

Research Article

# The Implications of Attunement and Understanding on Heidegger's Viewpoint in Education

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## Abstract

Heidegger in attunement and understanding quests genuine Dasein who disclosed to the world authentically. Definitely, Heidegger's genuine Dasein is distant from Descartes subject and not considering its relationship with the world and people base on subject- object relationship. It is aware of its worldliness and its understanding of it, therefore cannot consider itself superior than other race and people or like the modern man cannot consider itself a model for others. Thus, it is possible to establish human relationships that are no longer based on the subject-object relationship. Hence, in this essay, these basic existentialia of human being studied and its educational implications are examined. As a philosophical research, attunement and understanding from Heidegger's viewpoint are declared, and then in educational context some guidelines such as attention to students' mood, interest, understanding, and interpreting are inferred for policy makers and for an effective curriculum. Moreover, drawing hermeneutical cycle of understanding the importance of students' preconceptions is raised. Elaborating the process of evaluating and the worlds involved in learning can also help teachers to be more fair and effective which are discussed in the paper.

## Keywords

Education, Attunement, Understanding, Heidegger

## 1. Introduction

Heidegger is one of the greatest modern critics. In his view, the modern world has five characteristics: first, "science"; 2) "mechanical technology"; 3) "the advent of art towards the aesthetics"; 4) "understanding human activity as culture", meaning that culture the recognition of the values is supreme and, therefore, cultural policies were introduced; and, fifth, the "lack of gods" [9]. Since no new philosopher of the new age, as Descartes, reflects the roots and problems of the Western world, Descartes' thoughts account for a significant share of Heidegger's critique of modernity [14].

Heidegger believed Descartes claimed with "cogito, ergo some" have put philosophy on a new and reliable foundation;

but what was left indeterminate was the kind of being of entity. This leads to neglect of ontological analytic in the next era [8].

Descartes' subject is an agent who separates himself from nature as object. This subject is dominant and believed that for applying nature in order to cognition should dominate on it. He placed itself in the center and others in margin; though God and tradition were not forgotten in the thoughts of Descartes and Kant, they were drawn from the center to the periphery of the process of rational and social societal knowledge. This subject is universal and considers himself as a model for others and wanted to impose "evolution" on his own to others [11].

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The problem became even greater when, in order to understand its type, it acted in the same way as recognizing nature; and this aim of domination for more profligacy and profits reduced people to objects and left harmful effects in human relations. As Michel Foucault said this subject is rational, dry, serious and profitable. Since, as in the past, myths and religions were not intermediaries between him and the world, now there was a creature separate from itself, from its work, from the product of its work, and from the thinking that united it with the world [13].

According to Heidegger, modern technology is the greatest danger to mankind, not because technology can destroy the world, but because it reduces him as intelligent animal that does not have any insight into its original ability and duty. Heidegger has argued that the problem of modern technology in the disclosing objects is the lack of consideration of formatting human belief [15]. On Heidegger's viewpoint, in the analysis of man, all usual disclosure of soul, subject, ego must be left to a completely different understanding. This new perspective is called fundamental structure of human existence, Dasein or being- in- the- world [12]. Therefore, he analyzing ontologically structures of human existence including attunement, understanding and discourse to bring back existential weight to human experience and to return the meaning of his life is lost.

In this way, referring to the Greek roots of pedagogy, *paio*, "child," and *ago*, "to lead," Heidegger regards it as an attempt to guide students from outside for rising regarding ontological discrimination. He believes that about this rise should not be discussed, but this rise should be experienced personally as an interpretation, as learning to swim is not possible by talking about it, and it is only possible by leaping into the river [5]. Thus Heidegger's pedagogy is a reflection of the personal experience of the learner, and this is different for each individual.

In fact, Heidegger's pedagogy is to engage students in a genuine experience of thinking, and in his view he advocates five conditions for such a pedagogy: first, the existence of topics that are important for their learners; second, the common obligation to think about concern Third, exposure to phenomena (objects and individuals in meaningful text); fourth, openness to non-joint understanding in this encounter; and fifth, an appropriate response from those involved in this encounter [16]. Therefore, according to Heidegger, philosophical pedagogy must provide genuine sense of meaning in the presence of students. Thus, the task of pedagogy is to awaken the question of meaning; and it included fundamental attunement of our philosophizing [4]. In order to achieve this, Heidegger pays attention to analyzing how we receive and understand the world, which is discussed below.

