No Education Without Hesitation:
Exploring the Limits of Educational Relations

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In an 1894 publication, the German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey wrote that "*die Wissenschaft der Pädagogik kan nur beginnen mit der Deskription des Erziehers in seinem Verhältnis zum Zögling*" — which roughly translates as "the science of education can only begin with a description of the educator in his relation to the one being educated."[1] In the 1930s, Dilthey's student Hermann Nohl, by then professor of education at the University of Göttingen, would place the educational relation ("*Der pädagogische Bezug*") at the center of his conception of education, thus making it into one of the key concepts of twentieth century German educational theory.[2]

The idea that relations matter in education — and that they matter in a crucial and fundamental way — is difficult to contest. It is difficult to envisage education *without* relation, and in this regard it may well be true, to quote the title from the book edited by Charles Bingham and Alexander Sidorkin, that there is indeed "no education without relation."[3] Yet to say that there is and can be no education without relation is not entirely without risk. At a practical level the risk is that we may try to relate too much, that is, that we may try to get too close to our students — on the assumption, for example, that we need to know as much as possible about our students, about their history, their background, their identity, their feelings, their sense of self, in order to be able to teach them successfully — and therefore leave no space for something educational to happen, for the "event" of education to occur.[4] Here we can take inspiration from Anton Makarenko who, precisely for this reason, refused to have any knowledge about the history of the juvenile delinquents he worked with at the Gorky Colony.[5] At a theoretical level the risk is that, by focusing too much on the relational dimensions of education, we lose sight of the gaps, the fissures, and the disjunctions, the disconnections, and the strangeness that are part of educational processes and practices as well; and, more importantly, we run the risk of losing sight of the educational significance of these dimensions.

While I do not wish to contest, therefore, that there is no education without *relation*, I wish to *add* that there is also no education without *hesitation*. This involves what we might call "practical hesitation" — the subtle moments where we hold back, where we do not want to know, where we leave space for something to happen that is fundamentally beyond our intentions and control — and "theoretical hesitation" — an awareness of the importance of those aspects of educational processes and practices that are "beyond" or "outside" of a common (or perhaps we should say, an all too superficial) understanding of education-as-relation. It is to the latter task that I aim to make a modest contribution by exploring what, in the title of my essay, I refer to as the "limits" of educational relations.

In what follows I explore some dimensions of educational processes and practices that highlight the "unrelated" and the "unrelational," which emphasize separation and distance rather than connection and closeness. I will focus on three themes: communication, speech, and teaching. My approach will be broad more than that it will be deep, in that I aim to identify a number of "arenas" in which questions about the "unrelational" dimensions of education can be raised. My ambition, therefore, is to offer a number of starting points for further discussion, rather than pursuing all aspects of these discussions in full detail. Before I start, however, I need to say a few things about what I see increasingly as one of the most unhelpful and most imprecise words in our field — namely, the word "education."

THE MULTIPLE MEANINGS OF "EDUCATION"

While other languages and traditions of theorizing have a whole range of different words to talk "in" and "about" education — in no particular order: *Pädagogik, Didaktik, Bildung, Erziehung, Ausbildung, Unterricht, Lehren, danning, utdanning, dannelse, bildning, utbildning, opvoeden, onderwijzen, vormen* — the English language is seriously lacking in its ability to make meaningful distinctions. While I have no magical solution for bridging the gap between forms of educational thinking and doing that have emerged in the English language and those that have developed in other contexts and languages,[6] and while I would also argue that the ambition should less be one of bridging the gap than acknowledging the "strangeness" of each other's vocabularies, I have found it useful to make a distinction between three domains of educational function and purpose.[7] The distinction I have suggested is between *qualification* (the domain of the transmission and acquisition of knowledge and skills); *socialization* (the domain of the reproduction and adoption of traditions and practices, of ways of doing, thinking and being); and *subjectification* (the domain that is concerned with the formation of the human person, in whatever way we may wish to understand this task). These domains are of course not separate, at least not in their function — the research on the hidden curriculum shows, for example, that transmission of knowledge always also confirms existing social structures and stratifications — and probably also not in their intention; something we know at least since Johann Friedrich Herbart promoted the idea of "*erziehenden Unterricht,*" that is — in inadequate translation — "teaching which also aims to educate."[8] With these distinctions in mind, I now turn to three areas — or arenas, as I have called them — in which I wish to explore "unrelational" dimensions of education.

