

Performance as a Reflective Dialogical Practice

I argue for the importance of understanding identity construction in teacher education and the critical ontology for teachers and educators. Teachers in university and student teaching encouraged to confront why they think as they do about themselves as teachers, in relation to the social, cultural, and historical world around them. Commonly used terms: self-study, autoethnography, and biography. Such ontological investigation requires examining how power intersects with the ways educators make meaning of themselves and the contexts in which their teaching and their identities are embedded.

In my research I use life stories and life events in pragmatic theater. Socially endangered young people perform together with students in the theatre. They use their own life stories as a scenario. The scenario is changeable, depending on the players and the situations.

I utilize Hans Herbert Kögler's conception. He describes his conception in "The Power of Dialogue" (1999). One issue of his work is problematizing the unpredictable potential of conversation, which is capable of leading us to new insights and critical self-reflection through experiencing the other. The other issue of him is to explicate a conception of critical interpretation. His project is an attempt to fuse conceptually the analytical tools offered by discourse analysis and a microanalytics of social power practices. Kögler argues for a middle way between Gadamer's concept and Foucault's conceptualization. In light of this power-theoretic concept of open and reversible relationships, a second and decisive dimension of every analysis of power becomes comprehensible: fixed and stabilizing structures of domination. The structure of domination is the space in which experience and self-realization interact.

I do a hermeneutically sensitive analysis of power. During the performance roles, which are the actor's own life-roles, the self-understanding of the agent appears as something produced entirely by relations of domination. The life event's interpretation is a reconstruction in a cultural context. Individual interpretive schemes, based on biographical events and related gender roles, professional status, social class, the reality of another's meaning is accepted, its understanding will always be mediated by actors' own background assumptions.

The pragmatic theater helps to gain self-knowledge by exploring the inner landscape of person's life by a critical-dialogic circle of power. By understanding the self and its impacts on the teaching act students have on the development of how an individual makes sense of their world, they can become action researchers of themselves.

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