## 2. The Implications of Attunement on Heidegger's View in Education

According Heidegger mood and being attuned must be seen

as fundamental existential. Heidegger believes we always being in a mood; and relaxed calm and anger are Dasein's preoccupation every day; and sliding over from one mood to another or slip into bad mood shows Dasein is always in a mood. On his viewpoint, in bad mood that dasein often tired of itself, being there revealed as burden. He believes mood makes manifest "how one is and is coming alone" [10]. According to Heidegger Dasein in attunement perceives itself and be aware of its worldliness; and this disclosedness is attuned i.e. regarding to its mood, perceives itself.

The German word 'stimmung' which translated to mood in English is far beyond of its English equivalent word. The word 'stimmung' derived from the verb 'stimmen' is equivalent 'to tune' meaning tuning (e.g. a piano) and adapting; and it obviously related to 'bestimmen' meaning assignment. To include all of these words, it has been deftly translated as attunement which points to our consciousness and vigilance on the current situation [6]. In fact, tuning and adjusting a piece of instrument determines the sound that comes from it. Attunement determines our attitude and interpretation of affairs too. Our mood plays an important role in helping us for the interpretation of affairs, to determine our status in relation to the world as a whole, and also in relation to ourselves [3]. It should be noted our term 'attunement' in this section refers to Heidegger's 'stimmung' term.

As we put it, on Heidegger's viewpoint we are always in a mood and can sliding over from one mood to another, to try to get a better attitude [6]. Given that our mood determines our attitude to the affair of the world, we can get better attitude with the change of anxiety and getting out of it that it is coincide to becoming aware of ourselves and surrounding world. So, in Heidegger's view, in anxiety and overcoming it Dasein becomes aware of its worldliness.

According to Heidegger, anxiety is an attunement which disclosed Dasein's existence as being- toward- death. From his point of view, finding the death as the last possibility and becoming aware of its finiteness, choice and option are meaningfulness; and Dasein determined to project its authentic itself. Heidegger believes in this moment of vision Dasein disclosed to itself resolutely and takes its projection responsibility [7]. Undoubtedly, this Dasein who aware of itself and its thought and choose its own life, it also gives this right to others, and its relations with others can't be as subject- object relationship.

Considering that when world is meaningless for students, community averageness questioned and they seek their own meaning for their lives, they disclosed to the world authentically, the attention to this and the moment of vision is important. Therefore, the attention to this attunement and guiding students for genuine disclosedness and being authentic is important too. In this regard, attention to students' mood and providing grounds for discussion and Socratic conversation especially in puberty and older ages suggested. At a younger age, stories that raise questions about community averageness and make children thinking, can lead them in older ages to get

their own authentic being. For example, stories that raise questions about how to dress and what their customs and customs are, and why it is in a childish language can play such a role in their lives. They encouraged to ask about anything, even if it seem obvious.

### 3. The Implications of Understanding and Interpreting in Education

According to Heidegger understanding in its character of projection constitutes Dasein's sight. On him Dasein only sees itself as being- in- the- world, and being- with- another is transparent to it. Since Heidegger believes every sight constituted on understanding, he considers 'institution' and 'thought' the derivatives of understanding [10].

For Heidegger, the projection of understanding has possibility of development that he calls this development of understanding interpretation. Heidegger believes 'in interpretation understanding does not become something different, but rather itself'. Therefore, on Heidegger's view understanding does not arise of interpretation but interpretation constituted on understanding. Interpretation is processing projected possibilities of understanding [10]. Considering that students in interpreting and retelling the content with their language, they own what they understand and develop their understanding, it needed carefully designed teaching materials.