MIND THE GAP

It is perhaps not without significance that the chapter I contributed to the book *No Education Without Relation* carried the title "Mind the Gap."[9] The particular focus of my contribution there was on education as a process of communication and, more specifically, the communication of meaning — which puts the discussion mainly in the domain of qualification and, to a lesser extent, socialization. The argument in the chapter is based on a discussion of opposing theories of communication, especially between the "sender-receiver" model in which communication is mainly seen in logistical terms — as the transportation of bits of information from

a sender to a receiver — and the understanding of communication developed by the pragmatists — most specifically John Dewey and George Herbert Mead. In the view of Dewey and Mead communication is seen as a process of practical creation and transformation, that is, in Dewey's words, as a process in which "[s]omething is literally made in common."[10] While the idea of "making something in common" may suggest the kind of closeness and fusion that would perhaps begin to highlight the relational character of educational communication — one could, after all, say that we need to relate or, in the terms of pragmatism, co-ordinate, in order to make something in common — Dewey defines communication as a process in which something is made in common "in at least two different centres of behaviour,"[11] thus suggesting that the process of making something in common is *not* a process of producing something that is identical for both partners in communication.[12]

One could say that while the sender-receiver model is based on a logic of *identity*, the pragmatist understanding of communication is based on a logic of *difference*, based on the idea that while we can co-ordinate our actions, this neither *requires* identity (of action, meaning, and self) nor does it *result* in identity (of action, meaning, and self). The pragmatists therefore provide us with an effective argument against the idea that communication is only possible on the basis of a common understanding — a common "ground" — that needs to be established before communication can start. They rather depict communication as the ongoing task of producing or "living" a common "world" (note that the word "in" is not missing here).

The difference between these two conceptions of educational communication can also be articulated with the words "mechanism" and "event," in that the sender-receiver model depicts educational communication ultimately as a mechanistic process, whereas the pragmatist approach sees it as an event, that is, as a happening with always-unpredictable outcomes. Yet this also shows — and we have to be honest here and not fall into the trap of "accusing" only one position of (crypto-) normativity — that *both* conceptions of communication articulate a norm of good, desirable, or ideal communication. While the sender-receiver model sees communication ideally as a process where the intentions of the sender arrive "safely" with the receiver, the pragmatist model sees communication ideally as a process of creation, production, and transformation. This also leads to a different "position" for the self. Whereas in the sender-receiver model we might say the self is subjected *to* communication, in the pragmatist model the self is a subject *of* communication.

What is interesting about the pragmatist model is that it highlights a fundamental gap between the "partners in communication," and that there is no ambition or desire to bridge or close this gap. The theorist who perhaps has pushed the idea of a gap between the partners in communication to its logical conclusion is Homi Bhabha who, in his book *The Location of Culture*, makes the case that the "third space of enunciation" that emerges in the encounter between interlocutors (be they individuals, be they cultures), is "unrepresentable in itself."[13] The reason for this is the fact that any attempt to represent this third space — the in-between space in which meanings emerge — can only be undertaken from the position of one of the

interlocutors and not from some kind of neutral position outside of this. This means that any attempt to represent a third space of enunciation will only ever produce a further "third space" that will forever escape our attempts to grasp it. To acknowledge that what emerges in communication can never be "owned" or totalized by any of the partners in communication is, therefore, not only an epistemological point but also, first and foremost, an insight with ethico-political bearings.[14]

The theme of educational communication thus gives us a first case of an educational situation where gaps and disconnections seem to matter. If we tend to think about relations in terms of connection and the bridging of gaps — which is, of course, a point for further discussion — then we may have an example of an aspect of education that exposes some of the limits of educational relations. There is, however, an important educational point to make, which has to do with the fact that much educational activity is actually oriented toward reproduction and faithful transmission. Af ter all, irrespective of how much some constructivists would want to convince us that learning is a process in which students construct their own meanings and insights, at the end of the day two and two still equals four. And while we may wish to praise the creativity and ingenuity of the student who can argue that 2 and 2 should also equal 5, education, particularly when it operates in the qualification mode, has little scope for tolerance (in the technical sense of the word).

