

Bakhtin's philosophy for education: Pedagogy of aesthetics and dialogism

by

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Abstract

This thesis is an attempt to analyze the philosophical ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin from the point of view of their possible implementation in educational practices. The first chapter examines the philosophy of Bakhtin's aesthetics, which postulate that the perception of the surrounding world is possible through non-rational methods of phenomenological and hermeneutic reflections. Particular attention is paid to Bakhtin's understanding of the process of cognition, where a human is presented in his/her holistic subjective being. According to Bakhtin, this idea permits the usage of subjective cognitive processes in objective reality only through an individually responsible act. The second chapter deals with the possible implementation of the Bakhtinian dialogic philosophy in the theory of knowledge. An attempt is made to trace the understanding of the essence of dialogism from the phenomenological premise that any consciousness is a text that includes the cognizer in a situation of aesthetic understanding and, as the result of such participatory thinking, triggers the mechanism of an internal dialogue. The balancing correlation between the idea of "dialogic" and the idea of "answerability" as part of the general life experience is also explored. The third chapter examines Bakhtin's architectonics as a specific strategic tool, which allows for optimizing and effectively carrying out the many interrelationships of the participating in many educational processes. Additionally, Bakhtin's concepts of *chronotope* and *nonalibi in existence* are considered as categories of theoretical cognition and phenomena that can help better comprehend the truth, especially in post-modern educational conditions. Together with Bakhtin's ideas, the ideas of cognition specific to the neo-Kantian, primarily German, philosophical schools, are explored as well as their influence on Bakhtin and his followers. I also include some memories from my own teaching experience, which I collected for over 25 years of teaching foreign languages from K-12 to the university level.

Keywords: aesthetics; architectonic; Bakhtin; chronotope; dialogism; linguistics; phenomenology; philosophy

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Glossary

<i>architectonics</i>	Bakhtin adopted this concept from Kant and completed it with the notion that the surrounding knowable world is the whole in its totality of objects, phenomena, and their interconnections, as long as this concept has its value in the life of an individual.
<i>carnavalesque</i>	(or <i>carnival polyphony</i>) The term was introduced by Bakhtin into literary criticism and means the perception of the phenomenon of life in the traditions of the medieval carnival through a conscious involvement in the phenomenon and its simultaneous parody and humorous debunking aimed at its critical renewal.
<i>chronotope</i>	According to Bakhtin, this is a specific quality of an act of our life, which has an extrahistorical combination of temporal and spatial relationships in the process of our cognition.
<i>dannost vs. zadannost</i>	(in English: <i>real being vs. assignment</i>) These terms are used by Bakhtin in his concept of <i>objectivation</i> , in which reality appears to us not as existing initially outside of our consciousness, and penetrating our consciousness in the process of cognition, but is actively absorbed by us as a text that has an author and was created by an author for us for specific purposes.
extrascientific way	According to Bakhtin, this is a non-rational perceptual method, which allows us to confirm the authenticity of the subject of knowledge by using not only a scientific or technological approach but also philosophical, phenomenological, and hermeneutic interpretations.
Me	Bakhtin's concept of "Me" is based on a preceptor's attitude towards themselves in the process of cognition, in which the process itself is carried out in a dialogue between different incarnations of "Me" as " <i>I, the others and I-for-others</i> ".
metalanguage	Bakhtin emphasizes the importance of non-rational intentions in perception by including aesthetic components and absorbing them through the process of a dialogue. See: <i>unity of perception</i> .
moral reality	According to Bakhtin, this is the type of reality when individuals realize their own responsibility to the object or phenomenon of perception, as soon as this object or phenomenon becomes a part of their life in the process of perception.
<i>nonalibi in existence</i>	This concept refers to understanding one's own ontological essence as an individual in the process of cognition through the act of getting into life (See: <i>vzhivaniye, vchuvstvovanie</i>); that is, understanding one's own fundamental participation in the process of one's own being.
<i>objectivation</i>	With this term, Bakhtin defines the moment of awareness in which the reality that we cognize appears to us not existing initially outside our consciousness, and entering our consciousness in the process of cognition, but actively absorbed by us as a piece of

	somebody else's construction or text that has an author and was created by the author for us for certain purposes.
participative consciousness	Bakhtin uses this term to suggest that the process of cognition happens not only through the prism of theoretical knowledge, but also through the awareness of the fact; that those perceived objects and phenomena are important for one's own life and, therefore, one's own responsibility to them.
<i>postuplenie</i>	(in English: <i>coherent flow of acts</i>) By using this term, Bakhtin indicates that the process of life is a continuous and coherent set of acts, in which an individual goes through their life path from one act to another, endowing them with their own responsibility. See: <i>responsibility</i> .
<i>raznorechie</i>	(in English: <i>heteroglossia, multivoicedness, polyphony</i>) According to Bakhtin, the meaning of this term is the unity of equal voices simultaneously reflecting a life phenomenon from different angles of view, which through a dialogue add up to the general flow in the process of the individual's perception.
responsibility	According to Bakhtin, in the process of cognition, an individual becomes aware of each cognizable phenomenon as a part of their own life and hence endows each cognizable phenomenon with aesthetic qualities; that is, an individual understand these phenomena as inseparable parts of their own life and thereby take responsibility for them. See: <i>vzhivaniye, vchuvstvovanie</i> .
speech utterances	Bakhtin considers speech as a stream of linguistic units (speech utterances) with specific physical and semantic qualities.
<i>true position (in life)</i>	(or <i>truth of situation</i>) According to Bakhtin, an individual understands their own responsibility towards an object or a phenomenon of cognition, since in the process of cognition these objects or phenomena become a part of their own life. See: <i>participative consciousness</i> . See: <i>nonalibi in existence</i> .
unity of perception	Bakhtin considers this a unity of rational and non-rational aesthetic methods of perception. See: <i>extrascientific way</i> .
<i>vzhivaniye</i> <i>vchuvstvovanie</i>	(German: <i>die Einfühlung</i> , English: the act of getting into life) According to Bakhtin, this is the phase in the process of cognition preceding <i>objectivation</i> , consisting in the knower's ability to endow the cognizable phenomena of life with aesthetic qualities; that is, accepting these phenomena as inseparable parts of their own life.
<i>vnenochnodimost</i>	(in English: <i>extralocality, outsidedness or exotopy</i>) Bakhtin developed this term to name our ability to abstract in the process of cognition from an object or a phenomenon of cognition by taking the role of an author who creates a character in the general

outline of the surrounding world as if it were a literary text or piece of art.

zone of dialogical contact

According to Bakhtin, this zone is a necessary condition for a full-fledged process of cognition and is possible only through equal dialogue.

Introduction

As a teacher and an educator with several decades of teaching experience, and having undertaken scientific research for my bachelor's and master's degrees as well as always actively practicing self-education, I have been asking myself which philosopher's work would be equally applicable both to the theoretical problems of education and to the practical issues of pedagogy, curriculum, and self-education of teachers. I have always been interested in Russian philosophical ideas and became thoroughly acquainted with the works of many Russian philosophers and thinkers, including Michael Bakhtin. Bakhtin is a famous Russian philosopher and cultural theorist who lived in the first half of the 20th century and devoted his studies primarily to phenomenological philosophy and linguistics. Because in the days of the Soviet Union his works, primarily devoted to the metaphysical aspects of philosophy, remained unpublished, he became internationally known only after his death. After the first encounter with Bakhtin's ideas and then more-in-depth study of them, I found to my surprise that many of his philosophical ideas can and should be used in modern education. I also happily realized that I now have a theoretical philosophical justification for many pedagogical practices, which I have used to teach foreign languages to students from the pre-school to the undergraduate level.

As I began to analyze an extensive amount of literature devoted to Bakhtin, I noticed that some aspects of Bakhtinian philosophy are well developed for use in pedagogical practice. In this introduction to my dissertation, I will try to outline those aspects that, in my opinion, are not only well elaborated upon but are also important for me as a teacher in my practical work with students. Other aspects of Bakhtinian philosophy, however, are only partially illuminated or mentioned only as background arguments, without specifying their importance for education. I have dedicated my dissertation to precisely those aspects of Bakhtin's philosophy not fully studied or understood. From my point of view, Bakhtin has developed ideas that are significant not only for teaching foreign languages, but also for general educational practices. Proceeding from this point of view and from my admiration for Bakhtin's philosophy, I set a personal goal of structuring a basic philosophical analysis, easy to understand for practicing teachers, of some of Bakhtin's lesser-known ideas that are of great value to educators. I will concentrate on those that are seemingly still poorly understood in terms

of their practical educational value and remain barely known to many practicing teachers and educators. I also consider which of Bakhtin's ideas can support education and teacher self-education, as well as to what extent and under which conditions.

I would like to trace the history in Bakhtinian studies for several reasons. The first is that from a historical and cultural perspective, we need to understand the roots of Bakhtin's theories, and that includes the ideas of many neo-Kantian and phenomenological philosophers. The second reason is the evaluation of my teaching experience through the interpretation of Bakhtin's ideas for education, and the third reason is my personal intention to position myself in Bakhtiniana as a researcher and as a teacher for my future educational work. In addition to analyzing contemporary sources of many Bakhtinian educators, I will also add scholarship from little-known sources of highly valuable philosophical ideas, predominately German, neo-Kantian, and phenomenology philosophers. I will concentrate on predominately German, neo-Kantian, and phenomenology philosophers for two reasons. First, many scholars of Bakhtin (Clark & Holquist, 1984; Holquist, 1990) point out that it was German phenomenologists who influenced and inspired Bakhtin in his philosophical ideas. I also managed to trace the German philosophical roots in some of Bakhtin's ideas, which I will mention in later chapters. Second, I have the privilege of being fluent in German and therefore have the opportunity to use sources in German, which, to my regret, have not been fully translated into English. Additionally, I include some simple texts which represent my personal retrospection on my teaching experience in different schools and institutions, which I titled *Teacher's vignettes*. My hope is that these memories, although based on the specific practices and traditions of the teaching of foreign languages in other countries, still may provide teachers with some ideas or tips. My intention is not only to make a theoretical contribution to our contemporary understanding of Bakhtin's theory but also to provide teachers with new or other ways of thinking about their pedagogical decisions, possibly through the use of a more comprehensible version of my dissertation and by providing some practical examples from my teaching experience which they may find helpful or interesting.

Considering the wide palette of modern Bakhtinian research literature, I first single out some key aspects of the basis of Bakhtin's legacy. Personally, as a keen reader of classical (primarily antique and medieval) philosophy, I can single out Bakhtin's general philosophical conclusions created under the influence of the neo-Kantian school

of philosophy (Clark & Holquist, 1984; Holquist, 1990). I focus on neo-Kantian traditions in philosophy because not only were they well reflected in Bakhtin's theories, but because neo-Kantian philosophers attempted to reuse Kant's theories in the analysis of the cognition process instead of theories based on an absolutely speculative metaphysical approach; or vice versa, on abstract materialism (Heis, 2010), which was widespread in the second half of the 19th century. I believe that both approaches, speculative metaphysics and abstract materialism, are equally harmful to the theory of education, since they take the student either into the world of only sensual abstractions or into the world of only material (that is physical) phenomena separated from the social context. I will also focus on the phenomenological tradition, as represented by Max Scheler (Poole, 2001; Cresswell, 2011), because it raises important questions of being and of existential condition, which may come not through the methodology of external observation and physical experiment, but through the experience of empathy, hermeneutic interpretations, and dialogic self-identification.

Bakhtin's thought could be tied for first place with hermeneutic philosophy (Richardson, 2011), as long as he insisted on the understanding of a human being as "a self-interpreting being" (Taylor, 1985b) who is in a constant process of an interpretation of their own or someone else's activity and "artefacts" (Grossen, 2011) of surrounding reality. Bakhtin eliminated the difference between a formal approach to cognition through theoretical schemes and cognition through a human's own life experience, through phenomenological understanding (Cunha & Goncalves, 2009; Cresswell, 2011) of direct experience. Bakhtin (2003) called this phenomenological understanding "participative consciousness" (p.307) and insisted that such action-performing consciousness "is directed towards a goal, and the given course followed in performing the action as well as the means of achieving the goal are both experienced from within" (p. 310). Thus, Bakhtin proposed using inner experiences and inner emotions in an attempt to "break down the barriers between inner and outer" (Emerson, 1983).

As I will review in later chapters, I find inner experiences and inner emotions important for educational theory; I believe that the entire process of gaining knowledge and skills, no matter at what level, from preschool to higher education, is always a process of inner experiences, reflection and evaluation of one's own actions. An experienced teacher encourages students again and again to filter the acquired knowledge through the prism of their own experience, allowing them to let it into their

own life. It is clear that not every subject of study will allow such attempts and an aspect of personal abstraction is necessary in such scientific disciplines as, say, algebra or chemistry; however, in subjects such as foreign languages, history, literature, and native language, the opportunities for personal immersion and absorption into the emotional level are very high. For this study, I will purposefully not touch upon the elements of metaphysical perception in Bakhtin's philosophical studies in details, such as his ideas about "the word of God" (Greene, 1986), or the existence of being as a given from a higher idea outside the social context (Salgado, 2011) or the presence of some higher mind, *Mono Consciousness Almighty* (Matusov, 2015b) because my research lies beyond religious or theological reflections of Bakhtin. Rather, I will focus on his ideas in the context of ontological necessity for an individual, since such an understanding is closer to the educational context of my study. As long as I believe that the process of education has its ontological value, it means that education is important for us as an element and precondition of our existence. Bakhtin (1986b) asserted that human consciousness cannot be active in cognizing objects and concepts of the world without the possibility to "*relate dialogically* to them" (p. 56). The dialogical approach in cognition was mentioned by some Hermeneutic philosophers (Richardson, 2011). The dialogical approach resonates well with various aspects of the theory of education, so Bakhtin's theories are probably better studied in this section than in others. During my research, I was impressed how deeply such aspects as general question of child development (Lyra, 1999), forming of identity (Lourenco, 2013, Grossen, 2011, Fecho, 2010; Gillespie & Zittoun, 2010), educational chronotope (Matusov, 2015a), and fundamental questions of cognition (Clegg, 2011) were developed. In dialogism, an individual is no longer alone; "no longer possesses an independent ontological status" (Salgado, 2011, p.430), so formal dialogism receives the status of ontological dialogism (Matusov, E., & Marjanovic-Shane, 2014).

Considering dialogism as the condition for perception, Bakhtin proceeded from understanding the world through speech utterances, which are not just words from a dictionary, but arise through "concrete dialogic situations" (Emerson, 1983). For Bakhtin, speech utterances not only have semantic meaning - after all, any word is a word as long as it has meaning - but also aesthetic content: that is, how this word sounds in a certain context of dialogue, how appropriately it is used, how it affects the general canvas of a narrative. All these aspects create a detailed, concrete dialogical situation. I

think that any teachers of a foreign language have come across a situation in which they recommend that a student uses a specific word instead of another, precisely because in this particular dialogical situation, such a word would be more appropriate and even more beautiful. At that moment, we touch on the semiotics of Bakhtin, who created his own special world, "the world of signs" (Voloshinov, 1939), in which signs are not just simple semiotic tools but rather reflections of different material objects and physical realities (Grossen, 2011). They are not just images of objects, but complex constructions (Lourenco, 2013) sign systems (Leiman, 2011) with their own "cultural background and a dynamic context" (Lourenco, 2013, p. 424). Including utterances in his sign systems utterances, Bakhtin (1986b) pointed out that we have to "take into account the social and interpersonal context in which utterances are generated" (p. 445). An individual operates with utterances depending on the physical and mental position of their existence, using a specific word in a specific situation at a specific time, like a carpenter using a chisel to complete the design of a complex architectural structure (Shotter, 1993). In Ivanov's (1970) morphology, utterances are used like a frame change process in a silent movie. Thus, for Bakhtin, language is not just a means for communication, but an embodied action (Cresswell, 2011) or the subject of our values and beliefs (Dyson, 2010). According to Bakhtin (1981), "it [language] is populated - overpopulated - with the intentions of others" (p. 294). Here, Bakhtin points out that our choice of words and speech structures in the process of dialogue is not only our intention, but also our reaction to the words of another: that is, our reaction to other people's intentions. There, we may talk about specific branches in education - linguistic studies or foreign language teaching, which are very close to me, as a foreign language teacher with more than 20 years of experience. Therefore, in my dissertation, I will very often refer to my teaching experience and to these specific studies. Numerous studies are devoted to the use of Bakhtin's ideas in the methodology of teaching languages, primarily English (Kirkland, 2010; Fisher, 2007; Alim, 2006; Gee, 1996). Research in the field of language communities (Cresswell, 2011a) is important to take into consideration as well, because the issues of language communities or simply learning communities are an essential basis of any educational process, not only the teaching of languages.

As I mentioned before, I will also focus on phenomenological traditions. Not only did these theories form the foundation of Bakhtin's ideas, but these traditions are a cornerstone of educational theory, as long as phenomenology as a scientific discipline

considers consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view. There are other options in education and, in general, in the process of cognition, when cognition is carried out through acquaintance with the experience of others. After all, in order to find out what ripe strawberries taste like, you can taste them yourself or read about the taste of strawberries in a book. I am confident that the active participation of a student in education not only passive absorption of knowledge, but the skills to develop one's own first-person point of view on new knowledge constitute the key elements that make learning effective. I rely on phenomenologist Max Scheler (1970), who argued that participation in a language community involves bodily participation in activities with others. It is the social importance of Bakhtin's ideas that many researchers emphasize, pointing out mediated social systems (Cresswell, 2011), permanent communication with the outer world (Lourenco, 2013), or respecting social contexts (Bieler, 2010). Similarly, Gergen (1991) argues that humanity is a social construct in which each individual occupies a specific place; in saying so, he considers human society as a firm construct of individuals connected to each other. But Bakhtin offers another theory in which individuals determine their place in society through dialogue, and thereby Bakhtin insists on the flexibility of social structures, which are mobile and constantly changing in connections between people, obeying the rule of architectonics in their individual existence. This is a more active model of individual behaviour, understandable and useful in education, as long as in educational practices a teacher tries to teach the student to determine rather than understand their places. This corresponds with the first-person point of view theory mentioned above.

Through these attempts comes *radical ecologism* (Clot, 2008) - that is, an attempt to ensure a comfortable existence in society by cutting off everything that brings discomfort or misunderstanding, which requires additional, seemingly unnecessary efforts, to define one's own *behavioral frames* (Gonos, 1977; Moore, 2011). According to Cresswell (2011), "Bakhtin radically socialized personal experience" (p. 112), emphasizing the social nature of human consciousness (Matusov, 2011b) but without its potential transparency through the development of shared mediation in the zone of proximal development, as Vygotsky's sociohistorical theory implies (Matusov, 2011b). Bakhtin insists "that a person is always ethically engaged in a sociolinguistic community" (Clegg, 2011, p. 530). Considering such ethical engagement, Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, and Gradovski (2019) refer to Bakhtin's philosophy as *dialogic ethical humanism*

(p.9). This idea of ethical humanism is close to me because a good teacher should be primarily a humanist - that is, a person who accepts other people as full-fledged individuals. I specifically use the language of modality here, since in real life we encounter phenomena that contradict our idealistic desires.

Several of Bakhtin's researchers are trying to find close parallels or contradictions between Vygotsky's and Bakhtin's theories. Some point out their closeness to Freud's theories (Emerson, 1983), some show how both were interested in the theory of words and semiotic processes (Shotter, 1993), and some point out the importance of both for educational psychology (Lyra, 1999b; Ligorio, 2010; Salgado, 2011). On the other hand, there are studies pointing to the contradictions between the theories of both these scientists. Shotter (1993) argues that while Vygotsky's attitude about the sign is that it is purely a psychological tool (p. 389), Bakhtin endows the sign with a "socio-ethical nature," which allows it to make "impossible for me to know whose side 'I' am on" (p. 389). Matusov (2011b) insists on an irreconcilable difference between Vygotsky's and Bakhtin's conceptualizations, pointing out that "Vygotsky's sociohistorical approach was deeply instrumental, defining consciousness through activity mediation, while Bakhtin's dialogic approach was essentially ontological, defining consciousness through bodily experience, responsibility, addressivity, responsivity, respect, human dignity, and relationship with the other" (p.100). I will touch upon Vygotsky's theories again in the following chapters, when I address the importance of language in the formation of internal dialogue.

Alongside other aspects, I consider the influence of language on the formation of identity to be important. For me as a teacher, teaching a language is not only teaching someone else's speech, but also conveying the sociocultural background, the way of thinking, habits, and moral attitudes of the speakers of another language. Thus, language learning becomes a way of forming a student's identity. Bakhtin's theories are helpful for understanding how language learning contributes to identity formation. According to Cresswell (2011), Bakhtin gives us "insight into the emergence of individuality through individual stylization of embodied action" (p. 117), where the most important condition is the socio-cultural background of such a formation. In Bakhtinian dialogical philosophy, tensions exist between the individual and society (Clegg, 2011; Grossen, 2011; Fecho, 2010), between *abstract objectivism* and *individualistic subjectivism* (Emerson, 1983) with a constant process of negation. In contrast to

Scheller (1970), who believed that it is enough to bring a child to the stream of social consciousness and lower the child's head into it, so the child would fully draw in the sociocultural context, Bakhtin believed that immersion alone is not enough. A child should plunge into this context and consciously absorb it through dialogue. This idea is relatable for me as a teacher, since I consider the learning of a foreign language as a constant stream of activities with students that are based on examples from real life. A teacher provides such examples to the student for demonstration and teaching of certain morphological or grammatical structures. Thus, the process of learning another language is not simply the teaching of grammar but the application of grammar in real life. A teacher helps students to form their own attitude, to find their own place in real life, or according to Bakhtin (2003), "being-as-event is determined precisely in correlation with my own obligative uniqueness: the compellingly actual 'face' of the event is determined for me by myself from my own unique place" (p. 45). This constant *dialogical understanding of selfhood* (Richardson, 1998) determines the hermeneutic forming of self-identity (Guimaraes, 2010, Bieler, 2010), endowing an individual identity with *personal, interpersonal, and even transpersonal dimensions* (Clott 2008; Grossen, 2011; Moore, 2011). According to Bakhtin's dialogical self-theory (Hermans, 2002), the forming of an identity happens in a permanent dialogue between different *I-positions* (Salgado, 2011), in which the fundamentally *relational self* dominates (Clegg, 2011).

Connecting language to the formation of identity, we must consider that language exists not only as a dialogue, but in the form of a monologue. It is important to focus on the concept of monologue in the context of education and important to understand the purpose and significance of monologic speech in education. I will also touch on the concept of monologue when I talk more about the context of an internal dialogue. Dialogical dialectics cannot avoid monologic practices (Bieler, 2010). Bakhtin (1981) analyzed this interconnection, the complex of two forms of discourse, as "authoritative discourse" and "internally persuasive discourse" (p. 542), which must be taken into consideration in educational theories (Stewart, 2012). Monologism may be understood as the reduction of many voices to one voice (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 67; Salgado, 2011) or as a concentration of the essence of a dialogue in a time-context environment (Lourenco, 2013). The problem of a monologic approach in education has been studied in detail and subjected to heavy criticism: including such aspects as monological manipulation (Shor, 1987), authoritarian teaching style (Salgado, 2011), de-ontological

essence of a monologue (Matusov, 2011b), and its potential completeness (Nikulin, 2010). In educational practices, a monologue can be justified when there is a condition for it in the form of an important audience (Lensmire, 1994), but monologue is lacking the participation of many voices; there is none of the special "embodied rhythm among people" (Bakhtin, 1990. p.120) as there is in a dialogue. Bieler (2010) shows the pedagogical difference between a monologue and a dialogue, in that a dialogue provides "opportunities to strengthen individual agency" (p. 396), which is an important aspect in educational practice, where "knowledge is constituted, where it is transmitted, and the interests it serves" (Greene, 1986, p. 239). Bieler (2010) points out the importance of dialogue for mentoring talk, Cresswell (2011a) underlines its rationality, and Moore (2011) stresses its influence on the development of transpersonal dimensions (p. 513). A dialogue, to a greater extent than a monologue, is aimed at an attempt to understand an interlocutor. Voloshinov (1993b) insists that "every understanding is dialogical. Understanding is opposed to saying how a single expression is opposed to an expression in a dialogue" (p. 123). Therefore, educators believe that from a pedagogical point of view, a teacher should be democratic in approaching students, trying not only to hear them, but also to understand, trying to hear in their answer the essential *children's utterances* (Miyazaki, 2011). Herein lies the *social quality* (Cresswell, 2011a) of a dialogical pedagogical process, its complexity and potentiality (Fecho, 2010; Stewart, 2012).

Many researchers (Hermans, 2007, Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski, 2019) argue that for Bakhtin, the principle of freedom in a dialogue is especially important. Bakhtin (1984a) himself wrote that dialogical means a situation "when the other consciousness is treated as having equal rights with one's own consciousness" (p. 103). A dialogue allows one to get rid of the duty to be "*prisoners of education*" (Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski, 2019), which makes it possible to "resist any monopoly, as a manifestation of excessive monologism," and to be involved in "a critical examination of pedagogical dialogism, which requires tolerance to its alternatives" (p. 241). Along with the freedom provided by the dialogical approach, some researchers point to certain tensions arising from the interaction of centripetal and centrifugal forces (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 272). Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski (2019) name six different types of these forces among diverse Bakhtinian pedagogies. Bieler (2010) describes them within the analysis of a discourse between a mentor and a student, while

Clegg (2011) points out their simultaneity in action, and at the same their interdependence (p. 530). Fecho (2010) argues that their dynamism can increase, but so can tension (p. 428), whereas Leiman (2011) mentions that "every dialogically construed semantic position contains my referential relations with the object and, at the same time, all the referential relationships of alien semantic positions that the word has accumulated into its meaning" (p. 451). Taking into consideration the theory of interaction between centripetal and centrifugal forces, we can assume that while in a dialogue, we are in dialogue not only with the object of our perception but also with other participants in the perception of the same object, since in our perception we refer to the object by using words (utterances) already used by others at the time of their perception and that may represent the above-mentioned forces. Through this interwoven language, cultural heritage is implemented, which is part of our education and our identity (Taylor, 2002; Richardson, 2011).

