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Inhaltsverzeichnis

Besprechung

Dokumentation

Table of Contents

III

Jeong-Gil Woo/Joo-Young Jung

Beyond the Teacher – Three perspectives on school classroom

Abstract: This paper aims to investigate the classroom phenomenon, which lies beyond pedagogical intentionality according to organization theories, systems theory and the concept of natality by Arendt. Firstly, we investigate theories on school organization from bureaucracy theory (Weber) to garbage can theory (Cohen, March, Olsen). It provides us an organization theoretical overview and historical changes in identifying school classroom. Secondly, we will also investigate Luhmann's systems theory, in which the school classroom can be marked with the metaphor of the "white box". Different from the "black box", it will provide us relatively with more transparency regarding the rules of interaction between participants. Focusing on the concept of double contingency, the possibility and limit of this sociological-constructivistic approach will be discussed. In the following chapter, we will lastly explore the concept of natality by Arendt, which is a key concept in her philosophy. It will provide an ontological-genealogical perspective, which seems to be uneasy to reconcile with the traditional conceptualization of education, but is helpful to understand the classroom, where every individual, as well as the class as a social being, experience new identities through second births.

Keywords: Organization Theory, Bureaucracy Theory, Garbage Can Theory, Systems Theory, Natality

1. The Classroom

The classroom is a succession of surprises. It starts with a set lesson plan, but sometimes, a sudden disruption occurs regardless of the teaching plan and context, which sometimes breaks up the intellectual bedlam. The classroom is sometimes a space of pleasant surprises, while other times it is an unpleasant whack-a-mole-game against the students in the classroom. The classroom is sometimes a "peaceful daily dance floor for both teacher and students" (Palmer, 2007, p. 26), while it can change at any moment into a battleground where different intentions and opinions cross and collide with each other.

For sure, the classroom with these kinds of dynamics would not always be a pleasant place for everyone involved. Rather, we see more reports on the latter. In the first chapter "Teachers Talk – A Theme of Despair", of the book *Teacher and Child* by Ginott, we can see outspoken and provocative self-reports on how a classroom can be a tragic place for a teacher (Ginott, 1972, pp. 23–24). Of course, the teacher is primarily responsible for every situation in the classroom. He is the one who has a pre-understanding on teaching and chosen the job as his own vocation. Teachers have been professionally trained for the job as society vests them with administrative and educative authority and students and parents present them with trust. Therefore, it seems to be reasonable

and assuring that every event and story is reduced to the capability and professionality of a teacher.

> I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. […] As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or de-humanized. (Ginott, 1972, pp. 15–16)

Ginott's teacher-reductionism, which reminds us of Weber's (1964, pp. 328–329) "charismatic leadership", contributes to motivate the teacher to have a high sense of responsibility and courage to teach, calling for attention to the importance of the teacher profession. On the other hand, the skepticism of the reductionist teacher and negative byproduct of it should not be overlooked. In regards to the former, we need to take notice that the reductionist teacher is based upon a teacher-centered pedagogical optimism, which has been understood in a certain era even as the pedagogical almighty, and the academic skepticism on the modern concept of pedagogy that has been emerging in the last few decades.[1] In regards to the latter, we need to take recent reports into consideration revealing the fact that overemphasizes on the function and responsibility of the teacher, which results in teachers burning out often or at least undergoing an internal conflict in terms of the identity as a teacher (Higgins, 2003; Edgoose, 2010; Woo, 2013a). It would be theoretically as well as practically perfect if a teacher were an almighty being that predicts and controls all phenomenon and situations in educational practices, as Comenius had once desired (Comenius, 1910; Woo, 2013a, pp. 5–6). However, in reality, a teacher is just one important element for success in the classroom, but not an almighty and wise being that "control[s] and judge[s] the status of humanizedness or de-humanizedness" as Ginott wishes the teacher to be (Ginott, 1972, pp. 15). The attempt to decide the success or failure from the reductionist teacher perspective is neither theoretically impeccable nor free from negative side effects in educational practice. In the classroom, there is always *something more at work beyond the teacher*.