This is not only the case in the domain of meaning, knowledge, and understanding, but even more so in the domain of practical learning where identity between what is taught and what is learned tends to be the predominant orientation. There is, after all, only so much divergence and creativity that can go into learning to drive a car, learning to drill for oil, or learning to fly an Embraer ERJ 145. While perhaps from the perspective of subjectification education has and should have an orientation toward keeping the gap open and using it generatively, from the perspective of qualification (and probably also that of socialization) the normative educational ambition is strongly oriented toward reduction, reproduction, and closure — and these are real aspects of education as well. The main "mechanism" for closing the gap between teaching and learning is that of assessment, as assessment can be seen as the process through which selections are made from the divergent productions of students so that some of these productions are sanctioned as being "right" and others as being "wrong."[15] Given that assessment, rather than teaching or pedagogy, is the key process in closing the educational gap, it is perhaps not without significance that teaching and pedagogy are increasingly being replaced by and redefined as assessment, thus running the risk of driving the event out of education.[16]

Being Addressed

The second "arena" in which I wish to explore some of the limits of educational relations continues the theme of communication, but now in relation to the question of speech. The familiar way to engage with the question of speech in education is to ask how children learn to speak and, more generally, how they learn to communicate. This puts speech at the end of a developmental trajectory in which some kind of learning is supposed to lead to the ability to speak. There is a lot of developmental information that might be relevant here and, looking at it from an empirical angle,

it is quite difficult to deny that learning to speak is a kind of developmental process such that at one point in time a child is unable to produce words and sentences, and at a later moment in time the child has acquired this ability. But what might happen if we approach the question of speech from a different angle, that is, not as the question how children *learn* to speak but as the question how it is possible for the child to speak — how it is possible, in other words, for the child to be a speaking subject and a subject of speech?

The first thing we need to establish for this is that it is not possible to speak in isolation. One can produce sounds in isolation, but one cannot speak in isolation, that is, one cannot utter sounds that have meaning. If we follow this line of thinking, then we might say that in order to transform sounds into speech one needs to learn what one's sounds mean, which seems to imply that *others* need to tell one what one's sounds mean. This suggests a trajectory of learning in which the speaking that is made possible is the speech of the other, that is, the speech that already exists. On this account learning to speak becomes a process of socialization into an existing "order" of speech, and the speech that is made possible in this way is speech as repetition. It is speech, in other words, where the subject has dropped out and identity — as identification with an existing order of speech — has taken over. Also note that on this trajectory the guiding assumption on the side of the educator is that the child cannot *yet* speak. It thus starts from an assumption of *in*capacity.

This is, however, not the only way to think about the how the child can come to speech and can become a subject of speech. The alternative view I wish to explore is one that does not start from the assumption of incapacity but from the assumption of capacity. It starts, in other words, from the assumption that the child is able to speak or, rather — to keep the discussion away from questions of ability and inability —, it starts from the assumption *that the child is already speaking*.[17] This is indeed nothing more than an assumption. It is an assumption from which we can start; an assumption that can inform our educational actions. Jacques Rancière would call it an assumption that asks for verification, not in the theoretical sense of establishing its truth, but in the practical sense of *making* it true, that is, enacting its truth.[18] How might this assumption be enacted? I can see three different options, and it is by working through them that I will reach another point of disconnection and "unrelatedness" in education.[19]

The first option, which has become prominent in recent scholarship,[20] is to say that to enact the assumption that the child is speaking means to *listen* to the child. There is something I like about this suggestion, as it is indeed true that to listen enacts the assumption that the person one is listening to is speaking and has something to say. But there is also something I am concerned about, perhaps first and foremost the fact that listening seems to keep the sovereignty of the listener mostly in place — the listener remains in control of what he or she wants to hear. And maybe I am also concerned that listening may get us too much into questions of interpretation, understanding, and translation, and thus runs the risk of bringing the question of speech back to that of repetition, that is, of trying to decipher meaning rather than to acknowledge a speaking being.

