

DOI: 10.14394/eidos.jpc.2019.0036

Rafał Włodarczyk
Institute of Pedagogy
University of Wrocław
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8817-2493>

About Listening and Hearing in the Perspective of the Philosophy of Education

Review: Małgorzata Przanowska, *Listening and Acouological Education*,
(Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2019), 306 pages.

*No less than "poetry," in the categorical sense philosophy has its music,
its pulse of tragedy, its raptures, even, though infrequently, its laughter*

George Steiner, *The Poetry of Thought*

Małgorzata Przanowska's book restores to us a fascinating resonance of our way of being in the world. It gives voice to the rustling aspect of thoughts, the vibrations of human bodies and the cosmos. The author is interested in the kind of energy that like an image penetrates the mind, but has a greater capacity for transposing movements through the entire substance of a human being. Through assiduous, in-depth and original research that has been expressed precisely, interestingly and clearly, the author develops her studies on hermeneutics and on a Gadamerian approach to it, both focused on the issue of listening. It should be stressed right away that both the choice of the subject matter and the manner of accomplishing the tasks set by the author are a testimony to great preparation, which can be said with satisfaction by devoting attention to the work written in six chapters divided into two parts, preceded by an introduction, and closed by a short "coda," heart-felt acknowledgments, an extensive bibliography and a meticulous index.

In the first paragraphs of the introduction, the author explains the perspective adopted in her research, referring to the findings of Max van Manen on the subject of hermeneutic phenomenology. It is worth recalling, for a clearer presentation of this perspective, van Manen's conclusions, which Przanowska quotes:

The phenomenological method consists of the ability, or rather the art of being sensitive – sensitive to the subtle undertones of language, to the way language speaks when it allows the things themselves to speak.... This means that an authentic speaker must be a true listener, able to attune to the deep tonalities of language that normally fall out of our accustomed range of hearing, able to listen to the way the things of the world speak to us. (LAE, 7–8)

The author's aim is to get closer to the phenomenon of listening (or indeed audibility), including as an educational experience, then finding a proper reference point for this phenomenon: an acouological education (Greek *acouō* can be understood as both listening and hearing), which will focus on "acoumenons." The author explains her choice of the research subject as follows: "One of the most exciting concepts in contemporary hermeneutics is the experience of the speculative unity of language, thing and thinking (thought)" (LAE, 8). The researcher then discusses the selected literature, in particular pedagogical texts, focused around the phenomenon of listening, and her attention is mainly focused on those positions in which listening/hearing is the creation, updating, and intensification of subjectivity. The texts under discussion include those by Peter Szendy, Małgorzata Szyszkowska, Peter Wilberg, and especially Lisbeth Lipari. There is also the monumental *The Sourcebook of Listening Researches* edited by Debra L. Worthington and Graham D. Bodie,¹ as well as the work of Andrew Dobson, and the articles contained in the thematic issue of the journal *Educational Theory* (Przanowska pays special attention to Andrea English's contribution) on this subject,² and *Listening to Teach* edited by Leonard J. Waks.³ This selection of literature focused on research on the phenomenon of listening should be considered as representative, and their manner of presenting the content and issues related to this theme does not present any doubt. After the introduction, the other sections of *Listening and Acouological Education*, which are equally valuable, consist of a clear presentation of the work's structure and a preliminary discussion by the author about the approach to hermeneutics she adopted, in reference to the thought of Hans-Georg Gadamer.

The first part of the book, "The Phenomenological Hermeneutics of Listening," opens with the chapter "The Hermeneutic Conversation and the Piercing Dialectics Resounding in Listening (Overture Figures: Hans-Georg Gadamer and Jean-Luc Nancy)," which consists of nine precisely composed separate sections. The author discusses Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophy, various aspects of his dialogical and dialectical conception of hermeneutics, referring to it directly and through the prism of commentaries raised around his thought (a special role is played by the commentaries of James Risser). She puts clear emphasis on interpreting the task of understanding, expressed in *Truth and Method* and in Gadamer's later works, which consists in reviving the voice of the Other deposited in the text. It is worth emphasizing that this part of the work is characterized by an in-depth understanding of the issues raised, vast knowledge of the literature of the subject and an expressive presentation of the issue. Following Gadamer, the author investigates the language of things and their audibility,

1) Debra L. Worthington and Graham D. Bodie, eds., *The Sourcebook of Listening Research: Methodology and Measures* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018).

2) Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon and Megan J. Laverty, eds., "Symposium: Philosophical Perspectives on Listening," special issue, *Educational Theory* 61, 2 (April 2011).

3) Leonard J. Waks, ed., *Listening to Teach: Beyond Didactic Pedagogy* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2015).

trying to gain an insight into the perception of these issues, characteristic of antiquity. Seeking inspiration in ancient Greek philosophy, she turns to Plato's dialogues and rereads them.

In the same way (and using the commentary of Cezary Wodziński), she specifies the difference between "sophistic" interpretation, which reduces the disclosure to didactic administration, and "dialectical" interpretation, which overcomes the weaknesses of *logoi*; she writes, "philosophy as dialectics must put itself into the medium of discourse" (LAE, 52). This line of thought leads the author to develop a commentary, inspired by the question on the freedom of the listener. This commentary opens up with references to themes linked with the "techne" of teaching and to the famous work of Warner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Formation of the Greek Man*. In the next step, initiated by the statement, "the structure of question is the structure of openness" (LAE, 54), Przanowska sheds light on the issue developed in the previous section, where she seemed not to inquire about freedom but about "freeing" (emancipation), liberation or, speaking a different language, transforming being in yourself and for yourself into being for the Other. Nevertheless, this openness is at first a limitation or a specification of the direction; in the section under discussion, Przanowska, following Gadamer, considers this issue. Of course, she goes beyond the way of asking questions in which the teacher, "rhetor," leads to the answer they want or expect to hear. In the conception developed by the author, which is close to Gadamer's theory of understanding, the act of asking is an event, is an effect of practicing art; in other words, "the art of questioning is the art of conversation which consists in following the line of thought" (LAE, 56), says the author, inspired by the commentary of Thomas Schwarz Wentzer.

In the next, (sixth) subsection, Przanowska develops this understanding of questioning, discussing the central thesis of the work: "The conversation/listening that we are". In other words, "*Dasein* is dialogical, and our being-in-the-world is dialogical, con-versational" (LAE, 58). This statement, as she indicates, is close to Andrzej Wierciński's thinking. The author stresses that "in fact, this circular relation between listening and speaking is dialectical" (LAE, 59) (and also "the issue of listening... is hidden in the dialectics of question and answer" [LAE, 60]), which marks the next step in her interpretation of Gadamer's concept of hermeneutics, at which point she returns to the famous philosophical *topoi*, the allegory of cave from the seventh book of Plato's *Republic*.

The distinction between "hearing" and "listening" determines the moment when the author reaches for the thought of the second hero of the first chapter of the book – the French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy – for whom being someone who listens means, "to enter into tension and to be on the lookout for a relation to self" (LAE, 63). And the basis of subjectivity is identical with the place of resonance, a "sonorous place," a "vibrant place" – in this way she announces the small or mini phenomenology of listening, on which she elaborated in the third chapter. As Przanowska concludes, "listening appears to be a reality of being invited to enter a new or different multidimensional reality or being grasped, caught by reality." It makes you feel, "*at the same time* outside and inside, to be open *from* without and *from* within" (LAE, 64).

