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Giuseppe Iurato

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Existentialism, phenomenology and education: a brief psycho-pedagogical route

Giuseppe Iurato

Ministry of Education, IT

Abstract. This note wishes to highlight what remarkable role may have certain themes of existentialistic and phenomenological trends of philosophy in education, above all from the evaluation side, as well as in didactic and psycho-pedagogy, with a particular attention to the work of Piero Bertolini¹. The paper is also an attempt to claim the need for a resolute turn of pedagogy (with all the related contexts, like the scholastic one) towards, following Dilthey², an *understanding* dimension rather than to an explanatory one only.

This short note has the main intent to highlight what remarkable role or perspective may have the chief asserts of *phenomenology* and *existentialism*, as philosophical trends of 20th-century, from the educational standpoint, in such a manner that sociopedagogical view may undertake a more realistic evaluating stance, as well as ethically more human in its nature. We deem that, just a more suitable reconsideration of the resulting phenomenological-existentialistic trend of the history of psychiatry, may be the most adapt to play such an evaluating function from the pedagogical side. The above two philosophical trends were then used by Ludwig Binswanger to work out a radically new trend of psychology and psychiatry, in contrast with their bio-naturalistic trend based on the celebrated Cartesian dualism *res cogitans/res extensa*, which reduced human being to a mere object of study of phenomenonic reality³, neglecting so her/his own subjective world that – according to Binswanger – cannot be ignored in account for any event regarding her/his life. Binswanger says that the splitting subject-object is unacceptable as it is contrary to the basic structure of human existence, which is a *being-in-the-world (Dasein)*, that is, human being must be "understood" (and not only "explained") by taking into account her/his "human presence" as an "originary being-in-the-world" as well as her/his fundamental "modes of being" in the world through which human presence takes place. This basically because human being is not (*ist*) in the world like an object, but rather he/she builds up an own world through the fundamental dimensions of living (e.g., temporality, spatiality, intentionality, etc.), differently from the simple objects (or external phenomenonic reality), so that human being must be studied (or better, "understood") not with the usual scientific methods (or, at least, not only with these), but above all (or, for first) with the phenomenological-existentialistic methods in that are the only ones to have defined human existence in its real nature (Galimberti, 2006).

Phenomenology has for fist provided the right concepts, tools and methods to define, identify and investigate human existence, while *existentialism*, on the basis of the former, has deepening the first ones but has, above all, identified the right basic structures underlying human existence, and its real nature. Thus, phenomenological-existentialistic trend of psychiatry seems to be the most indicated one to may understood, in the best way, human existence, so it is the most indicated one to be used, in the right and suitable fashion, in other humanistic contexts and disciplines, like pedagogy. Surely, what seems to be the most important suggestion coming from this psychological sciences trend is a possible approach or perspective with which educator can see her or his work (i.e., the educational process) to achieve results or outcomes functional to its aims. The paper might turn out useful also from the sociological standpoint as the claim to a return to an understanding dimension, rather than to an explanatory one (widely present nowadays in almost every part of life), is surely a social need

1 See the editorial (Dallari, 2016).

2 As regard historicism and its main exponents, see for example (Tessitore, 2006) and references quoted therein.

3 In doing so, human psyche is considered as an object of study according to scientific methodology, based on quantification methods applied to measures, hence considering it basically as an epiphenomenon of neurophysiological system, neglecting suitably other variables (Galimberti, 2006).

against the pernicious spreading of general *alienation*⁴ phenomena in society. Anyway, we are of the opinion that *understanding* dimension, meant as a capability to overlook all the possible relations of sense-meaning, is higher (as a kind of metalevel) than the *explanatory* one, and should dominate on it as it is the only dimension able to catch the meanings of the world. In a few words, understanding tries to catch the meaning or sense of a lived event, re-experiencing, reconstructing and reliving this last by who (historian, psychotherapist, philosopher, etc.) wants to study this event; and, the search for understanding – which may be pursued through concepts and methods of phenomenology⁵ and existentialism – is rightly adequate to study any human phenomenon or aspect, as they are always full of meaning or sense, not graspable by usual scientific methods⁶ (based on explanation). So, also pedagogy (maybe, more than all the other human sciences), the chief aim is the understanding of the meaning or sense of the related phenomena, aim which may be pursued with methods, concepts and tools of either phenomenology and existentialism.

1. Existentialism: a very short account

We begin with some basic etymological and linguistic considerations, following Martin Heidegger in doing so (Heidegger 1968, Cap. II), hence with the main recalls to existentialism following either (Abbagnano, 1998) and (Brezzi, 1994) for a synoptic but organic view.

The term *entity* might be taken to indicate another philosophical notion different from that of *being* which, on its turn, includes the former in the usual philosophical terminology of English language. Not so, in other languages, like in Italian and French, where these two terms (i.e., *entity* and *being*) indicate two different philosophical notions. On the other hand, following a well-known suggestion due to Heidegger (1968, Cap. II), the clarification of the possible links holding between such terms, might come from their related comparative etymological analysis, drew from (AA.VV., 2004).

From a linguistic standpoint, the term *entity*, corresponding to the Greek locution *tò ôn* (in turn, corresponding to the Latin *tì estí*, i.e., "what is") of ancient philosophy, comes from the Latin term *ens*, whose genitive is *entis*, in turn the present participle of (Latin) *esse* (from the Greek, *tò einai*), i.e. "to be", from which it follows the clear links with the term "being". Then, *ens* comes from the Indo-European root *es-* which is, besides, included into the Latin term *est*, as well as in the Greek term *estí*. As has been said above, in the ancient philosophy, *ens* comes from the Greek term *ôn*, that means "essence", which, on its turn, comes from the Latin term *essentia*, that derives from the Greek term *ousía*, i.e. "substance". These brief etymological considerations show that there is a close relationship among the various terms of *entity* (Latin, *ens*; Greek, *tò ôn*), *being* (Latin, *esse*; Greek, *tò einai*) and *essence*, having a deep philosophical meaning for which we refer to (Heidegger 1968, Cap. II).

However, these etymological considerations are enough to understand how the central term of this chain⁷, is that of *being*. As said above, some languages (like the Italian and French ones) distinguish between *entity* and *being*. In these contexts, the *entity* refers to any *thing* which has the *act* of *being*, through which it exists; this entails a distinction between the *act* for which a certain thing exists and the *intelligible determination* for which it is as such; for instance, this is just what Antonio Rosmini (1797-1855) done in distinguishing between the *being* and the *determination* of the *being*. Thus, the

4 To be meant in its widest (philosophical) sense.

5 Indeed, *understanding* a subject (as, for example, the one involved in an educational process) must be distinguished from her/his knowledge, and is a pure "spiritualistic" act aimed at the intimate penetration of the other without any judgmental aim but with the will to pick up her/his authentic (if any) living reality. To this end, it is necessary to undertake an *entropathic* behaviour by educator, that is, the capability to put herself/himself (as educator) at the place of the other (the subject) to try to grasp the modalities of existence of this latter, her/his modes of seeing the world, the life, the others, to see the subject itself and the others in the world, and so on (Bertolini, 1980).