Then, what does the "something more at work beyond the teacher" mean? How can we explain the dynamics within educational relationships between the teacher and students or student and student beyond the pedagogical intentionality in the classroom? And especially, how can we explain the arising of newness which were neither planned nor expected in the classroom? Starting from these questions, we will explore a few theoretical approaches for understanding the school classroom. This paper aims at investigating the classroom phenomenon, which lies beyond the pedagogical intentionality according to the organization theories, the systems theory by Luhmann, and the concept of natality by Arendt. Firstly, we investigate theories on school organization from bu-

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1   Meyer-Drawe, 2000; Lippitz, 2002, pp. 180–181; Wimmer & Schäfer, 2003; Wimmer, 2003; Schäfer, 2007; Woo, 2007; Woo, 2013a, pp. 3–4.

reaucracy theory (Weber) to the garbage can theory (Cohen, March, Olsen). It provides us organization theoretical overview and historical changes in identifying school classroom. Secondly, we will also investigate Luhmann's systems theory, in which the school classroom can be marked with the metaphor of a "white box". Different from the "black box", it will provide us with relatively more transparency regarding the rules of interaction between participants. Focusing on the concept of double contingency, the possibility and limit of this sociological-constructivistic approach will be brought to discussion. In the following chapter, we will lastly explore the concept of natality by Arendt, which is a key concept of her philosophy. It will provide an ontological-genealogical perspective, which does not seem to be easy to reconcile with traditional concepts of education, but is helpful to understand the classroom, where every individual, as well as the class, as a social being experience new identities through the second births.

In spite of their heterogeneous theoretical backgrounds and focuses, these three approaches have one thing in common: they are not educator-centered in viewing and defining interactive relationships in the classroom. Considering that education has been mainly conceptualized as an educator-centered activity, not only as making and upbringing in traditional pedagogy (Bollnow, 1959, pp. 91–92), but also even as a "leading dialogue" in the so called dialogue pedagogy (Masschelein, 1991, p. 167), these three approaches provide meaningful moments to review traditional ways of thinking in pedagogy. Surely, these are not the only and first theoretical efforts to take a similar perspective. Hidden curriculum has been and is still an object of extensive research. The so-called "broken intentionality" (Mollenhauer, 1976, p. 15) has evoked a serious skepticism on teacher reductionist optimism, and a communication-theoretical approach and responsive phenomenology has also clearly shown the limits of intentionality-based pedagogy (Masschelein, 1991; Waldenfels, 2000; Woo, 2008). In addition to bringing these three different approaches together into one research category, there might be a limitation for ordinary research. However, the very heterogeneity will provide multilateral perspectives, which might be unconventional in the field of philosophy of education. In terms of interdisciplinarity within the boundary of the contemporary pedagogy, this research is worth trying to perform.

2. The School Classroom in Organization Theories

Weber's bureaucracy theory is the classical model for understanding school as an organization. From Weber's perspective, the ground of legitimacy is "authority" and he differentiates it into three categories, namely "legal, traditional and charismatic authority." The general organization, including school, belongs to the category of "legal authority", which is characterized as an "impersonal order, bound by rules, a systematic division of labor, principle of hierarchy, technical rules or norms, separation from ownership, formulated and recorded in writing" (Weber, 1964, pp. 324–325). School was not an area of Weber's original concept of bureaucracy theory and he himself says that his categorization is nothing but an "ideal and pure type", but school as an organization cor-

responds partly to Weber's bureaucracy theory, namely the "theory of legal authority" (Weber, 1964, pp. 326–333). Despite slight differences between countries, elementary and secondary education has a graded school system, the tasks of the teaching and administrative staffs are separated, and the assignment of the teaching staff is also functionally divided into school affairs, research, supervision, guidance, counselling, etc. The teacher staff is comprised of a hierarchical system of principal, vice principal, directors of different departments and regular teachers. Educational activities inside and outside the classroom in the school are conducted based upon stipulated rules and as an official business, educational activity is performed according to the principle of impersonality. Due to these characteristics, school can be regarded as an organization for bureaucracy theory.

However, if we specifically focus on the classroom, bureaucracy theory cannot be an appropriate method. In the classroom, the teacher performs his job quite independently and autonomously from school authorities and the teacher-student relationship or student-student relationship can be described more by coexistence, and mutual understanding, competition and cooperation at the same time, rather than of hierarchy and a functional division of labor. The members in a classroom share the everyday vision of personality and humanity based on common sense, communication and consensus, rather than the principle of impersonality set by cold rules. In addition, the classroom is a place where, to speak with Weber's terminology, not just "legal authority" but also "traditional authority and charismatic authority" operate together, where challenges are accepted and creative innovations are tried and mediated. These challenges and changes are not an exclusive achievement of a teacher, but to be exact, the collaboration of the intentional and unintentional, planned and unplanned performances of all classroom members.

