el CinePhilò cambia profundamente. Ya no se trata de ver una película para pasar el tiempo,

⁸ Trad: Mirar las imágenes es fuente de placer, porque aquellos que contemplan las imágenes aprenden y razonan sobre cada punto.

distraerse, quedarse dormido; de repente, nos encontramos intercambiando puntos de vista sobre temas de particular relevancia: amor, diversidad y normalidad, miedo, deseo, verdad e ilusión y muchos otros.

Otra práctica filosófica, desarrollada inicialmente en el contexto de la drogadicción y luego importada en el contexto de la formación tanto para adultos como para adolescentes, es la del Laboratorio de Estética Práctica.

El LEP, como el CinePhilò, también usa imágenes y pertenece a la categoría de las llamadas videoprácticas filosóficas. Sin embargo, aquí no se ofrecen películas o cortometrajes, sino videos (autoproducidos) con imágenes en bucle, generalmente acompañadas de música de fondo.

Estos videos están diseñados para producir una experiencia estética, tanto en el sentido etimológico del griego *aisthesis* (sensación, capacidad de sentir) como en el

significado más moderno de ese tipo particular de experiencia que nos sucede cuando juzgamos algo “hermoso”, como por ejemplo, una obra de arte, pero también un objeto, un individuo, un paisaje natural.

La experiencia estética, en este caso, consiste en el hecho de que algo capta nuestra atención, generando en nosotros, de una manera completamente misteriosa e inesperada, una multiplicidad de emociones y estados de ánimo. Es como si ese objeto en particular, aquello de lo que apreciamos la belleza, en el mismo momento en que se nos ofrece a la vista, exprese un “más”: algo que nunca podemos definir de manera completa y que, sin embargo, nos involucra, estimulando nuestro pensamiento y nuestra imaginación juntos.

Como dice J. Armstrong, “il fascino di una bella persona o di un bel posto è diretto, immediato (...) Tuttavia, il concetto di bellezza in sé è elusivo. È difficile dire che

cos'è la bellezza o perché per noi è importante. Qual è il suo mistero? Qual è il suo potere?⁹“ (2007)

La belleza no es simplemente sinuosidad y armonía de formas. En belleza también hay una fuerza, un poder.

Cuando juzgamos algo hermoso, en lugar de querer poseerlo, dejamos que nos posea y nos secuestra. Queremos transformarnos al reunirnos con él, para que también podamos compartir algunos de sus atributos.

En una obra de arte exitosa, en una cara bonita o en un objeto bello, en realidad vemos la imagen de lo que nos gustaría que fuera la vida.

Los talleres de estética práctica tienen como objetivo sensibilizar a los participantes en esta capacidad, reconocer-

la, no rechazarla de su existencia y convertirla en un motor precioso de conciencia y transformación para ellos mismos, para su propia vida y en las relaciones con los demás.

Reconocer la belleza de una imagen, pero también de un momento, la belleza de una relación, la belleza de un lugar o una situación significa aprender a saborearlas, hacer una pausa para sentir su gusto y placer: y todas las vidas, incluso aquella de los que más sufren, es más con mayor motivo si sufre, tiene la necesidad y el derecho de redescubrirse bella.

Bisollo concluye el libro enfatizando el profundo significado de la filosofía preventiva, que tiene la tarea de “cultivar una práctica estética contra la *an-estesia*, dejando brotar pensamientos y acciones que llevan en sí mismos el signo de la belleza y la maravilla y capaces de renovar la realidad: pensamientos y acciones verdaderamente

⁹ Trad: el encanto de una persona hermosa o un lugar hermoso es directo, inmediato (...) Sin embargo, el concepto de belleza en sí mismo es escurridizo. Es difícil decir qué es la belleza o por qué es importante para nosotros. ¿Cuál es su misterio? ¿Cuál es su poder?

estupefacientes” (2020, p.239).

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DECLARACIÓN ÉTICA SOBRE PUBLICACIÓN Y BUENAS PRÁCTICAS DE LA REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE FILOSOFÍA APLICADA HASER

1. INTRODUCCIÓN.

La *Revista Internacional de Filosofía Aplicada HASER* se articula de acuerdo a una serie de principios éticos y deberes fundamentales que conciernen al autor, el comité editorial, los autores y los referees. Asimismo, posee un procedimiento público para recibir y gestionar quejas.

Por último, los principios que determinan la evaluación de los artículos son difundidos tanto en su página web como en el contenido de la revista con el fin de promocionar la transparencia de la publicación.