Proceeding from the understanding of language as a precondition for dialogical and monologic approach, in the following chapters I will explore Bakhtin's theory of *multivoicedness* that many scholars consider a very important idea: they argue that the dialogical worldview endows society with a polyphonic condition (Cresswell, 2011a) and makes our life fundamentally multi-voiced (Salgado, 2011). Bakhtin (1986b) himself insisted on the fact that "human thought becomes genuine thought, i.e., an idea, only under the conditions of a living contact with another foreign thought, embodied in the voice of another person, that is, in the consciousness of another person expressed in his word" (p. 71). Many voices imply their mutual dialogic nature (Skinner, Valsiner, & Holland, 2001), and their intertwining and socially dependent complexity (Dyson, 2010) while providing creativity and productivity (Stewart, 2012), which undoubtedly should be taken into account in education. I am certain that a good teacher sees their own influence on a student not as a factor of their voices, but as a combination of their own voice, "voices" of textbooks, impact of social environment, influence of virtual learning spaces, voices of classmates, fellow teachers, and students' parents. A good teacher must understand that when individuals are in the environment of polyphony, they are in constant relationship with others, creating for themselves a social inclusion-of-other-in-the-self model (Hermans, 2007) that includes the absorption of different voices from the historical High Cultures (Miyazaki, 2011). A plurality of consciousnesses (Bakhtin, 1986b) helps to know an "*event* in the point of contact of various consciousnesses" (p.

65). According to Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski, (2019), the strong presence of dialogism together with participants' strong appreciation of this dialogism is an important value which defines "polyphony" (p. 300).

Here I come to the concept of dialogism for human consciousnesses which "defines comprehension rather than the relationship of an agreement" (Matusov, 2015b, p. 403). Considering the principle of dialogical approach to the human mind as a meaning-making system (Lourenco, 2013), we cannot assume that the words transmitted to us through dialogue contain pure knowledge formulated by someone else (Emerson, 1983; Linell, 2009; Matusov, 2011b). Here, I talk about communicative constructionism (Lourenco, 2013) as a principle of knowledge acquisition, in which an individual (in the spirit of Piaget's theory) develops a strategy, system, gradation, and categorization of knowledge. In my opinion, it contradicts Vygotsky's theory of a student receiving a pre-formulated conceptual system through social and cultural relations. According to the Bakhtinian principle of an "internally persuasive discourse" (Bakhtin, 1991), "truth *lives* in a critical heterodiscursive dialogue of diverse participants and communities with diverse foci, where alternative ideas are examined and tested by the participants" (Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski, 2019). In his writing, Bakhtin repeatedly mentions this notion of searching for the truth; as a reader of classical philosophy, I recognize this concept since the search for truth has always been the most important issue that occupied classical philosophers. After all, even Pontius Pilate asked the captive Jesus Christ "What is truth?" (John 18:38).

What principles can an ordinary practicing teacher learn from the theory of communicative constructionism (Lourenco, 2013)? According to Bieler (2010), Bakhtin's theories help teachers "feel their own strength" (p. 392): recognizing themselves not only as experts, but also as active participants in a dialogue; and in preparing educational practices, paying attention to the organization of a classroom, "focusing on space, time, axiology, participation, relations, and agency" (Matusov, 2015a, p. A67), where even the layout of tables and chairs (Moore, 2011) or the distribution of dates (Stewart, 2012) is important. That is, the general atmosphere of a consensus of understanding for an equal democratic dialogue, for an ideal dialogical situation, for a kind of "wobbling" (Fecho, 2010) is created. The conclusions of many Bakhtin researchers are devoted to the creation of an equal democratic atmosphere in schools. School is a collection of many educational hierarchies (Bieler, 2010); it is an institution in which a constant balance

between a personal leadership styles and the need for dialogue is maintained (Stewart, 2012), which means a systematic culture of dialogical participation (Dyson, 2010) must be created. The theory of such a cultural dialogue is one I strongly align with, not only from the dialogue point of view. Here, of course, as teachers, we understand the importance of dialogue between fellow teachers for clarifying their own teaching methods, discussing pedagogical problems, or gaining knowledge. I consider the importance of cultural dialogue also from a cultural point of view. For me, a teacher's culture is the culture of a teacher's self-awareness in the social space, understanding and learning of many mutually affecting aspects of such a space, the ability to determine the importance of events, and the ability to educate not only students, but also themselves. That is why Bakhtin's theory that understanding and response are contingent on each other (Fecho, 2010) is very close to me. Bakhtin (1986b) argued that "our thought itself—philosophical, scientific, and artistic—is born and shaped in the process of interaction and struggles with others' thoughts" (p. 92).

Bakhtin warned that there is an intensely, delicately balanced distribution of authoritarian forces opposing a dialogue. An *authoritative discourse* (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986a) makes it difficult for educational policy makers to engage in a dialogue. Often, a dialogue involves finding a common educational level, but it is also a search for a balance of power (Bieler, 2010) that leads to mutual enrichment of knowledge for all participants in such a dialogue; it works within, rather than against, the tensions in a class (Fecho, 2010). Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski (2019) point out different forms of teacher-student power relations, beginning with a power symmetry between a teacher and students (Gradovski, 2008), following through to students' dominance (Illich, 1983), and ending with a democratic communal governance as a possible tool for the regulation of teacher-student and student-student power relations (Greenberg, 1991). As a suggestion for personal action, Stewart (2012) explains the possibility of mutual agreements, including compromise, through the metaphor of two billiard balls. If two billiard balls move to each other at the same speed, they will collide with each other and their movement will stop mutually. There will be no movement - the balls will freeze, and the game will stop. But if one ball changes its speed and direction when approaching, both balls can fall into pockets. Thus, a win-win situation will be created.

At the same time, Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski (2019) present another tool in the form of *authorial judgment*, demanding that "the author of this

judgment takes responsibility for it by willing to stand by this judgment, risking his or her own communal reputation (which still does not mean that the authorial judgment is wrong or right)" (p. 270). According to Matusov and Marjanovic-Shane (2014), "self-generated authorship" (p. 17) is strongly required. And "without decision making about your own fate, your learning and professional development, when it's absent, it's very difficult to take ownership of your education" (p. 18).

For myself, as an educator, it is clear that education is the key to exploring Bakhtin's heritage. Considering Dewey's (2005) postulate that "education ... is a process of living and not a preparation for future living" (p. 7), Bakhtin's vision of education is a constant progressive process of the formation of knowledge from the aggregation of the multitude of voices: a peculiar poly-consciousness approach (Matusov, 2011b), whose goal is not making students gain the same understanding as the teacher, but providing students with the possibility to know many historically, culturally, and socially important voices (Matusov, 2011b) for forming their own picture of being. Dyson (2010) asks the question, "We all experience ourselves as we maneuver on a voice-filled social landscape, differentiating, appropriating, and remixing available symbolic material. How should we as educators respond to this diversity"? (p. 308). With his dialogical philosophy, Bakhtin also answers this question. With a dialogical approach to education, teachers temporarily refuse to use their authoritarian power; they cannot impose their opinion on the student, cannot point to the only Truth (Matusov, 2007). A teacher doesn't know more (Vygotsky, 1978), but knows it differently and is open to any critical conversations and interruptions (Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski, 2019).

Our ever-changing world is becoming more and more a semi-virtual world, where education is increasingly adopting a virtual learning format (whether in relation to pandemics or not, the trends of virtual learning through Internet portals, YouTube and online forums are growing). We therefore have to think about what is, or even what will be, the modern education process. Modern education is dominated by Western modernity, as Richardson (2011) argues, and in this context Bakhtinian ideas may be of great value because they may create a specific balance or bridge between the modern and postmodern divide (Clegg, 2011), between "modern individualism and postmodern relativism" (Richardson, 2011, p. 464). Bakhtinian ideas may help to solve the problems of social constructionism, "being faithful to selves and others in terms of I/other alterity" (Cresswell, 2011a, p. 485), or the homogenizing effects (Hermans, 2007) of postmodern

society. Hermans (2007) argues that "our era is witnessing an increasing impact of globalization on self and identity and at the same time a growing uncertainty which is caused by growing *complexity, ambiguity, deficit knowledge, and unpredictability*" (pp.34-35). At times when all languages deconstruct and pluralize under the contingency of use (Derrida, 1967), Bakhtin assumes a radical non-agreement-based constructivist approach (Matusov, 2015b) that meaning is always unique and fluid; it cannot be transferred or repeated without becoming something new and different (p. 397). Such interweaving of values in a social environment makes it possible to "deliver the object into the fearless hands of free experimental fantasy" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.23), which was reflected by Bakhtin in his theory of seriousness (Greene, 1986) and carnivalesque approach (Lensmire, 1994). Bakhtin's carnivalesque approach attracts me as a teacher because it allows us to look at the most serious problems from another, *non-serious* angle of view. When we attempt to apply elements of ridicule, parody, distortion in the analysis of a serious problem is aimed primarily at analysis, correction, or renewing of things. I am confident that with tact, taste, proper upbringing, and a sense of moderation, any complex social problem involving relationships between a group of people, especially between a teacher and students, has a greater chance to be solved. And that is what we as teachers must be aware of and try to learn as part of our interpersonal social practices.

The current conditions for the existence of such growing uncertainty in society, and the search for answers to this challenge in the theories of Bakhtin, has been the subject of research by various psychologists (Lyra, 1999b; Ligorio, 2010; Salgado, 2011, Clegg, 2011). I want to bring their ideas into the end of my introduction, as this will provide a bridge to the first part of my research that will relate to the aesthetic component of the Bakhtinian theory. Salgado (2011) insists that *social deconstructivism* in society has mental consequences. Under these circumstances, Bakhtinian heritage is relevant for psychology (Clegg, 2011), and specifically for psyche stability (Moore, 2011, Leiman, 2011), while language plays a semiotic role in psychological development (Grossen, 2011) and is ultimately subject to psychic transformation (Emerson, 1983). Bakhtin (1981) insisted that "in the actual life of speech, every concrete act of understanding is active and . . . filled with . . . emotional expressions" (p. 282). Although we talk about *emotional expressions* (Bakhtin, 1981), we cannot exclude the social component from our cognitive experience. Voloshinov (1993a) pointed to this when,

basing his conclusions on Vygotsky's ideas about higher mental functions, he divided experiences into "lower feelings of 'I-experiences' and the higher form of 'We-experience'" (p. 164), where if an experience falls out of a social context it will lose its verbal awareness (Ivanov, 1970). Having pointed out the importance of emotional elements in the process of cognition and in the process of reaction to the social challenges in our life, I now turn to the first part of my research that will analyze the aesthetic component of Bakhtin's theory.

Chapter 1. Bakhtin's Aesthetics

Summarizing the variety of research literature on Bakhtin, which I briefly outlined in my introduction, there is an important factor affecting education that I did not find among the general philosophical questions of being and consciousness, theoretical schemes for interpreting life experience, a dialogical approach in consciousness and education, and others. I am referring to the aesthetic component of the heritage of Bakhtin. This is not to say that the term aesthetics is not mentioned by some of Bakhtin's researchers. Richardson (1998) incorporates ethical principles into dialogical identification but neglects aesthetic ones. Grossen (2011) named aesthetics together with linguistics and psychology in a summary of Bakhtin's literary theory, and Shor (1987) insisted that "the politics of dialogic pedagogy are clearer than its aesthetics" (p. 12). But in all these references and in many others, what is missing is an understanding of emotional components in Bakhtinian theories. Those emotional nuances (Leiman, 2011), which may arise from "the spirit of ontological engagement (and dialogicity)," impact all participants including "the teacher's genuine interest in the topic and each other" (Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski, 2019, p. 161). But what exactly is this interest? And where does it come from? Does this ontological engagement have a sensuous emotional basis, and if so, how does it arise?

Bakhtin (1986a) wrote that "signs [i.e. language] determine the complex tonality of our consciousness, which serves as an emotional-evaluative context for our understanding" (p. 164). In all the research papers cited above, I did not find a theoretical analysis or justification for this emotional-evaluative context, which in my opinion is an important factor in the theory of education. As a teacher with many years of experience, I have often seen the positive influence of the emotional factor on the learning process. Likely every teacher would agree that students are more successful when studying subjects they like. However, the aesthetic perception of the surrounding reality, and I call education a controlled process of perception, is not limited only by the feeling of interest. Aesthetic feelings include all feelings of belonging, including sympathy, empathy, sometimes even protest or denial. These feelings leave their mark on the process of cognition and affect the processes of comprehension and memorization. I also find this fact important for education, which is why I am deeply

convinced that the reflection of this emotional-evaluative context should begin with Bakhtin's aesthetics.

Bakhtin himself argued that an aesthetic being is closer to the actual unity of being and life than the theoretical world, "therefore the temptation of aestheticism is so convincing" (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 21). I would assume that if we follow Matusov's understanding of education as "a *critical* socialization in practice, in which people not only creatively transform the cultural practice, but also critically evaluate the practice itself, including practice of education" (Matusov; Marjanovic-Shane, 2014, p. 26), such evaluation of the practice itself is directly connected with the process of aesthetic perception. In other words, I would again call education a controlled process of perception; perception from my point of view includes the fundamental cognitive orientation of an individual, encompassing the entirety of the individual's knowledge and an aesthetic component as I explained above. In the following pages, I will analyze Bakhtin's understanding of the theory of the aesthetic world view as a necessary condition for world perception. I will also look at Bakhtin's theory from a practical educational point of view.

Considering the variability of perceptual practice, Bakhtin insisted on non-rational perceptual methods, which are capable of confirming the authenticity of the subject of knowledge: that is, using such types of reflection as phenomenological and hermeneutic because they are able to acquire the object not through science or technology, but through a philosophical way or an "extrascientific way" (Bakhtin, 1986b). It was the path of philosophical perception that Bakhtin defined as "the metalanguage of all types of knowledge and consciousness" (Bakhtin, 1986b, p.17). I believe that the historical background of this idea can be found in the works of Rickert (1899), who insisted that "worldviews should be likened to works of art" (p. 33). If we pave the way of historical consistency from Rickert through Bakhtin to modern educational philosophers, we can find the same notions in the work of Dewey, who indicates that "an aesthetic experience, the work of art in its actuality, is *perception*" (Dewey, 2005, p. 162).

According to Dewey, aesthetics is part of abstract thinking because in abstract thinking we operate with symbols, just as we operate with them in mathematical formulas, or in social interactions or in religious procedures: that is, everywhere certain symbols have a special social and sacred significance. (Later, I will touch upon the

theory of sacral significance in education.) For me, it is important to observe how Bakhtin's aesthetical ideas are reflected, likely unintentionally, in Dewey's argument for the emotional component in the cognitive process: he believed that the process of cognition implies internal integration and fulfillment, which are artistic characteristics and therefore have an aesthetic value. He directly imparted to the experience of thinking as having "its own aesthetic quality" (Dewey, 2005, p. 38). This notion of "aesthetic quality" is a sign, for me, that the concept of Bakhtin's aesthetics is important from an educational point of view, that is, education is continuously connected not only to the experience of thinking, but also to inner spiritual emotions and aesthetic reflections.

Bakhtin's aesthetics demonstrates the materiality of the dialogic principle for understanding the aesthetic of a word and requires hermeneutic substantiation in the historical continuity of the dialogic comprehension. A hermeneutic substantiation implies an alternative way of seeing and feeling (Greene, 1986), creation of so-called aesthetical "as if"-situations (Greene, 1986), or use of words or narratives that will surprise or will be new for a person (Matusov, 2011b). In another words, using a metaphor by Shor (1987), as an artist uses predictable materials like oils or marble for unpredictable pieces of art, a teacher uses predictable words for aesthetically justified and pedagogically well-thought hermeneutic reflections. Bakhtin himself referred to a word as "an expressive and speaking being" (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 32). In my opinion, this applies to any aesthetic expression, including the educational, because any word contributes to education, and education itself is the essence of the word, as it is both historically and didactically based on a text, comes from a text, and is embodied in the text.

Echoing Dilthey (1931), who described the word as "written manifestations of life" (p. 120), Bakhtin defined the possibility of creating an integrative view of the world through an aesthetic vision that is not a set of semantic systems of scientific Cartesian perception but an entire concept, in the centre of which is the single axiological core of a thinker. According to Bakhtin, this axiological core is the human with all human values. Thus he defined the value of the being of a person, his existence in all-pervasive integrity, in which "aesthetic vision knows no boundaries; it must be correlated with the human, and must become human quality" (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 56). In this line, we see Bakhtin's attempt to combine the aesthetical perception with the core nature of a human being practically a metaphysical explanation of the process of perception. Here, he echoes the attempt of Simmel (1923) to combine the aesthetics of form with being

beyond the moral reality, where the secret of the form lies in the fact that the form is the edge of the object at the same time; it is both the object and the ending of an object, a sphere in which "being and non-being of an object merge together" (p. 340). In my opinion, this metaphysical formula is an attempt to prevent our abstraction from things that are an inseparable part of our life. Our abstraction is possible if we do not understand, do not share, or are strictly against the moral value of the object or situation we are cognizing. However, Bakhtin insists on the aesthetic value of any object or phenomenon we cognize; he needs this metaphysics to confirm the value of aesthetic perception since any human experience of a certain event in its being has its value. The very reality of being is thereby endowed with valuable human qualities, just as in the "theory of values" by Max Scheler (1954): that is, the reality of being becomes a "moral reality" (Bakhtin, 1986a, p. 7). Based on this theory, Bakhtin assigns moral qualities to facts collected through the perception of reality. Education, therefore, is not just an objective reality but also a moral reality: a reality that has the essence of aesthetic pleasure and admiration. This reality is very important for us as educators, as long as under these conditions we consider education not as a precondition for our ontological existence but as a part of our existence, which will be discussed in the following pages.

Bakhtin defined his philosophical concept of *objectivation* as the basis for an aesthetic perception of the world, and the awareness of "moral reality" as the third and highest stage of perceptual thinking. *Objectivation* of reality, according to Bakhtin, is based on the principle that an object is not given to us (Russian: *dan*) but rather assigned, (Russian: *zadan*). This principle is significant for our consciousness. The problematic nature of the reality given to us was interesting even for Aristotle with his exclusively "apophantic logos" (Aristotle, 1952): that is, awareness of the world resulting in an estimation through the affirmation or the denial of something which may exist or not exist. That is, it only concerned the state of true or false being. Aristotle's notion is echoed in Bakhtin's concepts of *objectivation*, with both philosophers pointing out the force beyond an individual's mind, where Aristotle formulated the concept of a specific logos, and Bakhtin a force that has the power to assign. Bakhtin explains this phenomenon of assignment through the metaphor of a text, insisting that individuals perceive the world around them as a readable text with its own elements of description, its own heroes and villains, multiple actions, and of course a plot. It goes without saying that the presence of a text implies the presence of its author. In this case, the author

does not assume the form of a divine being as a Creator; rather, it is a purely metaphysical author implying a certain force outside of our reality, which assigns us our reality in the process of our cognition. That is, simultaneous with the logically scientific process of realizing physical reality, we pose an abstract question about the purpose or the meaning of this reality. In other words, while cognizing, we not only ask what it is, but why is it. Unfortunately, such an approach to the process of cognition leaves out phenomena as requests, orders, or questions: although they are expressions in a dialectical process of cognition, they do not deal with the pure recognition of reality and therefore have no relation to being.

In my opinion, the phenomenon of objectivation is relevant to the process of education, since it is an integral part of experience and of aesthetics. Hermann Cohen, as the head of the Marburg neo-Kantian school, was the first to assume that the aesthetic component of consciousness has an equal position with logical and social components in the process of perception. In Cohen's system, a pair of categories of "givenness" and "assignments" is of key importance (Cohen, 1922, p. 239) since his entire philosophy is based on the methodology of mathematized natural science, the nature of cognition for Cohen is the nature of involvement in the cognitive process. Some researchers (Breykin 1995) state that Bakhtin was developing Cohen's theory by adding to the nature of involvement with his category of "unity": "because the unity of perception is always given" (p. 219). By doing so, Bakhtin expands the horizons of theoretical and empirical thinking in the process of cognition by adding the aesthetic category of dialogical thinking. He understands dialogical thinking not only as the tool of rational perception, but as an independent philosophical process of world perception. He writes about dialogic theoretical thinking both as a part of natural science and a philosophical concept.

Bakhtin defines objectivation as the third and highest stage of perceptual thinking. The first stage has a phenomenological essence in which transcendental thinking deals only with cognitive feelings or sensations in which an object of perception is not given to us (*dan*) but where it is more accurate to say that it is assigned (*zadan*) to us, with the purpose of being thought out by us, experienced by us, determined, clarified, conceptualized and finally realized. In the second stage, an unclear, vague, phenomenologically obtained object turns, by the forces of theoretical thinking, to a transcendental object in its formal form, which is independent from the concrete

empirical content of the perceptual experience. In the third stage, all forms obtained by consciousness are *objectified* and assigned to specific scientific structures. Such a "transcendental method" (Cohen, 1922) of cognitive perception was, before Bakhtin, specific to the neo-Kantian philosophical school, according to which transcendental thinking proceeds from the vague vision of the primary phenomenological contemplation, and only then, through thinking, generates and objectifies this vaguely comprehended object in the firm realm of perception. Exceptions to this form of cognitive thinking may be such phenomena of the educational process as guessing, intuition, metacognitive thinking, "embodied knowing", etc. But all these phenomena are possible if we consider the process of gaining knowledge from the philosophical point of view. Bakhtin (2003) discusses dialogical theoretical thinking at the same time as the "natural science and philosophical approach" (p. 303), which implies a possible departure from the pure Cartesian natural science approach, and allows the use of subjective, almost metaphysical elements. The specificity of Bakhtin's theory is that he sympathises with the subjective side of being.

This subjective side of being is reflected in Bakhtin's opposition to Cartesian natural practical orientation and theoretical worldview: "no practical orientation of my life is possible in the theoretical world, it is impossible to live in it, to act responsibly; I am useless there, I principally don't exist there" (Bakhtin 2003, p. 13). This claim indicates that in the process of cognition, such fields of idealized spiritual culture as science or art really exist only in their correlation with an individual. Taken separately from an individual, they do not possess the quality of true being and therefore are illusory or unreal. Does this mean that, in the first stage of teaching, any teaching material is illusory and not real for a student? Should any educator try to answer the question of how this transfer "from metaphysics and epistemology to the social practices of rational persuasion" (Robertson, 1999, p. 2) is possible? After all, if we assume that as long as the world seems to be theoretical (and by the world, we mean the theoretical teaching material in schools), then it is detached from the being of a subject: that is, from a student if we talk about educational practices. Lave (1992) has introduced notions of "teaching curriculum" (what the teacher tries to teach) and "learning curriculum" (what the student actually learns e.g., "math is boring and irrelevant for me"), These notions suggest that abstracting educational materials from a student may be a problem; thus, a student must first accept the importance of specific material and agree to absorb it. If this

problem occurs of abstracting educational materials from a student, it is necessary to understand methods to overcome this abstraction. Bakhtin offers his recipe for this transition, the combination of subjective cognition and objective theoretical reality. He asserts that overcoming the disunity of these two worlds is possible only in an individually responsible act. By "act," he does not mean a physical action but a mental or spiritual act in which the ideal meaning of a cognizable reality is subordinated to subjective being-and-becoming. Such a construction is methodologically possible due to the fact that, in Bakhtin's concept of the universe, it is the subject who in their formation occupies a central position, and becomes the starting point of their own objective being:

At this single point where I am now, no one else is in the same single time on the same single space but only me. And around this single point, the entity of my being is located, and it is unique and inimitable. (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 13)

Thus, for educators performing their educational practice, it is not they who are at the centre and who embody the essence of education, nor is it their educational material; rather, it is the student's, and only under the condition that this student exists at the centre of the whole process.

However, if we look at this process from the student's point of view, then where is the mechanism that allows them to realize the essence of this mental spiritual act and feel their individual responsibility? That is *the duty to answer* (Bostad, 2004). Bakhtin (2003) suggests that fulfilling this duty is possible due to a special ability of our aesthetic perception, or, as he calls it, the "*act of aesthetic contemplation*" (p.17). According to Bakhtin, the result of aesthetic contemplation is detached from the actual act of contemplation and is not fundamental to it; hence, for an aesthetic contemplation, there is "an elusively single being-event in its reality" (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 17). The world of aesthetic contemplation is not the true objective world because in the process of my contemplation it is not what it is in its essence, but only in the reality I want it to be. Thus, my aesthetic will change my cognitive ability, my vision. Manifesting my will, I endow my cognitive vision with responsibility, and as I begin to live what I have seen, I live *in* it. From this point, my aesthetic contemplation gets its epistemological essence and Bakhtinian *vzhivaniye* (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 18) (German: die Einfühlung, English: the act of getting into life) at the same time as active empathy occurs. According to Bakhtin, only after the moment when active empathy is completed, is the next moment possible - the

moment of *objectification*, that is, the awareness of oneself outside or beyond a cognizable object or phenomenon. At this moment, a mental separation occurs of individuals from the perceived object, and individuals return to themselves or to the understanding of their own position in being. Only after this will aesthetic formatting conclude “from the inside out, grasped by the active empathy as the whole” (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 18). This is the way in which a cognitive process is associated with awareness of one’s own responsibility.