In this context, it is meaningful to note the approach by Hoy and Miskel who explain the school with a "circulation model of formal and informal systems" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 108). According to them, school is an organization constructed by the "continuous circulation of the formal system (hierarchy, division of labor, formalization, impersonality, formal communication, formal leadership) and the informal system (informal structure, division into cliques, informal norms, personal relations, informal communication, informal leadership)" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 100). "Formality and informality, or rationality and irrationality are in supplementary relationship in school." (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 108). In this sense, school can be marked with a "loosely coupled system." (Weick, 1976). However, in the case of the classroom, we can further articulate it into, to use the expressions of Hoy and Miskel, an *informal system in a formal system* or a *mixture of the formal and informal system.* On one hand, the classroom is a systematic place or a system itself for teaching and learning. On the other hand, the classroom is also an un-systematized and de-systematized space where something more than teaching and learning occurs. Although the classroom is in the school as an organization, which shares bureaucratic characteristics, it has rarely anything to do with the bureaucracy. On the contrary, the classroom can be marked with de-bureaucratic or an "anti-bureaucratic structure" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 103). In other words, the classroom is an organization, which is not organized after the general principles of bureau-

cracy. It is a sort of system, which is systematically maintained with de-systematical elements. This kind of a twofold system or even de-constructive characteristics of the classroom, lead to the emergence of a skeptical model like the "garbage can theory."

While bureaucracy theory by Weber regards school as a systematic organization and focuses on explaining how it is maintained systematically, garbage can theory represents a descriptive perspective to show how a decision is made within a group or an organization. According to Cohen, March and Olsen (1972) an organization, especially a school, is neither hierarchical and labor-divided, nor rule-based and impersonal. Consequentially, decision-making does not follow the theoretical principles of bureaucracy. According to them, school is rather a place marked with "ambiguity and uncertainty" (March & Olsen, 1976, p. XX). Metaphorically speaking, school is a place where the border between questions and answers is not clearly defined, as seen in the following: "Despite the dictum that you cannot find the answer until you have formulated the question well, you often do not know what the question is in organizational problem solving until you know the answer" (Cohen et al., 1972, p. 3). Due to the characteristics of the continuous discontinuity reminding us of a Mobius strip, they consider school to be a place of "anarchy." However, this anarchy has its own system, namely an anarchic system. In other words, there are three regular elements in this anarchic structure, namely "problematic preferences, unclear technology and fluid participation" (Moch & Pondy, 1977, p. 351) and they disturb the clarity and certainty of the decision-making processes so that, though it sounds paradoxical, they enable the sustenance of ambiguity and uncertainty continuously and systematically within an organization. In this sense, Moch and Pondy seem to have found quite an appropriate expression for this structure that they call an "organized anarchy" which means a "natural, and even sensible, response to ambiguity" (Moch & Pondy, 1977, p. 351). School, or to be more exact, the classroom is a space in which "problems are unclear, solutions are capricious, participants are substitutional and nevertheless a decision is unavoidable" (Cohen et al., 1972, p. 3). In this sense, like a garbage can, the classroom is far from transparency, predictability, rationality and causality.

The perspective of the so-called "garbage can theory" by Cohen et al. is helpful to understand the characteristics of school, especially the dynamics of the classroom, although these authors did not actually aim to do so. Even though it is an anarchic or chaotic one, its three elements (problematic preferences, unclear technology, and fluid participation) provide us with an organizational theory of why the space of the classroom cannot be one of transparency, predictability, rationality and causality. The academic contribution of this theory is positively evaluated at least in two aspects. First, it does not rashly romanticize the classroom as a space of causality and teleology. Second, it does not simplify the classroom as a space of disorder and chaos. Garbage can theory helps us understand the classroom dynamics as it is at least on a descriptive level. It shows us that the amount of garbage in a garbage can is constant, the process of output is random, and therefore the sequence and result of output is ambiguous as well as uncertain. This is for sure a meaningful finding in that it brings us closer to the dynamic reality of the classroom.

However, this approach is also not impeccable. According to the proposers of this theory, the classroom is, metaphorically speaking, something like a black box. The three elements mentioned above give us a possible answer to the question why this black box is a black box, but the dynamics in the black box remains opaque and unknowable. In other words, the garbage can theory is not enough to explain the character of the *inter* or *between* of the participants of the classroom, namely the structure of their coexistence and cooperation and, above all, the generative character in and through these co-structures in the classroom. From garbage, we can get only what we had put in, although we cannot know the sequence of its output. The classroom is different from a garbage can in its essence. In the classroom, we can get new things, which had not been there before. The organization-theoretical perspectives regard the classroom as a system, whether it is a closed systematic iron cage or an opaque chaotic garbage can. However, they are not sufficiently capable of going beyond or going in-depth. Namely, it does not portray how the classroom is not only a place of repetition and reproduction, but also a space of creation of the unprecedented and generation of the new. It lacks an anthropological gravitas on relationships and interactions of classroom members who are not made, but born unique and therefore different from each other.