6 See (Gallino, 2006).

7 That is to say, *entity* ↔ *being* ↔ *essence*. The terms of this chain have been investigated by many philosophers of the history of philosophy.

entity is made by two fundamental elements, namely the *act* of being and the *determination* which makes it just such an entity.

Thus, the notion of *entity* refers to those of act and determination. The *act* is the realization of the essence of the being; thus, the being is act by essence, while the essence is that for which the being is act. The *essence* is the unity of the features or fundamental notes⁸ of the being, which determine this latter as such, and not another one. Instead, trying to define⁹, even loosely, the concept of *being* is quite difficult if not impossible, in that nothing is thinkable outside the being, as that that has already been or is solely possible, concerns the being or otherwise isn't nothing, hence it is even not thinkable, as thinking only the nothing itself, is also a way to think the being. So, the problem of the being itself, is undefinable, as to even put such a problem, it is need to already be within the being itself, so enquiring on the meaning of being is the same to enquire on the meaning of all the reality.

Therefore, the *existentialism*, as a philosophical trend, is a return to the problem of being, not meant in an abstract meaning, but rather in a practical way with regard to the living of human being. So, it is into the human being's *existence* that the being becomes a real philosophical problem, just as the main theme of existentialism¹⁰. Historically, its origins may date back to the publications of either the *Lettre aux Romains* (1918) by Karl Barth¹¹ and the *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen* (1919) by Karl Jaspers¹², thank to which the rebirth of the thought of Søren Kierkegaard had begun. Therefore, the contemporary existentialism considered the problem of human *existence* as primary with respect to the old problem of the being as meant since ancient metaphysics. And Heidegger pointed out, just in this regard, that metaphysics, from Parmenides to Nietzsche, was a kind of "oblivion of being", so he claimed a "genuine" return to it through the revelation offered by poetic language (Brezzi, 1994; Eco, 1968).

Thus, existentialism, as a philosophical trend born in Europe between the two 20th-century world wars, also as a consequence of the deep crisis of the ethical and intellectual values of 19th-century, notwithstanding its many internal trends, has one main common theme, that of the *existence* of the human being, meant as free of every reductionism of human¹³ to thing and annulment in a whatever totality. Nevertheless, this trend assumed different aspects in dependence on the specific social and historical context of the country of its exponents¹⁴, even if, according to Nicola Abbagnano (one of the main Italian exponents of existentialism), some common points may be identified, namely: *i*) the central role played by the reflection of the existence, until up to reach an abstract speculation on the notion of being, its meaning and sense (like in Heidegger's work); *ii*) the human existence is meant as a specific and proper manner with which human relates to being, this latter on its turn understood as either an experiential reality (i.e., the ego, the other, the world, etc., like in Jean-Paul Sartre and Abbagnano) or an ontological reality (like in Heidegger); *iii*) such a relationship of human with the being is characterized by possibility, so human existence is opened to freedom and risk; *iv*) due to these last events, human is responsible of the assumption of an "authentic" or "inauthentic" position with respect to the project of the own life (Brezzi, 1994).

8 In Aristotelian logic, these are basically the proximate genus and the specific difference.

9 Not in predicative terms, according to logic.

10 So, with existentialism, the real philosophical problem is that of *human existence*, not that of the *being* in itself.

11 See (Barth, 1962).

12 See (Jaspers, 1950).

13 Herein, we use the term "human" not as an adjective (as usual) but in place of "man" as a noun meaning, in the general sense, human being, without gender specification. We simply use "human" in this new sense, instead of "man" or "human being", just to avoid either gender questions (why just "man" and not "woman"?) and misunderstanding which may come from the comparison with the term "being" used in philosophical sense. Thus, the phrase's context will be enough to distinguish the use of the term "human" as an adjective or as a noun (for "human being" or "man").

14 For instance, the German existentialism (mainly, with Heidegger, Jaspers, Barth) makes reference to the philosophy of life and to Husserlian phenomenology, the French existentialism to either spiritualism (with Gabriel Marcel, Jean Wahl, René Le Senne, Louis Lavelle, Emmanuel Mounier) and Hegelianism-Marxism (with Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus) and the Italian existentialism (with Abbagnano, Luigi Pareyson, Enzo Paci, Cesare Luporini) to either the German one and in opposition to Gentilian actualism.

Therefore, what ties together all these philosophical trends of existentialism is the common working mean or tool, that is, the method of study of the existence, namely the *existential analysis*. Indeed, if the *existence* is meant as the proper human modality or manner to be (or of being), then such a way, by human, to be in the world, must always be related to a certain "situation" in which he or she may be, in terms of possibility. The existential analysis, therefore, is the enquire of the possible situations in which a human being may be. Hence, to exist, for human, means to be in relation with the world, with the things and the other humans; and, as such a relationship does not have a necessity feature, it follows that its modalities of actuation or establishment depend on the many possible situations in which it may take place, so it is unavoidable the consideration of the dimension of *possibility*. Now, historically, such a methodology of existential analysis has just been introduced by Edmund Husserl and his pioneering work on phenomenology (Abbagnano, 1998).

To be precise, Husserlian phenomenology has introduced a particular notion of *transcendence* with which the relation between the (knowing) subject and the (known) object is described in a detailed manner, and extended also to persons besides to impersonal things. According to Husserl, in such a relationship, the object (thing or person) remains always external to the subject, never falls into its interior. Such a notion has been retaken by existentialism and referred to human (who is named as a *Being-there* by Heidegger's existentialism, to mean human as the entity that exists) whose relation with the world is just settled in terms of Husserlian notion of transcendence.

The optimistic and idealistic promises and hopes of 19th-century *romanticism* are in contrast with the existentialistic conclusions: indeed, according to existentialism, human is a finite reality who is answerable (or responsible) of her/his existence, action and conduct; human is "cast in the world", that is to say, he or she is abandoned to its "cold determinism" (i.e., of the world), which may hamper or impeded his or her initiatives. In short, the antithesis existing between the fundamental themes of romanticism and existentialism, entails that they have different categories with which to interpret the reality, where a category is generally speaking meant as a construct, mean or tool of analysis for the description and the interpretation of reality. The first main difference between existentialism and romanticism is the perspective relevance given to human: indeed, existential analysis is an analysis of relations which are centred on human but that – contrarily to romanticism – immediately go out from it, beyond it, as such relations connect it (in a variety of different manners, which should be determined) with the reality or the world (of things and/or other humans) in which it falls. So, existentialism looks at the real *decentred* nature of human, basically made by all the possible connections that it may establish, which are not static but dynamic. Anyway, such relationships are based on the *possibility*, that is, on the possible modalities with which human may interact with things and other persons, in the reality or the world in which it is just "thrown" in a certain historical period with its typical social-cultural context (Abbagnano, 1998).