As this discussion shows, the process of active empathy and the awareness of one’s own responsibility can be interpreted as an act of bonding between an individual and the reality they perceive. Rickert has argued that an object of cognition comes into the rational domain of consciousness if its logical rationality is immediately perceivable; that is, the object has a *pervasive rationality* (German: *durchdrungene Rationale*) (Rickert, 1915, p. 31). To look at this problem from an educationist’s point of view, one weak point which lies in our subjective interpretation of purely objective reality. In my opinion, our rational approach to the fact or a problem may not mean that what we think about the fact or the problem is the truth. We can express only our opinion. In performing an irrational process of active empathy, we cannot resort to any rational tools as long as our possible rationality does not have objective confirmation. At this point, it is necessary to clarify our understanding of knowledge, resorting to Socratic interpretations, the Cartesian scientific method, and the understanding of scientific inquiry in modern education as long as such methods deny subjective interpretation. The understanding of the essence of knowledge is a major challenge in education because our desire as teachers is to convey to our disciples the truth. Without doubt, an aesthetic essence of our perception can and should act as an auxiliary tool for determining the truth in education. Here, I again resort to classical philosophy and its interpretation of its own purpose as an attempt to comprehend the truth, as I did in the introduction (see page 11). The term *truth* itself is very broad and can include many interpretations but, in my opinion, Bakhtin understood by this a person’s awareness of their life as a sum of all experience, including aesthetic emotions. According to Rickert, a real piece with an aesthetic quality, e.g. a piece of art, will have an aesthetic value. But this value belonging to it, or more specifically, the value associated with it, has nothing to do with the fact of its objective rational existence: that is, the financial costs of canvas, paints, frames, work, etc. Thus, the material rational value of the object is in no way connected

with the value of the essence of the object but is connected with the evaluative activity in the psychology of an individual who assesses this object. If we apply this assumption to educational practices, we may assume that a student can evaluate any fact or artifact from the material being taught differently than a teacher who provides a student with these facts, since both a teacher and a student have different processes of active empathy and self-identification with such materials. In this case, it is not important whether it is true or not in the essence of a fact or artifact, but it is important that this fact or artifact leads to the discovery and ascertaining of the truth.

Teacher's vignette:

Here, I include some memories from my teaching experience, which in my opinion are related to some ideas in Bakhtin's philosophy and can serve as examples of practical pedagogical procedures. I call these memories a teacher's vignettes since in their essence, they are only isolated moments of my life, time capsules, or, according to Bakhtin's terminology, *chronotopes*, separate moments arranged not in chronological but in meaningful logical order. Bakhtin (1991) defined a chronotope as "the place where the knots of narrative are tied and untied" (p. 250). The theory of chronotope has been analyzed by many scientists (Fecho, 2010, Fecho, Falter, & Hong, 2016; Lefstein & Snell, 2013, Kohn, 2014), and its educational value is laid out in a very detailed way by Matusov (2015a). Later, I will discuss the concept of chronotope and its importance for education in more detail; for now, I would just like to share some of my memories related to my work as a foreign language teacher with students from pre-school age to K-12, and up to the undergraduate level.

I begin with my first snapshot as a story from the time when I, as a young teacher, had just graduated with a teaching degree and was working in a small rural school deep in Southern Belarus. I remember desperately trying to awaken in my students an interest in learning German, especially at the elementary school level. At times, or even very often, this task was very difficult, and appeared to me almost impossible. I remember one 6th grade student who did not want to participate in any lessons at all. His passivity, his lack of interest in the subject, were visible to me and to other students, and it was quite disturbing.

At some point, I decided to have a serious talk with him face to face and asked him to stay after our class was finished. He was not particularly willing to talk, but in the end, I managed to have a conversation with him and asked why he had such a negative attitude towards the German language. I received the same answer that I had heard again and again from many students in this village school. "Why do I need to learn German?". He continued: "My father never spoke German in his life, and I will never speak it as well." To my remark that German could be useful to him in his future profession, he answered with a laugh that he was going to work as a tractor driver, just like his father, on the collective farm. After this conversation, I walked from the school to the small country cottage, where my school rented a room for me from an old *babushka* Maria, and thought that most of the students really will stay in their native village after school for their entire lives. They will work on the collective farm as tractor drivers or dairy women, and I have almost no chances of expecting their interest, never mind active empathy, in such an abstract topic as a foreign language. Staying in this village, I often saw how boys, at a much younger age than my students, already helped fathers take care of their tractors, diving with delight into the iron guts of these big machines. But I finally decided to give myself one more chance to persuade this student to learn German.

The next day, I brought to my class a large paper dictionary full of pictures: the so-called pictorial dictionary of the German language. At that time in my country, this book was of a tremendous value; I had it only thanks to many years of correspondence with pen pals from West Germany who mailed this valuable book to me, and it remains on a bookshelf in my office to this day in spite of the Internet and total accessibility to visual information. There is no translation of terms in such a dictionary but only pictures, drawings and blueprints, with many numbers assigned to different parts of drawings, and each number explaining a specific name of each part. Many pages in this dictionary were devoted to various production activities and included drawings of various mechanisms. Of course, I could find in it a drawing of a car, with all internal details and mechanisms. When my lesson began, I told my students a fictional story: imagine, I said, you are walking along the street in your village and what you see is a car standing in the middle of the street and a puzzled driver walking around it. It is obvious that something is wrong with the car, but the driver is not at all experienced and does not understand what is happening. As I expected, many students, especially boys, immediately showed

interest and began to ask me about the details of what exactly was wrong with the car. I told them that while operating, the motor of this car overheats very quickly, and a warning indicator lights up on the car's display. Immediately, these young mechanics began stretching up hands, because they instantly understood what the problem was. And that was exactly what I counted on.

I added to my story that the driver is a foreign German tourist and does not speak Russian at all. "If you want to help him," I added, "you need to tell him in German which part has broken (In German: ". . . ist kaput"). And I placed my picture dictionary in front of the class. As I expected, the children very quickly found the drawing of a car and my student, the one with whom I spoke the previous day, was one of the first to find the necessary part in the dictionary and read its name. Well done, I said; see, you helped a foreign visitor. Do you know what the German word is for . . .? And I began to mention various automotive parts, the ones I knew, and my students began to search for them on the drawing. To my great shame, then and even now, I am not very enlightened in automotive terminology, but I was able to name at least a couple of car parts. But looking at the excitement in the class, and how students were motivated to find the right vocabulary in German, I was sure that my lesson succeeded. For the first time, I saw in the eyes of this boy a real interest in the teaching subject. At the end of the class, he asked me to give him this dictionary for a while, as he wanted to get a better look at the drawings of other mechanisms. I agreed. I would not say that the learning progress of this student after my experiment improved dramatically; he was still not the best at learning German. But it became noticeable to me, as soon as the class began to talk about technical issues, that he was the first to show his interest; very often he gave the correct German term, or at least tried to translate the term into German using previously known German vocabulary and focusing on the word's root, or just using his technical intuition. Years passed by and the last I heard of him, many years after he finished school, was that he works as a truck driver for an international joint-venture and very often drives cargo to various foreign countries. I would not be surprised if the majority of his trips would be to German-speaking countries.

With this example, I simply wanted to show how the process of student self-identification with the subject of study can work. In my example, it did not occur directly, from a student to a foreign language, but indirectly, from a student to an awareness of a specific technical problem which must be verbalized through a foreign language. In other

words, a student used a communication opportunity to fix his personal need - a technical problem, which from his point of view was an important condition for the realization of a crucial life situation: that is, the moment when active empathy appeared.

Regarding the aesthetic component of perception, I now focus at two assumptions about our aesthetic reaction, each diametrically opposed on the border areas of our consciousness. One is a hypothetical assumption that aesthetic perception is nothing more than the result of our perceived will; that is, we endow our moments of consciousness with an aesthetic quality. Under such circumstances, the possibility of an educational process is very limited, since the perception is under the complete control of our will; that is, we assign to ourselves what we are supposed to perceive. An educational process in this case is limited, because we control the process of cognition on the basis of our ideas about the object or phenomenon of perception, and we suppress the mechanism of awareness of something unknown. The presence of will in our aesthetic consciousness certainly comes from Kant's theory of pure reason (Kant, 1985) and is developed in the theory of phenomenological interest (Beardsley, 1975) or visual rightness (Locher, 2003). On the other hand, we can hypothetically imagine that aesthetic consciousness is the result of our subconscious dominance; that is, in the process of perception, it is not we who control the perception, but it is our consciousness that is manipulating us. I use the term aesthetic consciousness here on purpose to show, an important difference which in my opinion there is between the practical (logical) and valuative (aesthetic) essence of our consciousness. My understanding of aesthetic involves our ability to recognize the different values of objects and phenomena we cognize. We are certainly able to determine the values of single objects or phenomena that, at the first glance, seem not to have any values for us at all. As an example, we are happy to decorate our home by hanging paintings on the walls which, from a practical point of view, have no material value at all except the value of canvas, paints, frames etc.; but from an aesthetic point of view, those paintings are important and very valuable for us, as they awaken in us memories, feelings or emotions that we refer to as aesthetic experience. Again, it is less about external appearances, but rather about values and experience.

Dewey (2005) pointed out the sensory component of aesthetic perception, calling the aesthetic experience "a delightful perception" (p. 19) or Beiser (2011) who built his arguments on aesthetic senses. Again, these are just hypothetical assumptions, but I

think from an educationalist's point of view it is useful to study them precisely because if they were to be accepted as possibilities, both would degrade the importance of Bakhtin's theoretical ideas. Thus, such study is important to us as educators.

As I have previously mentioned, the first theory - the presence of will in our aesthetic consciousness - is directly related to the ideas of Cohen (1982), who endues that the aesthetic part of cognition has its volitional qualities, referred to as *the ethic of pure will*. This correlation between aesthetic awareness and one's own will is, in my opinion, very important for the theory of education, since education is formed on the basis of one's own will, or at least presupposes the condition of engaging the will in the process, since without one's own will or one's own desire for self-education, the process will be not effective. I want to stress once again that when I speak about the fact that education is formed on the basis of one's own will, I do not point to the dominance of one will (e.g. teacher) over another will (e.g. student), but refer only to the will of a student who is open and ready to gain knowledge, or the will of a teacher who is ready to start a pedagogical dialogue with a student.

To be able to investigate the correlation of one's own will and aesthetic awareness, it makes sense to examine this theory from the viewpoint of objectivity and subjectivity of aesthetic perception. We have to resort to this strategy, keeping in mind that from an epistemological point of view, aesthetics is one of the main, albeit not the major, components of perception. If rationality is not immediately perceivable, but the object of perception is recognized and accepted by the subject of perception, it enters another area of consciousness: the area of consciousness that is responsible for the interconnection of an individual with the surrounding interactive world (that is, in the field of social ties). We can ask ourselves these questions: to what extent is this happening in the social field of our existence, and what is happening outside the framework of this field? However, cognition should refer to this social phenomenon, for cognition is in its essence an awareness of individuals in their external existence, which is primarily existence in society. According to Cohen (1982), "everything else enters the third area of consciousness, which has no all-pervasive rationality and whose interconnection is not yet understood or may not be an object of compulsory comprehension" (p.112); or in other words, rationality is felt rather than realized, which is in the realm of aesthetic experiences.

It should be immediately clarified that aesthetic knowledge in its essence is not a search for objective truth, since truth is that which has a logical reasoned rationale. Therefore, it is impossible to say whether the aesthetic part of our perception is true or false. According to Rickert (1915), "... that exists in consciousness, which not only does not need to be logically penetrated, but also need not to be recognized or known" (p. 314). It seems to me that this can be a big problem in education, because our desire as teachers is to convey the truth to our students. Here, I again resort to the worldview of classical philosophy as an attempt to search for the truth of being. Knowledge in this case is not only a set of some facts (which are also part of being), but also an awareness of the essence of being in the totality of emotional experiences we receive during our own cognition. In other words, my awareness of the weather outside is not only the knowledge of external temperature and other meteorological conditions, but also the realization of the weather as a part of my own life - meaning the joy of seeing sun or the disappointment of being caught by the rain. On the other hand, this emotional awareness opens great potential in education, since it can be an auxiliary tool for determining the truth. In this case, it does not matter whether an aesthetic reaction during the perception is true or not in its essence, but it is important that it leads to the discovery and statement of truth in educational practices. Cohen (1982) educes this aesthetic part of cognition with volitional qualities, calling it *the ethic of pure will*.

Contradicting the concept of the presence of will in our aesthetic consciousness, Cassirer's theory supports the epistemological value of aesthetic perception only as a part of aesthetic imagination and perception. Analyzing the theory of aesthetic imagination in education, we have to keep in mind that "both imagination and realistic thinking are social and verbal" (Gajdamaschko, 2005, p. 17), which means we have to view the problem of imagination not as aesthetical enjoyment, but from the perspective of emotional and social experience, with the conclusion that aesthetic consciousness is formed as a feeling, and is not only the willingness or unwillingness of an individual but also an inevitable element of our social and cultural interaction. This means that aesthetic consciousness is attached to that which is learned.

From the epistemological point of view, aesthetics is one of the main, albeit not the major, components of the process of perception. Let us see what this looks like in practice. If we observe a picture of a frenzied dog, then the first thing that comes to our minds is a logical conclusion about the physical component of the object of observation:

our conclusion in the first instant will be that it is a dog. We will not call the object of our observation a bird or a chair, because the logic of our knowledge will unerringly show us the name of the object as such - *das Ding in sich* - a dog. In his concept of *das Ding in sich*, Kant (1985) includes the assumption that people are endowed with cognitive abilities that allow them to perceive and organize the experience incoming from the outside. Thus, our brain acts as a unique and complex optical device, which we use to be able to look at the world. Seeing the "real" world can only be done by looking away from the device, with a naked and undistorted vision. However, we are not able to tear ourselves away from a natural "optical device" given us by nature, and we must see everything only through it. Therefore, we cannot say what "everything" looks like in itself beyond our perception. Kant (1985) argues that the outside world in its terminology is "the element for itself and completely unperceivable, but at the same time is the reason of that what we perceive" (p.33). Regarding our "wild dog" mental experiment, we must understand its conditions. We consider an object outside our reaction to this object as something existing outside the sphere of our existence. Of course, if we would have been close to a real and aggressive dog, our first phenomenological encounter would involve other reactions. In this case, the awareness of a possible attack would have primarily affected the moment of knowledge through the inclusion of our unconditional survival instincts. But we consider our mental experiment from the theoretical or, better educational point of view, where we focus not on the goal of intuitive survival but on the goal of conscious knowledge of the world.

As seen in my example, the perception of an object depends on the individual's own, rather than generally expected, experiences. And the sequence of the perception stages is not necessarily always the same. If someone were attacked by a dog and their feelings and memories are still fresh, then looking at the picture of a dog, they may at first feel purely emotional: that is, the aesthetic feelings will predominate. But still, before feeling these, a person must realize that this is really a dog, and not some other object of perception. Of course, not every feeling can be called an aesthetic feeling, and I do not speak only about innate reflexes (such as fear, hunger, etc.). In this example, I mean evaluative feelings – those feelings that arise in us when we realize the value of the object or phenomenon that we are cognizing. These feelings will not always be positive. A person who has suffered from a dog bite will also have negative feelings that can be called aesthetic, despite the fact that these feelings will not be associated with pleasure.

In a normal situation, looking at a photograph of a dog, the observer will realize that this particular dog is furious and aggressive; they will clearly see fangs and aggressiveness in the photo. The secondary reaction in the form of our social behavior comes into force: the observer assumes that because the dog is aggressive, it may be dangerous; the brain will give us the command to be on guard. But in the third moment of observation, the person will realize that this is only a photo depicting an aggressive dog, and they can examine the photograph more closely, seeing small details relating to the animal's situation: the glitter of eyes, the shape of hairs, the geometry of the body etc., which means the third, aesthetic moment of perception will begin. Regarding the social component of the experiment, we cannot deny that the impact on us from other objects can affect our perception. But we need to understand how instantly this happens, so that sometimes it is impossible to distinguish the boundaries of this transition. This happens almost simultaneously, as if many voices begin to talk at the same time (later, I will touch on Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia or multivoicedness). Our goal is to be able to hear and to properly understand all of them.

If we take in consideration the concept mentioned earlier that the impact on us from other objects can affect our perception, or as Cassirer (1953) called it, the impact of "all those other energies of the spirit by which a definite universe of objects takes on form"(p.80), we will find that Bakhtin echoes Cassirer and explains that this sphere of all aesthetic objects is united by a single aesthetic emotion, some kind of aesthetical intuition, that "does not realize an entire eventfulness, because all its images are objectified, that is, their contents are removed from the real entire formation, and that is why they are not involved in it . . . but they are bounded together as a result of the perception of life done by a living being" (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 7). From these words, we can understand that the aesthetic intuition has a communicative dialogical essence, because it is a combination of consciousnesses. On one hand, it is a logical consciousness because it is being formed in the moment of perception of reality; on the other, it is an aesthetic consciousness because it is being formed by elements of the subconscious originating from aesthetic feelings and experiences. Bakhtin (2003) calls this dialogical essence the "discursive theoretical thinking" (p. 7). That is, for him it is the process of interrelation between objective natural-scientific, historical, philosophical and logical elements of reality and subjective expressions of aesthetic intuition. For us as educators, this means that the act of a practical educational moment depends on how correctly and

expediently we can combine these theoretical thinking processes with a student's aesthetic intuition.

Teacher's vignette:

Teaching in K-12 classes with a lower level of foreign language skills, I constantly thought about how to diversify my lessons, how to make them more attractive to students and motivate them to learn more efficiently. In using the term "efficiently", which for the concept of a free democratic school, sounds perhaps somewhat aloof, I would like to remind that my teaching practice took place at another time and in another country, where the school administration traditionally demanded that teachers demonstrated the effectiveness of their teaching practice, which could be done primarily through testing. Thus, my personal internal desire to help my students coexisted with external administrative demand to improve academic performance.

Sometimes I used one activity as a game; and I called it "A Black Bag." This activity was not my invention; as a matter of fact, it is often and actively used in elementary schools for lessons in natural history. During such an activity, a student had to put their hand in a black bag, grab one of the items in the bag (usually picked in nature: a strobilus, an acorn, a stone, etc.) and without taking it out, guess what kind of object it is. I adapted this well-known activity for my students to help them learn a foreign language.

In one of my lessons, my students and I reviewed vocabularies for a class environment such as a pen, a pencil, a textbook, a ruler, etc. All these subjects were depicted in the textbook and under each picture, the corresponding word was given in German. Needless to say, all these objects were well known to the students as they used them in everyday practice. But precisely because of the latter fact, I saw a certain difficulty in memorizing these vocabularies in a foreign language. As I figured out, because these objects were constantly used in class, students constantly tried to use the words from their native language and therefore weren't able to memorize their meaning in a foreign language. There, I tried to use my black bag activity.

I was not able to find a bag big enough to contain all the items, so I just covered my items with a piece of cloth. Each student was asked to put their hand under the cloth and grab one of the items. It was possible to get the item out from under the fabric only after the item was named in German. An emotional effect of that game for the students occurred when a student, taking out an object and showing it to the whole class, confirmed his knowledge by showing the correctly named object. I remember how fast my students got involved in this game. All students showed interest and were intense and attentive. If one of the students pulled out the item but named it wrong, other students immediately corrected him in a loud voice. Even when a student was sure of the item they just had in hand and gave the German meaning of the word, I still asked, "Are you sure? Is it really a textbook, and not a notebook?" In other words, I motivated a student to start an internal dialogue to be able to confirm the solution to this difficult cognitive situation. To make the activity more exciting, I sometimes placed under the cloth not only the items from the classroom environment, but also other unrelated items: however, the meaning of which in German was already known to students. Thus, I not only complicated the task of recognition, but at the same time gave students a chance to review their vocabulary of other topics already covered in class. For a students, it also was a situation creating surprise: they initially counted on grabbing an item related to the class subject, but to their surprise they snatched a comb or an apple, which, of course, do not apply to the subject of "classroom."

To create an activity that would motivate students in upper classes to use their aesthetic imagination was a much more challenging task. But even discussing with students such topics as "Journey through Germany" or "German Art," I tried to motivate aesthetic intuition in students. I offered them an activity in which, for example, two students had to discuss and choose only one museum in Berlin to visit from two or three given to them, since they had only a couple of hours to stay in Berlin and would not be able to go to many tourist attractions. For this activity, I asked them first to discuss in small groups or in a dialogue the likes and dislikes of each student, and then gave them short texts with information about many museums, or simply booklets. On the basis of this information, I asked the students to choose a museum which would be interesting for both of them and give corresponding arguments. I purposefully chose museums with different themes, such as a museum of ancient Greek sculptures and a technical museum. Thus, my students had to choose between art and engineering, botanics and

history, and to reach a compromise. I still remember what battles sometimes happened in my classroom while students discussed which place would be more interesting for both of them.

Looking at these activities through the lens of Bakhtin's philosophy, one can say that, probably intuitively, I still managed to create a situation of combining theoretical thinking with aesthetic intuition. As a result of such a combination, a situation of natural active empathy was created which led, in my strong opinion, to the fulfillment of the purely practical pedagogical goal of memorizing a new vocabulary. Here I again specifically use the term aesthetic intuition, since it is important for me that students learn not only to express their aesthetic emotions about objects or phenomena already seen, but also learn to predict or to intuitively sense possible aesthetic experiences in the future and thereby strive for them.

I have already mentioned above how for us as educators, the combination between theoretical thought and the aesthetic intuition of the knower is important. We consider this process has educational value, wherein the empathy towards the knowledge, or more precisely to the object of knowledge, is formed. As for me, if an object of knowledge has a form or a context, then there must be an aesthetic component or aesthetic value to it. I do not want to say that the aesthetic moment is something pleasurable; by aesthetic moment, I do not mean the moment of pleasure or pure satisfaction. The aesthetic component as a reaction to some phenomenon can also cause negative emotions, such as the reaction of sadness, compassion, protest, or indignation. Aesthetics, in my understanding, is not the act of getting pleasure, but the act of awareness of specific experience. I base my conclusion not only on Hegel, who considered aesthetics as a part of philosophy (Hegel, 2016), or Fechner's experimental aesthetics (2013), but on Bakhtin (1986a) himself, who considered that an emotional-evaluative context for our understanding "determines the complex tonality of our consciousness" (p. 164). So as mentioned above, from an educational point of view, the process of education as the obtaining of knowledge is an aesthetic process.

Aesthetic consciousness is formed as a feeling: this is not only the willingness or unwillingness of an individual but can be a feeling attached to that which is learned. It is based on rational consciousness, as it consciously seeks harmony. "Harmony is the only vital thing," concludes Cohen (1982, pp. 110-111), and Lossky (1924) confirms this

conclusion, referring to the "*aesthetic act of knowledge* as an event that occurred in the time of observation, contemplation, judgment, and so on" (p. 77). The act includes not only passive perception but also a hypothetical projection. For example, while studying new physical material, a student may ask the question: is it denser than water or not? That is, will it sink in the water? This is a hypothetical question that includes a rational logical suggestion, but at the same time a picture of an object floating or sinking in water. While observing a plant or bush, a student may imagine it as blooming or wilting, thus creating a certain image with its aesthetic component. Thanks to the capability of our brain for abstract thinking, this can happen in any process of perception. Or in other words, we as educators should hope that this happens at the moment of learning and should try to encourage these reactions and teach our students how to develop these reactions further through abstract thinking. By abstract thinking, I refer to the ability of our minds to operate with abstract concepts in the process of thinking without binding the act of thinking to a specific existential situation. Abstract concepts arise as generalizations of specific concepts and situations of life. For example, having experienced real pain once in childhood, we operate on the concept of "pain" in its abstract essence in our thinking. Vygotsky (1986) in his fundamental book *Thought and Language* paid great attention to the development of abstract thinking of children and young adults. Abstract thinking is not imagination, although it is used to create imaginary concepts. By imagination, I mean the ability of our mind to create specific images of our being, which came true earlier in the past or which are possible or not possible in the future. Both abstract thinking and imagination are part of cognitive process, which is the process of obtaining knowledge, skills, understanding, and accounting of our own opinions.