Los principios éticos generales son los siguientes: transparencia, libertad de expresión, confidencialidad, respeto a la diversidad, obligación de declaración de conflictos de intereses y lucha contra el plagio y el autoplagio.

2. PRINCIPIOS ÉTICOS GENERALES Y BÁSICOS.

TRANSPARENCIA

Se editará en la edición en papel y la digital de la revista de todos los procesos inherentes a la misma y que respeten el principio de confidencialidad. Concretamente, implicará la publicación de la guía de evaluación de artículos facilitada a los referees, el procedimiento para la recepción y gestión de quejas y la declaración ética y de buenas prácticas.

LIBERTAD DE EXPRESIÓN

Los autores son libres de expresar su propia opinión siempre y cuando no lesiones el resto de principios de esta declaración, se

encuentren fundamentadas en los criterios académicos y posean el rigor científico oportuno.

Este principio se convierte en libertad de decisión para los referees y comités de la revista siempre y cuando cumplan los mismos requisitos de rigor académico y fundamentación argumental.

CONFIDENCIALIDAD

La revista se compromete a mantener la confidencialidad de los autores para asegurar un proceso de evaluación a doble ciego. Asimismo, este principio será básico en el caso de interposición de quejas o de desvelamiento de plagio o autoplagio hasta que no se haya obtenido un dictamen oficial del caso.

Este principio habrá de respetarse por los autores en los artículos que impliquen estudios experimentales con humanos u otra circunstancia que obligue la aparición de este principio ético.

LUCHA CONTRA EL PLAGIO Y AUTOPLAGIO

La revista mantendrá mecanismos para la lucha contra el plagio y autoplagio en todas sus instancias de acuerdo a lo señalados más abajo en los deberes de cada miembro de la misma.

ATENCIÓN Y RESPETO A LA DIVERSIDAD Y AL GÉNERO

Con el fin de evitar cualquier tipo de discriminación, se han creado mecanismos que promocionen en respeto a la diversidad. En este sentido, el editor, el comité editorial, los autores y los referees deberán evitar en sus juicios y escritos cualquier tipo de discriminación por razón de género, raza, ideología política o religiosa o condición sexual.

Los autores deberán informar del género en los datos de origen de las investigaciones publicadas con el fin de identificar las diferencias debidas a este aspecto.

GUÍA PARA LENGUAJE INCLUSIVO DE GÉNERO

El consejo editorial de la revista anima a la utilización de lenguaje inclusivo en los artículos remitidos. Algunas indicaciones para dar formato inclusivo se derivan de documentos internacionales como los aprobados por las Naciones Unidas y pueden resumirse en tres puntos¹:

- (1) Evitar expresiones discriminatorias: (a) utilizar formas de tratamiento adecuadas, (b) incluir los nombres y apellidos completos en ambos géneros y (c) evitar expresiones que perpetúan estereotipos de género.
- (2) Visibilizar el género cuando lo requiera la situación comunicativa: (a) explicitar los grupos de género referenciados; (b) usar los pares de femenino y masculino (desdoblados cuando sea preciso y (v) incentivar las estrategias tipográficas: o/a, o(a).
- (3) No visibilizar el género cuando no lo exija la situación comunicativa: (a) Omitir el artículo ante sustantivos comunes al género (periodista, participante, representante), (b) emplear sustantivos colectivos y otras estructuras genéricas cuando sea posible, (c) elegir adjetivos sin marca de género en lugar de sustantivos.

DECLARACIÓN DE CONFLICTO DE INTERESES

Se entiende por conflicto de intereses aquellas circunstancias en que los intereses primarios de una persona se encuentran determinados por otros secundarios ajenos a este.

Este principio implica, concretamente, las situaciones en que un referee tenga conocimiento de que está evaluando un artículo de una persona conocida o con la que mantiene una relación de cualquier tipo o viceversa, cuando el autor es consciente de que su

¹ Este punto es una adaptación de las recomendaciones de las Naciones Unidas que puede consultarse en <https://www.un.org/es/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>, último acceso 15 de febrero de 2020.

evaluación depende de estas circunstancias. Esta circunstancia se traslada a cada uno de los miembros de la revista. En todos estos casos, será preceptiva la declaración del conflicto de intereses de modo que la edición de la revista tome las oportunas medidas.

3. DEBERES ÉTICOS.

DEBERES DEL EDITOR Y DEL COMITÉ EDITOR

Actuar de modo justo evitando cualquier tipo de discriminación por razón de género, raza, ideología política o religiosa o condición sexual tanto en relación a los autores como al equipo de la revista.