The questions raised in this section are a convenient opportunity not only to develop but also to deepen the ontological issues of being and the world, as well as an opportunity to reflect on education, which together constitute a harbinger of the content developed in the second part of the book. According to the author, the findings of Gadamer and Nancy are not divergent; her reading of the essay *A l'écoute* written by Nancy leads her to the conclusion that, "we are like the musical instrument being set in motion (by touch, by oscillation or by different waves) that utters sounds, different noises, or voices – *we (re)sound*" (LAE, 67), and then leads her to the next subsection which presents, in brief, the issue of obtaining meaningfulness, content beyond, or in relation to meaning. As we know, the issue that the researcher approached in this way is one of the most difficult transitions for phenomenology. It is the relation (or tangent points) of the phenomenon which appears to consciousness to the semantic content of language, and also the relationships between connections in the structure of objects and in the structure of a language's grammar, the adhesion of thoughts to data derived from perception – and at the same time it is the crossroads of phenomenology and hermeneutics. In the first place, the author

draws attention to Nancy's approach to the rhythm and timbre of sound, and in the final section of this chapter to tonality, in order to ultimately formulate some conclusions about hermeneutics in relation to the findings of Gadamer, and about reactions to motions caused by sounds. As she accepts: "In the philosophical hermeneutic the experience of conversation and understanding in language is the experience of the event of sense because in the thing-coming-to-language a sense happens in order to disappear in a different understanding during the conversation that never ends" (LAE, 74). She writes very penetratingly about the reaction to motion caused by sounds: "A question not only occurs but sounds as well. Its motion is like a breath or a wind that appears and is capable of setting things in motion, that is to make things indeterminate and in a sense open" (LAE, 76). It should be emphasized that the content of the chapter under discussion is a well-ordered and inspired piece of philosophical reasoning with carefully selected documentation.

The author opens up the second chapter, "The Hermeneutic Priority of the Question: Cultivating the Hermeneutic Ear," consisting of five subchapters, by referring to the findings included in her own article published a few years ago, "Człowiek jako pytanie" ("Human Being as a Question"), and by referring to some of her own comments about the category of experience as well as about educational tasks. Then, taking off from David Aldridge's article "The Logical Priority of the Question," the author develops an analysis of the components and aspects of the questioning event as a transforming experience, an experience promised by the education taking place in the conversational situation. Subsequent sections of the chapter offer a deeper analysis of the issues outlined in its introduction, which the author consistently carried out in the perspective of Gadamer's philosophy: in other words, analyzing the phenomenological interpretation of different variations of the questioning situation and its impact, its resonating with both the questioner and the listener, the analysis of the ethics of taste, brings to mind the concept of the aesthetics of existence, and the analysis of the issue of translation. These analyses allow the author to indicate the prerequisites for education as a preparation for being listeners or being in a way of listening. In the context of the insights considered, it should be recognized that the quality of this being is what is at stake. As the author points out:

Listening can be compared to a gate that enables us to access another possibility of being human in the world. The uniqueness of it consists in the fact that the gate is in us and operates as the constant call to be ourselves within the community with "the other" who can be right, and so worth hearing out. Being able to hear out the voice of the other and respond to it seems to be the heart of education and every fruitful human relationship. (LAE, 94)

This chapter, of a clearly smaller size, elaborates on the issues raised in the earlier parts of the text. It is also well-documented, clear and inspiring in its findings and reflections. It is an important element of the project developed by the researcher. It is an interpretation of Gadamer's hermeneutics, as well as of a broader discussion that goes beyond this current of modern thought.

In the introductory part of the third chapter, "A Mini-phenomenology of Listening," the longest and the most extensive chapter of the book, before developing issues initially formulated in the previous chapter, the author discusses the assumptions that make up the perspective of her research and also allow her to distinguish forms or aspects of listening. She convincingly justifies the order of content appearing in this chapter:

Due to the reality of the substance and its captivating way of appearing and the different moments of perceiving its aspects, there is a need to enumerate the forms of aspect-performances separately, using a typological, in a sense, language of description, or – if one prefers – in an aspectual one. (LAE, 100)

The first of the forms Przanowska distinguishes and discusses, each of which is the subject matter of a separate subchapter, is unwitting listening, or in other words, hearing which is not accompanied by conscious listening, as well as the awareness of listening. The author presents the circumstances in which this form of listening occurs and illustrates them by referring to Alfred A. Tomatis' discussion around the training of hearing concentration; she also indicates the importance of this form of listening for education. The next forms the author indicates and discusses are listening with understanding, which manifests itself in communication situations as intentional listening, which via interpretations characteristic of a particular listener aims at that purpose. In other words, this form is understanding and listening to the breath, and also to the heart, and in fact to the waves generated in the air by the pulsating bodies of man and the universe.