So, every human tries to actively "project" its future relying on an "expectation" about a "possible" accomplishment of it, inside the world (of things and persons) in which it lives. But the realization of such planned expectations are not warranted, so they yet remain at the level of the "possibility", which is therefore the main category of interpretation of reality and world, by existentialism. The uses and meanings assigned to this category, then, will identify various sub-trends of existentialism. As early Kierkegaard had called into question the importance of the category of possibility from an existentialistic standpoint, so he is rightly considered as the main precursor of such a philosophical trend. Nevertheless, in regard to the use and meaning of the category of possibility, there have been three main sub-trends of existentialism on the basis of the assumption of one of the following asserts: *i)* the impossibility of the possible; *ii)* the necessity of the possible; *iii)* the possibility of the possible. The first assert is mainly assumed by German existentialism, above all by Heidegger's philosophy that reaches the thesis for which human must "comprehend" the radical impossibility of

the existence, so Heidegger stresses on the conception of the so-called *being-towards-death* as a unique possibility for human. The second assert is taken above all by French existentialism, while the third one by Italian existentialism (Abbagnano, 1998).

Among the German existentialists, besides Heidegger, we also recall Karl Jaspers that, in his work, considers the possibilities of the existence as many impossibilities: indeed, he simply states that, "I cannot be beyond what I am", "I cannot become beyond what I am", "I cannot want beyond what I am", and "what I am is given by the situation in which I stay and against which I cannot nothing". So, Jaspers says that every human is unable to want or wish other than what is allowed by the given situation which constitutes the human; and, as regard French existentialism, also Sartre reaches the same conclusions, but rather arguing on the reciprocal incompatibilities among the various, possible infinite choices. But, coming back to Heidegger and Jaspers, it is the factual necessity that restricts and destroys any possibility to transcend the fact itself, from which it follows the impossibility of a free choice. Even if these latter considerations have led to speak of a "negative philosophy", based on the well-known Kierkegaardian *anguish*, existentialism, above all in the German trend, has been a powerful tool of disenchantment against the void absolutistic dogmatism of 19th-century, with its disproportionated optimism and the fictitious safety sense, as unfortunately testified by the events of the next 20th-century. Part of the French trend, on the other hand, brought to an existentialistic view based on a spiritualistic anchorage having a transcendental nature warranting a potential realization of existential possibilities, but, in doing so, conceiving human existence more turned towards an illusionistic realization rather than to a pragmatic or realistic one, thus not providing any operative framework to approach its more problematic sides (Abbagnano, 1998).

Finally, it seems that Italian existentialistic trend has tried to conciliate the main aspects of German and French trends, reaching compromises between opposite tendencies. According to Italian trend, the existentialistic possibilities of human should be taken and kept as such, not trying to transform them into either impossibilities (like in German trend) or possibilities (like in French trend). To be precise, what is important to take into account are the limits and conditions related to the various existential possibilities, in such a way to understand the degree of warranty, relative or partial, that each possibility may offer in such a context. This Italian trend, therefore, has a more pragmatic aim, making reference to all those disciplines which may help in understanding the field of existence of a certain (existential) possibility. This justifies the search of the "possibility of a possible", as a third assumption of existentialistic trend *iii*). However, Italian trend underlines the necessity to refer to all scientific disciplines need to understand such existential field of a possibility, with the end to make use the positivistic method to investigate such a possibility, in such a way to may give an objectivity status to it, hence to be available in the future. From this standpoint, human is neither threw in the world towards the failure (like in German trend) nor destined to a sure final triumph (like in French trend), but, more pragmatically, it may understand (with the help of scientific disciplines) in which field of existence certain existential possibilities may be experienced or not¹⁵ (Abbagnano, 1998).

These latter considerations on existentialism – and, especially, about the Italian trend – have directly led, around 1950s, to educational implications of such a philosophical trend; in particular, notable are the applications to psycho-pedagogy and pedagogy, as demonstrate the work of Piero Bertolini, in regard to phenomenological trend, and in general, to phenomenological pedagogy (Brinkmann, 2016). In the next sections, we shall outline the main notions of phenomenology and existentialism and their applications to pedagogical contexts, highlighting the remarkable power that just these two philosophical trends may have in understanding human phenomena, above all when they converge together to give rise the phenomenological-existentialistic trend of psychiatry and psychopathology, due to Ludwig Binswanger, but suitably applicable also to normal and special pedagogical contexts.

¹⁵ See also (Santucci, 1982).

2. From existentialism and phenomenology to psycho-pedagogy and didactic

In the previous section, we have pointed out the relevance of the notion of *transcendence* in the relation subject-object, to specify the maintenance of the distinction between its terms, their alterity; thus, this notion does not imply an identity or unity of its terms, but, just with its establishment, warrants their diversity. It comes from ancient Greek philosophy, but has been considered only by contemporary philosophy, with Immanuel Kant who has used such a term in reference to the human consciousness and the act of knowledge that it does. Hence, Husserl distinguishes a *transcendental* perception – which has as a (knowledge) object the thing (perceived) and with respect to which the thing itself is transcendent – from an *immanent* perception, that regards those conscious experiences themselves which are immanent to the perception itself. Then, Heidegger puts this notion at the centre of his framework, speaking of it as the real meaning of the being-in-the-world. In this sense, transcendence goes beyond rational knowledge (*explanation*) to reach another level of knowledge, that of *understanding*, which is, according to Wilhelm Dilthey¹⁶, typical of humanities and social sciences, while the first is typical of exact and natural ones. Therefore, in contemporary philosophy, the comparison explanation/understanding became a crucial question aimed to clarify the reciprocal relationships and dependences. There are, so, four main positions in regard to these two modalities of knowledge (Abbagnano, 1998).

The first one privileges the understanding on the explanation. This is the mainly taken by Heidegger and Hans Gadamer, who consider understanding prior to explanation, in every field of knowledge; it realizes through language and is not objectivable as not subject to any methodological treatment. The second position is, instead, positivistically oriented to give pre-eminence to explanation with respect to understanding, which is considered devoid of cognitive relevance, at most being able to have some form of *empathy*¹⁷ (by subject, in regard to the object), besides to be methodologically handable. The third position, is turned to consider at the same level both knowledge logics, while the fourth and final position assumes these two logics as having a reciprocal autonomy (Abbagnano, 1998). A dualistic position, then, is that considered by Jaspers¹⁸ who, following Dilthey, founded the so-called *comprehensive psychology*, a psychological trend which reads psychic phenomena in a different manner with respect to which natural sciences read natural phenomena: while the latter are under the logics of explanation, which reduces every natural phenomenology within a theoretical framework formally built up with mathematical methods, the former may be known only leaving them as such, without any translation in other formal languages, but trying to pick up, in them, their intimate meanings as emerge from their side, not by the observer side (like in natural sciences). So, from such a new methodological stance, in which the observer no longer has a privileged position, there is also not a unique (or universal) formal scheme of interpretation (i.e., the scientific method), but every single case, due to its singular history, has its specific meaning, to be grasped just by understanding (Galimberti, 1979; 2006).