Gestionar todas las contribuciones basándose únicamente en su valor académico (consúltese la *Guía para la evaluación de artículos académicos* de HASER) y no en los recursos financieros aportados para su publicación² o en intereses empresariales.

Incentivar la libertad de expresión, la calidad argumentativa de los autores y la promoción de los modos diferentes de racionalidad en los trabajos remitidos.

Mantener la independencia editorial de la revista.

Publicar disculpas, correcciones, clarificaciones o retracciones cuando sea necesario.

Generar y monitorizar un procedimiento justo para gestionar las quejas que incluya la posibilidad a los querellantes de queja y de recibir una respuesta de acuerdo a los principios éticos de la Revista.

Incentivar la corrección de errores si estos aparecen en los artículos.

Mantener la confidencialidad de los autores y de los *referees* o árbitros en el proceso de revisión por pares ciegos de los trabajos remitidos.

Publicar los criterios y procedimientos de evaluación de la revista.

² Esta revista no cobra gastos de gestión o de otra índole a sus autores.

El editor es el último responsable de la aceptación y rechazo de los artículos, con cuyos autores no debe tener conflictos de intereses. Mantener la integridad de los registros académicos a lo largo de la existencia de la publicación

DEBERES DE LOS REFEREES

Aceptar exclusivamente los artículos para los que se dispongan competencias y conocimientos académicos suficientes.

Informar al editor/comité editorial en el caso de que se pueda deducir la autoría y rechazarlo para evitar violar el deber de realizar revisión a doble ciego.

En caso de detección de plagio o autoplagio parcial o total, uso del texto en conferencias o ponencias de diversa índole, informar al editor/comité editorial.

Realizar una revisión ciega imparcial de los trabajos recibidos aportando comentarios constructivos a los autores.

Evaluar los artículos exclusivamente de acuerdo a criterios académicos, generando un informe articulado por la guía de evaluación de la revista. Asimismo, se evitará en el arbitraje cualquier tipo de discriminación por razón de género, raza, ideología política o religiosa o condición sexual.

Ser consciente de la posibilidad de conflicto de intereses de naturaleza institucional, financiera, colaborativa entre el referee y el trabajo. En caso de que sea detectada, avisar al editor para que el trabajo recibido sea remitido a otro autor

Responder en un tiempo razonable a la evaluación de los artículos

DEBERES DE LOS AUTORES

Confirmar que el artículo no está siendo evaluado por otra publicación, no ha sido publicado o expuesto en cualquier evento académico.

En el caso de que el artículo sea una reelaboración de una conferencia, ponencia, comunicación, charla o semejante o se

corresponda con una reelaboración posterior, el autor habrá de informar al editor e indicarlo en nota a pie de la primera o última página del trabajo.

Evitar en el cuerpo del trabajo cualquier tipo de discriminación por razón de género, raza, ideología política o religiosa o condición sexual

Obtener permiso para la publicación de los textos, gráficos o tablas que no pertenezcan al autor y así lo requiera e indicar su fuente.

Citar la fuente de todas las ideas o contenidos sobre los que se desarrolla la argumentación del trabajo.

Informar sobre cualquier posible conflicto de interés en relación al arbitraje.

En el caso de estudios empíricos con humanos o animales, se deberán respetar los principios éticos exigidos por las normativas éticas nacionales e internacionales. Si el estudio lo requiere, se deberá obtener el preceptivo permiso del comité de ética indicado para tal investigación. Estos permisos incluyen obtener el consentimiento informado explícito de los sujetos implicados en el estudio.

Facilitar la corrección de errores y enmiendas si el propio artículo ha sido aceptado y de acuerdo a los plazos marcados.

Remitir artículos de acuerdo a la línea editorial de la revista y aceptar su rechazo en el caso de que no sea congruente con la misma, su área de conocimiento o la bibliografía y discusiones propias de su campo de desarrollo. No obstante, hay una línea de quejas en caso de que quiera utilizarse en relación a este punto.

Informar en el artículo de quién ha financiado la investigación, si ese fuera el caso.

Se prohíbe publicar el artículo en cualquier otra revista.

En el caso de artículos editados por varios autores, todos ellos deberán haber participado de forma igualitaria en el proceso.

Ceder los derechos de edición de artículos a la revista y solicitar permiso para su publicación o edición en otro medio si han sido aprobados.