3. School Classroom in Systems Theory

The metaphor "black box" for classroom reminds us of the systems theory by Luhmann. In the chapter 3 ("double contingency") of his work *Social Systems* (Luhmann 1984/1995), he uses "black box" not only as a metaphor, but also as a substitute for the concept of system. In the case of school, both the classroom and individuals in it can be regarded as black box. Among them, the latter is rather closer to Luhmann's concept of system, namely, the individual as a biological as well as psychological unit, more specifically, the system of consciousness.

The system by Luhmann is characterized with autopoiesis and closedness. An individual as a biological unit is self-productive and self-referential. His or her biological being cannot be replaced by others. In addition, his or her consciousness as a psychological system is isolated from the outer world. "There is no conscious connection of a consciousness with other consciousness" (Luhmann, 1995a, p. 38, translation by authors). The classroom can be reduced to a coexistence of small black boxes, which remind us of a collection of Monads (Leibniz). These black boxes have nothing to do with each other, because they function just self-referentially within their own boundaries. "The black boxes remain opaque to one another. Even if they operate in a strictly mechanical way, they must still suppose indeterminacy and determinability in relation to one another. […] Any attempt to calculate the other will inevitably fail." (Luhmann, 1984/1995, p. 109) In addition, they are closed to the outer world (in Luhmann's terminology, circumstance). However, this closedness does not mean complete isolation from its circumstance. They are just "operationally closed", and are inevitably influenced from such circumstances. Whether it is called "irritation, interdependence, struc-

tural coupling or interpenetration" (Luhmann, 1984/1995, p. XX), the system is open to its circumstance. If this is the case, then what is the characteristic of this peculiar kind of relationship with "closed openness"?

First, the relationship of systems is one of observation. For Luhmann, observation is possible based on separation between the ego and the other. As a self-referential activity, observation means nothing but a distinction of ego and non-ego. "No one can participate in the cognition of the other" (Luhmann, 1995b, p. 187, translation by authors); a system is only able to observe other systems, but unable to understand what other systems are doing and why they are doing it.

Second, mutual observation between black boxes is possible and certain rules for further observation can be made. However, mutual understanding is not guaranteed. In other words, the selection of what is meant and sent by ego is not up to ego, and ego cannot even understand the process and reason of this selection by alter. From the perspective of the ego, the other is an intransparent and unknowable object. Therefore, if an understanding is supposed to happen between black boxes, it is not what really happens between the ego and the other, but what is constructed from the perspective of the egos. In this sense, understanding for Luhmann is an epistemological-constructivistic phenomenon. Therefore, the being of the other and even the relationship is contingent. To comment on Luhmann's concept of contingency with Ricken, "it is not about being-able-to-be-different (Anders-sein-können), but about being-able-to-see-different (Anders-sehen-können)" (Ricken, 1999a, p. 190, translation by authors). In addition, it is not about subjectlessness, but about a variety of perspectivity.

Third, there is no existence of a meta-perspective to determine whether certain information is accepted and selected between black boxes. A criterion for judgment of the succession of communication as a whole process of notification and transmission of an information as well as acceptance and understanding is uncertain. Any meta-perspective is imaginary and that the relationship between black boxes is a combination of consensus and disagreement, understanding and misunderstanding. However, from the perspective of the ego, the other is always an object of observation, conjecture and expectation, and vice versa. In this manner, interaction between ego and the other is performed continuously on the accumulation of calculated contingency, which is "indeterminacy created by prediction" (Luhmann, 1984/1995, p. 121). This is the moment of what Luhmann calls "double contingency." It is more than a quantitative concept. The contingency from ego towards the other is in its essence not the same as the case of vice versa. As Scheunpflug rightly points out, "double contingency is more than twice of single contingency" (Scheunpflug, 2004, p. 72, translation by authors).

The systems theoretical concept of relationship and interaction provides new motives for revision of the classroom as well as the definition of education of modern pedagogy. First, the classroom is not a space of order and goal oriented socialization. As mentioned above, double contingency is unfolded in interaction in a more complicated dimension than can be imagined. It leads to a status of disorder. "Even if one imagined systems to be completely determined, interpenetration would infect them with disorder and would expose the unpredictability in how their elemental events come into be-

ing. […] The complexity each system makes available is an incomprehensible complexity – that is, disorder – for the receiving system" (Luhmann, 1984/1995, p. 214). It even seems to be natural in this context that Luhmann defines interaction with expressions such as "unpredictability, combination of order and disorder, order from noise." (Luhmann, 1984/1995, p. 214). It may sound uncomfortable and even unacceptable that the classroom is a space of disorder and chaos. However, this would be inevitable, if we seriously take the concept of double contingency into consideration.