Karl Jaspers (1883-1969) has given important contributions to philosophy and psychology. Mainly influenced by Kant, Nietzsche and, above all, Kierkegaard, he considers the existence as a particular situation historically determined. He further contests the alleged superiority of scientific knowledge, as it is only a knowledge perspective invalidated by its presuppositions and not being moreover a universal knowledge but only partial. The philosophical knowledge, instead, tends to go beyond the pure datum to search the being, which is yet always escapable and elusive, so delinable but never present as always in tension. Hence, he agree with existentialistic trend, accepting its main common themes, among which the basic assert for which the theoretical discussion on the human should be

¹⁶ Who said that "we explain nature, yet comprehend psychic life". Dilthey's view was then taken by Jaspers.

¹⁷ Which, however, is quite different from understanding (Abbagnano, 1998).

¹⁸ See (Jaspers, 1964).

addressed not on what it is in itself (i.e., its essence), but rather on its modalities of being, or else on the manners in which it is. Thus, with Jaspers (and Ludwig Binswanger – see later), the German existentialistic arguments gradually took a more suitable version to be applied to other humanistic disciplines, such as psychology and pedagogy, which couldn't neglect these (Bertolini, 1980; Iori, 1988; Neri, 1975; Prohaska, 1963).

Ludwig Binswanger (1881-1966) was a psychiatrist who founded the so-called *Daseinsanalyse*, that is a psychological trend, based on Husserlian phenomenology and philosophical existentialism, then said to be *existential analysis*. It is aimed to search the modalities with which every single patient manifests her/his own manner or fashion to being in the world, looking at an own coherence which is not that of collectivity (to which we usually refer as normality) but related to a certain unity of sense, if any, given by the global set of all her/his expression modalities. So, either Binswanger and Jaspers identify attitudes and behaviours as understandable or incomprehensible in dependence on these overall have a coherent or not unity of sense or meaning, as psychic manifestations. To be precise, Binswanger was intentioned to understand the complex world of psychosis and its language so, in respecting of psychotic and her/his modes of being, was naturally led to phenomenology and existentialism with their possible links with psychiatry. Therefore, he worked out a new trend of the psychological sciences, called *Daseinsanalyse*, rejecting the traditional psychoanalytic categories of unconscious, to give rise to a phenomenological analysis of the existence, in general. The human is a being-in-the-world, whose existence is the condition itself of the being and of the knowledge, and in such sense, also psychopathology is a manner to being-in-the-world. Always into this framework, Binswanger tries to come back the experience of the patient, who is not a separated object (from the so-called "normal society") but a subject who is providing, in her/his own way, a singular response, unique and unrepeatable, to the existence. So, phenomenological method consists in looking at the suffering of the patient after having put aside the own prejudgements and interpretative schemes to allow a free "categorical observation" of the patient, of her/his language, of her/his manners to relate to things and persons, with the meanings these latter undertake for her/him. The psychic disease has therefore to be looked as an unsustainable "situation" which refers not properly to the past trauma (which is, however, taken into consideration) but rather to the "meaning" that it currently undertakes as still present and active into the psyche of patient. Accordingly, with the help of the therapist, the main responsibility of the patient, who cannot delete her/his trauma, is in trying to engage, as far as possible, a new modality of being-in-the-world, turned towards a more "authentic" settling, so that the therapist should make the patient as much as possible aware of those "alienating" and "alienated" aspects of her/his life as well as marked by "inauthenticity" (Binswanger 1970; 1973; Galimberti, 1979; 2006).

Of course, these latter considerations and prescriptions, properly revisited and readapted, should be taken into particular account for disabled persons pedagogy and special pedagogy; further, the usual didactic might to take advantage from what has just been said above, better through the reference to the phenomenological trend. Indeed, a *phenomenological pedagogy* (Bertolini, 1958; 1980; 1988; 2001) is both based on a critical reflection about educational experience and centred on a gradually crescent understanding of this latter from an interdisciplinary standpoint (above all, with regard to humanities), considering the subject of the educational experience in its complexity as well as in the general and wider context in which it is as a relational entity, giving meaning; and what is really important in a phenomenological pedagogy is to give pre-eminence to the pragmaticity of the educational process, based on the phenomenological perspective given to the situation in which the subject (of such a process) is, as a being-in-the-world. The *intentionality*, as the main feature of human consciousness according to Husserl, explicates its function through the (inter)relationships (*intersubjectivity*) that every human establishes within the general and wider context in which it is, so building up its own "vision of the world" (i.e., a meaningful representation of the reality), made

by all the world representations that it gradually ripens, together the building up of its personal identity moulded on the former. Thus, every human has knowledge of the things (materials and persons) of the reality thanks to such an intentionality to know such things, through a relationship with them made by a both immanent and transcendent perception (see above § 1). Its vision of the world is therefore made by this historical set of world representations, each of which is pregnant of a meaning¹⁹, this last assigned on the basis of the own past living experiences, an historical class which is always open and modifiable, in such a way to may suitably change the *intentionality*²⁰ (to be meant as the main feature of human consciousness) in dependence on the educational needs, hence to build up a right vision of the world and a balanced system producing meanings. Every educational process, settled on a relation educator-pupil of high quality, must take into account such a meaning system based on the own lived experience (*Erlebnis*) to project future with a right vision of the reality (whose structure is basically relational), as a reference for the own intentionality and its action giving sense or meaning. So, the "need for meaning or sense", might be the principle of phenomenological pedagogy (Bertolini, 1980; Cavana, 2009-10; 2016; Cavana & Casadei, 2016; Iori, 2016; Tarozzi, 2016).

Bertolini admonished the extreme scientism and technicism in which pedagogy had felt, unable so to pick up the real sense of the educational process or relation, in which what really counts in it, is the relationship in "flesh and bones"; a coming back to the "original roots of life", out of any scheme and pre-concept (by *epoché*), is the real and pure condition that may lead pedagogy towards its non-scientific but genuine nature, reachable just with Husserlian phenomenology methods, without yet diminish the complexity of such a relation, polysemic in its nature for the many dimensions, aspects and prospects, which make educational experience extremely problematic. This entails that, from a philosophical standpoint, the education phenomenon belongs to a *regional ontology*, that, according to Husserl, deals with the many modalities with which entities may give to us, hence it may concern many disciplines²¹ but all converging towards the unique (ontological) field of pedagogy, so the education may be seen also as an *ontological region*. But an inauspicious error of modern pedagogy has been its attempt to become a positive science, for an alleged major objectivity of its phenomena to be gained just thanks to exact and natural sciences, but, in doing so, averting pedagogy from its natural course to may come back to the "originariety of life" (*Lebenswelt*); their rigidity and pre-schematicity would make difficult the needed educational change. So, making rigorous (and not exact) the pedagogy, is possible only overcoming that "dis-humanizing" approach reducing the subject to a mere and cold "object" of study of exact and natural sciences with their data, hence re-considering the individual in its own dignity and factual subjectivity, which should be the real

19 According to certain processes (important from an education standpoint) as provided by Husserlian phenomenology, among which are *epoché* and *entropathy* (or *Einführung*) that allow an "authentic" (so contrasting an "inauthentic", i.e., an alienating and other-directed, life) understanding of the subject involved in any educational process (Bertolini, 1980; Cappuccio, 2008; Tarozzi, 2016).