We cannot be satisfied with the fact that, at the moment of gaining knowledge, there is only a moment of transit from the transmitter of knowledge to a recipient. In fact, the process is much deeper and more diverse, and Bakhtin pointed out that every educator must want to be aware of this both in process and in course design. Bakhtin's idea about the awareness of processes resonates with the idea of Jean-Paul Sartre that consciousness is the ability to be aware of oneself (after Ryabushkina, 2014). In my opinion, this ability can be interpolated on the object of knowledge. In the process of learning, students let themselves know their own essence as an individual. According to Sartre (1956), "knowledge is not *absence* but *presence*, there is *nothing* which separate

the knower from the known" (p. 178). This is the understanding of the transcendence between an individual and knowledge. Thus, knowledge is the negation of nothing: that is, the negation of ignorance. "Knowledge is nothing other than the presence of being to the For-itself, and the For-itself is only the nothing which realizes that presence" (Sartre, 1956, p. 216). In other words, students can say "I know" when they realize that they know something; when they feel full of knowledge that replaces the emptiness of nothing or ignorance. The existential awareness of themselves is determined by negation. We are no one or nothing until we start to deny something, and because of that, our own being arises from nothingness. For example, with the simple phrase: "I am not lazy," a student identifies themselves as a hardworking student. From this point of view, knowledge is the ability to define oneself with a quality which is more than zero (or nothingness). From this perspective, we can conclude that knowledge gives us the confirmation of our existence as beings; that is, knowledge is the ontological condition of our existence. In other words, Descartes' (2006) words "I think, therefore I am", can be redefined as "I know, therefore I am."

Going from Lossky's (1913) attempts to combine aesthetic perception with the process of obtaining knowledge, I would like to consider the very process of acquiring knowledge as part of the process of forming an identity. Here I touch on the work of Henri Bergson, who argued that we perceive our own self by refraction through space, and that our conscious states crystallize into words. That means that if we know the world around us in a text, then we know ourselves, our "Me," in the text as well. As Bergson (1959) argued, "it has been pointed out that we generally perceive our own self by refraction through space, that our conscious states crystallize into words" (p. 167). A philosophical question which can arise here is whether we are free in knowing ourselves, whether we have the freedom of will for our own perception. For me, freedom of knowledge is the opportunity to observe, to question or to realize an object of knowledge. That is, the freedom of knowledge is the ability to reasonably separate one object of knowledge from another one. It goes without saying that I realize my existence as an individual when I realize my difference from others. If I understand that I am different from everything around me, then I realize that I am something else, something new, something individual. That is, freedom is the denial of everything around me as "not me." It turns out that individuality is a laborious process of learning and obtaining knowledge, through which a person determines their essence and significance for the

surrounding world. In other words, if it is not important for me, then it would not be the part of me. Or more specifically, if my possible object of knowledge is irrelevant to me, then it is not relevant for my existence. As Sartre (1956) says, "freedom is the first condition of action" (p. 433). That is, I perceive my freedom through actions. If there is no action, there is no freedom. If action is impossible, it is because of the absence of freedom. Here I want to explain my understanding of freedom, or to better lay out my concept of two types of freedom. By one type, I mean the absence of external authoritarian power over an individual. In an educational environment, this can mean various rules and regulations, the obeying of which is mandatory and inevitable. The obeying is inevitable because it is an administrative institutional condition for the implementation of the educational process. However, the absence of such authoritarian power does not mean that an individual will definitely be motivated to act independently. Thus, I distinguish the second type of freedom – freedom of action: that is, the presence of conditions, or better, the absence of invincible obstacles that would prevent an individual from performing the action that was originally intended but was not possible due to the absence of such freedom. By using the term freedom through actions above, I mean this second type of freedom. If the action is not intended, then the definition of freedom of action is impossible.

Following these conclusions, I connect the concepts of freedom and the process of obtaining knowledge, which for us as educators is of great importance. By using the term action, I mean not only physical action, but also any creative process that implies the presence of aesthetic emotion. In other words, students are able to experience aesthetic feelings for the object of knowledge, not only if they were taught to have the need to have such feelings, but also if they have the freedom of action to do so. As an example, I can imagine that a teacher speaking to a geography class about Berlin as the capital city of Germany not only provides students with figures about the area and the number of inhabitants living in the city, but also shows them pictures of famous buildings, as well as simply asks whether students like it or not. I would like to emphasize that when I talk about freedom, I am talking about freedom *in* education, but not about freedom *of* education. I understand that both conventional and progressive education denies freedom of education to students; and students are forced to study and are supposed to study what teachers, schools, and authorities find important for them to study. But I want to emphasize that even under such demanding conditions, students

should be given the maximum possible freedom to express their aesthetic feelings. In the above example, when a teacher talking about Berlin shows students pictures of buildings and asks if they like them or not, the teacher does not expect only positive emotions from students. A student can demonstrate negative emotions as well. But students must have the freedom not only to demonstrate them, but also to substantiate their position from their own valuative point of view.

When we talk about freedom in education, we must be aware that historically, education has always had an archaic hierarchical structure. Archaic, because it was based on a set of previously collected pieces of knowledge, sometimes very old or of archaic origin. I do not endow the term archaic with negative qualities, but only use it from a historical point of view. And hierarchical, because education implied the transfer of knowledge from a knowledgeable one to an uninitiated one, from a more powerful one to a less powerful one. Thus, through the history, a teacher in conventional education always stood above a student in the hierarchy of a school. Realizing the importance of freedom in education, we have to find the courage to abandon such a traditional system of values, and often place a student on the same level as a teacher and sometimes even higher. We as educators are striving to enlighten our students with the idea that they have more freedom in realizing themselves and the world around them. In the perception of one's "Me," logical rational perception deals with the knowledge of one's body, its physiological functions, its capabilities and limits. This knowledge of one's own body and one's own physiological capabilities comes to the individual empirically: that is, such knowledge is in its philosophical essence an opinion and not truth. Social perception deals with the relationship of oneself with others and the reactions of one's soul, which means that it is a product of one's abstract thinking. These relationships are achieved through the inner dialogue between one's "Me" as the subject of knowledge and "Me" as an object of one's perception, where the aesthetic perception aids in the ontological understanding of "me" as an immanent individual, as well as in the epistemological comprehension of one's further development and fulfillment. This moment reveals an interesting fact of our cognitive thinking. In the process of cognition, we can abstract from a particular object of knowledge, as if we look at it from the side. This process has its aesthetic component, as it happens in the same way as when we, for instance, observe a piece of art. At the same time, individuals actively involved in the process of cognition are not only self-improving but is also gaining the qualities that are valuable to

others from an educational point of view: hence, turning themselves into an art-object worthy of study by others.

This comparison of our perception with observing a piece of art while distancing from it echoes an idea of Rickert (1920), who advocated that "only there where distance exists, aesthetic value is possible" (pp. 22-23). I think this also applies to the phenomenon of aesthetic empathy, since the awareness of the need and importance of expressing aesthetic empathy in relation to the object of cognition occurs in the process of realizing the aesthetic value of the object, for which this distance is needed. Rickert (1920), Levinas (1998) with his concept of *exteriorite* (p. 117), and Bakhtin with his concept of *extralocality* (Ponzio, 1995, p. 63) justify the notion of extralocality as an important and necessary act of understanding two different "selves" of us — "Me as the author" and "Me as an the other" — as the object of an artistic performance. Bakhtin calls the unity and interaction of these two identities an "aesthetic act." We can represent this structure geometrically as the structure of a two-dimensional lexical space formed by the intersection of the author's and the reader's horizons. In order to make a decisive theoretical step, that is, to obtain a three-dimensional image of an object of perception, the third independent point of view is needed: that is, a position of a reasonable sense apart from the author's and the reader's subjunctive positions. From this third position, the transparency and the unification of both perceptive intentions will be visible. Bakhtin (1981) approves the need of this third point of view by associating it with the so-called "principle of extralocality" (p. 256) as for him, it is designed to provide perceptive depth (and not only height and breadth). For Evtushenko (1995) this extra local point of view is the most important condition for achieving an "excess of understanding" (p. 17), which makes us able to be aware of the otherness of an object of perception including people. In order to understand this otherness, it seems to me that the knower needs to abstract— to move away from their original ideas about the object of perception and try to look at the object from a different point of view, with different eyes. It can be defined as the subject's external appearance in various ways, but the most effective of them is a view of the subject from the standpoint of a different ("alien") culture. For me, as a teacher of foreign languages, this approach is very important, since while teaching a foreign language, by using a foreign language, I convey to students the awareness of a different culture, a different sphere of social life. Learning a foreign language, a student

seems to move from their own sphere of life, from their life bubble, into another foreign but perceptible sphere.

As a teacher of foreign languages, I have the experience of teaching the same German language to students of various cultures and backgrounds in the same class, and I am able to see how differently at times the same cultural phenomenon is perceived by different students. In my classes I, of course, have to teach specific terms and explain specific concepts and phenomena of the target country, Germany. I saw different student attitudes towards German dishes and eating habits and nation-specific ways of thinking or acting: many such elements were perceived differently by students of different cultural backgrounds. But at the same time, the fact remained that all students studied the same language from philological point of view and had to all be together in the same linguistic and, therefore, cultural environment. Being a student in such common environment presupposes a certain compromise between one's own cultural norms and the norms of a different linguistic space shared by many. In the absence of such a compromise, a conflict may arise between "Me" (like me) with my own ethical beliefs and ideas and the "Me" (like you), which means an individual in a group of others in an environment that inevitably becomes part of my life.

Georg Simmel (1923) believed that this conflict between "Me" (like me) and "Me" (like you) is the original conflict of human consciousness, which is also the "first form of the unity of consciousness" (pp. 228-229). The unity of consciousness in this regard is expressed in the fact that it gives us the foundation we can rely on in our decisions and evaluations, in our justifications or acts; it gives us ability to choose between egoism and altruism. This choice ultimately completely exhausts every intention, although it takes place in countless modifications and states, under various masks and with no less diverse consequences. In other words, in the process of cognizing an object or phenomenon, I, as an individual who receives knowledge about the object, can agree on the presence of some inevitable characteristics or qualities of this phenomenon, even if internally in disagreement with them; acting, in this case, as "Me" (like you) and at the same time, being aware of the possible viciousness or incorrectness of these qualities, acting as "Me" (like me).

Simmel justifies the aesthetic logic of this internal dialogue between Me and Me but misses the rationality of the decision-making approach that Bakhtin insists on, and

this rationality is precisely what is needed in educational practice. In his rationality, Bakhtin does not limit the otherness of Me to Heidegger's *Being-with* (German: *Mitsein*), or to Sartre's *Being-in-Itself* (French: *être-en-soi*). According to Bakhtin, the otherness should be sought inside the subject of perception, in "Me," which of itself is a dialogical process. In my opinion, the relation between "Me as Me" and "Me as the other Me," and to such an extent that the so-called problem of "the other Me" is no more than a tool helping the cognizer's consciousness to find and realize "Me" as a complete and all-sufficient individual. In this dialogical process between "Me as Me" and "Me as the other Me," any conflicts and misunderstandings are possible, but they must be resolved at the end, or the process of cognition of a specific object is not completed.

Comparing the theories of Rickert, Cohen, Cassirer, and Bergson, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of their reincarnation and development in the ideas of Bakhtin, which give reasoned answers to the problems posed by the above phenomenologists from the viewpoint of the theory of education. Specifically, the aesthetic component of perception gives us the freedom of abstraction from the *rational context* (Robertson, 1999) of our knowledge. This component depends on our free will of choice, whether the aesthetic takes us away from abstraction or allows us the freedom to abstract. The value of aesthetics is in its freedom, in its ability to help us, or as Patrick Slattery (2012) says, "to break with assimilative power" (pp. 260-261). That freedom is a cultural aspect, which is important for us in regards to education. Bakhtin (1981) points out this important possibility of abstraction, saying that

if I relate (or write about) an event that has just happened to me, then I as the teller (or writer) of this event am already outside the time and space in which the event occurred. It is just as impossible to forge an identity between myself, my own "I," and that "I" that is the subject of my stories as it is to lift myself up by my own hair. (p. 256)

Here, we again come to the question of mutual opposition of the objective and the subjective, which is important for us when we are talking about education. Or, in other words, the question arises: Can I forge an identity while telling a story? I think that a story is always a distorted identity, because any narrative is a monologue; as mentioned above, monologue can be manipulative and can lead to distortion. I understand as a fact that in order to know the world, one sometimes must be able to abstract from it, as "it is

necessary to take up the position outside it" (Bergson, 1959, p. 103). And while perceiving the world, we build it into a text, and the perception of this text from the outside creates another text. Thus, we oppose one text to another text; or in other words, we conduct an internal dialogue. In my opinion, this is a psychophysical explanation of the existence of internal dialogue.

Another value of aesthetic cognition I find important is the value of emotionality or feeling at the moment of perception. The difference in this case is that emotionality is a direct reaction to an object of perception at the moment of perception, and feelings are factors of experience, which may appear later as retrospections of what happened in the past. According to Bakhtin (2003), in emotional experience, there are (or there should exist) different hypostasis of my "Me": "Me for myself," "Me for others," and "Others for Me" (p. 113). All values of life and culture are located around these basic architectonic points of the real world, including scientific, ethical and social, aesthetic, and religious values. Such a plurality of individual consciousnesses, postulated by Bakhtin as a prerequisite for individual consciousness, can be explained by the fact that it has deeply religious Orthodox roots. Briefly described, the Orthodox concept consists of the following: a true spiritual orientation depends not only on the fidelity of the text of Holy Scripture, but also on the fidelity of real life, on the ability to look into the world with open eyes. In fact, Russian *pravoslavie* (in English literally: proper worship) was traditionally developed not so much in the direction of the theoretical system as in the direction of practical ideas of liturgy: that is, the embodiment of the "vision of the world" from inside of which everything earthly must be seen in the light of unearthly revelations. In Western Christian dogma, the words of St. Augustine may be taken as a short summary of religious essence: "Take it and read!"; while in Eastern Orthodox Christianity, believers are more susceptible to the perception of Biblical images. The slogan would be "Look at and feel!" (Emerson, 1990). Bakhtin (2003) practically points at these religious values, saying that "all spatio-temporal and content-semantic values and relations are tightened to these emotionally-volitional central moments: I, the others and I-for-others" (pp. 49-50).

By religious values, I understand here not the frozen dogmatic structures of pure religious consciousness, but our need to have something beyond us and beyond our cognitive consciousness: something to which, at the time of failures or doubts, we could turn for help or support, something that can play the role of a judge or a reconciliator for

us when we encounter different phenomena of our perceptive process. Of course, in speaking of religious values, I cannot generalize the spiritual experience of all people by resorting to the personal pronoun *we*. In this case, I only express my personal perception of metaphysical sensations. This metaphysical part of my cognitive process is reflected, in my opinion, by Jauß (1982), who says "My definition of aesthetic pleasure as "self-enjoyment in someone else's pleasure" (German: *Selbstgenuß im Fremdgenuß*) or as the experience of myself in the existence of the other, almost echoes with Bakhtin's extralocality" (p. 24); or by Buber (2002), who reflects on God's creation as "only the divine summons to the life hidden in non-being" (p. 100). Applying this metaphysical concept to the educational process, Sean Blenkinsop (2005) assigns this divine role to a teacher in dialogue with a student, saying that "the teacher must always be present, be available and reaching towards the student, proffering relationship, even if the student is uninterested, unwilling or unable to consciously accept it" (p. 292). This metaphysical presence of a teacher at a certain distance from a student does not threaten the freedom given to a student by a teacher, since distant availability does not mean force or demand. And although in pure Christian dogma, the awareness of God is not in the constant and unconditional possession of a human, it is a human who has to make an effort to experience deep spiritual connection or sometimes even turn to total asceticism to be able to come nearer to God. At the same time, God grants unlimited freedom to us, since we are seen as a reduced copy of God, "a little god in mud" (Popović, 1980, p. 360), endowed with the same consciousness and freedom of will, including freedom of emotional experience. Emotional experiences are beyond the bounds of rational existence, but they appear after the rational reaction to an object of perception because the latter are behavioral and appear thanks to survival instincts. Yet they are still important to the process of perception because, according to Bai, Cohen, and Scott (2013), in the paradigm of knowledge there is a certain hierarchy and the " subjective knowledge that comes from or deals with human values, desires, intuition, body, feelings, and tastes" (p. 7). Thus, these aspects of human life, including non-rational but emotional experience, cannot be excluded from the flow of human life.

Concluding this first chapter, in which I have tried to reflect the philosophy of Bakhtin's aesthetic perception, I will emphasize once again the most important points. Bakhtin insisted on using non-rational intentions in perception. His concept of the "metalanguage" as non-rational experience is able to pierce the essence of existential

being. In my opinion, this concept is important for educators, as it provides the understanding that education is connected not only to the experience of rational thinking but also to the experience of inner spiritual emotions and aesthetic reflections. Aesthetics for Bakhtin do not refer just to contemplative enjoyment, but to the possibility of perceiving the essence of the world in its aggregate unity including contemplative enjoyment, in the centre of which an individual is located. The epistemological nature of the Bakhtinian process of cognition lies in the fact that different areas of an individual's existence only exist only in aesthetic correlation with the spiritual experiences of an individual; without this correlation, taken separately, those spiritual experiences do not have true essence for an individual or are practically not real.

However, in becoming real, they form an attitude towards themselves as an individually responsible act. The process of active empathy takes place, as it is the process of instillation into an object of perception. Only by following this active empathy are individuals aware of their attitudes and their closeness to the subject of knowledge and can then objectify their attitude towards this subject. Bakhtin insists that only with such an approach to knowledge can the harmony of a knower with the outside world be achieved. From an educational point of view, the aesthetic component of perception gives us the freedom of abstraction from the rational context of our knowledge, spreads the borders of our abilities in education, and gives new tools for our educational procedures. But what are those tools? Bakhtin's aesthetic reflection—his understanding of the knowledge of the world through the ability of an individual to abstract from themselves and to realize themselves at the same time as a subject and an object of knowledge—is based on the dialogical principle that concludes from an internal dialogue to an external one, and from it to multivoicedness or polyglossia. The concept of dialogism, as the important part of Bakhtin's philosophy for educational processes, will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 2. Bakhtin's Dialogism

Bakhtinian dialogic theory is based on the idea of a dialogue as an exchange of uninterrupted speech acts within an individual during a thinking process of perception or reflection, or between two or many interlocutors. But Bakhtin's theory extends further than simply understanding dialogue as a speech genre. Dialogue is understood as the quality of human relationship, representing the ontological essence of human existence. The theory focuses its attention on specific implementations and intentions, which are indicated and realized by the speaking subjects. Drawing on my conclusions in the previous chapter on Bakhtin's aesthetics, I now consider Bakhtin's theory of dialogism through the prism of its usefulness and application in education. In my dissertation, I combine Bakhtin's aesthetic concepts with his dialogical theory, since such an understanding of Bakhtin's legacy, in my opinion, is most useful for education. This is interesting for us as educators because education, in my opinion, is based on a dialogic approach. I refer to education as a dialogical process for several reasons. The first is that the transfer of knowledge itself implies a dialogue either between a teacher and a student, or between two students, which can also turn into a monologic interaction or an intermediated dialogue between a student and a book (or other learning material). Second, the very organization of the educational process is deeply social; that is, it implies agreements or dialogues between all participants—administration and teachers, teachers among themselves, teachers and parents, parents among themselves. Agreement in this context is a condition for the carrying on of organizational processes, since in the event of a dialogical disagreement, common organizational action is impossible. Third, my many years of experience as a teacher shows me that the post-educational process from a teacher's point of view—the process of reflection, analysis of positive experience and possible errors, the search for new educational techniques and materials—are all, in essence, processes of constant internal dialogue of teachers with themselves, despite the fact that they are of course processes of thought. This last aspect is widely reflected in Bakhtin's philosophy.

Vasilyeva (1985) argues that Bakhtin's concept of dialogue implies that any consciousness is considered to be some kind of text, which is necessary for the perception of real life. However, we generally understand text as referring to phenomenological construction, and not only the linguistic meaning of a text as part of

literature. Here I agree with Holquist (2003), who argues that Bakhtin's dialogism "cannot be squeezed into an exclusively literary framework" (p. 265). It is necessary to understand the very essence of the text as a form of knowledge. Starting with Aristotle's (2015) understanding of the philosophical importance of text, in which he claimed that "a poet is more philosopher as a historian" (part IX), we must take into account the emotional component of our knowledge, which "through the interpretation of linguistic utterance within a social context" (Boler, 1997, p. 207) appears as the image of perceived surroundings.

Analyzing Bakhtin's aesthetics in the previous chapter, I mentioned his understanding of the process of perception as an aesthetic and a cultural phenomenon, which, according to Bakhtin, is possible in a holistic dialogue; that is, in such a dialogue where participants have the desire and skills to perceive each other's speech not just as a flow of information, but as a set of separate meaningful units (or Bakhtin's "utterances") endowed with semantic essence and intimately interconnected with each other. The dialogue of independent, unique and irreducible voices is present not only within Bakhtin's concept of the polyphonic novel. From the previous chapter, we can conclude that the entire concept of Bakhtin's aesthetics is an idea of a possible dialogue. This idea implies the inclusion of a perceiver in the situation of an aesthetic interaction. The process of perception itself should take place in a situation of confidential conversation and does not allow one to stay beyond an object, to change the topic of cognitive polemics, or to create an unequivocal agreement. Bakhtin's aesthetics is not the subject of a purely rational systematization and alignment into a hierarchical frozen structure; rather, it must be experienced as a continuous act. At the same time, Bakhtin's idea of perception is not based on a detailed gathering of many epistemological facts but is a unique concept implying personal awareness of self, and requires a non-linear, responsible answerability, rooted in our immediate humanity. Bakhtin (1986a) demands us to abandon linear theoretical cognition, saying that "all attempts to overcome the dualism of cognition and life, thoughts and the only concrete reality by the usage of only theoretical cognition are completely hopeless" (p. 11). It should be understood here that Bakhtin does not call theoretical knowledge hopeless. He talks about something else. He points to the falsity of the process of awareness when it occurs only "from the inside" of theoretical knowledge—that is, is lacking the sensory reaction of the perceiver—and hence, is deprived of aesthetic responsibility. Theoretical cognition does not give a

perceiver any reason to assert that the cognizable object is true in its relation to the perceiver: that is, separated from the perceiver's personal life. This concept is the basis for Bakhtin's dualism of knowledge and the perception of life.

Based on his unique concept of personal awareness of self as a non-linear, responsible answerability, Bakhtin concludes that we are constantly participating in our own process of life not only in the sense of our physical existence, but also with our thought process. In other words, he formulates his concept of participatory thinking. Bakhtin's idea of participatory thinking is similar to Kierkegaard's "*interests*" (Kierkegaard, 1985) or to theories of "*seinsverbundenes Denken*" of German phenomenologists (Rickert, 1915; Cohen, 1922) and moves Bakhtin closer to Derrida (Maccannell, 1985, Holquist, 1986) regarding the understanding of an uncompromising opposition to authoritarian consciousness and to any forms of external obligation and coercion. But then a fundamental discrepancy emerges between the solitude of consciousness, preoccupied above all with its freedom from any "others," and *convergence* (Typa, 1995) of the Bakhtin consciousness, preoccupied with its internal responsibility to "others." Bakhtin (2003) himself affirmed that participatory thinking prevails in all the great systems of philosophy, "consciously and distinctly in the Middle Ages or unconsciously and masked in the 19th and 20th century" (p. 12). Thus, the very idea of participatory thinking, according to Bakhtin's philosophy, is intertwined with the idea of internal responsibility.

Guided by this idea, Bakhtin constantly connects the concept of "dialogue" with the concept of "responsibility," since a participant in a dialogue is responsible for their contribution to the dialogue, and responsibility is constituted not in an autonomous *Self*, but in their participatory extralocality. Bostad (2004) describes this situation as a "Janus-like nature" (p. 114), and Bakhtin (2003) resorts to the same metaphor, arguing that

the act of our knowledge reminds us of a two-faced Janus, whose two faces look in different directions. One face is looking into the objective unity of the surrounding world, when the other one into the unique singularity of a personal life being experienced. (p. 7)

It appears that we are faced with an ethical problem of personal duality. Geord Simmel (1923) tried to solve this ethical problem through the setting of an individual law "*das*

individuelle Gesetz" (Simmel, 1923) of personal responsibility, naming two different kinds of responsibility, which we have to unify in a singular act of being. One is a *special* responsibility, responsibility of a context. The other is a *moral* responsibility, the *responsibility of being* (pp. 389-390).

Now, the question arises: how can we recognize the difference between these two responsibilities? Bakhtin understands the responsibility of being through an *act*; *act* here is not only the act of physical movement but every thought with its content. The life of an individual consists of such acts and therefore is a *coherent flow of acts* (in Russian: *postuplenie*) (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 8). Thus, the entire life span of an individual can be considered as a certain complex act. According to Bakhtin (2003), "I act with all my life, every single act and experience is the moment of my *coherent flow of acts*" (p. 8). I already mentioned in Chapter 1 (p. 27) that Bakhtin borrows from Cohen (1982) the concept of "pure will in ethics of life being" (p. 333) but complements it with the mechanism of an aesthetic dialogism, which defines the line between a logical action and own responsibility for an act. I don't want to say here that owning responsibility for an act is beyond our logical behaviour but to point out that owning responsibility is based on various aspects, including our emotions and subconscious notions. Thus, responsibility is not only a factor of logical cognition but at the same time, the result of our own self-cognition.