PROCEDIMIENTOS PARA GESTIONAR CONFLICTOS ÉTICOS Y QUEJAS

1. El editor y el consejo editor recibirán cualquier demanda ética o queja relacionada con la *Revista Internacional de Filosofía Aplicada HASER* en cualquier momento del año en el email hacer@us.es. La acusación deberá estar motivada y anexar todas las pruebas y documentos necesarios para su evaluación por parte el editor y el comité editor.
2. El editor recabará todos los datos ayudado, en caso necesario, por los miembros del comité editor.
3. El editor pedirá testimonios y argumentos a favor y en contra de las posiciones. Si es posible, el editor deberá recabar estas informaciones por escrito para transmitir las al comité editor.
4. El editor convocará al comité editor con el fin de exponer los pormenores y les facilitará toda la información, gestionará el desarrollo de un dictamen y la creación de línea de acción conjunta.
5. De modo ordinario, el comité editor presidido por el editor, o el editor, resolverá el problema en un plazo máximo de seis meses desde la recepción de toda la documentación. Asimismo, dictaminará resolución que se trasladará a las personas implicadas.
6. Los dictámenes incluirán:
 - a. Información al autor sobre la decisión tomada.
 - b. Información a las instituciones implicadas en el trabajo remitido sobre la decisión del comité de ética.
 - c. En caso necesario, por ejemplo en el caso de detección de plagio o autoplagio después de publicar un artículo, se retirará de inmediato el trabajo y se

- informará de la circunstancia públicamente. Asimismo, se informará de este asunto a todos los índices y catálogos donde se encuentra indexada la *Revista Internacional de Filosofía Aplicada HASER*.
- d. Prohibición al autor de volver a publicar en la revista por un tiempo a determinar en el dictamen y que decidirá el Comité Editor dirigido por el Editor.
 - e. Otras acciones legales que decida emprender el Comité Editor si fuera necesario.
7. En el caso de que el problema esté relacionado con el editor, se elegirá al miembro del comité de ética con más antigüedad efectiva para dirigir todo el proceso.

INDICACIÓN BIBLIOGRÁFICA

Tanto la *Declaración ética sobre publicación y buenas prácticas de la revista Internacional de Filosofía Aplicada HASER* como el *Procedimientos para gestionar conflictos éticos y quejas* ha sido realizado después de analizar diversos códigos éticos de editoriales y revistas académicas. El resultado es la síntesis arriba indicada. De forma concreta, se encuentran entre las fuentes consultadas las siguientes:

BMJ Publishing Group, *Resources for authors*, <http://resources.bmj.com/bmj/authors/editorial-policies/transparencypolicy> (último acceso 15 de septiembre de 2016).

Cambridge University Press, *Publication ethics*, disponible online en <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/authors/publication-ethics> (último acceso 15 de septiembre de 2016).

Cambridge University Press, *Ethical standards ethics*, disponible online en <https://www.cambridge.org/core/about/ethical-standards> (último acceso 15 de septiembre de 2016).

Committee on publication ethics, *Code of conduct*, disponible online en http://publicationethics.org/files/u2/New_Code.pdf (último acceso 15 de septiembre de 2016)

Committee on publication ethics, *Code of conduct and best practice. Guideline for journals editors*, disponible online en <http://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines> (último acceso 15 de septiembre de 2016)

Committee on publication ethics, *Code of conduct*, disponible online en <http://publicationethics.org/files/Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf> (último acceso 15 de septiembre de 2016)

Elsevier, *Publishing ethics resource kit (PERK) for editors*, disponible online en <https://www.elsevier.com/editors/perk> (último acceso 15 de septiembre de 2016)

Elsevier, *Publishing ethics resource kit (PERK) for editors*, disponible online en <https://www.elsevier.com/editors/perk> (último acceso 15 de septiembre de 2016)

DECLARATION ON ETHICS AND GOOD PRACTICES OF THE *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL ON PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICE HASER*

1. INTRODUCTION

The *International Journal on Philosophical Practice HASER* establishes a series of ethical principles and fundamental duties concerning the editor, the editorial board, authors and reviewers. Likewise, it has an open procedure for receiving and handling complaints.

The principles governing the peer review of papers are available both on the journal's website and in its print version, with a view to promoting transparency.

The general ethical principles are as follows: transparency, freedom of expression, confidentiality, respect for diversity, the obligation to declare conflicts of interest and combating plagiarism and self-plagiarism.