A second option, also prominent in recent discussions, is that of *recognition*.[21] Here the enactment of the assumption that the child is speaking would take the form of me recognizing that the other is speaking and me recognizing the other as a speaking being. One concern I have about the idea and the "logic" of recognition is that it tends to operate from a position of power: the power to recognize you as a speaking being or not, and therefore to make your existence dependent upon my decision either to recognize you or not to recognize you. (I am aware of the further complexities of work in this area, particularly the issue concerning mutual recognition and the subsequent struggle for recognition.)

I wish to approach the enactment of the assumption that the child is speaking in terms of the "experience" of *being addressed*, rather than in terms of listening or recognition.[22] While listening and recognition can be configured as acts of benevolence, "being addressed" works in the opposite direction. Here it is not for me to recognize the other, but rather to recognize that the other is addressing me — that I am being addressed by another human being; here it is for me to act upon this recognition. This suggests that if any recognition is involved, it is recognition that is directed toward the *self*, not toward the *other*. To say, therefore, that the child is speaking, and to act on this assumption, is not to make an empirical claim, but to make a choice, a choice that is at the very same time educational and political. But we must be careful with the word "choice" in order not to fall back on the idea that it lies within my powers to choose whether I want to be addressed or not. Zygmunt Bauman's reading of Emmanuel Levinas in his *Postmodern Ethics* is helpful here as he clarifies that the responsibility at stake is not our responsibility for the other — this responsibility is simply "there" — but the responsibility we take for this responsibility.[23]

What is interesting about this third way in which the assumption that the child is speaking can be enacted, is that, unlike listening and recognition, it does not rely on a "relating gesture" — if that is a proper way of putting it — but rather on the creation of a certain distance. The recognition, after all, is directed toward the self, not toward the other. The teacher does not reach out to the student — either as listener or as recognizer — but rather turns toward the self. In an essay with the intriguing title "Alone in the Presence of Others," Glenn Hudak provides an important exploration of these ideas by focusing on educators working with "youth labeled as autistic."[24] What makes his exploration relevant for my discussion is the fact that he focuses on a "category" — and I immediately apologize for the word "category" here — where the general assumption appears to be one of individuals who are unable to speak, communicate, or even relate. One could of course accept this definition — this knowledge about the other — and use it as the assumption to guide one's actions. In that case any educational activity would simply repeat what is already assumed to be there. It would be tied to what allegedly *is*.[25] Hudak, however, argues for the opposite case, suggesting that the possibility for education is precisely opened up when the educator acts on basis of three presumptions: the presumption of *competence*, the presumption of *imagination*, and the presumption of *intimacy*. And in each case Hudak makes the point that the onus is not on the young person to communicate

and relate in an "accepted" manner, so to speak, but on the educator "to figure out how we can help those with physical impairments better communicate their experience, and hence be included into discussions rather than remaining on the sideline, spoken for by others."[26]

The task for the educator, therefore, "is not to interpret the world for those labeled autistic [but rather] to *presume* that the person labeled autistic is a thinking, feeling [and, so I wish to add, speaking] person."[27] Hudak makes similar points in relation to the other two presumptions — those of imagination and intimacy — and with regard to all three he argues that they pose "at once a philosophical and political challenge," in that they not only require us fundamentally to rethink what it means to speak, communicate, and relate, but, by acting upon these assumptions, also challenge "dominant structures of power"[28] and dominant definitions "of what it means to be human."[29] And this, as Hudak concludes, is not only relevant "for those labeled 'disabled'" but actually for "all of us."[30] I agree.

What I find interesting about the idea of "being addressed," as mentioned, is that it denotes a significantly different gesture than the gesture of listening and the gesture of recognition. What Hudak's discussion highlights is that, through the idea of "being addressed," questions of speech, coming to speech, and being a subject of speech become disconnected from those of individual skills and capacities, and particularly from skills and capacities that are often seen as essential for any relationship to be possible. Speech, so we might say, is no longer a matter of the *acquisition* of a competence by the speaker. It is not even a matter of me making an effort to speak and to be understood. My "ability" to speak, so we might say, is there when someone is addressed by my speech, even if this speech has no recognizable form — like the babble of a baby or the silence of a person labeled as autistic. This also means that the question of speech and coming to speech viewed in this way is no longer a question of qualification and socialization but ultimately a question of subjectification.

