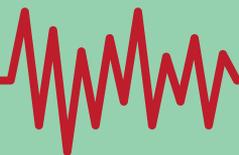


Małgorzata  
Przanowska



Listening  
and  
Acouological  
Education



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# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction. Intertwining of threads: Resounding contexts . . . . .</b>	<b>7</b>
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## PART I

### THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS OF LISTENING

<b>1. The hermeneutic conversation and the piercing dialectics resounding in listening (overture figures: Hans-Georg Gadamer and Jean-Luc Nancy) . . . . .</b>	<b>39</b>
1.1. Conversations and things . . . . .	39
1.2. Audibility of things and voice- <i>mousikē</i> . . . . .	44
1.3. Dialectic versus sophistic speaking and listening . . . . .	49
1.4. Listening and freedom . . . . .	52
1.5. Openness – understanding – questionness of things . . . . .	54
1.6. The conversation/listening that we are . . . . .	58
1.7. Listening to light – ontological tonality and the self . . . . .	60
1.8. Sense and the logic of evocation . . . . .	67
1.9. Someone as (hermeneutically dialectic) art . . . . .	72
<b>2. The hermeneutic priority of the question: Cultivating the hermeneutic ear . . . . .</b>	<b>77</b>
2.1. Initial remarks: The formative <i>how</i> and a deep-rooted liberation . . . . .	77
2.2. The educational: Between question and listening . . . . .	80
2.3. Ways of the question(ing): An approximation . . . . .	85
2.4. Ways of listening: An approximation . . . . .	88
2.5. Issue of education: An approximation. . . . .	93
<b>3. A mini-phenomenology of listening (or the small hermeneutic phenomenology of listening). . . . .</b>	<b>97</b>
3.1. Conceptual ambiguity: Forms of listening . . . . .	97
3.2. Unwitting listening and listening as intentional, attentive hearing . . . . .	100
3.3. Understanding/interpretative listening . . . . .	105
3.4. Breathing listening or heart listening . . . . .	108
3.5. Listening in action . . . . .	111

3.6. Critical listening . . . . .	112
3.7. Interrogative listening . . . . .	114
3.8. Emancipatory-liberating listening . . . . .	116
3.9. Recognizing/diagnostic listening . . . . .	119
3.10. Instrumental listening . . . . .	121
3.11. Psychologically therapeutic listening . . . . .	126
3.11.1. Attentive-feeling listening and mindfulness . . . . .	130
3.11.2. Empathic listening . . . . .	132
3.11.3. Actively conscious listening . . . . .	136
3.11.4. Passive-impression listening . . . . .	137
3.11.5. Relaxing-meditative listening . . . . .	137
3.12. Philosophically therapeutic ( <i>therapeutic</i> ) listening . . . . .	139
3.12.1. Dialogical listening and its polyphonic doubleness . . . . .	142
3.12.2. Musical listening and listening to music . . . . .	148
3.12.3. The musical ( <i>mousikē-logos</i> listening) in the philosophical, or the musicality of the wor(l)d . . . . .	165
<b>4. Interludium. Interweaving of meanings: (Trans-)formative (dialectic)     <i>mousikē</i> . . . . .</b>	<b>173</b>
 <b>PART II</b>	
<b>TOWARD ACOUOLOGICAL EDUCATION</b>	
<b>5. Listening in acouo-translation(al) education . . . . .</b>	<b>201</b>
5.1. The understanding of (transformative) acouo-translation . . . . .	201
5.2. Some myths about translation – some myths about education . . . . .	214
5.3. The listening culture (and the figure) of the Meaningful Translator-Interpreter . . . . .	221
5.4. Translation(al) listening or listening-for translation . . . . .	229
<b>6. The sense of acouological education . . . . .</b>	<b>232</b>
6.1. Pedagogical apologies in contemporary dynamics of/in education: Approaching the acouological in education . . . . .	232
6.2. The question of the hermeneutics of education: The <i>in-between</i> of philosophy and pedagogy . . . . .	255
6.3. The sense (reductions) and a sense of a “tasting touch” recovery in acouological education . . . . .	262
6.4. Education(al) listening – formative listening . . . . .	272
<b>7. Coda: Acouo-Educator . . . . .</b>	<b>276</b>
<b>Acknowledgments . . . . .</b>	<b>281</b>
<b>Bibliography . . . . .</b>	<b>282</b>
<b>Index . . . . .</b>	<b>297</b>

## INTRODUCTION

### INTERTWINING OF THREADS: RESOUNDING CONTEXTS

*At the dawn of the history of the world and human beings, the existence of extraordinary and all-encompassing creations (the cosmos and logos) consisted in listening. The cosmo-logos called into existence was capable of hearing out the voice that created it by the word calling into existence. To exist and to listen meant the same, although they were not the same. A human being was also called into existence with a task of listening intently to the logos, to the world. The task of the human – listening out for the essence of listening itself – was named a contemplation of the world. And the human heard that they have begun to understand the world because while contemplating they were in the tempo, in the time of the cosmos, and the time was a voice. However, the human – contemplating themselves – began to crave for knowing the world, meaning to own it, to encompass it and to have it. And the logos enjoyed the wishes of the human because the logos knew that the human is in their own time to become a micro-cosmos. In this way, the world did not talk to itself but recognized the other kind of its own – in fact – voice. With time it turned out that the human, while comprehending the world, was still talking to themselves and stopped to listen out for the other logos. The more the human knew, the more the human raved about themselves, until the human finally convinced themselves that the logos had never existed, that it was a fairy tale good enough for the unconscious first human being.*

*Only did they still have to listen to the world in order to understand anything at all?*

In his insightful book, Max van Manen states that “the phenomenological method consists of the ability, or rather the art of being sensitive – sensitive to the subtle undertones of language, to the way language speaks when it allows the things themselves to speak.”<sup>1</sup> Van Manen explains

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<sup>1</sup> M. van Manen, *Research Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy*, 2nd ed., Routledge, London and New York 2016, p. 111.

that “This means that an authentic speaker must be a true listener, able to attune to the deep tonalities of language that normally fall out of our accustomed range of hearing, able to listen to the way the things of the world speak to us.”<sup>2</sup> If it is so, to some extent and in a sense, this book can be read as an interpretation, and thus application, of such a standpoint. Van Manen follows the hermeneutic phenomenological writing as a method of description of the lived experience. It is all about being attentive to what language and things in it speak.

If one wants to look for a *methodos* of writing this book, it is clear enough that it can be described as a hermeneutic phenomenological way. It is hermeneutic because it is inspired by philosophical hermeneutics and its ontology. One of the most exciting concepts in contemporary hermeneutics is the experience of the speculative unity of language, thing and thinking (thought). It enables us to re-think the issue of the language of phenomena in the context of the phenomenon of language. That unity – quite enigmatic to our modern ears – opens up the possibility of interpreting language as the experience of the reality of things as well as their crucial way of existence. The paradox of the hermeneutic ontology is that – unexpectedly – the phenomenon is to be heard as much as (its) language demands to be seen and contemplated in order to be understood in the speculative experience hermeneutically understood. The hermeneutic dialectics is realized in a (dialogical and as we will see: acouological) search for a language of things by speaking from within language. The phenomenological way consists in the approach to the phenomenon: to let the phenomenon be as it appears to be in its presence in and in front of a researcher, understood here as a person who listens and thus sees things (Latin *res*) as they allow him or her to be seen,<sup>3</sup> given, touched and felt. If *phainomenon* shares its root meaning with *phōs* – light, brightness,<sup>4</sup> meaning something that appears – in the context of listening one can: firstly, emphasize the significance of a metaphor as a way in which language allows us to see something more clearly, in some light; secondly, discern in the act of appearing of something a movement that sounds and “speaks” as well. In this respect, thinking is a listening-speaking, or listening out for question(ing). Nonetheless, thinking can be considered as not being reduced to the operations on questions and answers but as the

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Paulina Sosnowska provides an interpretation of Heidegger’s understanding of phenomenology and *phainomenon* in: *Filozofia wychowania w perspektywie Heideggerowskiej różnicy ontologicznej* [Philosophy of education in the view of the Heideggerian ontological difference], Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2009, pp. 73–76.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

experience of the movement of things in their (audible, although not always heard physically as sounds) relatedness.