2. GENERAL AND FUNDAMENTAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

TRANSPARENCY

The journal's print and digital editions shall implement processes that promote transparency. Specifically, this will entail publishing its paper review guidelines, thus making them readily available to the reviewers, its procedure for receiving and handling complaints and its declaration on ethics and good practices.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Authors are free to express their own opinions, provided that these do not violate the principles set out in this declaration, that they are based on academic criteria and that they possess a solid scientific base.

This principle becomes one of freedom of decision for reviewers and the journal's different boards, provided that they meet the same requirements as regards academic rigour and the substantiation of claims.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The journal undertakes to maintain the confidentiality of authors in order to guarantee an adequate double-blind peer review process. Likewise, this shall be a fundamental guiding principle in the event of complaints or the disclosure of plagiarism or self-plagiarism, until an official decision has been reached.

This ethical principle shall be observed by authors whose papers involve experimental studies with human subjects or any other circumstance involving it.

COMBATING PLAGIARISM AND AUTO-PLAGIARISM

The journal shall implement mechanisms for combating plagiarism and self-plagiarism at all levels, in accordance with those pertaining to the ethical duties of all the parties concerned.

ATTENTION TO AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY AND FOR GENDER

For the purpose of avoiding any type of discrimination, a number of mechanisms have been implemented to promote respect for diversity. In this regard, the editor, the editorial board, authors and reviewers should avoid any type of discrimination on grounds of gender, race, political ideology, religious beliefs or sexual condition in their judgements and submissions.

Authors must indicate gender in the source data of published research in order to identify differences due to this aspect.

GUIDELINES FOR GENDER INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

The editorial board encourages the use of inclusive language in submitted articles. Some indications for inclusive formatting are

derived from international documents such as those approved by the United Nations³. Those ones can be summarized in three points:

- (1) Avoid discriminatory expressions: (a) use appropriate forms of treatment, (b) include full names and surnames in both genders and (c) avoid expressions that perpetuate gender stereotypes.
- (2) Make gender visible when the communicative situation requires it: (a) make explicit the referenced gender groups; (b) use the pairs of feminine and masculine (unfolded when necessary and (c) encourage typographic strategies: o/a, o(a).
- (3) Do not make gender visible when the communicative situation does not require it: (a) Omit the article before nouns common to the gender (journalist, participant, representative), (b) use collective nouns and other generic structures when possible, (c) choose adjectives without gender marking instead of nouns.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest is understood here as those circumstances in which the primary interests of a person are subordinated to other secondary ones far-removed from them.

Specifically, this principle refers to situations in which a reviewer is aware that he/she is reviewing the paper of someone who he/she knows or with whom he/she has a relationship of any type, or, vice versa, when the author is aware that the review of his/her paper depends on this circumstance. Conflicts of interest also affect each one of the journal's staff members. The declaration of conflict of interest shall be binding in all cases, with the journal reserving the right to take all those measures that it deems necessary, should this principle be violated.

³ These points have been adapted from recommendations given by the United Nations. They can be consulted at <https://www.un.org/es/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>, last accessed February 15, 2020.

3. ETHICAL DUTIES

DUTIES OF THE EDITOR AND THE EDITORIAL BOARD

To be impartial at all times, avoiding any type of discrimination on grounds of gender, race, political ideology, religious beliefs or sexual condition, in relation to authors and the editorial staff, alike.

To assess all contributions on the sole basis of their academic value (see the *Guidelines for Reviewers HASER*), rather than the monies disbursed for their publication⁴ or business interests.

To foster freedom of expression and academic excellence among authors and to promote different modes of rationality in the works submitted.

To maintain the journal's editorial independence.

To publish apologies, corrections, clarifications or retractions, should the need arise.

To implement and monitor an impartial procedure for handling complaints that allows claimants to lodge them and to receive replies, in accordance with the journal's ethical principles.

To encourage the correction of errors in papers, should the need arise.

To maintain the confidentiality of authors and reviewers during the double-blind peer review process.

To publish the journal's review criteria and procedures.

To accept or reject papers (the editor being ultimately responsible for this), whose authors must not have any conflicts of interest.

To maintain the integrity of academic records throughout the journal's lifecycle.

DUTIES OF THE REVIEWS

⁴ This journal does not charge authors administrative costs or any other type of fee.

To accept for review only those papers for which they have sufficient subject expertise and knowledge to carry out a proper assessment.

To notify the editor/editorial board if they can deduce who the author is, and to decline to review the paper to avoid neglecting their duty to perform a blind review.

To notify the editor/editorial board should they detect partial or full plagiarism or the use of the paper's content in conferences or keynotes of a different nature.