YOU MUST CHANGE YOUR LIFE

The final "arena" in which I wish to explore the limits of educational relations has to do with what we might perhaps characterize as the most general and most fundamental educational "gesture" of all, which is the fact that education always in some way implies a call, an evocation, and perhaps even a demand for *change*. When educators speak and act, they hardly ever — and perhaps never — do so in order to confirm what is already there, but always with the suggestion that something ought to change. This call for change occurs across the three domains of educational function and purpose — qualification, socialization, and subjectification — although what it means concretely is different in each domain. The call for change does not necessarily come with a clear specification of *what* this change should be, nor does it necessarily come with a clear specification of *how* this change should occur. But when the teacher teaches or the educator educates the overriding orientation is that of change.

Why do I bring this up in the discussion about relations and "unrelatedness" in education? The main reason for this lies in the fact that the *educational* call for

change is a call that comes from the *outside* and, so I wish to suggest, should *necessarily* be understood as a call that comes from the outside. This is one of the main reasons why the discourse of learning and the discourse of education are fundamentally different discourses. One can, of course, always decide for oneself that one wishes to change, and one can, of course, always decide to engage in learning in order to effect change. But the educational "logic" works differently, not in the least because it works in a different direction, that is, from the outside-in rather than from the inside-out. Yet this brings us to a question with a long pedigree in the philosophy of education, which is the question of whether it is possible for education — and more specifically for teaching — to bring anything radically new, to bring anything that really comes from the outside. This question goes straight back to Plato's *Meno*, to Socrates, and to what is known as the "learning paradox." I am aware that the issue of the interpretation of Socrates as an educator is a tricky one and, moreover, one about which almost every philosopher of education appears to have an opinion. Let me proceed, therefore, with one possible reading in order to make the point I would like to make, not claiming that this is the one and only or ultimate interpretation (or even claiming that what is at stake in my argument is the question of the "correct" interpretation of Socrates).

Socrates' way out of the learning paradox is to argue that all learning is a matter of recollection. This is why he can deny that he actually has anything to teach at all and why he can represent his educational efforts as entirely *maieutic*: bringing out what is already there. But whereas Socrates *says* that he is not involved in any teaching and, by doing so even seems to want to deny the very possibility of teaching, this is not consistent with what he may actually be doing. Sharon Todd, in her book *Learning from the Other*, argues that Socrates "cannot simply be taken at his word,"[31] and shows, through a subtle reading of the *Meno*, that there is actually quite a lot of teaching going on in the way in which Socrates tries to convince Meno's slave boy that he already possesses the knowledge he did not realize he possessed. Todd particularly highlights the teaching performed by Socrates that has an impact on the slave boy's subjectivity, a process through which the slave boy is being taught that he is indeed a slave boy, and also the process through which the slave boy is being taught that he is a learner, that is, a "subject of pedagogy."[32] Todd thus presents Socrates as "the teacher, who, like the perfect murderer, makes it appear that teaching has not taken place, who leaves the scene without a trace, and who, moreover, is convinced of his own innocence."[33] Yet, so she argues, by proclaiming his questions to be innocent, Socrates actually "obscures the fundamental structures of alteration and asymmetry that are present between teacher and student."[34]

Søren Kierkegaard, under the pseudonym of Johannes Climacus, provides a similar critique of the *Meno*, by asking whether it is possible to think of teaching outside of, and different from, the idea of maieutics. Whereas the maieutic conception of teaching sees teaching as *accidental* to learning, Climacus raises the question, as Merold Westphal puts it, as to "[w]hat would have to be true *if* there were to be an alternative to Socrates' account of knowledge as recollection, *if* the teacher were really to teach so that the relation to the teacher would be essential rather than

accidental."[35] The answer Kierkegaard gives is that the teacher needs to give the learner not only the truth but also the condition of recognizing it as truth, because "if the learner were himself the condition for understanding the truth, then he merely needs to recollect."[36] This "double truth-giving" is what Climacus characterizes as *revelation*. Revelation therefore means not merely "that the teacher presents the learner with some knowledge not already possessed, but more importantly, also [with] the condition for recognizing it as truth," since it is only in the latter case that "the relation to the teacher becomes *essential*." [37]