The next form, which the author called listening in action, the researcher links to everyday functioning, whose description resembles Heidegger's *bustle*, with its attentive listening to situations. In turn, when discussing critical listening, the author concentrates on the action of the power of judgment, mainly on the human capacity to analyze and evaluate and, as can be assumed, the specific distance to the spoken, which is assumed in this form of listening. Close to critical listening is interrogative listening, which, however, is different, according to the author, in its course, character and purpose, as it is a way of listening to spoken content, which is contrasted by its skeptical distance.

In turn, by addressing the issue of emancipatory-liberating listening, the researcher refers to the meanings derived from the etymologies of the expression "to be free" that are appropriate for various languages. She points to its connections with the expression "love" or "friendship," which is the starting point for her discussion of the nature of this form of listening, characterized by gaining the right relationship, breaking loneliness, or rather singleness, but without losing oneself. As she explains, "freedom is achieved when the measure and proportion of the existential 'distantiation' are restored, constructed anew or from scratch, but always somehow differently in the attunement to the particular situation" (LAE, 118), whereas in recognizing/diagnostic listening "we move our ears in two directions. The first is toward the reality as it is at the moment, the second toward our knowledge as a medium of understanding what is probably going on" (LAE, 121). We deal here with compilation, comparison, and recognition of something as something, creation of a kind – in the language of symbolic interactionism: a "definition of the situation".

According to the author, in instrumental listening, the context and ambiguity of the expression and the selection of its contents are limited in accordance with the accepted criterion for gaining access to the expected and useful information. Nevertheless, as she claims, "the instrumental listening plays an important role in many aspects of our everyday life and it is not a good idea to belittle its meaning" (LAE, 123). This statement does not mean that she does not see the symptoms of the crisis of listening as resulting from the domination of listening or instrumental action.

In psychological therapeutic listening, the researcher distinguishes its several subtypes: attentive-feeling listening and mindfulness, empathic listening, actively conscious listening, passive-impression listening and relaxing-meditative listening, which are given separate attention in five subsequent parts of this subsection. In the above-mentioned subtypes, clearly inspired by methods and techniques used in various trends of psychotherapy, the attentive attention of the listener, even if focused on the latter's own internal sensations, manifests its healing effect in a way that brings relief. In other words, "listening gives the person a feeling of being welcome and accepted, and so the patient can touch their life and express how they feel it and what they think of it" (LAE, 128).

The last form indicated by the author and at the same time the most widely described and shown in an expanded context, in the numerous commentaries of selected researchers, is philosophically therapeutic listening. It is the last form in the third chapter, with the following forms to be discussed in the second part of

the book, which is worth highlighting at this point. Because the investigations included in the book are rooted in the intellectual tradition developed at the heyday of the Athenian *polis* and seen through the prism of the achievements of modern hermeneutics, the formulation “philosophy as the *praxis* of the transformation of a subject” – which “takes the form of exercises of intellect, imagination, emotions, and moral attitudes” (LAE, 140) – is derived by the author also from this historical context. This form of listening includes three subtypes: dialogical listening, the musical form of listening and the affirmed (by the author) subtype – *mousikē-logos* listening. This form creates a special circumstance:

Musicalness gives opportunity and freedom to move to another register of being in the wor(l)d. To free oneself from the tyranny of being in a constant dialogue, if one wants to express oneself. It is a way of stating what is in one's own soul, which is exposed all the time to the wor(l)d – being immersed in the wor(l)d. (LAE, 171)