20 It consists in the necessary relation existing between consciousness itself (subject or I-Ego) and the external objectivity (object or otherness), which was made separable by Descartes in the celebrated dualism *res cogitans/res extensa*. According to Husserl, consciousness should not have any meaning or sense without a reference to something (i.e., the consciousness is always consciousness of something) or an objective content, while external objectivity should not have meaning or sense without receiving a certain aspect or form by consciousness. So, both elements of such a relation, should be present at the same time, to exist or to have a (reciprocal) meaning; and the intentionality will be the new Husserlian concept that will overcome the Cartesian separateness of such elements. From this conception, therefore, it follows that either a merely objectivistic (or materialistic) and a subjectivistic (or idealistic) conception of reality are rejected, while a relationistic conception of it, is that acceptable, for which what is really important is not the being in itself of the reality (which, however, escapes from any possibility of objective and unique knowledge) but rather the relevance of the being for human, that is to say, its living experience (*Erlebnis*) of the own living world (*Lebenswelt*). In doing so, phenomenology reaches to a transcendental conception of reality not meant as a synthesis of transcendence and immanence but as an outcome of the inextricable and indistinguishable relation between a subjectivity (giving meaning) and an objectivity (giving content). Each human is a *there-being*, in that it is inseparable from its context in which it is situated, preceding every related thought, judged or consideration, so that, necessarily, every educational act cannot neglect such an existential condition depending on the place, the time, the context, the individual features determining the existential horizon of each human. Phenomenological pedagogy tries to replace logical-scientific explaining (*Erklären*) to the opening understanding (*Verstehen*) made possible through *epoché*, empathic intuition with the analysis, investigation (by introspection and transposition) and comparison of lived experiences (*Erlebnisse*), which allow an "intuitive grasping" of the phenomonic *eidōs*, i.e., their essence, not otherwise identifiable by simple scientific objectivation (Bertolini, 1980; Iori, 2016).

21 Among these, there is also the psychoanalysis, which may give useful contributions to pedagogy basically because both are essentially based on an understanding process of human and its history; the common points between psychoanalysis and phenomenological pedagogy had already been pointed out by Piero Bertolini, in highlighting the fundamental importance to understand at first who is receiving education from a global perspective, so calling into question also psychoanalysis in helping the identification of this latter (Bertolini, 2005; Biffi, 2016; Cho, 2009).

"objects of study" of pedagogy, conducted through the methods and concepts of phenomenology, above all, *epoché*²² and *Erlebnis* (Farnè, 2016; Ghirotto, 2016; Iori, 2016).

Husserlian phenomenology – and phenomenological pedagogy, in particular – stresses on the net distinction, *d'après* Dilthey, between *understanding* (by participation) and *explanation* (by causes and effects), the former allowing to be aware of the phenomenon "from the inside", while the latter allows to be aware of the phenomenon "from the outside". For humans, especially, this distinction is crucial, with understanding of phenomena meant as an investigation conducted globally and with a unitary view, not in analytical and separated manner as usually done by scientific method (notwithstanding its next synthesis phase). This understanding process of human, seen by either the pedagogic and the psychoanalytic viewpoint, may lead to better outline the formation of the own personality in regard to the general and wider context in which it lives, so identifying two main moments or aspects in which such a formation process explains, in a synchronous manner: the first one, mainly aware and conscious, regards the own, personal identity (of each human) which is however active and in close, synchronous relation with the second one, most unaware or unconscious and passive, as a result just of the above general and wider context in which a human lives²³; this process of formation has been considered – by Bertolini – as a two-way process by active and passive generation, and a valuable part in working out it, has been recognized as due to psychoanalytic context (Bertolini, 1988; 2005). Of course, although psychoanalysis might help in understanding educational process, pedagogy has then the further commitment to act in such a way to may change, if necessary, the situation in which the subject is involved, so experiencing possibly other/new existential modalities which should be "intentionally" and "responsibly" acquired by subject itself. Further, many contact points may exist between educational process and transference phenomena of the analytical setting, due to the basic common understanding process undergoing both psychoanalysis and pedagogy; there is another analogical parallel between these two disciplines, namely the need for psychoanalyst to undergo, previously, to a suitable *didactic analysis* and the need for a right, equilibrated and sane mental health by educator, who continuously must (or should) self-reflect critically on itself and its conducts, behaviours and acts to role suitably the (surely present, both psychoanalytically and phenomenologically) influence of own acting past lived experiences during educational process²⁴ (Biffi, 2016; Riva, 2001).

3. A brief overview of existential analysis and related discussions

Ludwig Binswanger (1881-1966) was a notable Swiss psychiatrist, mainly known as the founder of a new interdisciplinary trend in psychiatry and psychology, said to be *Daseinanalyse* or *existential analysis* or *anthropoanalysis*²⁵, which may be also considered as a trend belonging to the so-called *phenomenological psychiatry*. It was a revolutionary trend of psychiatry of the first-half of 20th-century for having shed relationships with philosophy, anthropology and psychoanalysis to look in a new and innovative manner the psychic life of human being. Binswanger considered, above all, existentialism, in particular Heidegger main ideas: indeed, he stated that, just through Heideggerian notion of *being-in-the-world*, it was possible to overcome that "cancer" that undermined the bases of any psychological trend, that is to say, the Cartesian dualism between subject and object, that has made the patient a mere "cold" datum, as an object of that phenomonic reality of natural sciences²⁶.

22 Husserl himself said that "*epoché* is able to radically change the whole humanity". *Epoché*, in a few words, allows to (transcendently) understand (among other) the *Erlebnis* of every one enters into a certain communication with me, hence the *essence* (*eidos*) of such a relation (Iori, 2016).

23 Such a dialectic relationship between these two main parts of the personality of every human being, has been briefly formalized, within a socio-psychoanalytic framework, in (Iurato, 2018a,b).

24 A request, this last, which is very difficult to get practically and objectively.

25 The two denominations of *Daseinanalyse* and *anthropoanalysis*, are both due to Danilo Cargnello; see (Cargnello, 1970).