To perform an impartial blind review of the papers submitted, offering authors constructive comments.

To assess papers solely in accordance with academic criteria, drafting a report following the journal's guidelines in this respect. Likewise, reviewer reports must avoid any type of discrimination on grounds of gender, race, political ideology, religious beliefs or sexual condition.

To be aware of possible conflicts of interest of an institutional, financial or collaborative nature with the authors of papers that they are asked to review. And, in such an event, to notify the editor in order that the paper in question should be sent to another reviewer.

To review papers in a timely fashion.

DUTIES OF THE AUTHORS

To confirm that their papers are not being reviewed by another publication and that they have not been previously published or presented at any academic event.

To notify the editor should their papers be reworkings of conferences, keynotes, communications, talks or suchlike or subsequent reworkings, and to indicate this in a footnote on the first or final page of their papers.

To avoid any type of discrimination on grounds of gender, race, political ideology, religious beliefs or sexual condition in the body copy.

To obtain permission to publish texts, graphics or tables that do not belong to them and, if so required, to cite the source.

To cite the sources of all the ideas and content on which their papers' subject matter is based.

To notify the editor about any conflict of interest in relation to the review of their papers.

To abide by the ethical principles set out in national and international ethical regulations in the case of empirical studies performed on human or animal subjects. To obtain, if so required, the mandatory authorisation of the relevant ethical committee, including the explicitly informed consent of all the subjects involved in the study.

To expedite the correction of errors and modifications, should their papers be accepted for publication, in compliance with established deadlines.

To submit papers in compliance with the journal's editorial line and to accept their rejection should they be inconsistent with this, their area of knowledge or the literature and discussions pertaining to their field of development. However, there is a procedure for lodging complaints, should they deem this necessary.

To mention all funding sources in their papers, should this be the case.

To abstain from publishing submitted or accepted papers in any other journal.

To ensure that all the co-authors have been equally involved in the process, should the need arise.

To transfer copyrights to the journal and, if they have been accepted, to request permission to publish or edit their papers in any other medium.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ETHICS-RELATED CLAIMS AND COMPLAINTS

1. Any ethics-related claim or complaint relating to the *International Journal on Philosophical Practice HASER* can be lodged at any moment by sending an email to the editor and the editorial board at: hacer@us.es. Claims or complaints should be substantiated and include all the documentary evidence necessary in order to allow the editor and editorial board to assess them adequately.
2. The editor shall gather all the information with the assistance, should the need arise, of the members of the editorial board.
3. The editor shall request statements and arguments in favour and against all the stances. If possible, the editor shall gather this information in writing before submitting it to the editorial board.
4. The editor shall convene a meeting of the editorial board for the purpose of presenting all the information to its members, as well as making decisions and proposing a joint line of action.
5. Normally, the editorial board, chaired by the editor, shall resolve claims or complaints within six days of receiving all the information. Likewise, he/she shall adopt a resolution and notify those involved of his/her decision.
6. The resolution shall involve:
 - a. Notifying the author about the decision.
 - b. Notifying the institutions involved in the submitted paper about the decision of the ethical committee.
 - c. Should the need arise, for example in the event of detecting plagiarism or self-plagiarism after publication, the paper in question shall be immediately withdrawn and a public statement

- issued. Likewise, all the indexes and catalogues in which the *International Journal on Philosophical Practice HASER* appears shall be duly notified.
- d. Authors shall be strictly prohibited from publishing another paper in the journal during the period established by the editorial board chaired by the editor.
 - e. Any other legal action that the editorial boards deems necessary, should the need arise.
7. In the event that the claim or complaint involves the editor, the most senior member of the ethical committee will be appointed to oversee the process.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Both the *Declaration on Ethics and Good Practices of the International Journal on Philosophical Practice HASER* and the *Procedures for Handling Ethics-Related Claims and Complaints* have been drafted after analysing the codes of conduct and good practices of different publishing houses and academic journals, resulting in the aforementioned synthesis. Specifically, the sources that have been consulted are as follows:

BMJ Publishing Group, *Resources for authors*, available online at: <http://resources.bmj.com/bmj/authors/editorial-policies/transparencypolicy> (accessed 15 September 2016).

Cambridge University Press, *Publication ethics*, available online at: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/authors/publication-ethics> (accessed 15 September 2016).

Cambridge University Press, *Ethical standards ethics*, available online at: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/about/ethical-standards> (accessed 15 September 2016).