Climacus helps us see that a notion of teaching that is essential rather than accidental to learning is not simply about presenting students with something they do not yet know. It rather is about presenting students with something that "is neither derivable from nor validated by what [they] already know,"[38] but that truly transcends what they already know. This is why Levinas writes that Socratic teaching is characterized by the "primacy of the same," that is, "to receive nothing of the Other but what is in me, as though from all eternity I was in possession of what comes to me from the outside."[39] In contrast to this, Levinas is after a relationship in which I receive from the Other "beyond the capacity of the I" — which not only means "to have an idea of infinity" but also means "to be taught."[40] And it is this teaching that can be called revelation.[41]

Merold Westphal, in his discussion of these ideas in the work of Levinas and Kierkegaard, highlights that both Levinas and Kierkegaard link the notion of revelation to that of *authority*.[42] After all, if teaching is about presenting students with something that is "neither derivable from nor validated by" what they already know, then they have to take it on the authority of the teacher. The wider significance of this insight lies in the fact that, as Westphal puts it, "for both Levinas and Kierkegaard the basis of the ethical and religious life lies in an authoritative revelation that in its immediacy comes to us from beyond our own powers of recollection."[43] In the 1965 essay "Phenomenon and Enigma" Levinas refers to this revelation as "enigma" in order to highlight that what is revealed is not a phenomenon, not something that is comprehensible and comprehended by me, but rather something that is "beyond" my cognition and comprehension — and therefore even "beyond being"[44] and "beyond reason."[45] Enigma is about a way of "manifesting oneself without manifesting oneself." It stands for that which "signifies itself without revealing itself."[46] It is about God who literally "comes to mind," as Levinas would put it, rather than a mind trying to comprehend God.[47]

Elsewhere I have summarized this line of thought by suggesting that teaching, if it is to have any meaning that goes beyond the currently popular idea of the facilitation of learning, needs to carry with it a notion of "transcendence," a notion of a radical exteriority that comes to me rather than learning that is produced by me.[48] This is also why I think that it is important to make a clear distinction between "learning from (the other)" and "being taught by (the other)" (which is not to suggest that the distinction is simply "there" but to suggest that it is important to ponder the distinction that can be made with these phrases).[49] While learning from the other highlights the way in which I remain in control over what I wish to learn from the

other, being taught by the other indicates a different gesture, one where the other does indeed bring something radically new to me — something that, therefore, interrupts rather than simply confirms. It is the radical exteriority that is at stake here, the "non-maieuticity" — to use a very ugly phrase — of teaching that highlights rupture, disconnection, and "unrelatedness," and thus reveals another facet of the "unrelational" dimensions of education.

<div align="center">CONCLUSION</div>

As I have said before, the ambition of this essay has not been to present an argument against educational relations, but rather to explore aspects of educational processes and practices that reveal gaps, interruptions, distances, and disconnections — *not* in order to refute the idea of educational relations but to add a moment of hesitation to our thinking about education and about educational relations in particular. As I have nothing to argue for, I have perhaps also nothing to conclude, so let me rather try to capture what I see as some of the main insights emerging from my exploration. One has to do with educational communication and reveals that there is always a gap between the partners in communication — a gap, or in the words of Bhabha, a third space of enunciation in which meaning forever escapes us — that is forever beyond our control. We cannot close *this* gap by trying to "reach out" to our partners in communication, by trying to listen to them, by trying to understand them, because each time that we return our understandings to them, a new gap emerges, a new third space of enunciation comes into existence. The main advantage of understanding communication in this way is that it can help us to see that any attempt to close the gap always requires force — either by forcefully putting forward a particular representation of what, in itself, is unrepresentable, or by selecting and rewarding from a wide variety of meanings and actions those that are considered to be "right" or "true." The latter has been my description of the process of educational assessment, and while the discussion reveals that assessment in itself is always a forceful intervention, I have suggested that such an intervention is not without educational reason, if, that is, our orientation is toward qualification and socialization. The issue does, however, become an entirely different one when our interest is in subjectification, and I would argue that education — unlike training — should always exemplify in this dimension *as well*.