Discussions of this type of listening and the accompanying reflections are at the same time occasions to formulate a view on the nature of philosophy; in light of this view, this form of listening can be understood as a unique way of philosophizing, and perhaps is its unique way, whose omission or confusion separates philosophizing from its right practicing:

It is not about changing one sort of thinking or involvement into another. It is rather like being turned toward an entirely different reality. It is a rest from the wor(l)d and in this sense philosophy is, in fact, the way of approaching to a depth, or a death. Music is an approximation of the reality of resting, while being still alive. Musicality is an ontological dimension which exists and is present in more or less in every kind of music that comes to our ears. (LAE, 172)

These inspiring findings that finish the third chapter are an incentive to ask many important questions, for example about the translatability of different dimensions of thinking, the audibility of meaning, intuition, imagination, or questions about the ratio between imaging and music, etc.

The third chapter is certainly engaging and highly inspiring. Attention here should be paid to the careful ordering and differentiation of individual forms as well as to a profound reflection on their nature. Certainly, it is the climax of this part of the work.

The title of the fourth chapter “*Interludium: Interweaving of Meanings: (Trans-) formative (Dialectic) Mousikē*,” besides announcing the content, contains an indication as to its character and role. The author introduces readers to the content of this chapter, using the commentaries of numerous interpreters and by indicating the close relationship between wisdom, knowledge, art (unity of word, singing and dancing) and education in ancient Greece. Thus she goes beyond the well-known and the common convictions of that time, also shared by Plato and Aristotle, on the developing nature of music and the educational tasks of musicians. In contrast to musicians,

Paedagogi – the trained in everyday skills and equipped with moral education slaves – were minders of free children. Slaves have to be useful, so their “education” was a popular one, meaning training in the useful tasks that the slave was going to execute. LAE, 187–188)

The author directs the reader's attention to interpretation, especially in the context of Plato's dialogues, the moment of reevaluating the relationship between wisdom, knowledge, art and education, which took place with the appearance of a trend called “new music” by the great philosopher. (The author's considerations seem to

correspond with the passages contained in the second part of the book, in the sixth chapter, which concern the reductionism observable in education.) This trend, which was characteristic of the much earlier “Aeolian *melikas*,” or traveling musicians, brought more and more complicated lyrical compositions, which were performed during the symposia part of aristocratic feasts. Performing these works required a higher level of preparation, which contributed to the increase in popularity, on a large scale, of virtuosos, and consequently also the relative separation of music performance from other kinds of art. As the author writes:

Mousikē was a profound experience of truth (*aletheia*) and being connected with something that transcends the participants, letting them purify their souls and bodies. Its reduction to the purely tonal sense (music) and at the same time the process of a detachment of the unity of the word, sound and movement (poetry-song-dance) were the first steps of the separation between philosophy and art as equal (and mangled together) paths to a – liberating – wisdom. (LAE, 185–186)

In this chapter, the author gathers and considers the views of commentators, such as Jamie James, Bennett Reimer, Susanne Langer, and Gemma Corradi Fiumara, regarding the contemporary interpretation of the significance of the issues she has raised and analyzed. These views also correspond with the statements that conclude this part of the book, such as the “priority of listening to the ‘thing’ and its questions” (LAE, 196). In the conclusion of the chapter, we read as follows:

Listening to “things” seems to be primordial in a formative, shaping experience that happens in the event of human life. If we take into account the ancient experience of *mousikē* together with just a few examples of the contemporary understanding of music and participative listening, the necessity of listening not only with ears, but also through the whole body set in motion should be underlined. The thinking-listening body in dance, and while performing musical pieces, listens in movement while it feels itself, space and other bodies, materials, objects. (LAE, 196)

The content of the chapter under consideration exploits other values and possibilities offered by the adopted subject of the work, such as the author’s gathering around these discussions researchers who originate or operate in different traditions of philosophy or different scientific disciplines. Like the previous three chapters, chapter 4 consistently and continuously introduces new content and reveals more and more perspectives, avoiding the trap of repetitious content, findings or observations, which must be appreciated.