This book aims at getting a little bit closer to the phenomenon of listening “as such.” In this sense, it resembles enterprises in sound studies being focused on the sound itself. Nevertheless, the focus on listening stems from the conviction that the phenomenon (or rather the acoumenon) is in a way an educational experience, so while trying to describe it, one learns something more than only about listening as a phenomenon/acoumenon. Describing listening here means letting a specific concept of education speak. Education means here not a part of our life spent at school, but the whole experience of life that shapes us dialogically (ontologically and existentially) in listening. This concept has been called *acouological education*.

The term acouological education can be quite easily associated with Michel Chion’s *acouological treatise* on sound. However, the analogy stops here.

Chion enlarges Pierre Schaeffer’s meaning of the term *acouology*. Schaeffer’s acouology “designates the study of the mechanisms of listening and of the properties of sound objects with respect to their potential for music within the perceptual field of the ear. In this sense, it voluntarily puts to the side anything that concerns modes of listening other than reduced.”<sup>5</sup> Acouology revived by Chion is “a science of what one hears considered from every angle.”<sup>6</sup> The aim of Chion’s acouology is knowledge in the sense of the art of understanding something, and not a reunion with music as in Schaeffer’s concept.<sup>7</sup> Chion is convinced that acouology is “an undertaking that enriches, sheds light on, and feeds all of listening and thus, gradually, all of existence.”<sup>8</sup>

Acouological education is meant to express a logic (*logos*) of listening and the logic of being a hearer and listener that forms people. In this sense, it is a reverse of the “educative acouologic.” Greek *akouō* means at the same time “to hear” and “to listen,” that is why the Greek root appeared to be appropriate for the expression. Although it is connected with a perception of sounds, the *logos* root of logic points toward the notion of what is understood from sounds, and what as a whole speaks to the listener.

The very beginning of the idea to write on listening has originated from the interest in philosophical hermeneutics and its ontological assumptions. In the context of philosophical hermeneutics, listening

<sup>5</sup> M. Chion, *Sound: An Acouological Treatise*, transl. J. A. Steintrager, Duke University Press, Durham and London 2016, p. 210.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

appeared to be a phenomenon, or, even more precisely, an *acoumenon*, that precedes any question which has to be heard in order to get any answer to it. So, from the study of the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer, and the hermeneutic dialectics of question and answer, after having realized that dialectics favors – though more implicitly – listening as the core experience of and in understanding (as the phenomenon that Gadamer wanted to interpret), the course of my investigations has been directed toward the phenomenon of listening. In the book, one can find references to the most significant hermeneutic figures of conversation (or dialogue) and text (its reading, understanding and translating) as a form of meaningful speaking that educates. Thus, one of the aims of the book is to discern – and describe – different *wor(l)ds* within listening, showing at the same time that the different forms do not annihilate the unity of the experience and phenomenon of listening.

Another aim is to see how the *acoumenon* “operates” within education. To be more precise, to see that *education* is a form of listening itself, and at the same time, it is listening in itself. In this sense, although the expression *acouological education* is in a sense a pleonasm, it is needed to explain the understanding of education proposed in the book. Nevertheless, one can speak about *education(al) listening* or *the acouologic* while considering the second part of the book. Similarly, chapters on translation are to be read as a description of a *translation(al) listening* or listening for translation that is educative as well, so it is in a way a sort of educational (or) pedagogical listening as well. As one can see, the book is written in a kind of attunement to the revealing work of the phenomenon of listening, as perceived and thus understood by the author. Subsequent forms of listening are listed up to the educational type which appears to be the most existentially diversified and complex one. That is why further discussion on philosophy and education is needed. In the book, only some aspects of the relationship between philosophy and education (pedagogy) are addressed. In this way, the issue of philosophical and educational listening is considered with an interlude on *mousikē* (treated metaphorically) in and as education.

The expression *acouological education* may, though not explicitly, suggest that there are *non-acouological education* trends. In fact, however, there are not. Whenever we speak about education, listening is already included. Nevertheless, one can speak of *anti-acouological approaches*, meaning that there are approaches in which listening in education takes the form of a destitute or deprived, degenerated kind of listening that indeed changes people and forms them, but in a way, and to the shape, that can be hardly considered *education(al)*. At any rate, these methods cannot be called *acouo-education* even

if obedience<sup>9</sup> (understood as a form of listening) – and hearing of the other – takes place there. What these approaches lack, is the freedom which leads to responsibility based on the capacity to distinguish different kinds of things even if they seem to be similar or are covered under the same word. The point is that the expression *educational* means – at least intuitively and in the common imagination or expectation – something positive and valuable in the context of human being formation. To this extent, one can agree that education has a powerful ethical dimension not to be omitted or belittled. Even if it is not possible to address the issue of ethics here, the author certainly understands each ethical and moral obligation as a profound existential and educational experience demanding something of a recognizing (body-soul) listening.

Another thing is that this book is not aiming to deliver a history of (the notion of) listening. Some splendid examples of successful enterprises of the sort are *Listen: A History of Our Ears* (*Écoute. Une histoire de nos oreilles*) by Peter Szendy,<sup>10</sup> *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* by Jonathan Sterne,<sup>11</sup> and *Reason and Resonance: A History of Modern Aurality* by Veit Erlmann.<sup>12</sup> Tom Rice presents succinctly different contemporary approaches to listening, including its technological dimensions and a category of hospital listening<sup>13</sup> with the notion of auscultation. The historical aspect of auscultation as listening is analyzed by Peter Szendy in his text “The Auditory Re-Turn (The Point of Listening)” (with Martin Heidegger’s, Friedrich Nietzsche’s and Jacques Derrida’s contributions to listening studies also being discussed), published in a collection of critical articles on listening edited by Sander van Maas.<sup>14</sup> The recently issued *Keywords in Sound* edited by David Novak and Matt Sakakeeny can be treated as a useful

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<sup>9</sup> M. van Manen describes obedience as listening in *The Tone of Teaching: The Language of Pedagogy*, Routledge, London and New York 2002.

<sup>10</sup> P. Szendy, *Écoute. Une histoire de nos oreilles*, Éditions de Minuit, Paris 2001 (English translation: P. Szendy, *Listen: A History of Our Ears*, transl. Ch. Mandell, Fordham University Press, New York 2008).

<sup>11</sup> J. Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*, Duke University Press, Durham and London 2003. See also J. Sterne, “Hearing,” [in:] *Keywords in Sound*, eds. D. Novak, M. Sakakeeny, Duke University Press, Durham and London 2015, pp. 65–77.

<sup>12</sup> V. Erlmann, *Reason and Resonance: A History of Modern Aurality*, Zone Books, New York 2010. See also: V. Erlmann, “Resonance,” [in:] *Keywords in Sound*, eds. D. Novak, M. Sakakeeny, pp. 175–182.

<sup>13</sup> T. Rice, “Listening,” [in:] *Keywords in Sound*, eds. D. Novak, M. Sakakeeny, pp. 104–108.

<sup>14</sup> P. Szendy, “The Auditory Re-Turn (The Point of Listening),” [in:] *Thresholds of Listening: Sound, Technics, Space*, ed. S. van Maas, Fordham University Press, New York 2015, pp. 18–29.

and informative collection of contemporary listening and sound studies from different angles of interest. Salomé Voegelin has contributed to the understanding of the listening phenomenon from the standpoint of sound art,<sup>15</sup> paying a great deal of attention to listening to noise and silence as well as promoting the notion of sonic sensibility.<sup>16</sup>

In the context of musical experience, Jean-Luc Nancy, in turn, emphasizes the relationship between listening and feeling by juxtaposing the Italian music markings *ascoltando* and *sentendo*. “[T]o hear the score that is written so as to understand it, to examine it or *auscultate* it, taste it, then while playing it not stop listening and experiencing the music that resounds – one could say *sentire* or feel it [...]”<sup>17</sup> According to Nancy, in any phenomenon of sensibility there is “the element of a formative repeat [*renvoi constitutive*], a resonance or a reverberation, a return to itself by which alone the ‘self’ in question can take place. [...] There is no subject that is not a sentient subject.”<sup>18</sup> The subject is constituted by recursion (a loop) – the “self” is “a retour, a reminder, a relationship, a transfer, [...] an original, generative repetition [...]”<sup>19</sup> Such a description has some musical components and allows us to recognize the musical in the human-subject. According to Nancy, “the subject who is constituted in resonance, the listening-subject, is nothing else, or is no one else, but the music itself, more precisely nothing else but the musical work” that consists in the referral to itself and sending itself away to the outside.<sup>20</sup> Nancy also analyzes listening to itself in the context of narcissism,<sup>21</sup> which appears to be extremely important in our more and more narcissistic culture.