The question of speech — and more specifically the question of how the child can *be* a subject of speech (and I prefer to speak in existential terms of *being* a subject of speech rather than in developmental terms of *becoming* a subject of speech) — moved the discussion more explicitly to education in a subjectification "mode." In addition to two "relational" ways of enacting the assumption that the child is a subject of speech — listening and recognition — I have put forward a third option, that of "being addressed." While listening and recognition "reach out" to the other and in precisely this way can be characterized as relational gestures, "being addressed" reaches "out" to the self — a gesture I have also characterized as one of "reaching in" — and thus in a sense creates a gap or a distance, rather than a connection. But one could say that it is precisely because of this distance — because of the fact that there is no attempt to "capture" the other or to require that the other

proves his or her ability or capacity — that educational possibilities open up. The recognition of "being addressed" is therefore not factual but can perhaps best be understood as counterfactual, that is, as a belief — or as Birgit Schaffar calls it, a "moral demand" — upon which education becomes possible.[50]

Thirdly I have explored what it means for teaching to be possible *not* as something that is immanent, as something that is *accidental* to learning, to use Kierkegaard's phrase, but rather as something that is *essential* to learning and therefore as something that is transcendent, that is, something that radically comes from "outside," as rupture, interruption,[51] intervention, or, with the word that we can find both in Kierkegaard and Levinas, as *revelation*. Teaching as revelation in a sense looks at the experience of being addressed from the other side, which is why I have highlighted the importance of the distinction between "learning from" and "being taught by."

These insights, in sum, do not do away with the idea that to educate is to relate, but they may help us to look differently at educational relations, not only in order to see the gaps, fissures, disjunctions, and disconnections that are "at work," but also, and most importantly in order to appreciate why they might matter educationally.

1. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Pädagogik. Geschichte und Grundlinien des Systems. Gesammelte schriften, Bd. IX. 3. Aufl.* [Education: History and Fundamentals of Its System. Collected Works, volume IX, 3rd edition] *(*Stuttgart, GR: B.G. Teubner, 1961), 190.

2. See Hermann Nohl, *Die padagogische Bewegung in Deutschland und ihre Theorie* [*The Educational Movement in Germany and Its Theory*.] *(*Frankfurt am Main, GR: Gerhard Schulte-Bulmke, 1935); Friedrich W. Kron, *Grundwissen Pädagogik. Zweite, verbesserte Auflage* [The Fundamental Ideas of Education, second, improved edition] (Munich, GR: Ernst Reinhardt, 1989), 190–210.

3. Charles W. Bingham and Alexander M. Sidorkin, eds., *No Education Without Relation* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004).

4. See also John D. Caputo, "Teaching the Event: Deconstruction, Hauntology and the Scene of Pedagogy," in *Philosophy of Education 2012*, ed. Claudia W. Ruitenberg (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2012).

5. See Philippe Meirieu, *Pédagogie: Le Devoir de Résister* (Issy-les-Moulineaux, FR: ESF, 2007), 109–110.

6. For a first exploration see Gert J.J. Biesta, "Disciplines and Theory in the Academic Study of Education: A Comparative Analysis of the Anglo-American and Continental Construction of the Field," *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 19, no. 2 (2011): 175–192.

7. See Gert J.J. Biesta, *Good Education in an Age of Measurement: Ethics, Politics Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2010).

8. See Erich E. Geissler, *Herbarts Lehre vom erziehenden Unterricht* [Herbart's Theory of Educational Teaching] (Heidelberg, GR: Quelle & Meyer, 1970).

9. Gert J.J. Biesta, "'Mind the Gap!' Communication and the Educational Relation," in *No Education without Relation*, eds. Charles W. Bingham and Alexander Sidorkin (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 11–22.

10. John Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (New York: Dover, 1958), 178.

11. Ibid.

12. See, Gert J.J. Biesta, "'Of All Affairs, Communication is the Most Wonderful': Education as Communicative Praxis," in *John Dewey and Our Educational Prospect*, ed. David T. Hansen (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2006), 23–37.

13. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 37.

14. See Gert J.J. Biesta, "Witnessing Deconstruction in Education: Why Quasi-Transcendentalism Matters," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 105, no. 3 (2009): 391–404.

15. Elsewhere I have referred to this as a process of "retrospective complexity reduction." See Gert J.J. Biesta, "Five Theses on Complexity Reduction and its Politics," in *Complexity Theory and the Politics of Education*, eds. Deborah C. Osberg and Gert J.J. Biesta (Rotterdam, NL: Sense Publishers, 2010), 5–13.