The second part of the book, “Toward Acoulogical Education,” focuses the reader’s attention on two further forms of listening: translation(al) listening and education(al) listening. However, as the author emphasizes in the introduction to this part of the book:

Translation(al) listening is to be treated as the next form of listening, although including in itself some other forms of it, and education(al) listening is the most complex form of listening. On the one hand, its complexity consists in the complexity of the educational (formative) as such; on the other hand, educational listening is not to be considered without the other forms of listening mentioned earlier. In this sense, this form of listening is the existential (and thus hermeneutic) listening as such. (LAE, 199)

In the incipit of chapter five, “Listening in Acouo-Translation(al) Education,” divided into four parts, the author notes: “Education can be understood as the process of translation” (LAE, 201). This statement increases in

importance when seen in the wider context of changes that took place at the end of the twentieth century in the Western humanities, such as the “translational turn,” and also in the context of hermeneutics – of the theorems and findings of George Steiner or of the works of Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur. However, unlike Steiner, the author does not assume the identity of translation and understanding but rather refers to the notion of translation, which indicates the transfer of a certain content, expressing it in different languages. In her view: “there is no understanding without listening. ... The experience of translation and interpretation is a metaphor for the experience of education” (LAE, 202). In her discussion of this form of listening, the researcher also refers to Gadamer’s philosophy, his reflections on the subject of literary translation, and reconstructs his concept and interprets it, which maintains the consistency of the project the author developed.

In the context of reconstructing Gadamer’s conception of literary translation and educational issues, the researcher considers in the next section eight “myths” concerning translation – their list and description was taken from the work of Krzysztof Hejwowski, *Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu* (*The Cognitive-Communicative Theory of Translation*). In other words, she counters stereotypical and at the same time misleading statements about translation: issues of general non-translatability; the need to stick to a literal translation; or, on the contrary, adaptation to the native context for a clearer presentation; multiplication of the text through translation; non-translatability resulting from the incompatibility of cultures; general idiomaticity of each language; the value of only perfect translation; and the values of natural and universal translation skills. On the one hand, the author’s admission that each of the issues around which unanswered discussions have been going on for centuries – even in their hyperbolic form – are only myths, is perhaps a result of her having placed too much trust in Hejwowski’s arguments, which are like blades cutting the Gordian knot; on the other hand, the author efficiently and artfully uses the educational context and, in relation to each myth builds and comments on a parallel myth about upbringing, such as the belief that “everyone can educate people” (LAE, 220).

In the next subsection, the researcher refers to her experiences as an employee of the Faculty of Education at the University of Warsaw. She concentrates on a description of a study carried out with students as part of their classes. The description and conclusions are an illustration and a deepening of the previously discussed issues. The last section of the fifth chapter is a kind of short summary, concentrating the reader’s attention on acceptable conclusions, such as:

One of the hypotheses is that the flair for education, that presupposes the translational listening, considered as a sense of taste and recognition, is found in every human being, however, the degree of its actualization, manifestation depends on the process of experienced education (socialization and personalization); to be more exact, it depends on the ways of educating people. (LAE, 230)

The sixth chapter, “The Sense of Acouological Education,” also consists of four parts. In the first subchapter, the author deals with the map of contemporary pedagogical orientations and trends. She lists six of them: naturalistic orientation, humanistic pedagogy, pedagogical sociology, progressivism, pedagogy of culture and critical pedagogy and then outlines their interrelations. However, as she points out, to introduce the acouological education idea does not require one to discuss in detail all educational approaches or theories. That seems to be a good solution – appropriate literature regarding particular educational ideologies or the ways of mapping them is widely available. The author goes on to discuss and concentrate the reader’s attention on the polarization between “I” and “We,” or between individual rights, and social claims – in her opinion this polarization occurs in light of pedagogical orientations and differentiates them. Both the very concept of division, as well as her reading of the consequences resulting from it and the perspectives visible thanks to it, provides another inspiring example of the originality of the approach and the courage to go beyond thinking patterns in accor-

dance with the assumptions which she accepts in the book. As in any case of this kind, various decisions made by the author trigger separate discussions, which due to the nature of the issue should be expected.