Committee on publication ethics, *Code of conduct*, available online at: http://publicationethics.org/files/u2/New_Code.pdf (accessed 15 September 2016).

Committee on publication ethics, *Code of conduct and best practice. Guideline for journals editors*, available online at: <http://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines> (accessed 15 September 2016).

Committee on publication ethics, *Code of conduct*, available online at: <http://publicationethics.org/files/Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf> (accessed 15 September 2016).

Elsevier, *Publishing ethics resource kit (PERK) for editors*, available online at: <https://www.elsevier.com/editors/perk> (accessed 15 September 2016).

Elsevier, *Publishing ethics resource kit (PERK) for editors*, available online at: <https://www.elsevier.com/editors/perk> (accessed 15 September 2016).

Normas para la publicación en *HASER* ***Revista internacional de Filosofía Aplicada***

Haser. Revista Internacional de Filosofía Aplicada es una publicación académica que edita artículos, reseñas y comentarios de eventos de calidad vinculados con el mundo de la Orientación Filosófica y la Filosofía Aplicada. Para su aceptación, el envío de trabajos responderá a los siguientes ítems, devolviéndose a los autores que no los cumplan:

1. Los trabajos han de ser inéditos, desarrollar un tema acorde a la línea editorial y no estar incursos en evaluación por otra revista hasta conseguir el dictamen final de *Haser*.
2. Una vez aceptados, no pueden ser publicados, parcial o totalmente, salvo que dispongan del permiso de los editores de la revista, y siempre habrán de citar la fuente original.
3. Se enviarán en formato digital a la dirección electrónica de la revista haser@us.es en formato Word 2003 o anterior. Si, en diez días, los autores no recibieran acuse de recibo, deberán volver a remitir el email. Téngase presente que la segunda quincena de Julio y el mes de Agosto será inhábil para la remisión de acuses de recibo.
4. Los artículos y los comentarios se someterán a una revisión por pares externos, que incluye la evaluación de, al menos, dos *referees*. Éstos determinarán su aprobación, rechazo o aprobación con sugerencias a subsanar por el autor. Los artículos se evaluarán de acuerdo a los siguientes criterios: claridad, coherencia de las ideas, metodología adecuada a los contenidos, evaluación de la bibliografía utilizada actualizada y congruente con el tema, fundamentos y justificación suficiente y relevancia del trabajo para la disciplina. Más tarde, el comité editor decidirá el número de la revista en que se incluirá el trabajo.

4. EXTENSIÓN: Los artículos tendrán una extensión de entre 7500 y 10000 palabras, las notas de eventos (cursos, congresos, seminarios, conferencias) deberán contener una extensión de entre 3000 y 5000 palabras y las reseñas entre 1000 y 1500 palabras.
5. Todo artículo o nota deberá incluir bajo el título (tamaño máximo 15 palabras), la traducción del título al inglés, el nombre, filiación y ORCID del autor, su email, un resumen en castellano e otro en inglés de no más de ciento cincuenta palabras y entre cuatro y seis palabras clave (inglés y español).
6. En el caso de que existan varios autores en un artículo, se deberá indicar el orden y justificar esa decisión. Asimismo, habrá de indicarse la fuente de financiación de los proyectos en los que se enmarcan los trabajos, si así sucediese.
7. Se aceptan originales en inglés y castellano, publicándose en la lengua en que haya sido remitido. Los envíos en otras lenguas serán estudiados por el comité editor.

8. FORMATO:

Es requisito para su evaluación que las citas (siempre a pie de página) se rijan por los siguientes formatos:

- a. Libros: Apellido, Autor: *Nombre de la obra*, editorial, lugar, año.
Ejemplo: Séneca, Lucio Anneo: *Cartas a Lucilio*, Editorial Juventud, Madrid, 2001.
- b. Artículos de revistas: Apellidos, Autor: “Nombre del artículo”, en *Revista, número o volumen*, lugar, año, pp. xx-xx.
Ejemplo: Ruiz Pérez, Miguel Ángel: “La filosofía aplicada en el mundo”, en *Revista de Filosofía Aplicada, número 23*, Sevilla, 2003, pp. 23-45.
- c. Capítulos de libro: Apellidos, Autor: “Nombre del capítulo”, en Apellidos, Autor: *Nombre de la obra*, editorial, lugar, año, pp. xx-xx.
Ejemplo: Márquez Ruibarbo, Antonio: “La filosofía aplicada y su futuro ontológico” en González Mercader, Marcos: *La filosofía*

aplicada a través del tiempo, Editorial Miriati, Sevilla, 2006, pp. 23-56.

c. Artículos procedentes de Internet: Apellidos, Autor: “Nombre del título de la entidad referida”, disponible on-line en www.referenciaonline.net (último acceso 11 de enero de 2009).