16. See, for example, Paul Black, Chris Harrison, Clara Lee, Bethan Marshall, and Dylan William, *Assessment for Learning: Putting It into Practice* (Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press, 2003); and, on the risk of driving out the "event" of education see Gert J.J. Biesta, *The Beautiful Risk of Education* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, forthcoming).

17. See Gert J.J. Biesta, "Learner, Student, Speaker: Why It Matters How We Call Those We Teach," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 42, no. 4 (2010): 540–552.

18. See Jacques Rancière, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991).

19. Please note that what follows is in no way meant to be a critical discussion of existing literature on listening and recognition. My point here is not to deny what has been said there but to add a slightly different perspective that perhaps may reveal a slightly different way of understanding and being.

20. See, Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon, "Listening – in a Democratic Society," in *Philosophy of Education 2003*, ed. Kal Alston (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2004), 1–18; Leonard J. Waks, "Two Types of Interpersonal Listening," *Teachers College Record* 112, no. 11 (2010). 2743–2762; and, Audrey Thompson, "Listening at an Angle," in *Philosophy of Education 2010*, ed. Gert J.J. Biesta (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2011), 1–10.

21. See, for example, Charles W. Bingham, *Schools of Recognition: Identity Politics and Classroom Practices* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001); and, Krassimir Stojanov, *Bildung und Anerkennung. Soziale Voraussetzungen von Selbst-Entwicklung und Welt-Erschließung* [Education and Recognition: Social Conditions for Self-development and World Disclosure] (Wiesbaden, GR: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2006).

22. I would like to thank Nina Johannesen for bringing this notion to my attention.

23. Zygmunt Bauman, *Postmodern Ethics* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993).

24. Glenn Hudak, "Alone in the Presence of Others: Autistic Sexuality and Intimacy Reconsidered," in *The Sexuality Curriculum and Youth Culture,* eds. Dennis Carlson and Donyell Roseboro (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 58.

25. On this problem see Gert J.J. Biesta and Carl Anders Säfström, "A Manifesto for Education," *Policy Futures in Education* 9, no. 5 (2011): 540–547.

26. Hudak, "Alone in the Presence of Others," 61.

27. Ibid., emphasis added.

28. Ibid., 66.

29. Ibid., 61; see also, Gert J.J. Biesta, *Beyond Learning: Democratic Education for a Human Future* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2006), 1.

30. Hudak, "Alone in the Presence of Others," 69.

31. Sharon Todd, *Learning from the Other* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2003), 23.

32. Ibid., 24.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., 25.

35. Merold Westphal, *Levinas and Kierkegaard in Dialogue* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008), 25.

36. Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments,* eds. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 14.

37. Westphal, *Levinas and Kierkegaard in Dialogue*, 25, emphasis added.

38. Ibid., 26.

39. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 43.

40. Ibid., 51.

41. See Ibid., 67.

42. See Westphal, *Levinas and Kierkegaard in Dialogue*.

43. Ibid., 26.

44. Emmanuel Levinas, "Phenomenon and Enigma," in *Collected Philosophical Papers*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Dordrecht, NL: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987), 62.

45. Ibid., 61.

46. Ibid., 73.

47. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Of God Who Comes to Mind* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

48. See Gert J.J. Biesta, "Transcendence, Revelation and the Constructivist Classroom; Or: In Praise of Teaching," in *Philosophy of Education 2011*, ed. Rob Kunzman (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2012), 358–365.

49. See Gert J.J. Biesta, "Receiving the Gift of Teaching: From 'Learning From' to 'Being Taught By,'" *Studies in Philosophy and Education* (forthcoming).

50. Birgit Schaffar, *Allgemeine Pädagogik im Zwiespalt: Zwischen epistemologische Neutralität und moralischer Einsicht* [General Educational Theory at the Crossroads: Between Epistemological Neutrality and Moral Insight] *(*Würzburg, GR: Ergon Verlag, 2009), 109.

51. Gert J.J. Biesta, "What is at Stake in a Pedagogy of Interruption?," in *Philosophy of Education: Modern and Contemporary Ideas at Play*, eds. Tyson E. Lewis, Jaime G.A. Grinberg, and Megan Laverty (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 2009), 785–807.