Peter Szendy in the book *Écoute. Une histoire de nos oreilles* focuses on the role of the listener (*le sujet-oeuvre*) in music, so listening is

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<sup>15</sup> S. Voegelin, *Listening to Noise and Silence: Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art*, Continuum, New York 2010.

<sup>16</sup> S. Voegelin underlines the need for a change of position while hearing sounds: “Hearing does not offer a meta-position; there is no place where I am not simultaneous with the heard. However far its source, the sound sits in my ear. I cannot hear it if I am not immersed in its auditory object, which is not its source but sound as sound itself.” She argues that “a philosophy of sound art must have at its core the principle of sharing time and space with the object or event under consideration. It is a philosophical project that necessitates an involved participation, rather than enables a detached viewing position; and the object or event under consideration is by necessity considered not as an artefact but in its dynamic production” (*Listening to Noise and Silence*, p. xii).

<sup>17</sup> J.-L. Nancy, “Ascoltando,” [in:] P. Szendy, *Listen: A History of Our Ears*, transl. Ch. Mandell, Fordham University Press, New York 2008, p. ix.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. ix–x.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. x.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xi.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xii.

interpreted in this context. Szendy asks what is the responsibility of the listener (and his rights) in the context of the listening to music. Szendy also notices the change in listening (from a passive to a more active one) thanks to technological development allowing one to listen more selectively and according to the listener's preferences in the very moment of listening to music from the electronic device. More generally, Szendy represents the critical approach of viewing listening as a tolerated thief and a constant exposure of our ears to the ears of the other which already haunts our ears. Moreover, the act of listening entails domination and power. Szendy is also interested in the overhearing phenomenon.

This French philosopher and musicologist states:

whereas the activity of the sense that is sight can take itself as object, whereas one can look at someone looking (another person or oneself in a mirror), in short, whereas sight can thus be *reflexive* or *reflective*, it seems impossible to listen to someone listening. [...] Listening as such is thus *silent*, it cannot be heard.<sup>22</sup>

Listening (*écouter*) is not the same as hearing (*entendre*), because of an intentionality that is involved in listening. Szendy approaches the question of the reflexivity of listening (hear hearing, listen to listening) by shedding some light on the issue of the *responsibility of listening* and its *plasticity*.<sup>23</sup> “*To listen to oneself listening* (if that were possible) would in fact be the first condition required to open something like a critical listening.”<sup>24</sup> However, Szendy wonders whether the kind of listening, which means to “fold listening onto itself and onto oneself,” does not imply becoming deaf, that is to stop hearing totally.<sup>25</sup> Szendy continues:

It is, in any case, this improbable reflexivity that dogs my listening, that holds it in its attention. The listener I am is nothing, does not exist so long as you are not there. [...] The listener I am [*que je suis*] can happen only when I follow you [*je te suis*], when I pursue you. I could not listen without you, without this desire to listen to you listening to me, not being able, since I am unable to listen to me listening.<sup>26</sup>

What summons us to listen is the work, and the work “is at work, only so long as it *is still yet to come*, only to the extent of this desire that it opens. The work is a work, that is to say an event or experience *to undergo*, only when, beyond itself and its boundaries, it *leaves something*

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<sup>22</sup> P. Szendy, *Listen*, p. 141.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

to be desired.”<sup>27</sup> Szendy states that work “*demands* our listening, it *summons* us to hear. But it asks us to hear it *plastically*, rather than according to one *type* of listening or another.”<sup>28</sup>

Such a listener is a dissolute listener more than an expert who can listen in different typologies of listening. This dissolute listener “has above all espoused a form, a figure of listening.”<sup>29</sup> “We are not a community of listeners listening to one single object that joins us together, like that population with mute ears that Wagner seemed to dream of. We are an infinite addition of singularities that each wants to make itself heard hearing. Thus without any possible summing up. We do not listen *like one single body*: we are *two*, and (therefore) always one more.”<sup>30</sup>

In “The Auditory Re-Turn” Szendy considers the effect of *egophony* by referring to listening as auscultation.<sup>31</sup> He points out that his notion of overhearing relates to the aesthetics of spying. By this ascription, Szendy emphasizes “the active power of the ear, a power to which we are so oblivious today, since we conceive of hearing as a passive reception.”<sup>32</sup>

To some extent Małgorzata Szyszkowska’s phenomenology of listening, based on the experience of listening to music,<sup>33</sup> can be placed in-between the musicologically philosophical investigations on listening conducted by Szendy, Nancy, as well as Schaeffer or Chion’s acousmatic listening, and more existential interpretations, such as the listening philosophy of Lisbeth Lipari. Szyszkowska introduces the notion of aspectual listening (Polish *aspektowe słuchanie*) and thinks of listening (*wsluchiwanie się*: listening-for) as a “*panaesthetical* category related to art in general.”<sup>34</sup> Dariusz Brzostek, in turn, speaks about an audioanthropology while discussing the listening experience and phenomenon as it appears in the context (and experience) of musical improvisation.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 142–143.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> P. Szendy, “The Auditory Re-Turn,” pp. 19–21. In the article he refers to Nietzsche, Derrida and Heidegger, stemming from René Laënnec’s *Treatise on Mediate Auscultation* (1819) in which he pays his debt among others to Joseph Leopold Auenbrugger who invented a practice called “percussion.” “The physician, here, seems to be listening at the tip of his fingers.” It is a punctuation practice (P. Szendy, “The Auditory Re-Turn,” p. 21). Derrida criticized Heidegger’s ear for being monaural and in this way logocentric (pp. 27–28).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>33</sup> M. A. Szyszkowska, *Wsluchując się w muzykę. Studium z fenomenologii słuchania* [Listening to music: A study from the phenomenology of listening], Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, Warszawa 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 276; unless otherwise indicated, all translations from Polish by M. P.

<sup>35</sup> D. Brzostek, *Nasłuchiwanie hałasu. Audioantropologia między ekspresją a doświadczeniem* [Listening for noise: Audioanthropology between expression and experience], Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2014.

Lisbeth Lipari in *Listening, Thinking, Being: Toward an Ethics of Attunement*, using her notion of *interlistening*, establishes a connection between communication and ethics of treating the other as the other is and not imposing on a person the view of who the person is or ought to be in the eyes of the “listener.” Lipari recognizes our failure to listen to the other in the lack of an ethical attitude toward others, an attitude which involves listening as a way of being with others and toward the world. In a quite hermeneutic way, Lipari states that the listener listens to “the otherness of the other.”

The wording is compatible with the claim of the contemporary hermeneutics inaugurated by Gadamer and – although in a slightly different way implicitly appreciating listening – by Paul Ricoeur. From this viewpoint, it is not surprising that Lipari emphasizes the links and relationships between listening (as the absence of speech, a lacuna, a gap), language and thinking, as well as that she advocates the notion of “attunement” as a way to connect speaking with *logos*. This is quite a hermeneutic tendency, noticing also “an awareness of attention to the harmonic interconnectivity of all being of objects,”<sup>36</sup> and this is similar to Gadamer’s claim of participation in the relatedness of things.<sup>37</sup>

Lipari coined the term *akroatic thinking* (derived from *akroasis*,<sup>38</sup> a specific mode of thinking described by the German musicologist Hans Kayser), meaning *thinking listening as a way of being*.<sup>39</sup> Her book is not about how to be a good listener, but how listening “brings human into being.”<sup>40</sup> Moreover, the notion of *interlistening* assumes a dialogic concept of communication together with the social interactions and underlines the non-dual nature of speaking and listening, which is a very important claim in the context of my own investigations. Interlistening means “a new model of dialogic interaction that can reckon with aspects of the embodied polymodal, polyphonic, and polychronic processes of human communication.”<sup>41</sup> As Lipari sums up one of the chapters,

listening is a form of co-constructive communicative action fundamental to dialogic ethics. Listening is neither a secondary subordinate process that follows and flows from speech nor is it a futile gesture. Rather, listening is

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<sup>36</sup> L. Lipari, *Listening, Thinking, Being: Toward an Ethics of Attunement*, Penn State University Press, Pennsylvania 2014.