26 Unfortunately, this consideration is still of dramatic actuality, and it seems to worst ever more with time: indeed, ever lesser attention is paid to humanistic disciplines to give pre-eminence to natural and exact sciences, hence to the *explanation* dimension to the detriment of *understanding* one, with a consequent increasing of alienation phenomena. This is also the situation in which currently relies the scholastic context, notwithstanding the fictitious formal attempts to pursue vain, merely bureaucratic and inefficient reforms in the opposite directions. The understanding dimension simply

As a consequence, the human existence (*Dasein*) has been reduced to a mere subject devoid of the own world (Galimberti, 2020). So, Binswanger, from Husserl's phenomenology and Heidegger's existentialism, worked out a new trend of psychiatry in which human is seen as a *person*, not as a mere object, into its world, so grasping human as a phenomenon meant in Husserlian sense, picked up in its globality as it gives in itself, leaving out of consideration any scientific interpretation of it. Thus, the new method consists in neither analyse psychic phenomena as objects of study according to a scientific praxis nor looking at the mere subjectivity of who (i.e., the patient) is experiencing such a psychic phenomena, but rather at the *modalities* with which human effectively realizes itself in the basic primordial existential relation "I-World", hence their underivable essences. For instance, to reach its extreme perspective, phenomenological-existential approach also considers, as possible existence modalities, the psychotic manifestations (Ballerini, 1973). Now, surely this approach has become to be clinically quite anachronistic today²⁷ in respect to biology and medicine, but what we desire to point out here is its remarkable role from the philosophical and pedagogical standpoint, in that it provides an original and genuine view of human being and its spiritualistic or transcendental nature, which cannot be grasped by positivistic sciences, with their usual categories, but which is, however, necessary to be considered from, at least, the pedagogical perspective²⁸ (Giberti & Rossi, 1996).

As already said above, Binswanger was inspired by reflections due, among others, to Kierkegaard, Dilthey, Nietzsche, Husserl and Heidegger, agreeing in distinguishing between *Geisteswissenschaft* and *Naturwissenschaft* due to Dilthey: the firsts deal with spiritual phenomena which are internal to human, to its consciousness and concerning its lived past (*Erlebt*), while the seconds deal with the so-called natural phenomena, are approachable from the external, objectivable and decomposable in simpler components, hence analysable and synthesizable with scientific method, at the searching of possible causal relations. The phenomena having a spiritual nature must be understood by analysis, description and the comparison of the lived pasts (*Erlebnisse*), investigated by introspection and through the empathic transposition (or comparticipation) into (or with) the other. Husserlian ideas were also formulated against the positivistic trend of psychology of the time: indeed, also with the next support of Heidegger's view, the basic epistemological principle consists in "leaving to see by itself what is manifesting", by means of *epoché*, that is, neglecting any conjecture on the "why" and "when" of phenomena, so to know a phenomenon is nothing but that "picking up how it manifests". Such an investigation is clearly *extra-categorical*, as the real knowledge of a phenomenon is possible only putting aside any previous theoretical framework, and *extra-sensorial* (that is, transcendental). This is the real and true knowledge of any phenomonic manifestation, from the Husserlian stance, as turned to take the essence and the revelation manner of a phenomenon, so making explicit what is implicitly concealed in it. That is just what claims the basic phenomenological-existentialistic principle of the knowledge of a phenomenon. Applying these assumptions to psychological sciences entails the rejection of any reification of the psychic contents (i.e., the psyche seen as a thing, as an object of external reality), as usually meant according to scientific method, as well as the decline of either any naturalistic reductionism (that sees a psychic phenomenon as a simple sum of single and independent functions) and causalistic theories (which are responsively functional only to previous sets of hypotheses and pre-assumptions). In particular, the rejection of the known Cartesian dualism *res cogitans/res extensa*, that is, between mind (or psyche) and body, is an assumption of Husserlian phenomenology, which is aimed to look at the phenomenon in its totality, trying to catch its essence without calling into question any other theoretical framework (Sarteschi & Maggini, 1982).

helps to widen or enlarge our horizon of view, giving to it a wider prospective amplitude, so becoming just more comprehensive.

²⁷ However, for a clinical and therapeutical application of the phenomenological-existentialistic trend, see for example (Van der Berg, 1961). This trend had, in Italy, a flourishing development with the works of Danilo Cargnello, Bruno Callieri, Eugenio Borgna, Franco Basaglia, Umberto Galimberti, etc.

²⁸ Even if the phenomenological-existentialistic trend under question, belongs to psychiatry, by definition, it regards either the normal and the pathological subject (Bini & Bazzi, 1976). Further, there have been many succeeded attempts to transfer or extend the psycho-pathologic field of such a trend to the normal field of human life (Francioni, 1976).

The main differences between naturalistic and phenomenological knowledge are summarizable as follows. The former is based first on sensorial (*immanent*) perception of things or events, hence are identified, through scientific method, with a certain set of experimental data which will be, then, formalized in a right theoretical framework and conceptualized by means of suitable hypotheses, in such a manner to deduce or infer later explaining causal laws. The latter, instead, is based on a non-sensorial (*transcendental*) perception grasping the essence or mode of the intrinsic manifestation of a phenomenon, that will be then understood in its human meaning as resulting from the *ordinativity* (or order of existence) in which it is inserted, without making reference to any preconstituted theory and not asking neither "the why" nor "the when" of phenomenon. So, from the basic methodological distinction – due to Dilthey – between the causalistic explanation (*Erklaren*) and the psychological understanding (*Verstehen*), with the Husserlian phenomenological theory, Jaspers worked out a new psychological trend, said to be *comprehensive psychology* (as previously recalled), hence drawn up his celebrated treatise *General Psychopathology* (1913), which constituted the official birth of the other new psychological trend – the *phenomenological-existentialistic* one – which was sufficiently revolutionary with respect to the orthodox one based on clinical-descriptive approach to psychiatry as due to Emil Kraepelin and Eugen Bleuler (Sarteschi & Maggini, 1982).

Main assumptions of Jaspersian phenomenological-existentialistic trend are the empathic approach to patient, with a genuine participation feeling (*Einfühlung*), trying – respectfully – to penetrate its²⁹ intimate inner world to relive – till to possible – and elaborate its lived pasts and experiences (which lead and role its behaviours, but abstaining from any further interpretation going beyond the pure description) and representing these last in the own soul (*Rumke*) – of therapist. Only in this manner, it is possible to understand the lived experiences and the past of others, bringing back these latter to forms of similar, near or analogous lived facts or experiences of the own life (i.e., of the therapist), otherwise impossible to understand; of course, the psychotic ones cannot be adequately understood for its atypicality – so, these are the limits of the understanding³⁰ – not for their (possibly strange) content but for the modalities of psychic manifestation. Nevertheless, these last limits of Jaspersian phenomenological-existentialistic trend were overcome by Binswanger's work that, based on either Husserl's phenomenology and Heidegger's existentialism, has outlined an own psychological trend just said to be *Daseinanalyse*, that, with respect to Jaspers' work, tries to reduce the subjectivity of the empathic understanding, making appeal to the *a priori* ontological bases of human existence, i.e. the *being-in-the-world* (*Dasein*) and the *being-with-others* (*Mit-dasein*), to shed light on the real modalities with which it manifests, without any limits to pathological situations (like, in psychosis). Indeed, once it has been overcome the old splitting among the elements of the pair I-World, now included into an inseparable constitutive unity, *Daseinanalyse* is able to penetrate into the deepen, primary and fundamental (transcendental) structures of human existence (as temporality, spatiality, existentivity, the mundane, the language³¹, etc.) so making every (normal or pathological³²) human existence modality licit and meaningful, as *Daseinanalyse*, also said to be "analysis of the presence" (by Cargnello), just looks globally at the whole existence of every human, seen just as a person and not as a thing, and how it phenomenologically relates with the world in which it is cast, only distinguishing between the "may be" of an authentic existence and the "forced or constrained to be" of an inauthentic existence by an alienating, nullifying, forcing and flattening world. So, *Daseinanalyse* looks at the original human existence conceiving every human as a specific individual who copes its existence in a world on the basis of a certain modality of being, as an existential *a priori*, which cannot be freely chosen neither reduced mechanistically (Lalli, 1999;

29 We recall the apposite (impersonal) use of the pronoun for things (*It*), with the related possessives and/or determiners, also for persons; this, to dissipate possible misunderstandings with specific philosophical terms.