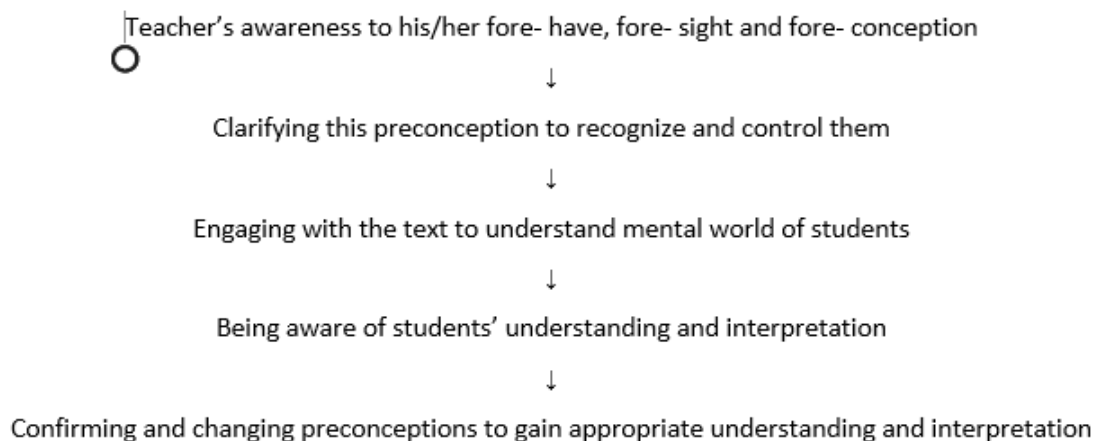
According to Heidegger in authentic understanding world disclosed; also on him every interpretation is essentially grounded in fore- structure which are fore-having, fore- sight, and fore- conception. In Heidegger's view interpretation constituted on fore- having; and in interpretation Dasein moves to totality of for- conception involvement. He believes that 'the interpretation is grounded in foresight that 'approaches' what has been taking in fore- having with a definite interpretation in view' [10]. Then we don't have any conception without assumption. So he rises authentic understanding that Dasein becomes aware of its assumptions and

discloses its world.

Heidegger's opinion on the interpretation has been taken into consideration by the scholars of education. For example, Bagheri according to hermeneutical cycle, proposed a four-stage model for assessing academic achievement: in the first stage, he emphasizes that a teacher doesn't evaluate with empty mind; and according to Heidegger's opinion on fore-have, fore- sight and fore- concept poses fore- have, here refers to teacher's relationships with students. In his view, fore- sight related to teacher's opinions to students; and fore-concept refers to concepts and words which teacher uses to express these views. He believes that for a desirable assessment, the teacher should be aware of his thoughts and make them clear in order to be able to identify and control them [2].

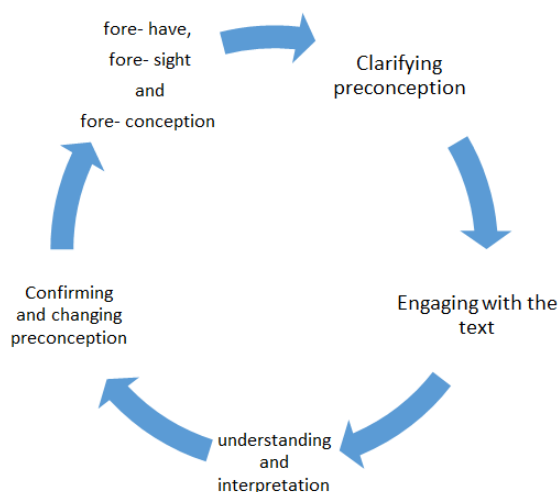
Bagheri believes that in the second step, the teacher tries to access students' horizons through their writings; and this is possible by putting aside preconceptions and temporal separation students from their writings, and through analysis and engagement with their text. At this stage, he believes that for a trustworthy evaluation, teacher prefers to enter the mental world of students to overcome his preconceptions. In the third step, based on results obtained in second step, preconceptions confirmed or, if necessary, changed and this requires the teacher to have an open mind. In the fourth step, it is expected that authentic understanding will appear and the teacher will arrive at a proper interpretation and understanding of the students' works. Bagheri, according to Gadamer, believes that teacher's and students' horizons blended and a foundation for understanding students obtained [2]. As you can see, the three first steps of the evaluation are based on Heidegger's view, and the fourth step is presented in Gadamer's view.

According to Heidegger's viewpoint, the author makes the last step in this way: in this stage teacher develops his own understanding in the light of his new preconceptions and arrives at a proper interpretation of students' work. Thus, the Heidegger assessment process can be presented in five steps:



*Figure 1. Evaluation stages according to Heidegger.*

The author believes that there are such stages always for teachers, students and others. so the hermeneutical cycle of understanding is considered as follows.