<sup>37</sup> H.-G. Gadamer, “The Nature of Things and the Language of Things (1960),” [in:] H.-G. Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, transl. and ed. D. E. Linge, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 2004, pp. 69–81.

<sup>38</sup> In Greek *akroasis* means “listening” (Polish *stuchanie*).

<sup>39</sup> L. Lipari, *Listening, Thinking, Being*, p. 2; about akroatic thinking see pp. 7–28.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

the invisible and inaudible enactment of the ethical relation itself; upon it, everything depends.<sup>42</sup>

Lipari's philosophy of listening and ethics of attunement is a multi-disciplinary project rising from a holistic model of human communication and based on the concept of the dialogic understanding of human capacity for the so-called inner speech. Lipari refers to "the ancient Indian grammarians to explore how selves and society are continually reconstituted in an ongoing intersubjective dance of word, rhythm, and meaning that begins when infants listen in the womb."<sup>43</sup> Through the notion of *polymodality*.<sup>44</sup> Lipari promotes the listening of ourselves through five senses, and her inner speech means the interplay between past and future acts of speech. *Ethical attunement* is understood as an interplay between *akroatic thinking* and the ancient *kairos*, the "right timing," the "opportune moment."<sup>45</sup>

Thus, *Kairos* is an ethical virtue inextricable from *akroasis* [listening – M. P.<sup>46</sup>], it is an attunement to others and the dance of circumstance. It is not timely in the mechanical sense of efficiency or serendipity, or as a well-timed shot into the goal, or timely as an intervention in the future "just in time." Instead, *Kairos* is the tangle of a braided nonlinear moment choosing us – speakers and listeners – as we move rhythmically together in harmonically attuned, responsive movement.<sup>47</sup>

Peter Wilberg, in turn, applies Heidegger's philosophy of being as the philosophy of listening in the psychotherapeutic context. Wilberg uses the Heideggerian (or more generally, German) language of listening in order to "deepen our experience of listening understood not as a mere *prelude* to responding to what someone says, not as one among other counselling 'skills' or 'techniques.'"<sup>48</sup> In accordance with the post-Heideggerian tradition, Wilberg treats listening "*as our most primordial mode of being with and 'bearing' with others in pregnant silence.*"<sup>49</sup> Wilberg

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid. p. 204.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 207–214.

<sup>46</sup> Ancient Greek ἀκρόασις meant both hearing and listening, see: Liddell & Scott, <http://perseus.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/philologic/getobject.pl?c.2:8:117.LSJ>, accessed 15.01.2019; however, there is also an etymological reason to distinguish hearing from listening as Lipari does, see: L. Lipari, *Listening, Thinking, Being*, p. 50.

<sup>47</sup> L. Lipari, *Listening, Thinking, Being*, p. 214.

<sup>48</sup> P. Wilberg, *Being and Listening: Counselling, Psychoanalysis, and the Ontology of Listening*, New Yoga Publications, Whistable 2013, p. 8.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

emphasizes the importance of being with the suffering others, and how a listener (a therapist<sup>50</sup>) can bear this suffering within them, so that the suffering person (a patient<sup>51</sup>) can deepen their own capacity to listen to themselves and enter into relationships with authentic, that is a “thinking,” meditative listening.<sup>52</sup> Such listening is an attunement to the process of thinking itself, as Heidegger, and previously Heraclitus thought. Wilberg has described his philosophical counselling as the embodied philosophy of listening with its relation to thinking in silence as an inner listening combined with the psychoanalytical understanding of human development: “What we call ‘character’ is an individual’s capacity to be in silence, and thus to bear the generative process of thinking – a process of inward listening.”<sup>53</sup>

Another approach to listening, based on psychological research, can be found in *The Sourcebook of Listening Research: Methodology and Measures*.<sup>54</sup> The editors of this monumental volume, Debra L. Worthington and Graham D. Bodie, are focused on the research on listening delivering methodological guidelines for studying and measuring the phenomenon in the paradigm of scientific psychology.<sup>55</sup>

For an example of political thought on listening, one can refer to Andrew Dobson who advocates for “sensory democracy,” in order to restore balance in the discourse on democracy which has usually privileged voice and speech over the other senses such as sight and hearing. Thus, there is a need to focus more on the latter two. Dobson appreciates Jeffrey Green’s work on sight and spectatorship in democracy.<sup>56</sup> The author of *Listening for Democracy* argues for and enhances the standpoint of John Dryzek and others, that the best way

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<sup>50</sup> Cf. P. Wilberg, *The Therapist as Listener: Martin Heidegger and the Missing Dimension of Counselling and Psychotherapy Training*, New Gnosis Publication, Eastbourne 2004.

<sup>51</sup> Etymologically “patient” means someone who endures suffering, see Ch. K. Germer, R. D. Siegel, P. R. Fulton, eds., *Uważność i psychoterapia*, transl. M. Cierpisz, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2015, p. 15. [English original: *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy*, Guilford Press, New York and London 2005].

<sup>52</sup> Cf. P. Wilberg, *Being and Listening*, pp. 8–9.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>54</sup> D. L. Worthington, G. D. Bodie, eds., *The Sourcebook of Listening Research: Methodology and Measures*, Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester 2017.

<sup>55</sup> A great deal of more psychologically (and scientifically) oriented sources is to be found at [www.listen.org](http://www.listen.org) – the site of the International Listening Association (formed in 1979) that decided to use as the motto of the website the words of Ralph Nichols: “The most basic of human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them.”

<sup>56</sup> J. E. Green, *The Eyes of the People: Democracy in the Age of Spectatorship*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York 2010; A. Dobson, *Listening for Democracy: Recognition, Representation, Reconciliation*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014, pp. 18–19.

to silence somebody is to refuse to listen to them. So, unless the right to be heard is secured as a political right to speak in democratic societies, and moreover, unless the two rights are treated as two sides of the same coin, the promise of democracy will not be fulfilled.<sup>57</sup> Being in favor of Leonard J. Waks's *apophatic listening*,<sup>58</sup> Dobson emphasizes that being forced to listen cannot be justified in the dialogical model of democratic society, although listening is more a kind of obligation than an optional extra.<sup>59</sup> Dobson defines listening as an active, reflexive and requiring feedback experience of the verbal and non-verbal communication of the other, to whom the listener is at the same time open and ready to expand their horizons and is still aware of their own standpoints.

To some extent this definition is similar to Gadamer's notion of understanding (and at the same time of listening) to the other: it is not about leaving our own selves and jumping into the other's mind or jumping into their shoes. Understanding is possible if the otherness of the other is heard out and the whole being of the listener is involved in the experience of understanding. What really allows both interlocutors to be moved and changed is their readiness to follow the "thing" (the matter) as it is understood in the conversation thanks and through the standpoints of the persons involved in it. The reason for failure in listening is our tendency to listen constantly to ourselves instead of listening to the other or to something else than ourselves.<sup>60</sup>

In the field of education, the work of delivering a kind of a history of listening has been done to some extent by the authors of a special issue of *Educational Theory* (vol. 61) devoted to listening in education.<sup>61</sup> The idea of discovering different standpoints on listening throughout the history of education and its theories is very appealing, tempting, and demanding a collective enterprise. All the more, the issue on listening edited by Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon and Megan J. Laverty

<sup>57</sup> A. Dobson, *Listening for Democracy*, p. 25.