30 This entails the making necessarily reference to natural sciences for explaining psychotic manifestations, in the Jaspersian psychopathology.

31 According to Heidegger, language is the "home" of the being and in it lives human (Piro, 1967).

32 These distinctions do not belong to the proper anthropoanalytic methodology, as *Daseinanalyse* has not diagnostic finalities or aims, but is turned only to deepen and investigate human existence.

Piro, 1967; Sarteschi & Maggini, 1982).

The human existence is the *there-being* (*Da-sein*) because it is just in the *there-*, or in the *Da-*, that emerges that sense for which human is the place in which (or where) *there is* (*ist da*), or takes place, the manifestation of the *being* (*Anwesen*), in which that originary and primordial sense of *being* establishes and relates with human, and with respect to which this last turns (*Zu-wendung*). From this, Heidegger stated that "the essence of there-being is the existence". But *existence* (*Ec-sistenz*), as a word, etymologically³³ comes from the Latin *ex-sistere*, that means "to raise or emerge, stand forth, come out", as *ex-* means "out of", while *-sistere* derives, as a radical, from "to stand or stay". So, human, who *ex-sists*, goes beyond own originary presence in the world, as he/she "opens and discloses" the own world with life projects, differently from the simple objects or things which simply are included into the world, that is, objects "insist into the world", from *in-sistere*, where *in-* means "inside", so these stand or simply stay within the world, neither opening nor disclosing any project of life³⁴. These simply Heidegger's statements were then reconsidered by Binswanger from the psychological viewpoint, hence arguing why humans cannot be simply considered like objects of external reality, as well as contrasting the tendency of isolating the subjectivity of the patient, so ignoring the deep and originary structures and meanings of her/his life, as just identified by phenomenology and existentialism (Galimberti, 2006).

Indeed, Binswanger makes appeal to the fundamental notion of *presence* given by Heidegger. With this term (*Anwesenheit*), containing a subordinated term (*Wesen*) referring to the *essence*, Heidegger wished to refer to that primordial originary dimension of human existence, not having any relational nature, with which every human opens or discloses her/his project of life through the *intentionality* (*In-der-Welt-sein*) – differently from the presence of simple objects or things of external reality (*Vorhandenheit*) which are simply there, in front (*vor*), hence handable (*zu Hand*), then usable (*Zuhandenheit*) – so declining its existence with its own originary mode to be opened towards the world. This originary and primeval mode of opening of human to being (i.e., the *presence*), with which one puts itself into the world, "is as early there" or offered to our experience already before any other our next categorial thought or reflection, so presence is a pre-categorial unity which is the basis for any other further categorial construction; presence is the specific trait of human. Husserl claimed that the presence is detectable or identifiable only through *epoché*, i.e., the suspension of any judgement with which we usually consider any other thing of the world, so putting aside any our categorial framework, it is possible to reach the originary experience of the presence, intrinsically characterizing human (Galimberti, 2006)

But, already Heidegger had understood that a psychology reduced (or interested) only to consider the nature of entities (*ontic dimension*) and not to the originary primeval opening of human to being (*ontological dimension*), i.e., to the presence, is destined to the failure of its anthropological end as it ignores that human is essentially featured just by its originary opening to the world. This has then entailed the so-called *ontological difference* between being and entity, given by the difference between the *ontic truth*, that concerns the entity in its empiricity and factual determination, and the *ontological truth*, which concerns the being of the entity, that is, its essence. So, Heidegger himself claimed the need for a psychology turned towards the ontological truth of human rather than to the ontic one. But he also said that the being is undefinable (for human thought) as any possible (logic) definition always remains at the ontic level, or of the entity, so such an ontological difference refers to that incapable gap holding between the being and the entity, whose place of revelation is just the *Dasein*, that, transcending itself, establishes relations with other entities, trying to understand their being or else their essence (Brezzi, 1994).

³³ Again, making reference to the etymological analysis of terms, according to Heidegger.

³⁴ Nevertheless, recent researches are looking at a possible psychology of plants (Castiello, 2019), which might give rise to original philosophical discussions along this new side.

From that, Binswanger claimed a psychology devoted to its real object of study, that is the human, not to be studied yet with the usual methods of natural sciences as an entity of external phenomenical reality, but starting from its real and true nature as a *Dasein*, with its typical feature as a *presence* in the world, hence considering its primordial, originary giving itself to the world and the related ways of posing. So, psychology should concern the effective modalities with which *Dasein* offers to the world, i.e. how it spatializes (*Raum gibt*), temporalizes (*sich zeigt*), mundanizes (*weltlich*), coexists (*Mitdasein*). Therefore, psychology should go beyond the mere psychic phenomenology (which is basically described – by entities – by biological and natural sciences) to look at that vital horizon (i.e., the *presence*³⁵) in which to describe the transcendental conditions of psychic life, to be detected by phenomenological methods which allow to know the real meanings, the true dimensions and the sense of an authentic psychic life and its manifestations. So, psychotherapy should stand out those aspects or moments of psychic life overshadowed by inauthenticity, to bring back to the authentic ones. To be precise, with the originary opening to the world (with which every individual is born), two are the main existential routes, namely: the *thrownness* (or *throwaway*) on the one hand, with which human is thrown (*Ge-worfen*), as an existential falling (*Verfallen*), in a world already done that moulds or forces it – by *facticity* (*Faktizität*) – with an inauthentic life (*uneigentlich*), and the *projectuality* on the other hand, with which human is however able to overcome or overrun (*Überschreitung*) that unavoidable *situation* (*Situation*), linked to the unavoidable historicity of every existence, by *transcendence* (*Transzendenz*), so building its own *project-in-the world* (*Ent-wurf*), whence living with authenticity (*eigentlich*). Thus, the prevalence of the *being-thrown* over the *may-be*, implies a fixing on the primordial *presence*, so having a prevalence of the *facticity* on the *overrunning* (or *overcoming*), hence a replacement of the possibility that the world "may happen" (through an own life project) with the acceptance of a (world) project not properly desired but imposed³⁶, so sinking into the *dejection* (*Verfallen*). In that, Binswanger sees the basic *destruction* of human existence as any project is so foreclosed. Indeed, human existence is seen as opened towards the world as a *project*, this last being the chief constitutive trait of human existence which should not mean as that of a thing of external reality but rather as just a project regarding its possible attitudes, behaviours, conducts, and actions. Human has just such a possibility to *project* (*ent-werfen*) a world and, in this project, to find its own identity (*Selbstheit*) as notwithstanding it is *thrown-in-the-world* (*ge-worfen*) or else it is in a certain *situation* (closely linked to its unavoidable historicity), an its *overcoming* (or *overrunning*) should be undertaken just through a possible *project* (although influenced by such an originary situation) outlined by transcendence, as well as it may fail in this task (Galimberti, 2006).