Against the background of reflection on contemporary theories and practices of education, in the next subsection, the author addresses the issue of the relationship between philosophy and pedagogy. On the one hand, as she points out, they constitute separate or separated academic disciplines; on the other hand, she also recognizes that they are connected by an interdisciplinary area located between them.

In the next section, the researcher addresses the issue of reduction in the context of the organization of the learning and teaching process. As she indicates: "In contemporary education, one can observe a tendency toward different reductions stemming from the reductionism of the sense of human life" (LAE, 262). She considers this kind of threat in several of its variants: she singles out teleological reduction, which leads to the dominance of the techno-instrumental trend; moralizing or ideological reduction, which reduces the sense of human life to living in accordance with custom or doctrine; or "aesthetic reduction," which is associated with sensual enjoyment, it implies limiting education to the development of some superficial habits; and finally "*bureaucratic statistical reduction*" (LAE, 264), which is characterized by a kind of tabular logic and reduces the sense of education to procedures of evaluation. As the researcher points out, hermeneutics still resist these reductions. In this way, the author introduces the reader, following Kant, Aristotle and Gadamer, to the tradition of reflecting on the taste and power of judgment. This reflection is crowned among others by the message in which the author links the various threads raised in her book:

It appears there is a connection between a right decision and the fine ear, namely a sensibility and a sound "grasp," touch of something. If the essence of taste is differentiation, the sense of taste (like the old *diairesis*) is essential to make judgments, to make a decision. Education needs good teachers, namely tasteful (self-)educators having a flair for education, having a pedagogical sense, a talent, and allowing themselves to keep being learners. The flair also means here having a sense of education, that is, being able to discern different aspects of what is going on during the educative encounter. This sense is animated by this enigmatic and still fascinating experience called intuition and human instincts. The teacher-educator should practice the ethics of taste or at least be directed by and toward this ethics. Imposing the ethics, as well as not promoting it, is strongly opposed to a "good taste." (LAE, 270)

Also the final section of the chapter contains conclusions gathered around the issue of educational listening, combining the threads developed in individual chapters of the whole book.

The work closes with its "Coda" in which the author again references Plato's *Republic*. Also, she leaves a few recommendations, addressed to the acouo-educators, and, re-invoking Gadamer's thoughts and findings, formulates some final remarks, such as this captivating sentence: "Listening, considered not as a mental state opposed to speaking, but instead as a *real welcoming of the touching timbre of the relatedness of beings*, should be examined with a closer attentive ear which hears out differently and therefore sees something" (LAE, 279).

As I tried to present in this review as accurately as possible, the author consciously and consistently implements the issues taken in the book in the vein of Gadamer's hermeneutics. This concerns the reconstruction of both the general approach and the individual elements of the philosopher's concepts, well-chosen commentaries of other authors, as well as the original arrangements of the author, which are an extension of the adopted perspective. Moreover, she skillfully and often in an innovative manner included in her book the concepts created outside the hermeneutic approach. This integration can be a sign of the high level of research presented in this work, appropriate for this type of publication. This aspect of the reviewed work, together with

the findings presented in captivating language, is an argument for its originality in relation to publications addressing the issue of listening. However, it should be noted, which clearly comes to the fore in the introduction of this book, that there are few studies devoted to listening in the philosophy of education. As a result, the book can be naturally expected to engage others, and not only interest other researchers and university students, or philosophers of education and pedagogues. It is much needed and useful as it closes the inaudible yet resounding gap in our knowledge.