<sup>58</sup> Leonard J. Waks also distinguishes the notion of *cataphatic listening*, meaning an interruptive, inattentive listening, whereas *apophatic* means a quiet listening (*apo* – away from; *phasis* – speech), see L. J. Waks, "Listening and Questioning: The Apophatic/Cataphatic Distinction Revisited," *Learning Inquiry* 1, no. 2, 2007, pp. 153–161. Waks, referring to Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon's concept of listening, also distinguishes a cognitive type of listening and a noncognitive one, see L. J. Waks, "Two Types of Interpersonal Listening," *Teachers College Record* 112, no. 11, 2010, pp. 2743–2762.

<sup>59</sup> A. Dobson, *Listening for Democracy*, p. 107.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. H.-G. Gadamer, "Einaptitude au dialogue," [in:] H.-G. Gadamer, *Langage et vérité*, transl. J.-C. Gens, Bibliothèque de Philosophie, Édition Gallimard, Paris 1995, p. 174.

<sup>61</sup> See S. Haroutunian-Gordon, M. J. Laverty, "Introduction. Listening: An Exploration of Philosophical Traditions," *Educational Theory* 61, no. 2, 2011, pp. 117–124.

merits further attention and continuation.<sup>62</sup> Nonetheless, the issue is a meaningful example of recapturing the vital notion of listening in the field of education, and we will refer to it later.

Instead, hoping to be in one way or another a contribution to such a re-discovering of listening, this book is not a historical study, either in philosophy or theories of listening or the history of education. Some historical figures that do appear in it, like the ancient *mousikē*, past philosophers, etc., are more like metaphors for the interpretation of education in its acouological core. Listening appears to be not as much as one could expect an ability or capacity for educational aims. It is true that we need to focus more on listening capacity in teachers and the pedagogical profession. It is true as well, however, that education has quite a long-lasting, let's say, *tradition* of neglecting or instrumentalizing listening. Reductive tendencies transformed listening into its opposite: blind obedience executed by physical or psychological abuse on the part of the controller (a tyrant) who does not listen to others and does not respect them. The relation obedience–deafness implies a devastation of persons by tyranny, torture, enslavement, interrogation, eavesdropping, and even more of the same horrors of “ear abuse.”

Until the twentieth century, the history of “educating” children is *paedagogical* in the sense of a strict discipline through which ancient slaves achieved “educational” results with their pupils.<sup>63</sup> Children were expected to obey adults who were the officers of society, executing the rules needed to preserve the status quo. In Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s notion of education – as a critique of eighteenth-century society – the child is placed in the center of all educational efforts. However, it is nature that plays the crucial role. Naturalistic pedagogy is about a turn to the nature of the child in education. Thus, contemporary concepts of humanistic education, and any others that refer to the countercultural movement, pay much attention to Rousseau’s idea, including the notion of “natural” relationships among people, and as a consequence, the concepts of law, social justice, education as the unfolding process of natural development, and so forth.

Nonetheless, naturalistic pedagogy pays homage to nature itself, the nature that is present in children as well as in adults. So, the imitation of nature actually guides education, and listening to nature in the child is beneficial for the whole progression – or even if one wants – education. As a result, in the middle of the twentieth century

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<sup>62</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Kelly L. Wrenhaven, “Slaves,” [in:] *A Companion to Ancient Education*, ed. W. Martin Bloomer, Wiley Blackwell, Chichester 2015, p. 469.

the direction of listening changes. Alternatively, one can say that a new progressive consciousness has begun to spread to more and more adults who start to realize that they should listen more attentively to their children, to attentively hear them out, to be more perceptive about what their behavior is and what they express, what they say. It is not about being obedient to children, as some misinterpretations of progressive humanistic education conclude. If the *century of the child* was about a shifting of the power of the social officer, the tyrant-like structure would be still preserved, only that the opposite side (children) would now take over the control. Nevertheless, at the “mechanism-structure” level nothing would change at all. The progressivist experience from a century of struggles against domination, discrimination, and different kinds of violence has at least showed us that no one can learn how to freely listen to the other without participating in a reality full of listening.

The question of listening in education has occupied great thinkers and educators, for example Richard Smith, who was influenced by reading Gemma Corradi Fiumara.<sup>64</sup> Paul Smeyers, Richard Smith and Paul Standish wrote a book entitled *The Therapy of Education*<sup>65</sup> which can be interpreted as a contribution to the re-reading of the idea of education in a more profound and at the same time broader horizon. Even if only focusing on the intriguing title of the book, one can notice that it meaningfully plays with “the philosophy of education” expression and suggests in a way that contemporary education needs a kind of therapy to become a space and place of personal growth. It is possible if one stops treating therapy and education as separate, and to some extent hostile, disciplines.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, the very notion of therapy needs to be rediscovered and interpreted anew if we want to regain its meaningful dimension in education. In this book, a positive reading of *therapeia* in the context of listening can be easily found in sections 3.11 and 3.12 of Chapter 3. Quite a similar constatation about abandoning dualistic thinking can be drawn from Chapter 6 in which philosophy and pedagogy are discussed as related and separate disciplines. In the context of the issue of the hermeneutics of education, philosophy and pedagogy as academic disciplines differently understood are viewed dynamically in

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<sup>64</sup> G. C. Fiumara, *The Other Side of Language: A Philosophy of Listening*, transl. Ch. Lambert, Routledge, London and New York 1990; R. Smith, “Half a Language: Listening in the City of Words,” [in:] *Educational Research: Proofs, Arguments, and Other Reasonings*, eds. P. Smeyers, M. Depaepe, Educational Research, vol. 4, Springer, 2010, pp. 149–160.

<sup>65</sup> P. Smeyers, R. Smith, P. Standish, *The Therapy of Education: Philosophy, Happiness, and Personal Growth*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2007.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 1–2.

their mutual relationships and influences. However, the chapter does not aim at contributing to the theory of education field. In another language (being constantly in search for language while speaking of education) and as it would seem in a different scope of thinking, the author strives to bring up some questions on contemporary education. At the same time and in this way, a horizon of the issue of acouological education emerges for possible future investigations.

Leonard J. Waks explains that the modern English “to listen” has three meanings. The first one is to give ear to, to *hear attentively*. In the second sense, “to listen” is to pay heed or hearken, meaning “to give *careful consideration* or *obedient regard* to, to allow oneself to be persuaded by, to hear attentively *in order to obey*.” And finally, the third one is associated with “waiting in suspense,” that is “to attend (within an indeterminate auditory field) *in order to hear*, as when we are listening for a knock at the door.”<sup>67</sup> In an account of listening in John Dewey’s philosophy of education, Waks points out that Dewey was against listening as obedience and passive acquiring of knowledge. It is important due to the fact that Dewey’s progressive education is considered as a negation of the “old school” based on listening to the teacher. *Learning by doing* does not mean to act without listening, but to listen actively, together with different senses, engaging thinking and intelligent doing. Of course, it does not escape some reductions, but the Deweyan approach can serve as an example of the interconnection between carnal habituations and the way of being in the world. In such a positive reading of it, *learning by doing* appears to be in a way *listening in action* or even more: *listening by doing* and thus *learning that involves ears*, figuratively speaking.

Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon and Megan J. Laverty in the volume of *Educational Theory* devoted to listening have collected articles about listening in the framework of the main figures of the philosophy of education: Plato (and Socrates), Aristotle, Rousseau, Johann Friedrich Herbart, Dewey, and Martin Buber.<sup>68</sup> In the context of Anglo-American educational philosophy culture or of English-speaking countries, Haroutunian-Gordon and Laverty pointed out that since 2003 a group of scholars is collaborating on “investigations related to listening.”<sup>69</sup> In a footnote, they enumerated (besides themselves): Nicholas C. Burbules,

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<sup>67</sup> L. J. Waks. “John Dewey on Listening and Friendship in School and Society,” *Educational Theory* 61, no. 2, 2011, p. 192.

<sup>68</sup> S. Haroutunian-Gordon, M. J. Laverty, “Introduction. Listening.”

<sup>69</sup> S. Haroutunian-Gordon, “Plato’s Philosophy of Listening,” *Educational Theory* 61, no. 2, 2011, pp. 125–139.