The polarity pair *authenticity/inauthenticity* has been introduced by Jaspers to refer to those aspects of life which properly (*eigen*) rely at the basis of the existence, with respect to what stays at its early surface, mainly acquired by imitation or acquiescence by society: i.e., what is persisting and durable against what is temporary and elusive; what has developed with the existence against what has been acquired by imitation or simply accepted as such. Then Heidegger has deepened such perspectives distinguishing from what human may see in the world according its own point of view (belonging to the *Dasein*) or simply by that common standpoint provided by the impersonal social perspective of the time in which human is. Then, Binswanger, accepting the categories of existential analytics of Heidegger, declines the fundamental pair *authenticity/inauthenticity* according to the category of temporality, which Heidegger showed to be closely related to the being. Indeed, Binswanger states that, the present of every existence lies between a non-chosen past and a future to be chosen, so the

35 This notion might be put in a certain, partial relation with the so-called *scheme of the world image* considered by Konrad Lorenz (1973), which is an innate schema of the image that every person has of the world, and that evolves along her or his life in dependence on the related social-cultural context.

36 In such a case, it may be included, for example, those deep and persistent depressions (also resistant to pharmacological treatments) mainly due, accordingly, to a strong attachment or anchoring (of the patient) to the own originary *presence*, so displacing unilaterally her/his own temporality in the past. In these cases, therefore, where pharmacologic cures fail, a right phenomenological-existentialistic psychiatric treatment might be indicated.

authenticity consists in building up own existence in agreement with the coming future projectuality so chosen, or in tuning with it. Instead, inauthenticity springs out when human is however unable to go beyond own past, which constitutes – metaphorically – an anchor³⁷ for its future life projects and psychic development. Thus, in the inability to transcend its own past, human gives up to an its own "may be" in favour of an already done (not by it) possibility, which is an inauthentic choice because not given by it but passively acquired. This is the victory of the *being-thrown* on the *may-be* (or *projectuality*), the failure of new possibilities for the human in favour of repetition of (already done) possibilities. In this last case, Binswanger says, the things from being tempting become looming, from being alluring become distressed, because in place of to be able to dominate the situation – that is, having under control all the possible relations of sense or meaning – this last instead become overwhelming, so stealing to the *Dasein* its ownership and self-control (Galimberti, 2006).

What has been said above, is quite enough to have a synoptic view of what existential analysis is; and for an its deeper understanding, we refer to (Galimberti, 1979).

4. Conclusions

Almost paradoxically, it might seem quite anomalous try to apply a psychiatric context to general pedagogy, if we conceive psychiatric sciences just as belonging to the natural sciences realm, in that as seen above, right in this latter, psychiatry is properly based on a primary distinction, that between the two main categories of normal and pathological, with the latter the one treated by psychiatrists. Instead, if we look at the humanistic side of psychiatric sciences, namely at the phenomenological-existentialistic trend, then no paradoxical conclusion may be inferred as just this trend does not have the categorial hiatus between normal and pathological. It is just this trend, rather, to have shed light on the real nature of human existence, giving dignity and respect to who is classified as a "sick" by the other side of psychiatric sciences based on scientific methodology, which currently seems the unique one to be taken into consideration in any possible context. The present one seems to be the era of a *panscientific* view of any possible context or dimension of human life, seen this last itself as a simple object or regarded as a mere datum, hence treated as such: this is, above all, findable or visible in the economic realm³⁸ where any human being is simply – and exclusively – seen as a pure statistical datum, with all the consequences that are under our eyes. Among these are the ever more increasing alienation phenomena in almost every part of human life.

Therefore, for what has been said above, it seems that the humanistic trend of psychiatry, and of psychological sciences in general, provides the real and right framework in which to lay out human existence, from which its real and true nature may emerge, and thanks to which it is possible to understand better it for knowing authentic and inauthentic aspects of human existence. All that, in particular, might turn out to be useful to pedagogical aims, above all for special pedagogy, basically to see, in a more properly *human* (and not "scientific"³⁹) fashion, the subject to whom is addressed the pedagogical intervention. Yet, as phenomenological-existentialistic trend however belongs to a psychopathological context, what we would like to point out in this note is simply a possible methodological suggestion for pedagogy, namely try to pursue each educational process ever seeing

37 In general, due to traumatic events.

38 Partially due to the prevalence of the so-called *utilitaristic philosophy* trend of 19th-century.

39 What we intend is as follows. Above all nowadays, a great variety of scientific disciplines are taken as perspective references for many other fields of knowledge transversally considered. Nevertheless, this reference is undertaken always from the explanatory standpoint, not from the understanding one, thus neglecting the necessary rightness, coherence, pertinence and pragmatic value of such a multidisciplinary comparison or evaluation (or simply calling into question), all methodological aspects, these, which must be taken into the right consideration for the licit inference or deduction of related judgments, and this task may be accomplished only making appeal to an understanding dimension, not remaining into an explanatory one only. Moreover, the emergence or the occurrence of such a scientific interdisciplinary perspective, besides to motivate the requirement of the just above recalled epistemological reflection, entails too another epistemological need, to be precise the one claiming a revision of the notion of *determinism* in the context of humanities. Anyhow, hierarchically, understanding dimension is a level (or metalevel) higher than explanatory one, so it is much more powerful than this latter; furthermore, it is indispensable to have also an *ethical* dimension of life, which should be the highest aim of any educational process.

the related subject (to whom it is addressed) as a human being meant – or better, seen – just according to such a phenomenological-existentialistic stance, in that this latter is the only one to have better understood the real and true nature of human existence. This (hoped) turn towards the *understanding* dimension might also have useful implications above all from the social psychology standpoint, as it might reduce the increasing adrift towards *alienation*⁴⁰ (to be meant in its widest sense) whose current society is ever more afflicted⁴¹.

40 It denotes the estrangeness from itself, the condition to be lost into the things or events, the falling in doing or coping own duties, and – above all in the existentialism – the negativity or the incapability of human *situation* to warrant and realize the ownership and the self-ownership of the person.

41 For a clear, deep and updated view of the present situation of contemporary society, it is need to refer to (Galimberti, 2020).

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