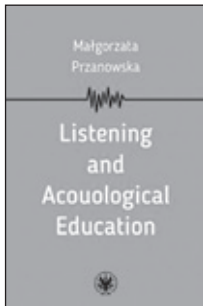




Małgorzata Przanowska, *Listening and acouological education*

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The book written by Małgorzata Przanowska in many regards is truly unique: the subject addressed in the book, the manner of apprehending it, and above all the unusual courage of thinking manifesting itself in the author's ability to think against the dominant trends.

The main problem of the book, i.e., the multidimensionality of the phenomena of listening, is presented through a series of analyses very clearly inspired by the phenomenological method in a broad sense. Although from the outset the author clearly privileges the phenomenological approach, and more precisely, attempts to grasp and describe listening as it manifests itself in various forms and aspects, the analyses presented in the book nevertheless critically refer to numerous philosophical texts on listening, conversation, and dialogue. In sum, one could say that the book presents a very eclectic perspective combining a typical phenomenological attempt to grasp the phenomenon as such with a hermeneutical interest in contingency and the historical character of language.

The first chapter provides a general introduction to the theme of listening and the presentation of the path the author will follow. From the very beginning, listening is presented not in a reductive manner, as an isolated phenomenon, but apprehended in all its complexity. Moreover, listening is viewed as a specific key to the constitution of the world and a factor shaping our relation to the world.

It is worth noting that the goals of the book are not limited to disclose the importance of listening but are more ambitious. The author follows Hans-Georg Gadamer and attempts to understand listening as the central issue allowing one to redefine the structure of the human psyche, and how this emerges from the constant relation with the external world. But more importantly, the author unveils the fundamental dynamic with others through which our psychic life is

co-created. In sum, listening brings to the forefront of analysis an inevitably dialogical aspect, and thus the ethical dimension of our psychological development.

Przanowska's book is undeniably a philosophical one, due to the main subject as well as to numerous philosophical texts she refers to and reinterprets in her analyses. However, it must be underlined that her goal is not purely philosophical, but also pedagogical. The main aim of her work is to show the various implications of listening to our understanding of the educational process. To sum up, the book provides an interdisciplinary perspective juxtaposing philosophical themes and methods with a pedagogical interest in the inherent dynamics of the process of learning.

It might seem that the problem of listening, or more broadly, the question of voice in philosophy, is somewhat exhausted. Nonetheless, this book proves that the subject has not been sufficiently examined and the connection between those philosophical questions with the field of pedagogy is still *terra incognita*. Moreover, the latter should not be brought to the trivial constative that education requires dialogue.

Małorzata Przanowska provides not only an interesting complementary analysis of philosophical reflection concerning the nature of listening but also — and this is undeniable the most vital and innovative aspect — applies interpretatively the outcomes of her research to the various pedagogical concepts in order to reinterpret them. As a result, she develops a truly interpretative model of education. And by doing so, the author transgresses that widely recognized and very popular model of education as original mutual understanding. Instead, she deeply challenges this model and, in the end, replaces it with a more complex understanding of the internal dynamics of the learning process that transforms and shapes each person involved in it.

The way the book apprehends the problem of education is truly unique due to the consistency with which the author explains the problematic unity of education: a unity, and this must be added, that cannot be reduced to a given aspect or element. Firstly, the analyses take into account the bodily condition of any learning process, for the latter obviously is a transmission of thoughts, but in the last instance, the body is the universal mediation of the exchange of ideas. Secondly, Przanowska constantly focuses our attention on the historical condition of philosophy and pedagogy. So, the search for the “original” phenomenon of listening necessarily turns into a dialogue with tradition. Dialogue that in the end emerges as the impassable horizon of education, though equally as the most elementary dimension of the philosophy of education.

*Urszula ZBRZEŹNIAK**

* Ph.D. (habil.), assistant professor, Department of Philosophy, Warsaw University, Poland. E-mail: urszulazbrzezniak@uw.edu.pl.