Andrea R. English,<sup>70</sup> Jim Garrison,<sup>71</sup> Elisabeth Meadows, Walter Parker, Susanne Rice,<sup>72</sup> A. G. Rud, Katherine Schultz,<sup>73</sup> Leonard Waks,<sup>74</sup> and Stanton Wortham.<sup>75</sup> Since 2003, year after year thinkers like Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon (in 2003), Nicholas Burbules and Suzanne Rice<sup>76</sup> as well as Leonard Waks (in 2004), Jim Garrison (in 2005) have delivered papers, published articles or participated in discussions on listening. It is not possible to refer to all the mentioned thinkers, however, their diverse contribution to listening in education should be recognized.

Andrea English devotes much attention to the capacity of listening, especially in the context of what is going on during the mathematics lessons at schools. However, in her interpretation of Dewey and Herbart's<sup>77</sup> thought, English underlines the difference between socialization and education, which would locate her thinking on education in the field of the *pedagogy of culture* in the context of Polish general pedagogy and *critically* oriented philosophy of education.<sup>78</sup> In her book from 2013 entitled *Discontinuity in Learning: Dewey, Herbart, and Education as Transformation*<sup>79</sup> she has contributed not only to the reinterpretation of Herbart's

<sup>70</sup> A. English, "Critical Listening and the Dialogic Aspect of Moral Education: J.F. Herbart's Concept of the Teacher as Moral Guide," *Educational Theory* 61, no. 2, 2011, pp. 171–189.

<sup>71</sup> J. Garrison, "A Deweyan Theory of Democratic Listening," *Educational Theory* 46, no. 4, 1996, pp. 429–451. The article was also inspired by H.-G. Gadamer's idea of dialogue.

<sup>72</sup> S. Rice, "Toward an Aristotelian Conception of Good Listening," *Educational Theory* 61, no. 2, 2011, pp. 125–139.

<sup>73</sup> K. Schultz, *Listening: A Framework for Teaching Across Differences*, Teachers College Press, New York 2003. See also her book on silence and participation of students: K. Schultz, *Rethinking Classroom Participation: Listening to Silent Voices*, Columbia University Teachers College Press, New York 2009.

<sup>74</sup> L. J. Waks, "John Dewey on Listening," pp. 191–205.

<sup>75</sup> Articles of the scholars can be found in S. Haroutunian-Gordon, L. Waks, eds., *Learning: Challenges for Teachers* [special issue], *Teachers College Record* 112, no. 11, 2010; and in L. Waks, ed., *Listening and Reflecting* [special issue], *Learning Inquiry* 1, no. 2, 2007.

<sup>76</sup> N. Burbules and S. Rice published in 2010 an article "On Pretending to Listen," *Teachers College Record* 112, no. 11, pp. 2874–2888. In the abstract Burbules and Rice state: "Conclusions/Recommendations: A romanticized view of listening suggests some kind of totally encompassing focus and understanding: The good listener is hearing everything, understanding everything, blessed with profound insight and infinite patience. Having set up this ideal type, however, we then judge every deviation from this perfect model as a moral failing. This way of thinking about moral conduct, we conclude, is often misleading and counterproductive."

<sup>77</sup> Cf. J. F. Herbart, *Psychologiczne uwagi na temat nauki o dźwiękach* [Psychological contribution to sound studies], transl. D. Stępkowski, [http://pedagogika-filozoficzna.eu/?page\\_id=535](http://pedagogika-filozoficzna.eu/?page_id=535), accessed 15.01.2019.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. A. R. English, "Dialogic Teaching and Moral Learning: Self-Critique, Narrativity, Community and 'Blind Spots,'" *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 50, no. 2, 2016, pp. 160–176.

<sup>79</sup> A. R. English, *Discontinuity in Learning: Dewey, Herbart, and Education as Transformation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013.

pedagogy (not to be confused with the “herbartism” movement) and to the understanding of a deeper relationship between the philosophers of education listed in the book’s title, but also to the field of listening. She has stated elsewhere that in fact the core factor of moral education is listening in the sense that the way “a teacher listens to a learner contributes to the moral development of the learner.”<sup>80</sup> It is not about an evaluative listening, that is, a controlling listening needed in every kind of assessment. This kind of listening seems to be too one-sided, not giving much justice to the event of learning which involves the learner’s way of life. Herbart’s concept of the teacher as a moral guide is not to convey the rules to be obeyed, but rather to cultivate in the learner the listening to their own inner voice that speaks especially in the situation of a moral dilemma. Thus, a teacher must be open to the learner and listen to them in order to recognize to what extent the learner is open to their inner voice (a censor voice, a negative voice telling what not to do, similar to Socrates’ *daimonion*<sup>81</sup>), that is, listens to themselves.<sup>82</sup>

English elaborates in her work the notion of a critical listening of the teacher “both as a *critical mode of listening to the learner* and as a *self-critical reflective mode of listening*.”<sup>83</sup> A teacher with a critical ear can gain some educational distance, allowing them to recognize what is going on in the learner’s thoughts and interactions. A teacher that is good at being a critical listener allows their students to explore the world without constant assistance. This is in fact what Herbart criticized in Rousseau’s notion of naturalistic pedagogy: it is true that children need guidance in education, however, it is not about being their “companion at every step.” Both the freedom of a child and the freedom of a teacher are needed in education, and critical listening based on a certain amount of distance enables the learners and the teacher to make their free, but not capricious, reckless or self-centered, choices.<sup>84</sup> In other words, the teacher’s tactfulness consists in a great deal of understanding and recognition of the present situation of the learner in a broader perspective of the learner’s growth; the understanding and recognition come from a dialogue with learners and with the teacher themselves, namely in the self-reflective listening of the teacher. The learner’s growth includes their autonomous decisions and actions (stemming from the inner struggling and inner freedom in the Kantian sense), so the teacher has to also recognize when to cease their guidance.

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<sup>80</sup> A. English, “Critical Listening,” p. 171.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 178–180.

Andrea English's interpretation of Herbart's pedagogy shows that it was critically related to the child-centered approach of Rousseau, as well as that it was a critique of the authoritarian imposing of rules and moral patterns of behavior. It is important to notice that Herbart's idea of a teacher assumes the teacher self-listening and a recognition of the situation and the individuality of each learner, so the teacher "is trying to 'hit the right note'"<sup>85</sup> in a given situation. Such an expectation is quite similar to Aristotle's *phronesis*,<sup>86</sup> although the point of reference here seems to be the Kantian ideal of morality. However, English reminds us of the idea of the pedagogical tact,<sup>87</sup> which includes critical listening and learns to "maintain openness and flexibility toward the *other as a learner*."<sup>88</sup> The thinker concludes that "the task of the teacher is to speak to and listen to the learner in the way that *breaks* the learner's immediate connection between listening and obeying external authority."<sup>89</sup> The teacher cannot silence the inner voice of their learners and themselves. Listening to the inner voice enables a transformation of both, learners and teachers.

Another interesting perspective is offered by Kathrine Schultz who has devoted her book to the learning to teach through and thanks to listening. What is moving in her book is the idea of rediscovering a link between the so-called traditional and progressive education. For that purpose she speaks about listening with the ear, the mind, and the heart.<sup>90</sup> Frederick Erickson, in turn, believes that "teachers must listen in order to know how to act pedagogically at the right times. Without the awareness that comes from listening, a teacher does not know how to recognize *teachable moments* when they are happening."<sup>91</sup> The teachable moments are "the right times for tactical actions," known from Ecclesiastes, and from the Hebrew tradition (word *eyt*), as well as from the Greek one (*kairos*), in which it also means opportunity: "*Kairos*, in contrast [to *kronos* which is a sequential duration – M. P.], is the

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>86</sup> About listening in Aristotle see S. Rice, "Toward an Aristotelian Conception." The author notices that a good listener knows when not to listen at all and what degree of attention is needed in a given situation. What is most difficult and not easy for everyone, is choosing the right kind of listening in a concrete situation.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. A. R. English, *Discontinuity in Learning*. On pedagogical tact see M. van Manen, *Pedagogical Tact: Knowing What to Do When You Don't Know What to Do*, Routledge, London and New York 2015. Van Manen discusses Dewey and especially Herbart's understanding of tact as contributions to his account on pages 213–217.