From an educational point of view, the obligation of a pedagogical process can be realized at the moment of individual perception only under special conditions of responsibility. According to Bakhtin (2003), "historical concreteness of an individual act" (p. 9) is necessary since the theoretical judgment in itself is not enough. In other words, a theoretical statement submitted by a teacher as an untouchable truth is perceived by students as the moment of their being given a sensation, but not as the moment of their responsibility. This is an important point for any educator. It turns out that what a teacher perceives as an indisputable fact based on educational material, and which is transferred to a student in an educational procedure as an object of obligation, may be considered by a student not as an object of obligation. A student may perceive a fact as a historical fact or moment of their own being, but it does not mean that they can perceive this fact or moment as truth. This fact can become true only at the moment of internal obligation or at the moment of internal responsibility. An external obligation at the moment of pedagogical transit of knowledge can be understood by a student as a

moment of pressure from a teacher, and because of that, may be considered by the student as the fact of a violent influence on their will and therefore be rejected or ignored. According to Bakhtin (2003), "[f]or obligation, truth alone is not enough, but the responsible act of a subject is necessary, the act of recognizing the truth of responsibility" (p. 9). In other words, if a teacher tells a student, "Please remember this fact," the student must not only agree with the teacher about the truth of the fact, but, through an internal dialogue, convince themselves that the fact transmitted by a teacher is the subject of their convicting responsibility. Husserl (1952) wrote about the indissoluble unity of the experience of "*Erlebnis*" and the *intention* of the object contained in it. Bakhtin added that an experience is not enough because an experience may or may not lead to the moment of complicity and to the awareness of responsibility.

Teacher's vignette:

Coming into my classes as a teacher of foreign languages, I asked myself again and again how to motivate students to forget that the language they are supposed to use in the class environment is a "foreign" language and to accept it as a native one. I believed that the non-acceptance of a language as native is always combined with its rejection; on the contrary, when a language is considered something that is personally owned, it is remembered better and used more often. Introducing the topic of "City" to my students, I asked them to prepare a number of expressions necessary to describe movement in a city, such as "walking along a street ..." or "crossing an intersection." At the same time, I asked students to analyze at home a route I gave them, shown on a map from point A to point B, and describe it in the foreign language. I also provided students with maps of a fictional city so that they could practice at home. In my next class, I changed this activity without any warning. This time, I split the entire class into pairs, where one student had to tell the other which route they should take on the map. All pairs knew the starting point on the map, but no one knew in advance what point on the map they would need to go to. At the beginning of this competition, I gave all pairs the final address. The goal of this activity was to reach the end point as quickly as possible and to be the first or winner of this competition. At the beginning of the activity, one student had to ask where to move next, and the second student to give directions for which streets to take and at which intersections to turn. For any words used in native

languages, a pair received penalties. With the start signal, all pairs got more and more involved in the game; the sense of competition motivated them, and they tried to get closer to the finishing point as quickly as possible. I saw how within a few minutes, students practically forgot that they spoke a foreign language, so strong was their ability to be involved in this situation, and so high was their responsibility for what was happening in front of their peer students. After the end of each route, I exchanged partners in groups, letting each student be the leader or to be guided. Of course, I changed the starting and the finishing points of each route.

With this brief example, I wanted to show how the sense of personal interest and responsibility may help in developing of active empathy and becoming involved in educational materials (in this example, the vocabulary of the topic "City"). What was at first purely theoretical material changed for the students throughout this activity into something important, almost crucial, for their survival during the short period of time, and obviously was accepted by them as full truth within their being. During this activity, my personality as a teacher completely disappeared from the class. Students found themselves outside of the classroom environment, outside of the scope of the assignment set by the teacher. By performing their actions, the students were not focused on "pleasing the teacher", but only on the action that was important to them, for which they felt their own responsibility.

Stressing his concept of a notion of responsibility, Bakhtin showed that the surrounding perceivable world consists of cognitive viewpoints created by an individual about this world. Thus, when a cognizer or someone else (a teacher?) changes these viewpoints, the world around an individual can be changed. At the same time, Bakhtin (2003) pointed out that "no theoretical definition and position can encompass the moment of obligation or be a conclusion from it" (p.10). Individuals determine for themselves this moment of obligation, in accordance with their understanding of the significance of a phenomenon or fact. "There is no aesthetic or scientific obligation with an ethical obligation next to them, but there is only an aesthetically, theoretically, socially significant obligation" (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 10). Here Bakhtin echoes Rickert (1915), who determined the direction of perception not toward the transcendental essence of the knowable, but toward transcendental obligation, which is a judgment about a value: that is, the affirmation of true values (*Bejahung*) and the denial of false values (*Verneinung*) (270-271). Rickert, as a phenomenologist studying the process of cognition, writes here

more about moral, rather than about epistemological values; but I am sure that this concept also applies to education, where only individuals themselves, penetrating the world, can determine the truth or falsity of knowable objects and assert its truth or reject its falsity, at the same time changing their own conception of the world around and its cognizable phenomena.

Before proceeding to external dialogical speech, I will examine monologic speech to review its prerequisites and its usefulness in the process of perception. I am confident that it is necessary for a teacher to understand the stimuli for the emergence of monologic speech and its usefulness in the educational process. While other thinkers defined a different essence of monologue speech, Sartre (1956) described monologic speech as an "agreement with myself" (p. 413): that is, the kind of internal agreement resulting from an internal dialogue. Analyzing the diversity of monologue speech constructs, Piaget (1926) distinguished several types of monologic speech in early childhood development. He united all these types by using the term *ego-centered speech* (p. 9). However, Piaget mostly analyzed such external monologic speeches as when a child loudly spoke to themselves at a moment of intense concentration while performing a task. In this case, it is not entirely clear whether this external speech was the result of preliminary internal intentions or reflections, or simply an external emotional accompaniment of physical actions by a child who is involved in an activity. The fact that children may loudly reproduce an internal dialogue at a time of higher mental concentration is only an indicator of their concentration and excessive emotionality. In moments of extreme excitement or emotional eruption, adults are also able to talk to themselves aloud. However, this kind of internal monologue still has significant differences from internal dialogue. To be able to understand this paradox, it is helpful to compare reflections of Vygotsky and Piaget on the same problem.

Vygotsky, as did Piaget, turned to that moment of the formation of sign-symbolic activity in ontogenesis where the natural and the cultural are connected and represented in a language by a speaker without their knowing all the linguistic rules. The consciousness of a speaker randomly combines signs and meanings while producing monologic speech. In the process of perception and communication, the possibilities of individual manifestation and the possibility of understanding others are actively connected with the personal attitude of a speaker toward their own creation of language. Such creative linguistic ability directly depends on the traces of *individual symbolism*

(Gryakalov, 1995, p. 83), which is formed at the early stage of human development thanks to imagination. Vygotsky argues that the path from a sign or thing to a child, and from a child to a thing, is possible through another person. At the same time, an action and a speech, a mental influence and a physical influence, are all factors that come into play. Verbal communication is the manifestation of the conscious in an unconscious moment and at the same time, the manifestation of the unconscious in a conscious moment. This means that sign-oriented and thing-oriented perceptions are mutually involved. According to Vygotsky (2005),

in the process of a practical assistance, a child connects their unconscious being with the existence of the "word of another": the egocentric speech "for myself" strives to become a socialized speech "for another" and thus social involvement enters into an individual. (p. 7)

For us as for educators, this highlights the important idea that individuals become themselves, form and realize their personality with the help of others, and because of others, they have the potential for not only social but intellectual and cultural development, but their own "*zone of proximal development*" (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Vygotsky (1996), this is the essence of cultural development, when social responsibility precedes psychological self-determination and forms the "sociogenesis of higher forms of behavior" (pp. 5-8).

A similar idea of social theoritism is present in Bakhtin's philosophy in the form of an architectonic *zone of responsibility*, which arises and is formed around each individual worldview. In Bakhtin's manuscripts (1986b), the idea of perceiving life events appears as the relationship of "Me" - "the Other," with the following simple observation at the starting point: an individual identity and the external borders that each of us has form a specific "surplus of vision" of "Me" in its relation to the reality of all "Others" outside of me. An individual sees occurrences like all other people but cannot see what occurs directly before them. In other words, they cannot look at themselves from the outside. It is obvious that only someone else can see a person outside the person. Considering this paradox, Bakhtin (1986b) concludes that

from this point of view, it follows that everyone from his/her place spatially embraces and "completes" other spatial body, depending on his/her point of

view, and the image of a person therefore requires at least two specific consciousnesses which form it. (p. 32)

Thus, according to Bakhtin, the process of knowing or even realizing us in the existing world requires the presence of not one, but two consciousnesses within the subject itself. This postulate demonstrates the essence of internal dialogue. In this point, Bakhtin confirms the conclusions of Vygotsky for, according to Vygotsky, the condition of personal development is the external social environment in which a person exists. According to Bakhtin, the condition of personal self-awareness is an internal social dialogue which determines the rationality and moral basis of a person's actions.

Talking about dialogical and especially about internal dialogical speech, it is necessary to view the essence of monologue speech, its meaning, and its difference from dialogical speech. If we proceed from the Aristotelian understanding of monologic speech as the core element of rhetoric (Aristotle, 1959), monologic speech arises in conditions of necessity, which pushes for monologism but does not always predetermine monologism. It is needed as a means or tool to prove something, to demonstrate something, to convince and even to force somebody into a given act. It represents a specific relationship with others through a specific form of speech or even without speech. In its essence, monologue speech does not imply an interaction process with the outside world (as, for example, is clearly seen in the case of a dialogue) and thus is not an active assistant in the cognitive process. In other words, when using monologue speech, we do not perceive but only present an already consciously formed product of thinking. In the jurisprudential sense, monologic speech must be addressed to a judge as an essential argument in the decision-making process of a judgment. A monologist may not know whether they are right or not but must be convinced in the truth of their words. According to that, monologue speech in its essence is considered by its speaker as absolutely correct. Even a small doubt can act as a trigger for an instant dialogue with another opponent or with the inner voice of a speaker, in which one "Me" insists on the correctness of its own words and the second "Me" provides counterarguments leading to doubt, creating in this way an external dialogue between a speaker and an opponent. It was the judgmental role that saw Cassirer (1953) analyzing epistemological inquiry in the process of perception, arguing that "for epistemological inquiry an unbroken path leads from sensation to intuition, from intuition to conceptual thought, and thence to logical judgment" (p. 303). Cassirer assigned a major role to intuition as one of the many

layers of our consciousness. He meant that everyday consciousness has many layers. According to Voloshinov (1993b), the lowest, unstable layers form "all those vague, underdeveloped, flashing experiences, thoughts, and random idle words in our soul" (p. 334). The upper layers of everyday consciousness are associated with "stable and formed ideological systems"—public morality, science, art, religion, and so on. Since "the ideology of life in some respects is more sensitive, responsive, nervous and agile than already formed official ideology, it accumulates contradictions, which, having reached a certain limit, finally blow up the system of official ideology" (Voloshinov, 1993b, p. 330). This ideology implies the emergence of socially justified contradictions inside an individual in the process of cognition, which can lead to the emergence of an internal protest, a protest against formerly well-established internal attitudes. According to Günter (1984), a monologic text is characterized by a "naïve", invariably direct language, which however does not dominate itself but is polemical or apologetic with respect to the diversity of words that really exist outside the text. A monologue speech arising in the process of such a protest is a type of "demonstration of freedom within oneself in relation to oneself" (Günter, 1984). Taking this into consideration, we can only agree that monologue speech must remain an essential part of pedagogy if it can contribute to the success of specific pedagogical goals.

Teacher's vignette:

In a small rural school, following one of my German classes two girls approached me and asked if I could recommend a German fairy tale which they could use for a short puppet theatre project. At that time, the school held a puppet theatre competition between different classes, and students had the opportunity to design the set and puppets on their own and give a short performance. These two girls believed that it would be interesting to show not a well-known fairy tale, but an unknown fairy tale from a foreign country, and they therefore came to me. Of course, I replied that I liked the idea and offered the tale "The Bremen Town Musicians" first, but my idea was rejected because these two girls wanted only to perform together and not invite anyone else to their small group. Obviously, for "The Bremen Town Musicians," more participants would be needed, as the fairy tale had many different characters. My second choice, "Little Red Riding Hood," was also rejected, because it was quite known to children and apparently another group of students had already chosen this fairy tale for their performance. Then I proposed one of the fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm, fairly unknown to Russian

children, titled "Hansel and Gretel." Having offered this fairy tale to the girls, I made the radical suggestion that Brother Hansel and Sister Gretel would not speak Russian, as they are German children and therefore must speak German.

First, the girls were very surprised at my suggestion and very skeptical at the same time. The reason was that no one in school could speak German well enough to be able to understand what this brother and sister would say, so the performance might be very boring for all spectators. Then I suggested that only one character, the little brother Hansel, was so stubborn that he only spoke German to his sister Gretel and refused to speak Russian. Gretel could speak German but decided to speak only Russian with Hansel. Considering that, Gretel would understand what Hansel says, and would answer him only in Russian, at the same time translating to the audience what he said previously in German, or perhaps not; but the audience would still understand the meaning of his words because of Gretel's answers. At this, the girls were definitely interested. They asked me to write a small script for them, but I asked them to first write it in Russian and make it as interesting and funny as possible. Both I and the girls were happy to write a script in which we decided to show only how Hansel and Gretel traveled through the woods, until the moment when they discover the Witch's gingerbread house. While writing dialogues, we developed the characters of the brother and the sister: the brother was a little bit stubborn and constantly wanted to catch a wild forest bird or to taste an unknown mushroom, and the sister was a more balanced and educated character who protected and taught her brother. For example, Hansel always asked what that is, pointing at all sorts of items, and sometimes tried to take them or even eat them. I deliberately wrote very short dialogues, literally inserting constantly recurring questions like "What is this?" or expressions that were already familiar to Russian children, such as "Kaput." I must say that the preparation for this project took a lot of time. The girls created a beautiful set with trees and the gingerbread house as well as Hansel and Gretel puppets, and rehearsed a lot. My role was to make sure that the pronunciation of German words was good, and I, as a teacher of German, insisted that even Gretel would sometimes speak a couple of German words as well. Girls repeated dialogues and sometimes added various expressions from themselves both in Russian and in (not quite correct, but I did not interfere) German.

It happened that unfortunately I wasn't able to see the final project myself as I had to leave the village on that day, but when I returned the next day, I heard that our

theatre piece was a real sensation. Many children came running to my class to report to me that a “German” puppet show was taking place in the school for the first time. Teachers congratulated me as well. These two girls received the grand prize for their project and furthermore, their project was chosen to be presented in a competition between school theatres around the province. The best sign of success for me was the fact that some expressions from this performance even made it into the school folklore, and at times I heard them later from students in the school hallways.

With this story, I want to demonstrate how a dialogical speech construct may instantly turn into a monologue due to the listeners' inability to understand the source language. While watching this puppet theatre piece, the audience understood only one participant in the dialogue on the stage; for them, a full-fledged dialogue between two participants turned into a monologue of one, although at the same time, the audience had the opportunity to understand more in the show through a non-verbal or an extraverbal context. From a language teacher's point of view, an awareness of this fact can be useful for understanding and preventing situations where, even during an active dialogue between participants, a dialogic speech may turn into a monologue only because of insufficient vocabulary competence. Educators must understand that while actively participating in a dialogue with a student or even with a colleague, they may at some point end up not in a dialogue but in a monologue without realizing this instant switch. Sometimes we refer to this situation as "talking past one another," meaning that instead of having one fictional dialogue, we have two real monologues. On the other hand, recognizing that moment, an experienced educator may change the situation to “rational persuasion” (Robertson, 1999, p. 4), and will in time go back to equal dialogue as the more effective procedure in terms of its educational effectiveness.

Considering the first interactions between monologic and dialogic speech, one may recall Buber's suggestion that many speech acts appearing as dialogue are really not: they are in essence monologues (Buber, 2000). In my opinion, the goal of each educator is to figure out the balance between monologic and dialogic pedagogy which, in their opinion and in the opinion of students, is the most appropriate for a particular subject, teaching environment, and group of students. I already mentioned that, for me, education as a deeply social phenomenon has a dialogical essence. It is obvious that from an educational point of view, it is impossible to avoid monologic speech. According to my experience, very often conventional education in its essence is seen as a

hierarchical transfer of knowledge from the more knowledgeable to the less knowledgeable. In this regard, the more knowledgeable has more power over the less knowledgeable, which justifies the need for monologue speech that does not tolerate dialogue: that is, doubt or discussion. External monologic speech is often observed in pedagogy when a teacher explains the teaching material to the class or to one student. Any text in the textbook is a sample of monologic speech in which a student, although able to interrupt the reading and ask questions in this context, is still unable to receive answers to these questions. Such answers are not always required, and often the lack of feedback allows the student to think, build hypotheses, and look for additional materials to be able to answer questions. Even Socratic dialogues with students were often interrupted by monologic speeches.

Bakhtin's understanding of a dialogue, in my opinion, differs from Socrates' dialogue concept to the extent that in Bakhtin's understanding the essence of the object of knowledge occurs, though through dialogue, but the process of consciously understanding the attitude towards the object means taking responsibility for the object. As Bakhtin (1984) wrote about Socratic dialogues,

At the base of the genre [the Socratic dialogue] lies the Socratic notion of the dialogic nature of truth, and the dialogic nature of human thinking about truth. The dialogic means of seeking truth is counterposed to official monologism, which pretends to possess a ready-made truth. (p.110)

In Socrates' conversations, a dialogue is merely a tool for transmitting knowledge; a kind of relationship between a teacher and students with the goal of manipulating the mind of a student when a teacher, through various questions, leads a student to understand the essence of the subject matter. Turning from Socratic dialogues to a more modern dialogic approach, one can notice a significant difference: first of all, in a Socratic dialogue the conversation is controlled from beginning to end by a teacher, and the authoritative, previously known meaning is specified by interpretation in the current situation. In the modern style of dialogue, the conversation proceeds freely, continually flowing into devious paths and circumferences; meaning arises here as a way of knowing, a situation of a joint striving for truth. What a teacher, however, must take into account is the fact that if they use monologic speech, they can practically "be trapped by the gravity of a dichotomy between monologism and dialogism" (Bostad,

2004, pp. 50, 68) because they immediately move away from the students and are perceived by them as something outside their possible contact, as something far away and hence, unreachable. But an aware teacher can dance right back into dialogue and create these in-and-out movements.

In my opinion, for conventional education, the environment of a classroom itself implies the hierarchical purpose and imperious independence of a teacher from students. The contextual circumstances of an auditorium, especially in the past, were often viewed as something sacred, as a "temple of science," and teachers themselves were considered almost as priests of this temple, carrying secret, even sacred, knowledge. With such unequal positioning of a teacher and a student, it is extremely difficult to create a full-fledged dialogue between two equal partners. On the contrary, if a teacher chooses an equal dialogue, they must descend down to the student's level, to become equal to a student and thus be able to enter into a *zone of dialogical contact* (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 45): that is, the moment of contact between a reader of a text with the author of the text. In this moment, a teacher loses their unapproachability to students and becomes an integral part of the teaching process. Callan (1995) describes a similar situation, saying that

often students may not speak their minds with candour because, for example, they are either ashamed to express convictions that may put them at odds with their peers or intimidated by the unyielding orthodoxy of a teacher's views. Then we have no real dialogue, and therefore, none that could serve the ends of moral education. (p. 13)

A moral relation, the main cultural form of which is discourse, is the actualization of "otherness" and myself as "other-for-others." The leading element of an ethical discourse is an addressee, not a subject, as in an aesthetic (artistic) discourse, and not an object of knowledge, as in an "epistemological discourse" (Typa, 1995, p. 216).

Here, we see more correlations between the dialogical concepts of Martin Buber and Bakhtin. These similarities have been pointed out more than once (Perlina, 1984; Holquist, 1990). Both Bakhtin and Buber developed ideas of the ontological rootedness of the personal-impersonal "Me-Thou" in the structure of being. However, a human in Buber's philosophy finds the world as a completed material and spiritual composition.

Buber (2000) wrote that "a child first perceives the world around him, only gradually opening his "I," separating his body from the world around as a special existence. These stages of perception are repeated later while forming a spiritual orientation" (p. 70). That is, individuals open for themselves the world as a substance, which is changing but at the same time stable. Individuals see themselves in the cosmos, a construct from their own impressions, in which only the palette of feelings depends on the "Me." Two large areas derive from this cosmos: first, the surrounding physical environment which persuades an individual into an obligatory existence, and second, people who draw the individual into accepted forms of communication through language, behaviour, and customs. On these two constant elements of perception, the "sense of belonging and involvement in life" (Buber, 2002) is built. In this understanding of perception, there is still a monologue view: that is, not a conscious "double" look as in Dostoyevsky's famous "double-ended stick" (Dostoyevsky, 2002) where one end of the stick is the author's vision of the surrounding world, and the other a vision of an observer. At this point, Bakhtin (2003) introduces his metaphor "to look in a mirror" (p. 12). In his metaphor, individuals see themselves in a mirror as an object of their own knowledge, but does not see what's happening within them, and do not see their past. That is, the image in a mirror has essentially no real face, but there is only an image of a face; a person looking in a mirror does not see all of themselves, but sees only an external image, a shell. But at the same time, a person sees the inner of their "Me" from within this shell. "This moment of self-awareness under the gaze of the 'other Me' means the passing of the border of my view in general, that is, the transgression of my monological consciousness" (Bakhtin, 2003, p.12). In Bakhtin terms, it can be said that the very border between "I-for-myself" and "I-for-another" is problematized: thus, the situation of the monological mutual agreement between us is broken and the situation of a dialogical confrontation occurs. Buber (2000) also points to this state of the findability of "my "I" outside of me," but resorted to only religious terms, saying that "the great illusion is that they think that the spirit of a person is inside of the person. In fact, it is outside-between a person and what is not a person" (p. 141). Bakhtin broadened this concept beyond religious awareness and called it *vnenochodimost* (in English: *extralocality*, *outsidedness*, *transgradience* or *exotopy*).

Teacher's vignette:

When teaching a foreign language at an upper-intermediate university level, it was possible for me to discuss more difficult topics with students, as students already had sufficient vocabulary and grammatical structures and were able to express deeper thought and causal relationships in a foreign language. One of the topics of my discussion with GERM 210 students at University of British Columbia was "Justice." We did not discuss this term from a general philosophical point of view, but only in the context of a narrow historical period of time when Germany was divided into Western and Eastern states with a hostile ideological confrontation between them. At the end of the semester, I asked my students to prepare personal presentations to help them demonstrate the level of their language knowledge on the subject under discussions. One of the students prepared what was, in my opinion, an excellent presentation in the form of a short theatrical performance, where he dressed as an ancient Chinese emperor who meditates and speaks out loud regarding his thoughts on how to make his country a more just society. This student put on traditional Chinese clothes, lighted an incense burner on the desk, and hung up a map of ancient China on the board. All this was done in order to immerse the audience in the atmosphere of ancient China. For a couple of minutes, all of us in the class had an ancient Chinese emperor who walked around his palace and reasoned out loud in German how to achieve justice in his country. He asked such questions as—would it be just to use violence against those who showed injustice? Would violence be justified in order to achieve justice? At the end of his meditations, the emperor concluded that only the law is capable of establishing justice, since violence only in compliance with the law does not violate the principle of justice. All of us, myself and the students, were astonished by this performance and gave the student our applause. After the class, I asked the student to stay behind and asked him why he thought it was necessary for him to be dressed up and act as an emperor. He answered that otherwise, no one would believe him. He said that if he was just a student, everyone in the class may have their own opinion about the subject matter and his words may not be listened to or understood. Using the trick of acting as an emperor, he had a chance to have everyone listen carefully and think about the concept. This performance was also important for him since his parents were of Chinese descent; even though this presentation was in German, for him, any association with the

country of his heritage enriched his studies with more meaning and aesthetic satisfaction.

With this example, I wanted to show how a student, possibly unknowingly, resorted to the principle of extralocality to be able to give his message. That means that to convey the context of his message, he chose to not only leave the space of the classroom not only geographically but also temporally, moving centuries into the past. In the end, thanks to this theatrical performance, his communicative goal was achieved. I believe that from pedagogical point of view, Bakhtin's concept of extralocality can be understood not only as the ability to see in the other what the other cannot see in themselves, but also as an opportunity to help oneself to see or to understand something important for one's ontological existence, resorting to an externalized view on one's own life, outside of own temporal or spatial being.

In the following paragraphs, I would like to deviate from the main line of this thesis and draw attention to a slightly different question from another discipline, which in this context seems important to discuss. The question is about a purely psychological interpretation of an internal dialogue. I touch upon this problem because when in conversations with teachers I brought up Bakhtin's dialogic concept, many teachers asked me again and again about the psychological adequacy of such behaviour. Without a doubt, for us as educators it is important to be sure that the patterns of behaviour we encourage in students are mentally adequate and will not lead to the distortion of a student's psyche. Lossky (1913) pointed out that "the act of knowledge is always the mental state of the knowing subject" (p. 22) That is why, from an educator's point of view, such doubts are justified; we as educators need to be sure that the dialogic approach is a natural process of perception and not a distorted mental form of deviation. Bakhtin himself (1991) pointed out that an "individual being is incapable of containing the whole truth. It can be revealed only in an unfinished dialogue between different consciousnesses" (p. 17). However, our attempt to achieve the duality of consciousness may sooner or later be recognized by someone as abnormal and contrary to the scientific and logical principle of knowledge.

We may begin with Bakhtin's suggestion that consciousness itself is essentially a permanent dialogue. Bakhtin uses Cohen's (1982) structure; in *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls*, Cohen introduces the term "Me-Other" which was later modified by Bakhtin.