**Figure 2.** Hermeneutical cycle according Heidegger.

In general, this cycle illustrates how one understands the text involved; hermeneutical cycle of understanding about students can reflect how they understand and receive the content of educational.

In Heidegger's view, meaning is 'what can be articulated in interpretation, and thus more primordially in speech' [10]. Dasein in interpretation says something that has come to his senses; and only Dasein can understand based on its preconception and achieve in a meaning. Thus, for awareness of students' mental world and their understanding, it's necessary to pay attention to students' fore- have, fore- sight and fore-conception and what they articulate in interpretation.

In this way, learning is considered as an interpretive activity that arises and focuses on the cultural assumptions of the individual who seeks to understand; and Socratic dialogue allows for the correction of the understanding and change of what it means [1]. So he believes this dialogue and the permission to ask questions can create conditions for the expansion of learning. In order to engage in fruitful learning interaction, a certain precondition is required, including the implicit life belief that partners in exchanging learning are human beings whose understanding world disclosed to another because they share at least the basic meanings (this concerns to their shared surrounding world). Somewhere, the hermeneutic partnership fails, such as lack of dialogue in the inter-

action between the reader and the text. Considering the role of preconception in interpretation, another barrier to understanding and engagement is when materials in student world are not in place. In his view, learning from this perspective is not merely a cognition, and it is participation with engagement in learning, leads to emotional and motivational sharing; and in the absence of such mood (an excitement and motivation), there is little chance to engage in formal learning.

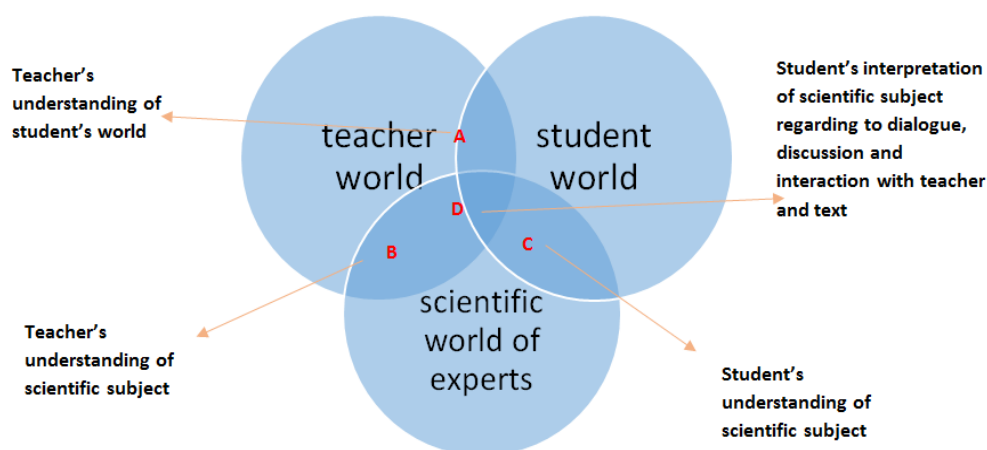
According to Ashworth, in this learning, it is essential for people to find that their assistance and cooperation are revered and respected and valued, because if a person's personality or person's identity is compromised as a valuable participant, and one cannot comfortably focus on the subject, and concerns about how it looks like in the eyes of others, this learning compromised [1].

Given the fact that students' understanding done with regard to fore- having, fore- sight and fore- conception which is according to their worldliness, and scientific subject studied by students designed with regard to the world of experts, in order to understand scientific subjects, students need to become familiar with the world of experts and look at them from their point of view. The author believes that it's not possible unless the learners are placed on the path of knowledge and scientific discovery of the researchers, and become familiar with their fore- have, fore- sight and fore-conception, find out their questions, how they deal with issues and thus discover their discovery.

The author suggests writing stories for children and designing animations and computer games with scientific themes regarding the issues raised in their surrounding world attractively. Also students' scientific visits to laboratories, workshops and factories, in addition to familiarizing them with scientific work, make them more willing and more involved in school discussions and homework. At the secondary level, scientific materials can also be examined with greater depth and, of course, a story (using print texts, cinematic screenings, internet or theater).