<sup>88</sup> A. R. English, "Critical Listening," p. 186.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 188.

<sup>90</sup> K. Schultz, *Listening*, p. 168.

<sup>91</sup> F. Erickson, "Foreword," [in:] K. Schultz, *Listening*, p. x.

nonchronological, discontinuous time of appropriateness for action.”<sup>92</sup> In these words, Erickson emphasizes the importance of Schultz’s approach to listening in teaching and in learning how to teach. The issue of *kairos* as the right moment of doing something appears in Lipari’s, van Manen’s and other contemporary approaches including the ethical dimension in listening or education, because of it being a relational and temporal phenomenon.

Haroutunian-Gordon and Laverty define the philosophy of listening as follows:

What is a philosophy of listening? We define it as a set of beliefs about (1) the aim of listening – the goal or goals that the listening tries to achieve; (2) the nature of the listening – what people do when they listen; (3) the role of the listener in the context where the listening occurs; and (4) the relation between the listener and the speaker.<sup>93</sup>

Leonard J. Waks in his “Introduction” to *Listening to Teach: Beyond Didactic Pedagogy* makes a distinction between “Teacher Talk and Passive Listening” didactic methods and the so-called active listening approach promoted by him and others. The first method was criticized by John Dewey (who emphasized an activation of students) and critical pedagogues such as Paulo Freire (who created the dialogue-based method in opposition to the so-called banking education). But, even if this sort of criticism is quite old (and during the history of our civilization its different forms *mutatis mutandis* can already be noticed in antiquity), the “didactics pedagogy continues to dominate schooling even today.”<sup>94</sup> In post-industrial society there is a need – Waks states – for a different kind of pedagogies:

pedagogies that can liberate the energies and intelligence of teachers and students while still keeping chaos at bay – pedagogies that can reduce the stress of teaching and make learning exciting and personally meaningful for students – pedagogies that can prepare learners for creative intelligence and democratic social life.<sup>95</sup>

Waks claims that alternative pedagogies are more suitable for a new society of information that needs the intellectual and practical capacities of young people to “solve poorly structured, unpredicted

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> S. Haroutunian-Gordon, M. J. Laverty, “Introduction. Listening,” p. 119.

<sup>94</sup> L. Waks, ed., *Listening to Teach: Beyond Didactic Pedagogy*, State University of New York Press, New York 2015, p. 1.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

problems.”<sup>96</sup> The alternative pedagogies deliver new – as Waks puts it – “patterns of speaking and listening more conducive of thinking and learning,” creating at the same time the “occasions for communication and action.”<sup>97</sup> In a nutshell, teachers can teach through listening, improve their instruction by adjusting to students’ capacities and demands, as well as create innovative versions of the “pedagogy of listening,” like in the Reggio Emilia project (described by Winnie Hunsburger), which is, according to Waks, closely related to Dewey and Freire’s concepts of education (emphasis put on observation, making a hypothesis, discussing it with other teachers, and revising the hypothesis).<sup>98</sup>

In *Listening to Teach* we can find other methods of teaching through listening and thus of respecting the other, recognizing others and enhancing social justice.<sup>99</sup> The authors of the articles present, for example, the method of Interpretive Discussion about texts (Elisabeth Meadows and Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon), the Harkness Pedagogy Conference Method (David I. Baker), the Pedagogy of Discomfort, that consists of showing students materials that are challenging for them and confronting them with patterns of social injustice (Ashley Taylor, as well as Bronwen Low and Emanuelle Sonntag), the Pedagogy of Trust (Katherine Schultz),<sup>100</sup> and Waks’s method of Listening in Experiential Learning that is based on different ways of listening that are to be grasped in the teaching process.<sup>101</sup> Nicolas Burbules addresses the issue of listening and teaching in online contexts and Stanton Wortham together with Alexandra Michel rediscover uncertainty in promoting listening in education.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. L. J. Waks, “Introduction,” [in:] *Listening to Teach*, ed. L. J. Waks, pp. 9–10. Waks states: “Justice as an educational ideal demands more than the fair distribution of pedagogical, curricular, and technological resources, safe and clean buildings, and school lunch. It also demands individual recognition and respect, the space to speak and be heard, and for one’s concerns to be considered in school practices. In this sense didactic teaching is unjust. It proceeds without consideration of learners’ needs and concerns. It does not bring out the voices of the young, or bring their contributions into play in the design or implementation of lessons or activities. Those least likely to be heard, the poor, the alien, the shy, the psychologically and mentally disadvantaged, are often neglected or ‘left behind.’”

<sup>100</sup> K. Schulz recognizes – as does Lipari – the immanent relationship between listening and *kairos*.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. L. J. Waks, “Introduction,” [in:] *Listening to Teach*, ed. L. J. Waks, pp. 5–6. In his article Waks analyzes two approaches in experiential education (with its ways of listening) by David Kolb and Laura Jopin, cf. L. J. Waks *Listening in Experiential Education*, [in:] *Listening to Teach*, pp. 39–51.

Leonard J. Waks, following John Kline's effective listening,<sup>102</sup> has enumerated six distinct types of teacher's listening needed for making a model of alternative pedagogy used in the classroom. Waks defines listening in the following way: "Listening is something we do as active creatures bringing our energies and learning histories into each situation as we act with purpose – to achieve our ends." And he adds: "Acts of listening already involve 'trying to get.' We need to distinguish between different types of listening because we listen in different ways in relation to different purposes."<sup>103</sup> In this way, we have here a kind of a functional definition of listening typology. In the context of the forms of listening described in this book, Waks's concept belongs to the instrumental – in the best, non-reductive sense of the word – form of listening. *Ad marginem*, one can notice that the word "instrumentalization" hides two words: "instrument" (being in "string" attunement) and "mentalization." The latter can mean a process of realizing something that was done habitually, but also a reductive routine of the mental process. The attunement happens while someone uses their voice in singing or speaking, and when someone plays, because any kind of producing or emitting sounds involves movement. In this sense, what is done instrumentally is done with conscious attunement to reality. Nevertheless, in mentalization the activity is reduced to the abstract functioning of the mind, and the mind-intellectual constructions take over the reality of the full experience of the body movement and direct its movement by ordering what the other has to do. It demands obedience and the execution of what is ordered. If, however, mentalization is closer to its first meaning, it has some positive traits and can fruitfully form a "good shape" of a learner-listener.

Waks lists *informative listening*, *interpretive listening*, *practical listening* (to learn how to do something), *relational listening* (to sustain or improve relationships) with two subcategories, namely *contemplative listening* and *therapeutic listening*; the next type is *appreciative listening* (to appreciate or enjoy), *critical listening* (to come to a sound evaluation through an analysis). That last sort of listening is crucial for teaching but only "when contained within the bounds of a respectful and caring relationship with learners."<sup>104</sup> Waks summarizes his understanding:

In pedagogies that emphasize teacher listening, that listening spans all of the above categories – listening to observe and hypothesize about, and to

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<sup>102</sup> Cf. J. Kline, *Listening Effectively: Achieving High Standards in Communication*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs 2002.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

interpret, learners' interests and capacities, to build relationships with them and care about them, to appreciate and value them, and to form creative practical ideas – about lessons and activities that will engage their learners as individuals and as a group and help them grow. And learner listening will move from passive absorption to active intellectual and practical engagement involving all types of listening.<sup>105</sup>

Even if the idea is to promote alternative pedagogies as the new methods of active listening for both teachers and learners, Waks invites us to read *about* listening not in order to apply it externally to the classroom, but to risk our own way of thinking of *how* these methods apply to our learning and teaching situations.<sup>106</sup> That invitation has great importance, primarily if it is directed toward the dominating technical rationality of today's teachers who seem to be eager to adopt the easy way of blindly following this or that instruction. According to Waks, it is first of all a matter of reducing, if not eliminating, the harmful didactic teaching that privileges passive learning instruction. Without the personal involvement of teachers, even alternative pedagogies will turn against themselves, becoming – no matter how tricky that may appear – yet another way of silencing new generations.