According to Bakhtin (1986b), an "individual really exists in the forms of I and the Other" (p. 17). But then the Other is not only a partner in conversation; it is first of all a structural element of consciousness, providing the possibility of a dialogue and therefore the possibility of consciousness itself. In this sense, Bakhtin inherits Kant's philosophy. Kant's transcendental subject is a precondition of the possibility of consciousness, since the moment of thinking itself must be accompanied by a moment of a constant imagination; in other words, at the moment of cognition, two different mechanisms are simultaneously involved, not contradicting each other but collaborating with each other. And without such dialogical cooperation, "imagination would be impossible, or at least would not exist for me" (Kant, 1985, p. 17). It should be noted that in Kant, the duality of consciousness is not identical to the duality of the carrier of consciousness. Consciousness still remains one self-identified but internally differentiated consciousness.

Kant's idea of such dialogical cooperation is also reflected in the writings of Bakhtin. It lies in the fact that an individual, as a creature endowed with independent reason and freedom, has autonomy of judgment and moral dignity. Reason is a combination of instrumental rationality: that is, the ability to select means and design the achievement of any goals, and the ability to distinguish between the duty to inner moral law, and the duty to choose moral goals. Bakhtin represents a similar unity as the manifestation of internal interrogation and the demonstration of responsibility. Bakhtin connects this situation of internal dialogue with perception by asking: "Are a knower and a perceivable one congruent?" (Bakhtin, 1986b). At this point we must resort to professional psychologists in order to be able to understand whether an internal dialogue has a pathological pattern or not.

Vasilyeva (1985) points out that Bakhtin's ideas are relevant to clinical psychiatry, but a completely different form of the pathological transformation of dialogue takes place in schizophrenic developments. An analysis of obligate symptoms gives psychiatrists a reason to believe that in a pathological case, a special tectonic shift of semantic centres occurs; namely, a dialogue splits in such a way that two individuals coexist, often having mutually exclusive but still equally relevant monologues between "Me1" and "Me2." The "Other" as a meaning-forming structure becomes lost, and its place in the architectonics of consciousness is taken by a "mirrored image of Me"; in other words, "instead of a paradigm 'Me and Other' a paradigm 'Me-at-Myself' appears" (Vasilyeva, 1985, p. 86).

There is simultaneous imposition of *externally* and *internally* oriented functions, which according to Vygotsky (1978) "are so different from each other that the nature of the means they use cannot be the same in both cases" (p. 55). Bakhtin insisted that the truth about life cannot be clarified as part of the being of a single individual, and without a dialogical approach, it simply cannot be contained in the consciousness of an individual. "The truth can be ajar (and even partially) in the process of communication of equal individuals, in a dialogue between them. The end of a dialogue would be equivalent to the death of mankind" (Vasilyeva, 1985, p. 89). In another words, I have determined that the dialogic approach in education is not something pathological, unnatural, and therefore false, but, on the contrary, dialogism is not separable from our consciousness and thus is part of our identity. For us, as educators, it is important to form a student's identity from the earliest years of their upbringing and enlightenment, since by understanding the process and structure of personal self-identification, we are able to meet their needs: that is, to saturate this formation with knowledge and skills. Using the dialogical approach, an educator is able not only to understand the identity of the knower but also to fill the needs of a student by passing on the necessary knowledge.

Another point of Bakhtin's metalinguistics is his "dialogic relations" (Bakhtin, 1984): that is, attitude toward the words of others or more precisely, to the statement of others, because for Bakhtin, the statement is a fundamental unity in understanding and evaluating all the manifestations of human life. Dialogue reaction personifies any statement to which it responds. It accepts the significance of subjectivity, which manifests itself in every semantic position, in every "voice," while the monological approach de-emphasizes a statement, depersonalizes it, and creates an object from it. Thus, the dialogical identity of a subject gives them the opportunity for social identity, that is, to determine their own voice in a surrounding world full of voices, or a polyphonic world. In a dialogue, any word has its live value; it belongs to someone who really exists, unlike in a monologue in which the cognitive value is expressed through the instrumentalism of manipulation, which does not allow for opposition, counter-narration, or interruption of a statement.

I am absolutely sure that Bakhtin's meta-language philosophy has high potential in education. Without a doubt, education is a synergy of the voices of students, teachers, parents, administrators, and educational scientists, with all these voices having their own value and significance. Bakhtin builds his meta-language theory on the fact that there

are no permanent and stable communication networks within society, but there is an ongoing dialogue between "Me" and "The Other." A teacher who is involved in a dialogical interaction in the formation of students' identities, and is a participant in a curriculum discourse, becomes a part of the educational community and an active participant in the overall dialogical process, which a priori implies polyphony. The phenomenon of polyphony, in my point of view, is of great importance not only for pedagogical practices but also for curricular and institutional modeling, which I will analyze more deeply in the next chapter.

I mentioned already that from a dialogical self-identification standpoint, education is a deeply social and therefore dialogical phenomenon. Education is a social phenomenon because "it is one of the main ways we have as humans to define our humanity, to practice our humanity, to maintain our humanity, and to change our humanity" (Boyd, 1997, p.4). At the same time, the characteristic of dialogicity itself does not imply a social essence since we know the phenomenon of an internal dialogue. This last statement is rather controversial, since one might argue that internal dialogue is also a consequence or a product of social essence. However, the result of an internal dialogue may be a conclusion that contradicts the clear logic of a social process. In other words, in their own reflections and contradictory argumentations, individuals may come to unexpected and paradoxical conclusions; they may interpret socially reasonable constructs differently and not necessary reasonably. Bakhtin himself asserted the fact that the word always remains more or less alien, because the phenomenon of "Me," same as the language of an individual, is never single, having its own inner alternateness, its own *raznorechie* (in English: heterodiscursia (by Matusov), heteroglossia, or multivoicedness). Bakhtin (2004) shows this otherness within the "Me" itself; this does not lead to the disappearance, dissolution, or erasure of the "Me," but on the contrary to the "manifestation of the "Me" in "its intensely conflicting attitude to its own otherness, to the certainty and completeness of the 'Me'" (p. 67). Here, Bakhtin seems to endow the dialogue with internal tension or energy. This very energy leads to the continuation of a dialogue, fills it with necessity, and leads to the creation of the process of cognition through dialectics, which, according to Bakhtin (1986b) is "the absolute product of a dialogue" (p. 30). In this dialectic of knowledge, "there are no distinctions between the times of 'Me' and 'Other.' They are in a living sensation, but an abstract thought erases them. A thought creates a single, common world of a person

regardless of 'Me' and 'Other'" (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 31). I do not want to insinuate here that, in the process of an inner dialogical thinking, individuals create their own world independent from anyone and not subordinated to anyone. Rather, individuals subordinate the perceived external objects and phenomena to their own internal expectations, attitudes, and experiences, endowing them with characteristics in accordance with their internal ideas. I am deeply convinced that we as teachers should be aware of this Bakhtinian concept of *raznorechie*, since we should not exclude the possibility that certain educational materials that we see as entirely understandable and clear could be understood by the students in a way that is entirely unexpected to us and possibly false.

According to Bakhtin (1986b), a human personality is so viable that it can accommodate—or on the contrary reject—any external definition imposed on it from the side of "Other." In the process of cognition, "something absolutely new appears: an over-person, an over-Me, that is, a witness and a judge of a person as the whole (all of me), therefore I am no longer Me, but I am the Other" (p. 31). From an educational point of view, that means teacher's judgment may be perceived by a student as their teacher's personal opinion only, beyond the student's spatial possession. A student may accept this judgment in the sphere of their spatial possession, making it their own, or may even reject it as a foreign body. The understanding of polyphony within an individual is also important for an educator for the correct expression of a pedagogical act in the framework of a single being-event, in which this act is performed as a Bakhtinian act. Not only is its meaningful side important, but so is the totality of all phenomena of a "whole word" (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 31): that is, the word as an image, and the emotional-volitional (intonational) characteristic associated with the word in their unity. Being involved in a dialogical interaction in the formation of one's own identity as a teacher and as an educationalist, as well as a participant in a curriculum discourse, becomes the basis for the realization of myself as a part of the education community and as an active participant in the overall dialogical process, which a priori implies polyphony. In my opinion, education is considered a part of many target discourses, where the starting base for such discourses is the knowledge obtained in the previous stages of education and self-education as well as the ability to adapt to social and professional environments and targets are of both a teacher and a student.

For understanding the interconnection of internal and external dialogues in the process of cognition, we go back to the ancestors of phenomenology. Cassirer (1953) echoed Rickert (1915) in believing that a person, as the recipient of information, is in the middle between their inner world and the outside world. From the point of view of education, it would be interesting to consider how, in the process of identity formation, the child is in a constant process of choice, which already implies an abstracted judgment.

I have no doubts that from their very birth, humans as independent and reflecting individuals oppose any phenomena of the surrounding reality. Practically, we ask Boyd's (1997) question of "what it means to be fully human" (p.4). Boyd addresses this problem of a human only in context of communication with society. But individuals consider everything around them from a person-centered point of view: that is, the vector of understanding the surrounding reality is directed from the inside to the outside and in all directions. We are talking not only about people but about the totality of human exposure to the conditions of the external world. An awareness of oneself as a part of the surrounding reality, its cognitions and evaluations—those cognitive processes are ones an individual deals with practically from the first moments of life. As creatures endowed with abstract thinking, humans passively experience their existence in space and actively try to analyze all data received from the outside; they react to data not only using unconditioned reflexes but also reasonable reactions. The experience of ourselves within our being can occur unconsciously or consciously as an attempt to systematize all experiences received. As soon as such an attempt is applied, a person enters into dialogue with themselves, or according to Vygotsky (1978) "[p]rior to mastering his own behavior, the child begins to master his surroundings with the help of speech" (p. 25). According to the phenomenological concept, for individuals "there is another world as an immanent reality" (Rickert, 1915, p. XI) from which they draw pieces of information, experiences, and feelings on which they build their own inner world. Thus, there is a permanent relationship between the inner world of a human and the external world, "between 'inside' and 'outside', between *the I* and the world" (Cassirer, 1953, p. 91). That can happen without one being explicitly aware of the separation between self and others, but in the process of the formation of identity, children deny some elements and recognize other elements. They are in a constant process of choice, which already implies a kind of isolation since the choice requires independent judgment: that is, the

possibility of abstraction from the objects of choice. If this abstraction does not happen, the choice has already occurred. From the moment of birth, a person assumes the full right to empower themselves with a voice to express their own interests and aspirations; their abstract thinking allows them not to leave the surrounding reality or natural world speechless but to grant this reality the right to speak. It is abstract thinking that allows a person to give the right to speak to those phenomena of the world that do not have the ability to communicate and are not living beings at all. Thus, on the basis of this equal relationship between an individual and the surrounding reality, emerges a dialogue. Of course, in discussing a dialogue between an individual and the objects around them, we are forced to resort to the language of metaphors. Speaking about such an equal dialogue, we must exclude the instrumental nature of the cognized object. Naturally, when a person seats on a sofa, they consider the sofa as a necessary tool for their comfortable existence. But if a person observes an object as a part of their own universe that they live in, they can build an equal relationship, abandoning the notions of consumption, operational use or exploitation. On this *philosophy of life* (Rickert, 1920), Bakhtin builds his system of dialogical perception (Bonezkaya, 1995).

Teacher's vignette:

I previously mentioned my activity with a "Black Bag" of sensations for the purpose of reviewing vocabulary with students. Students enjoyed this activity, not to mention the fact that it was exciting and the lesson was fun and effortless. One of my lessons was devoted to the topic of "Nature." I thought about how to diversify the lesson and how to make it more appealing and involving for my students, debating what type of activities I should choose for better immersion in the subject matter. Obviously, an activity with a bag was not suitable for the task of describing the weather outside. But even here, I came up with something original. The road to the village school from the house where I lived ran along an old village garden, which was not very well kept and looked more like a small park. Sometimes, when I had time, I preferred not to go down the road but to walk through the garden even though it lacked walking paths. That day, walking to school, I picked up a small stone, a few branches and fallen leaves, a couple of pinecones and tree bark. I brought all this to the classroom and laid it on the floor in front of my desk before the class began. On the blackboard, I wrote the terms for these

objects in German and reviewed them with my students before an activity began. After that, I asked one of the students to come in front of the class and take off his shoes and close his eyes. Then, the student had to walk on the floor with his bare feet, touch the objects with his feet to determine which items he stepped on the floor, and name them in a foreign language. The task turned out to be much more difficult than the “Black Bag,” but the objects were also easier to identify. The students participated in this activity with interest, and although they were not allowed to tell students going to the front of the room the word meanings, I heard some of them trying again and again to whisper the names of items, not even in German. After the first part of this activity, we gave the items that I brought characteristics in accordance with the seasons. So, the stone was damp in the autumn and hot in the summer, and the leaves were green in the summer, yellow in the autumn, and in the winter they were not there at all. After that, I asked my students to choose the time of year they liked the most and to write a short essay in German about nature in their village during the selected time of year. Most of my students chose summer, with some choosing winter, but what I liked the most was that many students actually mentioned in their essays the very same objects from my activity and the characteristics we had practiced before.

With this example, I wanted to demonstrate how I, although not consciously, tried to provide students with a situation where they were cut off from the class environment and force to feel the world through other non-visual means. Thanks to the limitation of sensations, they were able to associate themselves with the subject outside of their visualization, meaning beyond the complete picture of the world, and supplement it with their own ideas. The reduction of consciousness in this case was only to the benefit of the cognitive process, or as Sartre (1956) argues "the reduction of consciousness to knowledge in fact involves our introducing into consciousness the subject-object dualism which is typical on knowledge" (p. lii). I have already mentioned Sartre's subject-object dualism; as a language teacher, I will now focus on those grammar terms and use them but in another, more theoretical context.

Rickert (1915) was the first to introduce the idea that the process of perception may be expressed in grammatical terms as an individual simultaneously interacting with a subject and an object of a process. I believe that from an educational point of view, it is very important to understand this process; although it happens naturally, very often and especially at a young age, unconsciously, one needs to be educated in this regard.

Many educators pointed out the theory of "Subject-Object": Dewey (2011) postulated that every experience is constituted by interaction between "subject" and "object," "between a self and its world" (p. 246). Unlike Rickert, Husserl (1952) identified an object of cognition not as an object but rather as a second opposing subject (in German: *Gegen-Subjekt*) in "self-constituting streams of experience with own inner world" (p. 194). The problem with the opposing subject is indicated by Weber (1985), who asked if the removal and transfer of meaning show that the Subject only acts as part of the subject matter, and if the only form of a subject, which an Author provides, is no longer a reliable and self-evident principle of certainty. If its identity itself is determined by the transition from one subject to another (*Subjekt - Gegen - Subjekt*), then Weber asks, "how does the process of identification or self-identification happen?" (p. 337-338). Bakhtin resolves this problem by going beyond the traditional interpretation of a dialogue by defining "*polyphony*," just as Derrida's dissemination practice is realized through polysemy (Derrida, 2007). Like Derrida, Bakhtin positions dialogicity as the positing of meaning in translation (German: *Setzung in der Übersetzung*) (Bostad, 2004, p. 49); that is, dialogicity provides a knower with the right to determine the personal meaning or importance of an object or phenomenon for their own life. The pedagogical value of these approaches is that very often a teacher should give students the right to determine for themselves the value of any teaching materials passed on to them, since the place specific knowledge will take in the students' lives depends on them and not on the teacher. Neither subject-object nor opposing subject theories do not contradict Bakhtin's definition of polyphony but show different interpretations of the process of identification and self-identification. This otherness does not erase the preceptor's identity, but only helps to form it. As a teacher, I am positive that educators should understand what interactions and tensions can arise in our educational processes when our students are placed in a position of opposition between a self and its world.

To conclude the second chapter of my thesis, in which I have reflected on Bakhtin's dialogic principles in perception, I will emphasize once again the most important ideas. Bakhtin implied that consciousness is a type of text, not in the linguistic sense but in the philosophical sense, which reflects the emotional component of our knowledge. Through a dialogue, a knower is included in the situation of aesthetic cognition. This situation has a dualistic character, where there is an objective unity of the surrounding world and with subjective affection. The unity of these two factors is

possible due to one's own sense of responsibility. According to Bakhtin, our life consists of an unbroken series of actions that come together into a single permanent flow. Bakhtin contrapositions monologue speech and dialogic speech and insists that only through a dialogue can we comprehend the whole truth of the world around us. According to Bakhtin, in order to comprehend the surrounding world a person needs two forms of consciousness: the awareness of oneself as a subject "Me," and the awareness of oneself as an object "The Other"; this duality of awareness is the meaning of an internal dialogue. An external dialogue, according to Bakhtin, is possible only in a situation of a dialogic confrontation: that is, the set of such conditions under which both participants in the dialogue are equal. Unlike a dialogue with two or many participants, a monologue is always a speech of one directed at others; it is a type of relationship with others, in which others who are listening are not meant to be equal to a speaker. Willingness to perceive many dialogical partners implies such terms as polyphony or multivoicedness. Understanding of Bakhtin's idea of polyphony is important for an educator to have a right pedagogical approach in their single act of teaching. However, what opportunities for the implementation of the concept of internal dialogue and polyphony are interesting for us as educators from a practical point of view? I will expose some of them in the third chapter of my thesis dedicated to Bakhtin's architectonics.

Chapter 3. Bakhtin's architectonics

According to Bakhtin's theory, the act of communication through a dialogical process sheds light on the intentions of all participants of this process, as long as the language style chosen in the dialogue gives an opportunity to realize the maximum value of all voice units used in this communication. According to Redkozyubova (2014), Bakhtin argues that the intention and necessity of communication determines the sequences of sentences, their extent and limitations, and is therefore a specific *strategic tool* (p. 2) used by all participants of a dialogical communication for perceiving new aspects of communicative reality. I find it very important to consider using this strategic tool in different creative processes with the many participants that may be present in educational environments. I am confident that the process of education has strong ties with creative processes, despite the previously mentioned fact that the organization of pedagogical processes implies a hierarchical transfer of knowledge; however, it does not only concern applied pedagogical procedures but also such platforms as curriculum development, teaching material negotiations, and hierarchical interactions in schools, etc. For such multirole organizational processes, Bakhtin's idea of architectonics is useful in many aspects.

In his concept of architectonics, Bakhtin insists that the world around us is specific and unique for each unique individual, but it is expressed to them from a particular angle of knowledge. By saying that, I mean Bakhtin's concept of uniqueness through the prism of personal responsibility. Each person is endowed with their own unique responsibility to the perception of the world around them. I have already mentioned in Chapter 2 that individuals subordinate the perceived external objects and phenomena to their own internal expectations, attitudes, and experiences, endowing them with characteristics in accordance with their internal ideas. An individual, while cognizing the world, is doing it continuously and progressively, as if building an architectonic wholeness, which exists around the individual as a single whole and which includes itself and the individual as the carrier or the subject of their own act. According to Bakhtin (2003), "The world is with me, as I proceed from myself in my vision of my action, in my thought about my action, and in my deed as my action" (pp. 52-53). Thus, in all the diversity of the surrounding world, an individual is a middle point, a centre in which all lines and intersections of their relationships with the world converge. An

individual is not only the geometrical centre of these processes, but also a responsible emotional-volitional centre, in the specific time interval of their personal existence. By using the term responsibility here, I am referring specifically to the concept of answerability, which Bakhtin's researchers sometimes use in English translations (Holquist, 1990, Ewald, 1993). Being in the centre of their own constantly created world of cognizable objects and phenomena, individuals react with their own minds and feelings; that is, they provide answers to these objects and phenomena, saturating their own lives with full-fledged experience. In other words, if an individual were to be removed from this "Me as a centre" concept, the entire architectonics system would certainly fall apart. All architectonics in their unity and totality are possible only in relation to an individual, or more specifically, an actively thinking individual.

David Orr (1992), describing similar processes, resorts to the ancient Greek concept of *Paideia* (p. 131):

[T]he aim of connective education is personal wholeness and transcendence. In this sense it is similar to the Greek concept of Paideia. The aim of Paideia was self-transformation, personal wholeness, and competence—a search for a "divine centre." Its methods were those of open dialogue, participation, and experience. Paideia assumed no distinction between learning and living. (p. 138)

Confronting this concept of Paideia, I asked myself—what is the meaning of using such an architectonic principle in cognition, and what is its value for educational practices? I believe I found my answer in Bakhtin's philosophy. According to Bakhtin, the world in which something is going on does not coincide with our theoretical understanding of what is going on. Being an active participant in life, an individual constantly performs actions. At that moment, the world is instantly rebuilt and restored to the architectonic structure that an individual finds true for them at a specific moment of life, where everything theoretically conceivable by an individual is only a moment of their theoretical consciousness. In our lives, we often notice that the moments that we experience arouse certain emotions, but over longer periods of time, we experience the same moment differently, with different emotions coming into play. Sometimes we tell ourselves that we need time to collect our thoughts, analyze what is happening, and work out our optimal attitude toward what happened. We want to look at moments of our lives in a temporal plan from the perspective of a different person; we almost want to use a different

consciousness since we are not sure that our first reaction is the actual truth of life, and is not lying to us.

Bakhtin (2003) points to the duality of our consciousness, which has become so familiar to us that we consciously do not notice it: or in his words, "our consciousness is not outraged by an inner lie" (pp. 13-14). The process of getting knowledge thus turns into a process of moving and localizing actual facts from a real single existence into an indifferent conceivable theoretical world; that is, the real world is reflected and focused as not experienced, but only conceivable as its moment of time in the theoretical world. Thus, in Bakhtin's concept of the duality of our consciousness, the values of the mentally assigned events of life and the values of real events are not only mechanically, logically, and systematically analyzed, but also architectonically experienced and felt in accordance with the inner architectonic structure of a human being, including such zones as "Me" and "The Outer World." I have mentioned Bakhtin's phenomenon of assignment in the previous chapter (p. 19) in which an individual perceives the world around them as a readable text written by an Author who is purely metaphysical and implies certain forces which assigns us our reality in the process of our cognition. Reading such a text, an individual (as a reader) naturally endows it with certain ethical and aesthetic qualities realized not only as a set of words, phrases and sentences, but also as a single architectonically complete whole.

Bakhtin insisted that in the process of cognition, an individual is not just a third-party participant but is part of the process itself, participating with their own consciousness or participatory thinking. Such participatory thinking, according to Bakhtin (2003), seeks to overcome its real being (in Russian: *dannost*) for the sake of its assignment (in Russian: *zadannost*), and "this participatory thinking proceeds precisely in our affirmed architectonics of an existential event" (p. 15). Bakhtin refers here to the Plato, who pointed out that there are two kinds of essences: *truly essential* and *imaginary essential* (Plato, 2004). However, Bakhtin develops this idea assuming that there is a constant process of our transition from an imaginary being to a true one. Based on this, I ask myself the same question again and again: is this process of permanent transition from the imaginary to the truth not the essence of education? Or not the essence of education? Following Plato, Kant as the next philosopher who resorted to architectonics and the first to use the term "architectonic" in his work *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant, 1985), contrasting "technical unity" and "architectonic unity." It

seems to me that the difference between these two unities is that one obeys the rational law, and the other is at a somewhat higher, almost metaphysical, level of aesthetic or sensitive perception. As an example, I bring up a clockwork mechanism, which as a "technical unity", consists of a set of mechanical elements designed for constant long-term function, producing nothing but a mechanical movement, while an "architectonic unity" is an attempt to realize the passage of time. As a hypothetical answer to Kant's assumption about duality of unities, Bakhtin (1990) argues that

a whole is called 'mechanical' when its constituent elements are united only in space and time by some external connection and are not imbued with internal unity of meaning. The parts of such a whole are contiguous and touch each other, but in themselves they remain alien to each other (p.1).

Here, it is necessary to understand the difference between Kant's and Bakhtin's understandings of architectonics. Kant's (1985) architectonics is "the art of building a system (In German: die Kunst der Systeme) of all human knowledge" (p. 117). He understood the structure of the system as an expediently constructed whole, using the analogy of a living organism. The role of the "Builder" is given to the human mind, which is architectonics-able by its nature: that is, it considers all knowledge as belonging to a *possible structuralized system* (Kant, 1985).

Kant's teaching on the synthetic ability of consciousness was further developed by the Baden school of neo-Kantianism and was regarded by the school as the basis for the *Philosophy of Culture* (in German: die Kulturphilosophie) (see Windelband, 1995). In contrast to Kant and neo-Kantians, Bakhtin's architectonics is the architectonics of the *emotionally* felt world: that is, the world of an event or the world of aesthetic vision. The specific "centre of origin" of absorbing and awareness of life events is not the human brain but an individual as a whole whose ability for perception is based on their own ability to emotionally feel and experience, and not only on the ability to logically construct. Thus, for Kant, architectonics is a rational unity of diverse elements of knowledge; for Bakhtin, it is a unity of diverse elements, the importance and value of which are determined by individuals according to their emotional experiences in a certain space-time unity or *chronotope* of time. Bakhtin (1990) called this space-time definiteness an "internal unity of reason," saying that "the whole is called mechanical if its individual elements are connected only in space and time by an external connection,

and are not penetrated by an internal unity of reason" (p. 5). That is, this unity of reason belongs not to the constructed speculative system of knowledge, but to the form of life and life experience. Just as an act is a real act of conscious and feeling, it is reflected in all spheres of an individual's life: in physical, aesthetic, and in ethical or moral reality. Hence, architectonics is a medium of an assigned space-time definiteness in its particular historicity.