Ejemplo: Santes Martín, Antonio: “Philosophical Practice”, disponible on-line en www.santes.net/philconuns.htm (último acceso 23 de agosto de 2016).

9. El tipo de letra de los artículos, notas y reseñas será:

- Times new roman 12 tpi para el contenido del artículo.
- Times New Roman 10 tpi para las citas dentro del texto, las notas a pie de página, los resúmenes, abstracts y palabras claves.
- No se aceptarán los subrayados ni las negritas dentro del artículo, a excepción del título de los epígrafes que irán en negrita.
- No se incluirán líneas entre párrafos.
- No se usarán mayúsculas.

10. No existen costes por procesamiento y publicación de artículos.

11. Una vez publicado el trabajo, se remitirá al autor una copia de la revista en versión online vía correo electrónico.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS TO PUBLISH IN *HASER*. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL ON PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICE

Academic and peer-reviewed *International Journal on Philosophical Practice HASER* encourages authors to submit articles, reviews and reports of events linked to Philosophical Practice. Contributions must be sent according to these policies.

1. Articles must be original. They have to develop a topic linked to the editorial line. They must not be published previously or sent to other journals before author receives the decision of *HASER* about its acceptance or rejection.
2. Contributions published in *HASER* can't be published (partly or totally) in other journal, websites or similar without permission of Editor of *Haser*. If *HASER* allows its re-publication, author must indicate its original source.
3. Contributions must be sent in an electronic version to haser@us.es in *Word 2003/97* format. *HASER* will send a return receipt to authors in ten days. If they don't receive it, article must be sent again.
4. Articles will be sent to two referees, in order to double-blind review. Articles will be evaluated according to the following criteria: clarity, coherence of ideas, methodology appropriate to the contents, evaluation of the bibliography used updated and congruent with the topic, foundations and sufficient justification and relevance of the work for the discipline. Referees will propose one of these decisions: 'suitable for publication', 'rejected', 'suitable with minor corrections'. If an article is 'suitable for publication', editorial committee will decide the issue where it will be included.
4. **LENGTH:** Articles must contain between 7500 and 10000 words (12-18 pages), event reports must contain between 3000 and 5000 words

(5-8 pages) and books reviews must contain between 1000 and 1500 words (2 pages).

5. Contributions must include author name, affiliation, ORCID, email, an abstract in Spanish and English (70-150 word) and 4-6 keywords. Articles will incorporate a “Reference section” with 8-15 books at least.

6. If there are several authors in an article, the order must be indicated and that decision justified. In addition, the source of financing of the projects in which the work is framed must be indicated.

7. LANGUAGE: Contributions could be written in English and Spanish. Translation services will not be provided.

8. TEXT FORMAT:

Contributors who want to publish in *Haser* must follow these formats:

a. Books: Family name, Name: *Title*, publisher, place, year, p.xx.

Example: Seneca, Lucio Anneo: *Letters to Lucilius*, Granta Books, New York, 2001, p. 23.

b. Articles: Family Name, Name: “Article title”, in *Journal title*, number, volume, place, year, pp. xx-xx.

Example: Hume, David: “Philosophy and its links to Politics”, in *Political Philosophy*, number 23, Baltimore, 2003, pp. 23-45.

c. Chapters: Family name, Name: “Name of chapter”, in Family name, Name: *Book title*, publisher, place, year, p. xx-xx.

Example: Smith, Peter: “Philosophy and life” in Murphy, John (ed.): *Life*, Pearson Publishers, Washington (USA), 2006, pp. 34-56.

d. Articles from Internet: Family name, Name: “Title of article”, available in www.online.net (last access February 17th, 2016).

Example: SMITH, Michael: “To make Philosophical Practice”, available in www.filoze.org/vera.htm (last access March 26st, 2009).

9. Type of letters must be:

- Times new roman 12 tpi: Main text of articles.

- Times New Roman 10 tpi: quotations inside article, footnotes, abstracts and keywords.

- Texts must avoid stress, underlined or bold words. Sections titles will be written in bold words.

- Do not use capitals.

- Do not include lines between paragraphs.

10. There aren't any fees for publishing articles.

11. After publishing articles, authors will receive a whole issue of HASER by email to authors.