The hermeneutics of education as outlined in this book – to be more exact, the acouo-hermeneutics of education – is driven by a similar spirit of invitation to free reading and listening. In a sense it is the invitation to risk ourselves in this freedom of reading and listening.<sup>107</sup> The structure of the book enables different ways of approaching it, for example one can read it as a whole that is open to interpretations and composed according to the idea of developing an argument by following the “thing” (subject matter) that invites different voices and aspects of thinking about it. In such case the division into two parts appears to be provisional or symbolic for the dialogic-dialectic dynamism of thinking; on the other hand, one can observe that each chapter can be treated as a whole that opens up space for another query, which can, however, be read separately, despite being an intergal part of the whole book. The main division into chapters has been done in light of such a reading, and thus the reason for them is more justified. Another thing is that some parts interpretatively repeat the key conclusions or standpoints in

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., pp. 8–9.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

<sup>107</sup> About the productive aspect of taking a risk in education see: K. Węc, A. Wierciński, eds., *Ryzyko jak warunek rozwoju. Transformatywne aspekty edukacji* [Risk as the condition of development: Transformative aspects of education], Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2016.

different context (for example Chapter 5), which means that something is in this way seen from another angle, but even more importantly, the “subject matter” reveals itself somewhat differently. Nonetheless, the reader can recognize a multilayer construction of the book, namely that different forms of listening are from one point of view described as separate, different forms, but from another point of view they can be seen as a subsequent passage from less to more complex forms, and thus an exhaustive description of the phenomenon. So, educative listening would be the most complex and existentially experienced form, but at the same time the most ambiguous, elusive and clouded, at least in the common use of the word listening. The interpretation of the composition of the book and its potential productive aspect must be left to readers’ ingenuity.

Chapter 1 is devoted to listening and question interpretation in the context of Gadamer’s and Nancy’s works.<sup>108</sup> The aim here is not to introduce the reader to the whole project of Gadamer’s or Nancy’s thought. It is a sort of an overture to the idea of the book. Therefore, different threads intertwine in the interpretation of listening and its shaping aspects, as can be seen in the reading of the works of the two thinkers. In a sense, in its initial sections, the chapter introduces the main threads of the book (among others conversation, text, dialectic, *mousikē*, question and listening, taste and sense) that are consequently explored in a more detailed way in the next chapters.

Thus, Chapter 2 is a deliberation on the question and listening in the perspective of education that allows an introduction of some understanding of question(ing) and listening.<sup>109</sup> It is important to point out that *questioning* means in the book “asking questions,” so it is a gerund of “to question,” and the author decided to leave the word “questioning” in order to be phonetically attuned with “listening” or – if one prefers – to preserve some interpretative aspects that can be recognized in such a written form. It was difficult to decide how to express in English the active state of asking a question. In the Polish “pytanie” we already have two meanings: the “question” as a noun and as a verb at the same time, which allows us to play with

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<sup>108</sup> It is a revised version of my article: M. Przanowska, “Hermeneutic Conversation and the Piercing Dialectics of Listening,” [in:] *Hermeneutics – Ethics – Education*, ed. A. Wierciński, International Studies in Hermeneutics and Phenomenology, vol. 8, LIT Verlag, Münster 2015, pp. 387–414.

<sup>109</sup> This chapter is an extended version of my article: M. Przanowska, “Hermeneutic Priority of the Question: Cultivating the Hermeneutic Ear,” *Studia Paedagogica Ignatiana* 18, 2015, pp. 59–80, <http://www.apcz.pl/czasopisma/index.php/SPI/article/view/SPI.2015.003>, accessed 11.01.2016.

language in order to express some crucial aspects of the hermeneutics of question.<sup>110</sup>

Chapter 3 is focused on a mini-phenomenology of listening. It is called mini-phenomenology to underline that it is not about referring to the most significant figures of phenomenology in order to answer the question of their influence on education.<sup>111</sup> The prefix “mini-” determines the preliminary investigations on listening and the *methodos*: to follow the thing as it shows itself to the interpreter. The hermeneutic spirit of it lies in the interpretative description of what follows and points to the major perspective from which the investigations initiate and in the light of which they have particular meanings and notions vital for their interpretation. After a short deliberation on the idea of typology and forms of listening, we begin to describe step by step the complex and vital phenomenon of listening, from the issue of unwitting listening to the musicality of the world.

Part II is preceded by an interlude that introduces the reader to the ancient notion of *mousikē*. It appears that *mousikē* is to be treated as the origin of the notion of “education” in the broadest and more profound sense, not without the “religious” context so characteristic of ancient culture.<sup>112</sup> Participation in the unity of song, dance, and word, the notion of *theoria*, the crisis of the New Music movement in ancient Greece, as well as the institution of slave pedagogues, has a lot in common with the listening experience. In the “Interludium” one can easily grasp a slight division into two parts: the second one is on music and listening as interpreted by some chosen contemporary authors. Of course, the time

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<sup>110</sup> This interplay is used in M. Przanowska, “Zapomniana hermeneutyka pytania a ontologia hermeneutyczna” [A forgotten hermeneutics of question and the hermeneutic ontology], *Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej* 63, 2018, pp. 139–158. Another thing is that “questioning” is widely used instead of “asking questions,” at least in hermeneutic writings, without being understood as “asking questions of (someone), especially in an official context.”

<sup>111</sup> See, for instance, investigations conducted in such a paradigm in Poland: A. Ryk, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw pedagogiki humanistycznej. Od fenomenologii Edmunda Husserla do pedagogiki fenomenologicznej* [In search for foundations of the humanistic pedagogy: From the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl to phenomenological pedagogy], Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2011; K. Ablewicz, *Hermeneutyczno-fenomenologiczna perspektywa badań w pedagogice* [Hermeneutic-phenomenological research perspective in pedagogy], Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Kraków 1994; J. Gara, *Od filozoficznych podstaw wychowania do eideicznej filozofii wychowania* [From philosophical foundations of education to an eideic philosophy of education], Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej, Warszawa 2009.

<sup>112</sup> In Latin *religare* meant to be joined again with something that transcends the individual, cf. J. Grondin, *Du sens de la vie. Essai philosophique*, Bellarmin, Montréal 2003, pp. 114–116.

gap and the leap from the ancient to the contemporary understanding show explicitly that our aim is not historical, but at the same time that the endeavor to understand musical experience widely (and tangibly metaphorically) is not coincidental, but, hopefully, meaningful, that is open to inspirational interpretations and further investigations. From another point of view, the “Interludium” introduces the issue of translation implicitly – metaphors work by assuming a recognition of meaning that makes any translational effort possible. In this sense, listening in its broadly understood diagnostic-recognition form already participates in the translation(al) experience.

In Chapter 5 the reader is introduced through the concept of acouo-translational education to the notion of translational listening. Consequently, the content of the chapter moves toward some contemporary issues of and in education, and another kind of rhetoric appears. References to a cognitive-communicational idea of translational myths are, on the one hand, an excuse to share with the reader some myths concerning education. On the other hand, the myths refer to the “myth” written for this book at the beginning of this introduction. As in the case of composing, one idea is chasing the other or responds to it, no one knows when some threads are to be explicitly interwoven. Nonetheless, the task of the interpretation of education calls us from different sides of our experience. In this book, it is all about translating with an attentive – but not suppressed when oppressed by fear – ear. The author takes a risk by accepting the hermeneutic invitation to speak incompletely, and to honestly share with the other how the thing is understood (when one listens to a light that voices something, allowing the thing to be seen as it is heard).

In Chapter 6, the question of the sense of education is posed. In its light, educational (formative) listening is presented. Just like in performative arts, the notion of it is concealed by the discussed tropes and trends in contemporary education as seen from the point of view derived from some academic discussions. Nevertheless, neither the book nor the chapter aims to elaborate and discuss – even on a rudimental level – contemporary accounts on education, theory, and philosophy. This chapter describes some contemporary issues in pedagogical thought, pointing out reductionist tendencies in education, and considering the issue of the hermeneutics of education and – to be more precise – the acouo-hermeneutics of education in particular. The reason for focusing on the peril of (more or less latent) reductionism is to sharpen our consciousness and to realize that pathological generalizations blunt our capability of a full participation in education as a multidimensional, meaningful, inspirational life-experience. By rediscovering the ancient