The author believes that the role of the teacher in creating the conditions for discussion, questioning and engaging learner in the fruitful interaction of learning after the presentation of a film, theater or study of texts is important; as much as his scientific knowledge and his share world with the world of experts Science (B) is more, he can play a greater role in students learning.

As a whole, students' knowledge of scientific subjects can be illustrated with regarding to the sharing of the world of people involved in it (D) as below:



**Figure 3.** Student's interpretation of scientific subject.

As it shown in this figure, with the view of the shared surrounding world of teacher and student, the existence of common ground meanings, their understanding is disclosing to each other; and the more the teacher's and student's mental world sharing, the teacher's understanding of the student's mental world (A) will increase and can be more effectively debated with the attention of the learner world and contribute more to fruitful learning conversations and engagement. To increase this subscription, the author suggests a close and teacher-friendly relationship with learners. Obviously, the greater the level of sharing with the scientific world of experts (C), the more he will be engaged and be more interested in the debate, because his preconceptions will allow him to broaden the dialogue. As previously mentioned, this can be started by reading the science stories of the teacher for learners from an early age. As can be seen, finally, according to Heidegger's viewpoint, his interpretation of the scientific topic can be seen as the result of the sharing of these three worlds.

Considering that the perception of each person is different from his experience of his life and that the person with his own preconceptions understands the opinions of others, the same look and understanding of a subject will not be possible. In view of this, Gadamer considers the person's understanding and interpretation as the result of merging the horizons of understanding of the persons involved in the text under discussion. The author also considers student understanding of scientific topics as the result of the merging of the comprehension of the student, the teacher and the specialists of science (observing their scientific content).

Heidegger believes hermeneutical cycle provided the possibility of primordial cognition with condition that the interpretation does not allow fore-have, fore-sight, and fore-conception predetermined by the ideas and opinions of the people [8]. With Heidegger's emphasis on dasein authentic understanding, the true teacher with aware of his own preconceptions should not allow his fore-have, fore-sight and fore-conception predetermined by ideas and opinions of averageness; and providing the conditions for discussion, and

asking about the students' preconceptions, they will provide the ground for their thinking and awareness to regain themselves from averageness and can do authentic projection. In the case of scientific materials, instead of accepting issues without questioning, by asking questions about the presuppositions of experts, the tendency of student research will be provided so that they will not only receive a profound and authentic understanding of materials but also become active questioners in the field of science.

## 4. Conclusion

As mentioned Heidegger in attunement and understanding quests genuine Dasein who disclosed to the world authentically. Definitely, Heidegger's genuine Dasein is far away of Descartes subject and not considering its relationship with the world and people base on subject-object relationship. It is aware of its worldliness and its understanding of it, therefore cannot consider itself superior than other race and people or like the modern man cannot consider itself a model for others. Thus, it is possible to establish human relationships that are no longer based on the subject-object relationship. Therefore, it is important to address Heidegger's view of Dasein as discussed.

As considered Heidegger believes we find ourselves in a world, a society and a special field, and also in a mood. Our attunement is also the ground of our relationship with others and our social world; and it is the ground of our understanding (self-interpretation and self-understanding of us as being in the special world). According to Heidegger attunement understanding of being-in-the-world expresses itself as discourse. Because of his outstanding comments on mood and understanding, in this research, educational implications of attunement and understanding in education were examined; and on his viewpoint teaching, assessing and etc. were raised.

Also as Heidegger himself admits, art can be used to return from the inauthentic understanding of everydayness



because art is something that discloses the world [17], that means it presents being- in- the- world and student perception of surrounding world; and can inform him of it, in order to achieve his own authentic understanding, and determined to project himself based on this understanding.

According to Heidegger, art should not be like the subject of "aesthetic knowledge" in museums, but should be in the same place as the public "occurrence" of "truth" [17]. From Heidegger's point of view, art is not a periphery of the aesthetic field; art and artist can be seen in all places, including in education, for example, a teacher in Heidegger's view is an artist who offers artwork such as teaching; in teaching the truth of Being is revealed and, as already mentioned, the teacher allows the learners to fulfill their existence, so the teacher is exalting.

## Author Contributions

Rozita Aboutorabi is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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