From this, I conclude that without a connecting idea, parts of our experience are just parts and are alien to each other. This fact is especially important for education, where often an element of teaching material is being transferred from a teacher to a student in separate parts, not in its entirety. For example, according to my many years of experience as a foreign language teacher, for conventional schools, in teaching of a foreign language, the communicative skills are first taught through the grammatical concept of the present tense. Much later, students receive knowledge about past times and the passive voice. But in real life, a language is perceived by an individual as something integral and inseparable, in which all individual elements are used together in their unity for achieving certain goals of communication. For me as a foreign languages teacher, this grammatical progression is one of the strongest obstacles to learning a foreign language, especially at beginning or lower levels. Bakhtin offers his remedy against such an obstacle by naming it active empathy. Active empathy is a necessary condition of architectonics; without it, it is much more difficult to determine the difference (which I have indicated above) between the Kantian and the Bakhtinian concepts of architectonics.

Active empathy (Russian: *vchuvstvovanie*, German: *Einfühlung*) is a concept that has its origins in the subjective-psychological tradition of aesthetics of Theodor Lipps with his *Ästhetik* (Lipps, 1903), and Max Scheler with his concept of *Mitgefühl* (Wyman, 2008, p. 58). It is a necessary transitional step in the process of cognition, not the objective of an aesthetic experience. Preliminary identification of myself with another is necessary in order to take a position of Bakhtin's aesthetic *extralocality*: this position allows an individual to perceive and experience the other in its otherness, and themselves in contrast to this otherness. This two-sided nature of experiencing someone else's experience and self-experiencing is Bakhtin's decisive innovation in rethinking the theory of active empathy. After all, this innovation gives us something beyond the sole assertion that human consciousness is dialogical by its nature, and that "the

consciousness of an individual is always aware of itself through the projection on the consciousness of an other" (Bakhtin, 1984, p 223). It shows us that our consciousness is a deeply social and deeply multivoiced phenomenon. But in addition, an aesthetic experience has the function of helping (if not making it possible) to approach one's own emotional experience through the image of another's experience.

Bakhtin (1991) wrote about the "absolute aesthetic need of a person for another" (p.65). In this, he echoes Kant's "*transcendental aesthetics*" (Kant, 1985) as a process of perception realized in space and time, which is connected to Kant's epistemology. Bakhtin agrees with Kant that consciousness itself is essentially a dialogue. An individual really exists in the forms of *the Self and the Other* (Bakhtin, 1986b). The Other is not only a simple partner in conversation but is an important structural element of consciousness, providing the opportunity for a dialogue, and therefore the possibility of consciousness itself. In this sense Bakhtin agrees with Kant, since for Kant (1985) a "transcendental Subject" is a condition of the possibility of consciousness. According to Kant (1985), "so that I think would accompany all my perceptions . . . otherwise the perception would not be possible, or at least it wouldn't exist for me" (p 77). In other words, Kant refers to the same idea as Bakhtin—the confrontation and "*mutual cooperation*" (Vasilyeva, 1985, p. 91) of "Me" and "Other." It is important to keep in mind that, for Kant, this duality of consciousness is not identical to the twoness of the carriers of consciousness; consciousness still remains self-identified but "*internally differentiated*" (Vasilyeva, 1985, p. 91). As a follower of neo-Kantian philosophy, Bakhtin agreed with this concept, introducing his own concept of *vnenachodimost* or extralocality.

Bakhtin (1986b) expresses this internal mutual cooperation in terms of internal interrogation and responsibility. He connects this situation of an internal dialogue with the process of perception by asking: "Does the person who is in a process of perception coincide with an object of the same perception?" (p. 33). According to Bakhtin, the experience of active empathy occurs at a certain point in time in which our consciousness is in awareness of this point in time. He calls this moment a *chronotope*, but he understands this moment not from the viewpoint of mathematically calculated chronological formulas, but from the viewpoint of historically and ethically experienced events of reality. In the process of cognition, our whole life in the present time is a combination of gradual transitions from *before* to *after*. Part of this temporary life flow is the process of education. I would go so far as to say that the process of education in

different forms accompanies us throughout our entire lives, which means that it is not a part but an integral characteristic of our life flow. Like other life processes, this life flow is temporal, which is often considered as indefinable. At the same time, it has its own before-after relations or, as Sartre (1956) pointed out, has its "temporal multiplicity" (p. 130).

German phenomenologists considered the temporal multiplicity of life in general as a complex act and subject to its own law of life (in German: *das individuelle Gesetz*) (Simmel, 1923), pointing out that each act of life is the product of the person as a whole, and not only, as rational morality considers, the product of the pure or the sensuous parts of their consciousness. Bakhtin, as do Neo-Kantian phenomenologists, argues that our life is conditional in the same way as a text. His *chronotope* as a category of dialogism is based on all levels of cultural existence, including not only performing or visual arts or literature, but also creativity in real life, practically life as art. Holquist (2003) considered *chronotope* as "an ideal tool for the study of an indirect, always mediated complex of the relationship between art and life" (p. 269). Similar to dialogism, which according to Bakhtin does not have a completion point and is constantly in a process of creation, and thus does not have a central point of normative unity, a *chronotope* does not have a chronological component, as it is perceived not as chronological time flow but as a whole event. That is, its structural elements are both the whole of a *chronotope* and a collection of changes at the same time. With such a combination of spatio-temporal parameters, the architectonics of knowing what is happening is extremely important, since Bakhtin's architectonics presupposes an all-pervading or transcendental approach to reality, whereas *chronotope* denying the chronological sequence of physical parameters within itself. Holquist even points out the possible influence of Einstein's theory of the continuity of time and events on Bakhtin's idea of *chronotope* (see Holquist, 2003). Calling his *chronotope* a historical phenomenon, Bakhtin might use the term "historical," not in the direct sense of the German "*historisch*" but with the meaning of German "*geschichtlich*," which is close to the German word "*Geschehen*" or in English, occurrence. In Bakhtin's understanding of this historicism, a *chronotope* is given to us as a "time capsule": a "combination of temporal and spatial signs, reflected in historically stable forms of narration" (Holquist, 2003, p. 267). As I mentioned before, the theory of chronotope has been analyzed by

many scientists (Fecho, 2010, Fecho, Falter, & Hong, 2016; Lefstein & Snell, 2013, Kohn, 2014, Matusov (2015a), but I just want to underline again its pedagogical value.

Teacher's vignette:

In my lessons, I always tried to come up with new activities that would help students memorize new words and expressions, and better understand their meaning and the possibility of application. One of the methods I constantly used in my classes before learning of Bakhtin's concept of internally persuasive discourse, was the moment of agreement. That is, by correctly naming the structure of a language or a word, I encouraged students to agree with me, thus confirming the correctness of the statement. My experience showed me that by using this method helps students better absorb new material. But one day I thought—why not turn this method around? I reasoned that if the moment of agreement allows students to remember the material better, then the moment of denial and contradiction could also induce them to do so. The moment of denial for me was associated with a deliberate insistence on the truth, which also affects the learning process. My experiment, let's call it, was conducted by me with junior K-12 students, and probably can only be conducted at this level of teaching.

At one of the lessons, I taught my students the names of colours in German and noticed that many students, although remembering the German words for colours, still often confused them with Russian words, especially when a German word sounded similar to the Russian word for a different colour (German: *gelb* (yellow) vs. Russian *goluboy* (light blue). Confronting this problem, I wondered how, with such a simple topic, one could use the moment of denial to help students memorize concepts over a long period of time. After some thought, I visited a local toy store. The next day, at the moment of one of the lessons, just as we were repeating German colours and I was sitting at my desk, suddenly a small creature from a popular animated movie appeared behind the desk close to me, and, with my slightly changed voice, began to protest, naming wrong colours in German. My students began to laugh and argue with this creature, correcting his mistakes, and the creature showed itself as rather stubborn and constantly insisted on its own opinions, pointing to colour cards and naming wrong colours. In the end, even I had entered into polemics with it, but the creature was so

stubborn that it was already arguing with me, much to the amusement of the entire class. It is clear that such a trick with a hand puppet may be performed only with young students and probably only once, but at the end I instantly realized how much the efficiency of memorizing and using colours increased. Moreover, I began to notice that students began to use colours even in sentences they created, where their use was not necessary or sometimes even inappropriate. My students tried to use colours while describing objects, people, and even concepts. The result of the participation of this famous creature from Russian fairy tales was not only that students remembered the names of colours in a foreign language, but that in the future, when I saw someone making the occasional mistake, I reminded them about the stubborn little household spirit (in Russian: *Domovenok* - a famous character from Russian children's cartoons). My students very quickly corrected themselves, remembering the German word for a colour without my hint. I remember how often after this lesson, students asked me whether our household spirit would come again.

With this story, I tried to demonstrate an example of how a group of students may experience active empathy from a possibly unreal situation by having aesthetic emotions during participation in what was essentially a game, and at the same time keep it in memory as a *chronotope*. When an event of life is being simultaneously experienced by the entire group, the “unavoidable simultaneity of the dialogue between the body and its environment” (Holquist, 2003, p. 272) may happen not only chronologically but also aesthetically and emotionally, meaning it does not only have a temporary chronological quality but serves as a good tool for achieving a certain pedagogical goal.

In the teacher's vignette just above, I tried to give examples of how the concepts of architectonics and *chronotope* are possible in the use of applied pedagogy. However, the idea itself can be an aid to a more theoretical analysis of the general concept of knowledge. It is important to understand the phenomenon of knowledge, especially from a post-modern cultural viewpoint, as the understanding of post-modern culture is, in my opinion, very necessary for a modern educator. I am confident that the entire volume of facts with which an educator needs to deal in the process of education can be characterized by the following general feature: every knowledge is knowledge of something. In other words, every affection can be described by the word *knowledge* if it contains a clearly expressed relation to something that can be called an object of knowledge. I am confident that in post-modern conditions, knowledge receives an

ontological value in the paradigm of Rickert's *Sinn und Wert* (English: sense and value) (Rickert, 2015), where everything has a positive value for something that helps us to maintain a balance of our coexistence in nature and with nature, or a negative value for something that violates this balance. I will not be touching on examples of intuitive, metacognitive, or innate knowledge, since such phenomena relate more to the psychophysical quality of an individual rather than to the educational-cognitive process as a concept. When as educators we touch upon the problem of knowledge, the following question is very important: Does an object of knowledge, or something to which the affection of knowledge is related, exists outside of the process of knowledge or within the process itself? According to Lossky (1924), "[i]n the first case, knowledge has a transcendental character, and in the second case, it is immanent" (p. 60). Considering the entire volume of knowledge, the criterion of the truth of knowledge may be our obligation towards it. This is a kind of Kantian categorical imperative, since it is based on our confidence and developed by the logic of our reason that we need to know this, because it makes sense without which we cannot coexist as a whole with the natural world. Especially important here are our steps towards knowing ourselves, from which the process of cognition begins. Knowing myself, my personality, my abilities, and desires is an ontological necessity for me. This is the inner balance of Rickert's *Sinn und Wert*; the rational (placed at a distance) needs the emotional/aesthetic subjectifying in order to find the balance. In this paradigm, to determine the value of knowledge we are guided by the truth of our situation or by the truth of our existence. The question is only—how are these truths determined? The truth is determined by the fact that we are all in this truth, but the truth is much higher than each of us separately, because in our ontological existence we bear a common responsibility. According to Bakhtin (2003),

[i]t is possible to establish some inverse proportion between the theoretical entity and practical unity (between existence and consciousness). The closer we come to the theoretical entity (to the meaningful permanence or recurring identity), the poorer the entire content gets, and finally the problem reduces to the unity of content and the final entity just becomes the currently empty content, which is identical to itself. . . . A responsible immersion into recognized exclusive unity of being as a single-event is the *true position*. [emphasis added] (p. 38)

In talking about Bakhtin's idea of the true position, we will instantly arrive at his idea that all humans hold a responsibility for their own acts. If we try to observe this

assumption from a post-modern point of view, the post-modern culture of the 21st century appears to be a world of integration processes in which a polyphonic range of political, economical, social, ethical and religious conflicts is presented. In the contemporary world, there is a mixture of ethnic groups with their own interests and notions, but at the same time, there is a keen desire of every nation to preserve its identity and national values. Forming their identity, humans experience a unique set of events and actions and form a personal attitude toward them, which means making an investment of their own concepts and meanings in these events. Thus, the pedagogical task is to awaken an inner voice, which through the inner dialogue will help us form the ability to be aware of our own actions. As for me, the cultural differences between the modern and postmodern worlds lie in the recognition and understanding of the importance of institutions and existing cultural practices, or the clear understanding of their presence and roles, as long as the post-modern is about naming, and identifying as problematic, the meta-narratives and the power associated therewith.

While the modern world was characterized by the emergence of many institutions (schools, hospitals, museums, galleries, etc.) with the intention to bring people together in the paradigm of certain cultural practices, in post-modern society, humans determine the transition from ignorance to knowledge on their own; they follow their inner voice and carry their own choice of morals and values. Taking into account Bakhtin's theory of polyphony, we can call post-modernism an epoch of many voices, which are diverse in content but equal in essence. Lyotard (1984) agrees with this concept, calling post-modernism "incredulity toward metanarratives" (p. xxiii). For Lyotard, narration is the quintessential form of customary knowledge in more ways than one. But he seems to agree with Bakhtin that only through dialogue can educational truth be achieved. Lyotard (1984) says that "the scientist needs an addressee who can in turn become the sender; he needs a partner. Otherwise, the verification of his statements would be impossible" (p. 24). He seeks the verification of his own statement through others, but for Bakhtin this verification is primarily the awareness of one's own responsibility towards one's own act. So, all humans hold responsibility for their own acts:

[E]very thought of mine contextually is an act of my *individual responsibility* [emphasis added], one of many acts my entire life consists of as a continuous flow, as long as my whole life can be considered as one complex act: I act with

all my life, in which every single act is an act of experience and a moment of my life-perception. (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 8)

Can we call Bakhtin an early post-modernist? In contrast to modernism with its rational-progressive vector of development, post-modernism is characterized by a variety of vectors, where the value of diversity is higher than the value of a single rational logic. From this perspective, Bakhtin does not prioritize the rationality of an act. He considers an act in its integrity as more than rational, since the rationality of an act is only part of it, its "moment in the general essence of responsibility" (1990, p. 30). Bakhtin believes that all the transcendental unity of the objective cultural life of society is dark since there is no single centre, and everything is diverse. Resorting to metaphors, he writes that "only our responsibility can give us the light that breaks through this darkness" (1990, p. 30). According to Bakhtin, an act itself is endowed with physiological, biological, and psychological qualities, but it is a spontaneous and dark phenomenon since in its essence it is an abstract event of being. However, from the inside of an act, the responsible person themselves knows a clear and distinct light to which this person is oriented. For Bakhtin, "an event can be clear and distinct for a participant in his/her act in all its moments" (2003, p. 30). Here, it seems to me, there is an important educational moment: a teacher providing a student with theoretical materials that the student perceives as something abstract and distant from them. For a student, theoretical material does not appear to be part of their own natural being, and that is why for a student there is no relation of responsibility towards it. Bakhtin tries to establish an inverse relationship between the theoretical unity of the external and the actual uniqueness of an individual's existence and consciousness. In a practical attempt to approach the theoretical unity, its meaningful constancy or repetitive identity, the content of theoretical materials becomes poorer and poorer until it is reduced to a single self-identical content. Only by including responsibility in the process of knowledge can an individual "include in a perceived unique event the uniqueness of own existence" and realize the "*truth* of situation" (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 30). In other words, a student feels the truth of their position in an event of their own life in relation to theoretical educational material only through their awareness of responsibility towards it.

Teacher's vignette:

Teaching foreign languages to university undergraduate students with much higher language skills, I quite often ask them to write short essays on various topics that we discuss in our classes. In one of my classes in university, the topic of our discussion was the historical situation of the mid-20th century when Germany was divided into democratic West Germany and socialist East Germany, and the confrontation between these two systems. Quickly the discussion focused on the question—which of the two societies was fairer to its citizens? Many students pointed out the advantages of a democratic system of values, since such a system guarantees more rights and opportunities for an individual. However, other students pointed out that the desire of the socialist system was to provide all citizens with equal rights, and for this purpose other, often violent, means were used. At the end of the lesson, I asked students to write a small text at home in which they would explain to me their understanding of the pros and cons of these two systems. The purpose of this task was to give students a chance to once again reflect on all aspects we discussed in the class, to lay them out in more structural written form, and if possible, to express their own opinion. Next week, I received the texts and plunged into reading. To my dismay, most of them, although sometimes written in good German, were similar to each other. My students tried to explain theoretical terms and their relevance to justice by focusing more on the legal component of these terms using a dry, almost bureaucratic language with little use of diverse morphological and syntactic structures, and using mostly the grammatical forms of the present tense. In other words, I saw well-written texts without personal emotions inside. I really missed these personal reflections, and that is why, when I came to class next day, after thanking students for their good texts and grammatical quality, I suggested another topic for an essay, giving enough time to think through and write it.

Now the topic of the essay was, "Imagine that you live in a socialist society. How do you feel? Do you feel injustice towards you or your family?" After receiving texts from students, I saw completely different compositions. Now the writings were filled with students' own thoughts and experiences, with descriptions of suffering, doubts, desires, deep reflections. As a teacher of a foreign language, I was delighted to see how diverse the vocabulary of my students became, how grammatical structures changed and improved, how often the authors began to use forms of the past and future tense and even the passive and subjunctive forms. The second essay, when we discussed them

during the next class, prompted a variety of discussions and heated controversies. I was really happy to see how actively students were involved in discussions using a foreign language: how they tried to defend their own opinion and to point out diverse arguments.

I give this example from my teaching experience to show that the awareness of one's involvement in an event of life is the main reason for responsibility towards this event. Or, according to Bakhtin (2003), "the fact of the actual own awareness of the participation in a single event cannot be adequately described in theoretical terms, but only emotionally expressed and experienced" (p. 38). It is another point of validation that through active empathy and through the feeling of own responsibility, the fact of our being in an event turns this event into part of our own life, assigning to it the moment of our responsible consciousness.

Bakhtin himself describes the awareness of one's own being by resorting to metaphorical formulas. He argues that every act is unique and will not be repeated, because "what I can accomplish can never be accomplished by anyone else" (2003, p. 39). That is, according to Bakhtin, any manifestation of real life is not rationally recognized and is not theoretically perceived as pure piece of information: it does not belong to the sphere of practical truths and values of an individual, but is emotionally, mentally, and volitionally recognized as an integral act at the same time, not divisible into cognitive and emotional-volitional aspects. It is cognized as *the truth of a concrete actual responsibility* (Bakhtin, 2003). Here, Bakhtin introduces the aspect of modality into the process of cognition, as if he obliges our objective existence to be responsible. Bakhtin (2003) calls this "the fact of my *nonalibi in existence*" (p. 39), which is at the core of any act. It is not recognized and not cognized by logical or/and rational thinking but is only recognized and affirmed through active empathy. Bakhtin seems to say, "If I am, then I must" and associates our own very existence with the moment of duty. Or in Bakhtin's words, "I must have a commitment to everything" (p. 40) and "not a single semantic significance in itself can be categorical and compulsive, since I have my alibi in existence" (p. 41). As educators, we must understand that such an obligation does not arise by itself and is not the innate ability of an individual. The goal of an educator is to encourage students to create and form this feeling. Understanding and awareness of duty in existence is the understanding of responsibility. Any rule, any teaching material imposed by a teacher on a student by hierarchical force, will not be accepted by a student as a priori compulsory, since a student will have their alibi in existence.

Teacher's vignette:

In this thesis, I tried to show more positive examples from my teaching practice. But of course, in my career there were negative experiences as well. The main problem, and I think any teacher will agree, is student involvement in learning. What to do if a student simply has no desire to learn a foreign language at all? I already mentioned above that, in spite of its educational and cognitive value, the school is still an institution of hierarchical force, where students are obliged to learn materials which they may not have motivation to learn at all.

I remember when I was a fourth-grade student, which is when in my time, students began to learn a foreign language. At my school, we had a choice of which foreign language to choose: English or German. Some of my classmates chose without thinking, while for others it was a major dilemma. I remember one student in our class who was the first to say that he did not want to learn a foreign language at all, since he would never need it. I still remember this little boy. His father was a shepherd, and his mother was a milkmaid on a collective farm. This boy hoped to finish the required minimum number of classes and leave school as soon as possible to start working. Like his father, his dream was to be a shepherd.

This student, with disarming directness, asked how he would be able to use his foreign languages skills while walking with cattle on a meadow. From a fourth-year student's logical point of view, he was absolutely right. Not only did he not intend to travel or to work in such circumstances where a hypothetical conversation with a foreigner might be possible, but the conditions for his future work were such that he was supposed to work alone with animals without any communication with other employees at all. In those days, when I was the same age as he was, I could not find arguments that would make him agree to learn a foreign language. Even now, after so many years and much teaching experience, the only argument I could put forward to him would be a purely aesthetic argument: learning a foreign language can be just a pleasure. But is this argument enough?

Teaching foreign languages at pre-schools, K-12 schools, and universities, I often asked myself how a lesson can be done so that students forget, even for a short time, that they speak a foreign language. It has always seemed important to me that this

element of foreignness or alienation is the major factor that not only hinders the absorption of materials, but also contributes to the separation of students from teaching materials as something unreasonable, not needed, and not mandatory in life. The problem of teaching a foreign language is that both the vocabulary and grammatical structures of students are always limited, especially at the beginning of the learning process, and students are not able to resort to all the features of the language as they can do while using their own native language. In my teaching practice, I resorted to different activities to create a situation of active empathy towards the language; some of them I have already demonstrated in this paper, and sometimes even such active steps were not successful.

I remember one more activity, which seems to me to have been successful and arouse interest among students and readiness for the active use of a foreign language. In my class we played a charade, where students were asked to find a special small object among a variety of other objects. For this game, I simply placed many different subjects on the teacher's desk, the names of which in German were known to students. After that, standing with my back to my students and blocking their view of the desk, I quickly put one more object on the desk they were supposed to find. The task of the game was not only to find the object but to be able to tell as quickly as possible where the object was located. It was clear that the students had to describe the position of an object in a foreign language, and it was clear that the pedagogical goal of this activity was to review prepositions. As soon as a student found the object and described its location, the student received a point, and I changed the location of the object and placed it in another location. The winner was the student with the most amount of points. This activity became easier to perform when computers appeared, and I was able to project an image with many items on a screen. With time, I have expanded the location of objects; now they increase in number compared with those that sit on the desk. I was able to change items that I hid, the environment where I hid my items, and the number of hidden items—everything was possible with computer slides. And gradually, my students, immersed in playing and searching for those items, forgot that they spoke a foreign language. Those who wanted to be champions of the class were ready to tell me the location of hidden items in seconds, while using the necessary prepositions and articles inclined in the correct case. Thanks to this activity, a boring grammatical exercise turned into an interesting game in which the element of competition and speed

was important, and not the element of correct grammar or sentence construction. I believe that my intention of immersing students in the situation of active empathy was achieved.

The immersion in the subject matter in this case differs from the regular game without educational goals. An example of such is the game of a kitten with a ball described by John Dewey (2005). In Dewey's story, a kitten acts as a living being and subordinates the game to its abilities and capabilities. The final goal of the game is not known to the kitten and is not important. After the example with a kitten, Dewey writes how a child plays with blocks and builds a tower. Just like a kitten, a child subordinates the game to their abilities, but the child forms the rules of the game and its ultimate goal. These rationally assigned rules and an ultimate goal turn game into work; the same happens in art, which is why we call a piece of art a *work of art*. Thus, any work turns into art if the following factors are present: the freedom of expression (see above page 36 about freedom in aesthetics), absence of force (or in other words, freedom of action), setting of rules, awareness of a goal.

I am convinced that the process of education cannot be built only on the argument of receiving pleasure, although we should not forget about this argument either. For Bakhtin, the state of civilization in general is the subject of criticism with which it is necessary to interact at the level of an act, including all mental feelings and emotions. If the need for an obligation arises, then the *feeling of guilt* (Bakhtin, 1995, p. 5) may arise because of a poor realization, or the absence of realization, of this obligation. The concept of guilt was first associated with the concept of Cohen's *Selbstverantwortung*. According to Cohen (1922),

Ethics must keep the line between logic and itself in the matter of guilt and responsibility. . . . no one will release an individual from their responsibility to themselves, not even an acquittal. In this fact of responsibility an act of self-knowledge is committed. (p. 237)

Bakhtin develops Cohen's concept, since for him the sense of responsibility is not only at the border between logic and ethics but is also a connecting element between the logic of life and the ethical perception of life phenomena. Bakhtin's architectonics allows us to perceive life in its progressive step-by-step movements, assessing the ethical and

aesthetic consequences of this step and placing each act of life in a common transcendental totality.

Bakhtin (2003) endows his architectonics with the moment of “distraction from one’s only place” (p. 45); that is, it is a kind of hypothetical movement through the process of a responsible act. All the substantial knowledge obtained by this way is a possible given reality of being, which must be translated into the language of participatory thinking. Through this process of cognition, the knowledge of an individual “becomes a responsibly obliging knowledge of me” (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 45). Bakhtin explicitly states that the entire context of possible human theoretical knowledge and science must become *responsibly recognized* for the participatory uniqueness of an individual; through this recognition, an individual will realize this context as the truth significant to them. This realization determines the priority of emotional experience before rational thinking in Bakhtin's architectonics. This concept is the basis for his entire architectonics of knowledge of the real world, “not thought, but experienced” (Bakhtin, 2003, pp. 49-50). On this concept of an emotionally experienced world, the entire ethical modality of an individual is based, and it is the key factor of education in the post-modern era. It is very interesting to foresee how, in the post-modern world, the task of classical pedagogy in motivating students' interest in knowledge can be replaced by a sense of obligation and responsibility that lasts much longer than simple interest and has a deeply thought-out foundation of conviction. In other words, the question arises: how can we create for our students this “pursuit of wisdom” (Bai, Cohen, & Scott, 2013), that can help students realize their own responsibility for the survival of all, and to move away from the violent imposition of any behavioral schemes or rules?

Another moral aspect in Bakhtin's philosophy inflected in his concept of architectonics is the category of “doubt” as one of the most important moral values. According to Bakhtin (2003), “doubt lies at the core of our effectively incoming life” (p. 12). This concept is in line with such categories as “dialogue” and “polyphony.” For Bakhtin, modern civilization is characterized by the disintegration of the once unified morality into a complex of autonomous and sometimes antagonistic moral systems. Nowadays, it is hardly possible and necessary to determine a single, equally acceptable ideal. This multiplicity of systems will inevitably lead to the totalitarian monologism of a certain “supermoral”, and deeper confrontation between those who have different ideals. Rather, a general orientation to the polyphony of moral life and to the dialogue of many

moral concepts may help in the social integration of the post-modern society. Bakhtin finds a solution that can be opposed to the actual dominance of one ideology and the defining "serious" reality by inventing the *carnival polyphony*. According to Bakhtin, there are two concepts in opposition to each other: a dualism similar to the Apollonian and Dionysian dichotomy in Greek mythology (developed later by Nietzsche in his *The Birth of Tragedy*, where the carnival concept is a plurality of voices), and the monologism that represents only one voice of an established ideology. Bakhtin writes that

[i]n the era of great fractures and reappraisals, changes of truth, all life takes in a certain sense a carnival character: the borders of an official world are going narrow, and the world of itself loses its severity and confidence; the borders of an area are expanding, its atmosphere begins to penetrate everywhere. (Dmitrieva 1995, p. 28)

In our time of the destruction of global ideals and the emergence of many theories, ethics, sources, and platforms of virtual coexistence, this idea is more important than ever. Postmodern theory is used in the term of *super-realism* (Groys, 1989, p. 76), which is also expressed in Bakhtin's polyphony and carnivalism. Modern *deconstructive* or *eliminative postmodernism* (Orr, 1991, p.2) breaks solid concepts apart and makes it difficult to see their essence and the general context. In such situations, Bakhtin's architectonics of polyphony act as a tool—not as a process of organizing the totality of the sum of elements, but as an all-penetrating transcendental substance of understanding that arises from all these elements in their wholeness. This tool is necessary to see and understand the wholeness—not as a sum of particulars, but as a result of the perception of all these particulars. On the other hand, Bakhtin's carnival is a joyful event that is free and brings people together; a kind of common worldview, which is opposed to one-sided and totalitarian seriousness of the monologic concept that generates nothing but fear and separation. According to Lorenz (1998), "it is laughter which creates a strong sense of community between its members." Shared laughter creates an instant connection between participants. At the same time, laughter may generate a line of separation; this means that, if you cannot laugh with others, you become a stranger even when the laughter is not directed against you.

Teacher's vignette:

Probably one of the most important moments in every teacher's life is the moment of starting a lesson. The first minutes, even the first seconds, of the lesson are always important: they set up students in the right way, they imbue the entire process with an appropriate tone, and create an atmosphere necessary for efficient teaching processes. My experience as a teacher told me that quite often, the lesson got off to the right start if I started with a joke, with shared laughter. Over many years of work, I have collected various drawings and sketches, as well as short funny stories or anecdotes from history, from books or magazines, or from my own experience. At first, all this material was stored in many cardboard folders; now, everything is scanned and systematized in my computer, but still quite often I start my lessons by projecting a funny sketch on a white screen. All images in my collection are sorted according to the topics of possible lessons or grammatical constructions that will be reviewed in a lesson. For example, if I plan to review the topic "Food" in my lesson, I will most likely begin this lesson by showing a sketch about a funny situation in a restaurant. And if the subject of a lesson is the grammatical construction of modal verbs, the picture will be devoted to the wishes of children for Santa Claus on Christmas Eve. I mention my collection as an example that proves Bakhtin's idea of carnival as an *ontological secondary nature of reality* (Bakhtin, 2003)—as carnival laughter in its essence is not an action, but a person's reaction to a sociocultural phenomenon.

Laughter, according to Bakhtin, is a "post-phenomenon" or a "post-reality", which is "consonant with post-modern ideology" (Chorushiy, 1995, p. 18). It is of great help to teachers in their educational practices because teachers take into account the anthropological and sociocultural aspects of humor. Thus, humor is considered not only a practical tool but also an equal component of an aesthetically organized Bakhtinian act. Thanks to humor and laughter, a teacher may create a situation of participation or involvement of all, including the teacher, in one single act of life. This concept resonates with Lyotard's *process paralogy* (Lyotard, 1984) in which he suggests that groups can get together and create their own narratives; hence, they are playing their own language games, using language to create new forms of knowledge. Balancing questions about knowledge and narratives in post-modern conditions, again suggests Bakhtin's idea of the true position, which I mentioned above, where it is possible to establish some inverse proportion between the theoretical entity and practical unity (between existence

and consciousness). Bakhtin argued that the closer we come to the theoretical entity in a specific event, the more urgently we feel our responsibility, which is immersed in our *true position* of this single event. For me in this situation, the question of balance between one's own subjective narrative and objective knowledge is important. In this paradigm, to determine the value of knowledge, we are guided by the truth of our situation, or by the truth of our existence, in which we are present, but which is higher than each of us, because in our ontological existence we bear a common responsibility.

Thinking about the possibility of creating the notion of a *true position* in a group of students, we can again resort to Bakhtin's dialogical idea in which a word is "a bridge thrown between myself and others" (Bakhtin, 2003, p. 39); therefore, both a speaking subject and a listener play the same roles of identifying values and meanings that are important to both parties. This united interpretation of meanings, or a *shared language*, is one of the most significant characteristics of dialogical communication. Such an example of dialogical communication is reflected in curriculum language (Mehrmohammadi, 2016) or in reference to Heubner's six different types of curriculum language described by Pinar (2008, p. 417).

Applying Bakhtin's architectonics principles to curriculum discourse, we may ask ourselves a simple question: what is meant by curriculum discourse? According to Egan (2003), the key point of curriculum discourse lies in the answer to the question—what is the essence of education? It is a Bakhtinian attempt to find architectonics, as it is for Egan (2003): "one part of my conclusion was that almost anything to do with education seemed to be encompassed in the notion of what it meant to "do" curriculum" (p. 18)? Egan indicates the same idea in his book *The Educated Mind* (2006), when he highlights two different historical approaches to education by Plato and by Rousseau:

Ideas of Plato and Rousseau are in conflict to each other. The idea of Plato is that the educational process is pushed forward by the study and comprehension of an individual, more and more towards new forms of knowledge. That is, the accumulation of knowledge is the driving force of education. The idea of Rousseau is that education is the result of an internal development process, which constantly exists within a supportive environment. It is development that defines what skill should be gained at each of its stages, and what kind of knowledge is appropriate. Education for Plato is an epistemological, time-

depending process. Education for Rousseau is a psychological process, which depends on the age. (p. 27)

As I see it, in the issue of curriculum two forces need to be considered: ontological and epistemological. On one hand, students are in the process of personal and social survival, and depends on the rules and regulations of social groups in which they are located; on the other hand, students need to go beyond their ontological existence and gain some knowledge of a higher level or the moral quality: or as Egan (2003) interprets Plato's words, "we should shape the child's mind through years of careful discipline and learning, to inquire after the truth, regardless of conventions and what is taken for granted by the society at large" (p. 19). Trying to combine these two opposite forces in education, Egan (2006) believes that "education must be a process of mastering these forms of knowledge that can give students a very specific, rational sense of reality" (p. 19). I see here in this idea of rationality an "ideal" curriculum. That means that the objective of a curriculum is not to merely connect students to life in society, but to connect them to a rational social existence. Education not only provides academic knowledge but provides it from a rational point of view, in which, according to Cohen (1922), "[t]here is no doubtful truth...." (p. 115), which takes into account only the student's, not the media's subjective reaction to knowledge.

Conclusion and possible implementations

At the end of my dissertation, I would like to summarize once again my main conclusions on Bakhtin's philosophical ideas from their practical educational point of view. As a pedagogue, I am impressed by Bakhtin's ideas and am convinced that when someone is inspired by them, they will have far-reaching reform possibilities for education. I would like to devote this last section of my thesis to not only summarizing Bakhtin's main philosophical ideas but also considering deeply and imaginatively what schooling—the formal part of education—would be like if we were to infuse it generously with his ideas. I am convinced that the process of implementing an aesthetic worldview is an inseparable part of the whole concept of education. For myself as a practicing educationalist, it is important to understand in Bakhtin's philosophy of aesthetical perception that a word has aesthetic importance; since education is not separable from a word, Bakhtin's philosophy also has an epistemological importance because any word contributes to education. As a practicing teacher, I must understand that a person perceives the world around them as a text that may be interesting or boring, useful or unimportant, but it always affects cognitive emotion. Thus, the process of gaining knowledge itself is a combination of many emotions. These emotions are not always positive or useful, but all aesthetics originates from this experience.

Thus, the text of our progressive life has an image of literature, thanks to which we perceive our life. Verducci (2000) called literature "the main method used for cultivation of empathy in education" (p. 79). In this moment we as educators need to understand that aesthetic perception in its essence is not a method for finding objective truth and can, under specific circumstances, even prevent the finding of objective truth. But a practicing educator has the right to consider aesthetics as an auxiliary tool for determining the truth in education. I can well imagine that teaching can be organized as a moment of learning or even reading a piece of literature—not only in literature classes but also in other classes. In this thesis, I have written many teacher's vignettes where I tried, even in foreign language classes, to awaken in students an aesthetic interest and a passion to learn. I am confident the same is geography, ethnography, history, etc. where the aesthetic aspect must not be forgotten. I do not mean only the emotional factor of pleasure or disgust—after all, it is quite difficult to achieve an aesthetic reaction in math or chemistry classes—but even in such classes, some elements of aesthetic

reaction are possible. The most important thing for a teacher here is to be able to create a pathway from purely logical mandatory teaching material to the aesthetic feelings of students, simply by asking whether they like what is being taught or what is their reaction is to the teaching events in their class.

As soon as we start talking about the aesthetic component of education, we immediately take the path toward a subjective perception of reality. This is obvious because if one individual likes or dislikes something, it does not mean that exactly the same emotions will be displayed by everyone around them. I can imagine that the awareness of this fact will require a teacher to be willing to compromise, since they will understand that the inviolable and indisputable truth that they pass to students can be perceived differently by students: it can be interpreted differently and probably even falsely. This can be considered a disturbing factor for education but at the same time a helping factor, because it may help the students to determine the importance of the acquired knowledge for their own life. And if we are talking about subjectivity, then sooner or later we will come to the concept of metaphysical elements in the process of perception and education. Under the influence of Bakhtin's ideas, I am sure that a practicing educator should not be afraid of such aspirations and can actively use them in their teaching practices. We as educators should have a clear concept of students' process of perceiving educational materials, when, according to the phenomenological philosophy, students first realize only the vague, unclear, presumable content of the material; and then, thanks to their own empathic thinking, come to a clear understanding of facts, processes and concepts. I am deeply convinced that a teacher, realizing this, must demonstrate great patience and responsiveness to any possible questions from a student, even if they are not logically connected with the specific material being taught. It is this joyful final awareness of one's own rectitude in understanding that gives the phenomenological process of perception its moral characteristic, convinces a student about the rightness of their understanding, and gives them confidence in the Bakhtinian *truth of life*.

Considering this emotional factor, a teacher not only expects students' understanding of educational materials and their firm memorization and strict implementation but encourages students to achieve the Bakhtinian individually responsible attitude towards the material as an act of life. The process of education, it is more than simply memorization of pieces of knowledge or showing the results through

patterns of a test or quiz. A teacher expects from students the fulfillment of a mental spiritual act, a moral action that will endow students with truth in their position and will give them confidence about the importance of knowledge acquired for their future life. Proceeding from such an educational objective, it turns out that it is not educators who are at the centre of their educational practices—that is, as persons who embody the essence and correctness of education and non-educational materials as an undeniable source of knowledge—but students, for the student is at the same time both the target and the result of such a mental moral act. For me as a teacher, it seems to be important to understand that the ability to realize individual responsibility requires a student to possess certain mental and moral qualities that must be brought up beyond any particular learning subjects. Every teacher has probably said to our students: "This is important for you." But this phrase is not enough. It is necessary to bring up the material in such a way, and choose the teaching and communication tools, that would help the students realize and make a personal choice with the answer: "Yes, this is really important for me."

Following Bakhtin's philosophy of perception, as educators, we are able to abstract from a specific object of perception, as if to look at it from the outside. The dual nature of this approach is expressed in the fact that we simultaneously immerse ourselves in the subject of our study; we examine it from the inside, and at the same time we find ourselves outside it—outside of our position in relation to the subject—and observe it as a whole from a distance, considering in our observation all the accompanying elements of this one-time life event. For cultivating such a world view in students, it is necessary to cultivate their aesthetic will, which can lead students to the harmony of life through education. By harmony here, I mean the term for harmony in classical philosophy, as an agreeable coexistence of many dissimilar and sometimes even conflicting elements. From the educational point of view, pedagogy can be harmonized by a syllabus coexisting with different subjects of study, or harmonized coexistence of different opinions between a teacher and a student, or another compromise between different strata in school society. In any case, I am sure, the search for general harmony can and should be part of modern education. This concept is the basis of Bakhtin's cultural philosophy, which, in my opinion, can help us in the contemporary world in realizing the totality of cultural phenomena, if we accept our culture as "as a network of overlapping discussions and tendencies, attitudes and ideas,

changing over time" (Bostad, 2004, p.2). This philosophy is, from my point of view, useful not only in practical pedagogy but also in self-education of teachers, as it helps to structure the diverse educational material delivered to an educator in the form of books, articles, interactive manuals, virtual sources, and ideas from conversations with colleagues in terms of their usefulness and effective impact on students. In addition, Bakhtin's philosophy is an aid in understanding the balance between the subjective attitude towards materials and their objective usefulness for specific educational practices, which in turn helps to crystallize the most useful and important essence of educational processes.

I have already mentioned Vygotsky's (2005) conclusion that "social activity passes into a subject" (p. 7). In the course of their lives, individuals develop and become themselves: they form and realize their personality through interactivity with others. In Bakhtin's philosophy, an individual is the central point of the world they perceive, to which thousands of rays of new phenomena, knowledge, facts and emotional moments are streaming. Bakhtin preaches that in order to realize all this variety of phenomena, a person needs at least two specific consciousnesses in their unity. I mentioned already the epistemological importance of the word and its embodiment in the text of our knowledge. But in this case, the discussion focuses on the dialogical property of our consciousness. Without a doubt, every educator is confident that education is impossible without a confidential conversation. According to Callan (1995), "Dialogue is said to be one of the essential processes by which caring is developed" (p. 10). But what Bakhtin adds to this paradigm of a dialogue between a teacher and a student is the fact that he embodies dialogue with the concept of responsibility. This is the core element of a mental moral act. For me, as a teacher, the awareness of this moral act is an important point for education. This means that the dialogue between a teacher and a student is not only a pedagogical necessity, but also a moral duty—at least on the teacher's end. Considering this, the purpose of a pedagogical dialogue is not only the transfer of knowledge or skills from a teacher to a student, but also an important cultural and ethical aspect of common life. In practice, this means that a good teacher must carry out a dialogue with their own students. And by using the term dialogue, I mean here an equal dialogue between equal participants. Educators must understand a statement, which they themselves perceive as untouchable truth, may be perceived by a student as the moment of their being, but not as the moment of their existential responsibility. Thus, a

dialogue itself as an educational process receives the quality of moral action: it becomes a *moral dialogue* (Callan, 1995), which is much broader than just a dialogue about a moral act. Unfortunately, the hierarchical structure of education itself, implying unequal positioning of knowledge-giver and knowledge-taker, process administrators, process providers, and process performers implies more and even encourages more use of monologue speech.

Monologue speech is inherently implied as absolutely true because it does not tolerate open objections or reflections. Any monologue speech confronting an objection or contra-monologic speech instantly turns into dialog. I, as an educator, should understand that for better contact with the student and considering Buber's (2002) suggestion that "the relation in education is one of pure dialogue" (p.116), the teacher must step down to the level of a student; to become equal to a student within their existential matrix and as such, to enter into a *zone of dialogical contact* (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 45). Such dialogic contraposition and participatory thinking developed through it, are useful not only from a practical pedagogic point of view, but also in possible and frequent negotiations within the entire educational hierarchical structure. The most logical and effective way to solve social problems is to have open discussions: that is, to create a process of equal participation in democratic discussion, in which everyone is ready to express their own opinion, provide reasoned arguments, and even to be open to compromises. As I wrote above (p. 54), a teacher should be aware of the difference and the meaning of dialogical and monologue speech. Of course, it is impossible to completely abandon monologue speech in teaching, no matter how hierarchical and possibly outdated this teaching instrument may be. But nevertheless, if there is a choice—and this should be a conscious choice on the teacher's part—a teacher should try to prefer dialogical speech to a monologue one, the advantages of which have been explained in detail in this dissertation.

In such mutual social contacts within closed systems, participants may need a specific strategic tool: specifically, what Bakhtin called his philosophy of architectonics. In the post-modern world of the 21st century, when there are many political and economic climates, when culture is dominated by technology that provides many forms of *representation and communication* (Bostad, 2004), when oral or printed informational and educational materials are replaced by more diverse, flexible, and interactive virtual sources or by meta-narratives—in such a complex world, it is necessary to have the

skills and abilities to build a clear, logical, and all-pervasive concept of the surrounding environment. In education, there are "many features that could properly be called postmodern" (Usher, 1997, p. 1); therefore, we cannot rely only on purely mechanical procedures for systematization of individual phenomena. It is important for us to be able to relate the often complementary and sometimes mutually exclusive moments of our existence into a general canvas of understanding: to have a common "cognitive perspective" (Warnick, 2007) to help us not only to penetrate separate events of our life, but also to establish the connection of these elements to other aspects of the world and to see our place within a "coherent pattern of life" (Warnick, 2007). Bakhtin postulates that the entire architectonics in their totality are possible only in relation to an actively thinking individual. Such architectonics are possible when the world is not only rationally and logically knowable, but also internally emotionally experienced.

I am confident that teachers should include this aspect of internal emotional experience in their practical teaching work, and not only in communication with students. In preparation for a lesson, a teacher can imagine what emotions the presentation of certain teaching material will cause, and how these emotions may impact the flow and context of a lesson. A teacher can also think about the emotions of students during the class, in order, as a real leader, to create the most favorable communication atmosphere so that students can and wish to demonstrate their skills. Understanding the importance of emotions will help a teacher communicate more effectively with students' parents, with colleagues, and with school administration. And most importantly, emotions are part of the teacher's own life. It is clear that teachers can most effectively and passionately be a teacher if they experience motivating emotions. In my understanding, Bakhtin's architectonics is akin to a *house* described as a building in its variety of architectural forms, decorative elements, engineering solutions, and aesthetic perspective of location. But that is not enough until the house is filled with a sense of belonging, turning into a *home*.

The architectonics of Bakhtin's polyphony acts as a tool: not as a process of organizing the totality of the sum of elements but as an all-penetrating transcendental substance of active empathy, which may be "active or passive, rational or mystical, artistic or scientific, and a symbol of projection or reception" (Verducci, 2000, p. 64). It is necessary to see and understand the wholeness not as an aggregation of particulars, but as a result of the knowledge of this aggregation. Bakhtin's architectonics is not a

frozen passive structure, not a row of shelves in our memory closet, but a flexible, adaptable, and absorbable structure. It creates margins around the temporary flow of our life and provides us with power to understand our life as an all-pervading philosophical phenomenon, which is why it can make a significant positive contribution to educational practices. We as educators have the intention to bring people together in the paradigm of certain cultural practices; in our post-modern society, we impact the identity formation of our students as well as the formation of social groups in our part of society. Playing the role of teachers, it is in our authority to distribute power and freedom in educational practices and it depends on us to what extent this freedom will become a "*moral freedom*" (Buber, 2002). Our philosophy of life can be Bakhtin's desire to respect the freedom of our students in their own perception of the world, their own *truth of position*, and we can contribute to "encouraging varying forms of expression and the freedom to speak and question both within and beyond the classroom" (Ben-Porath, 2016, p. 84). Such freedom can awaken, both in a student and in an educator, the Bakhtinian phenomenon of *nonalibi in existence*, the phenomenon that endows our existence with moral principles and transforms the empty possibility of our existence into active empathy of our cultural development as conscious and morally responsible personalities.

Teacher's vignette:

Well, my work is almost finished. While writing this dissertation, memories of my long years teaching in small rural schools flashed by: many faces of students and colleagues, ordinary rural dwellers, who were completely committed to their profession. The last memory I would like to share is of a small village school in the depths of southern Belarus, in areas troubled by the Chernobyl disaster, where, while still a student at a pedagogical university, I had my internship and practiced teaching German as a foreign language.

The village in which this school was located was so far from large settlements that it took several hours to get to it by regular bus. There were not many inhabitants in the village, and the school was so small that in some classes there were only a few students; they came to school from nearby villages and farms, sometimes walking several kilometers every day. When I came to this school, I saw only four students in the

ninth-grade German class, three boys and one girl, and I was surprised to find out that this girl was pregnant. She was not the best student, always shy and timid and seemed afraid to say too much, especially when her other three classmates actively participated in class discussions. Fortunately (or unfortunately), all three boys were rather inconsistent students, and as soon as the snow had gone and the weather became sunny, they preferred playing soccer at the stadium behind the school to attending my class. So, it turned out that in many of my classes, I had only one student—this girl sitting in the last row, as far away from me as possible. At first, we did not succeed in contact at all. I spent more time telling stories about Germany or just reading German texts aloud, and she just sat without saying a word. Then I asked her to follow my reading and raise a hand every time she recognized a German word she knew, or when I made a reading mistake (on purpose). Finally, she started talking: first a little, then more, and it so happened that I found out her sad story.

She lived on a long-distance farm, two kilometers away from the school. She never knew her father, and her mother worked in the nearest collective farm as a milkmaid and was always very busy because she was a member of the local, very closed, church community and spent all her free time in the church. This girl never had friends, she was always alone, and no one had ever talked to her about relationships with people of the opposite gender, not to mention sex. One morning, when she walked to school as usual through fields and meadows, a local shepherd—a man with obvious mental issues—chased her, beat her, and raped her. At the first moment, she did not even realize what he was doing and thought he wanted to kill her. She was very scared about what happened, but she had no one to tell it to. She told her mother only when she realized that something was wrong with her body. From her mother, she learned that she was pregnant. The reaction of her mother, as a fanatical Christian, was somewhat predictable: she became furious and practically drove her out of the house. The girl had to spend nights in a barn with animals; she went home only to eat something and only when her mother was away. Moreover, at school she also did not receive any support. When her pregnancy became visible, her classmates, no matter how few they were, preferred not to talk to her and began to mock her even more than before. In the end, it turned out that the only one who spoke to her at all, who listened to her attentively and sympathized with her, was me in my German class.

I was the first one and the only one in her life who listened to her story, and possibly the only one who could give her some advice. Frankly, as a young teacher not even having graduated from university, I did not have much experience in this matter. The only thing I could give her at this time was my sympathy and some encouraging words. Four months of my internship in this school passed by and I had to leave. This girl, despite the fact that she was already in the last month of pregnancy, was one of the few students who came to the bus stop to say goodbye. I was the only German teacher in their school, so students obviously asked me who would teach them German after me and whether a new teacher who would come after me would be a male or a female. I could not answer these questions. This girl also asked me for some advice on how to continue learning German on her own, and what books I could advise her to read. I understood, but didn't tell her, that soon she would have a completely different experience, a difficult life experience for her, and that in the coming years she would hardly have the opportunity to seriously study German; still, I recommended some books for her to read. And only having become a more experienced teacher, after many years, I realized that she, too, understood her future perfectly, and all she wanted from me at that time was to tell me, in her own way, how thankful she was for my support and words of empathy and kindness to her at that difficult time. It was not the German language that was important to her, but my support and acceptance of her as an equal and decent person. I never saw her again and do not know what happened to her and her child. I hope that she had a good life.

I am finishing my dissertation with this vignette in order to emphasize once again that sometimes a teacher can be considered by a student as some kind of unreachable sacral person. I say sacral, because thanks to a teacher, a student has the opportunity to enter a different tangential world of knowledge and get other new meanings of their life. Thus, a teacher has the ability to connect a person with their existential meaning and thereby give them some hope. In Dewey's (1911) reflections on whether education is science or art, there is no definite answer. Exact sciences give the ability to predict; we can calculate the trajectory of a stone not yet thrown or the reaction of chemical substances not yet mixed into solution. But when we are engaged in education, we cannot predict which of the knowledge and skills that we have transferred to students, will be retained after many years. All we can do is to "attach the hope to education" (Warnick, 2007). We can spend a lot of energy teaching in classes, communicating with

students, parents, and other participants. We can design the most sophisticated quizzes to test students' skills. But after all this effort, we cannot predict what knowledge transferred by us will remain with a student in the future, as we do not know what will happen to those students who leave our classrooms at the end of our educational performance. In this case, we really have nothing left but hope.

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