Second, a reconceptualization of educational success is necessary. Pedagogy has been accustomed to the concept of education as making and upbringing. In the basement of these mainstream concepts, there is a strong belief in educational intentionality and causality. However, the systems theoretical concept of double contingency between black boxes in the classroom undermines the traditional way of thought. Radically to say with Scheunpflug, this is a situation, where "students don't know what they are doing – and the teacher doesn't know it either" (Scheunpflug, 2004, p. 72, translation by authors). Success of educational communication in the classroom from a systems theoretical perspective is neither possible nor identifiable at the end. Due to the fact that a successful communication for Luhmann does not mean a completion of mutual understanding, but a detonation of succeeding communication, it would be meaningless to thematize the success of educational communication from his viewpoint. On the other hand, the fact that the one who raised strong skepticism on the "deficit of technology in pedagogy" (Luhmann & Schorr, 1979; criticism on it, Benner, 1979) was Luhmann himself should not be overlooked. In this dilemmatic situation, the skepticism on the success of education as well as of educational communication does not get optimistic, even though the "black boxes change into white boxes" as Luhmann himself proposes[2] or the term of validity of the educational technology is prolonged.[3] It seems also to be inappropriate to make a rash connection of Luhmann's pedagogical idea with "postmodernism" according to its dissent-orientatedness and skepticism on the possibility of communication (Vanderstraeten 2003, p. 30; 2004, p. 56). The classroom participants in Luhmann's conception are based on the ideal of autonomy (autopoiesis). His system seems to function more subject-centered and even more mechanically than the Cartesian subject. As Meinberg rightly points out (1984, p. 257, translation by authors), "systems dominate the subject" in systems theory. The human being is nothing but a system and humanity is reduced to a functionalism of systems. Radically speaking, there is no human being in this classroom (Meinberg, 1984; Vanderstraeten, 2001, p. 390). There are only systems which stand face to face and are designed to try to minimize the intransparency towards each other, namely to the extent that black boxes change into white ones.

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2   "The black boxes, so to speak, create whiteness when they come upon each other, or at least sufficient transparency for dealing with each other. Through their mere assuming they create certainty about reality, because this assuming leads to assuming the alter-ego's assuming." (Luhmann, 1984/1995, p. 110).

3   "It is no wonder that the problem of technology seems to be difficult and insoluble at the end, because technology requires time – and in the case of education, we are talking about a long time" (Vanderstraeten, 2004, p. 63, translation by authors).

In this sense, it is neither meaningful nor possible to take the success of education into consideration. The success of communication in Luhmann's sense is not the same as the realization of educational intentionality or sharing systems of educational meaning between teacher and students.

Third, with regard to the genealogy of the new in the classroom, it is meaningful to take notice that Luhmann paid more attention to the positive function of double contingency than its first proposer Parsons (Luhmann, 1984/1995, pp. 215–216). It is surely a positive contribution by Luhmann that he accentuated the sensitivity on contingency, reminding the productive function of intransparency, possibility of misunderstanding and dissent which had previously been regarded as an irritation and hindrance for interactions. Contingency, specifically double contingency, can be seen neither as an end to interaction nor as an impossibility of it, but as a moment for new beginnings. In Luhmann's explanation on the concept of autocatalysis, we can find a hint of an emergence of a new system: "Thus the problem of double contingency has the properties of an autocatalytic factor: without itself being consumed, it enables the construction of structures on a new level of ordering, which is regulated by that perspective on perspectives" (Luhmann, 1984/1995, p. 120). In other words, a genealogical motive for a new system is immanent in the relationship between black boxes. In this context, the notion of "potential dimension and structural probabilities" by Vanderstraeten in terms of a genealogical character of systems is worth mentioning: "In the light of this beginning, every subsequent step then becomes an action with a contingency-reducing effect. Every action, every gesture, and every expression in such a situation appears as a relevant, meaningful selection. The initial situation is a take-off situation: it creates sensitivity to chance, and then it transforms chance into structural probabilities" (Vanderstraeten, 2003, p. 29). What is interesting is the fact that the purpose of this whole process of interaction is the minimizing of contingency, that this contingency-reducing strategy bears the following action, and that these series of actions happen interdependently and contingently. In this way, the classroom provides a "structured version of double contingency" (Vanderstraeten, 2004, p. 54, translation by authors). In other words, the classroom from the systems theoretical perspective is grounded rather on the possibility of misunderstanding than that of understanding, and rather for the purpose of reducing contingency, not for the realization of educational intentionality. If a new system or a new being were born in this process, it would be a byproduct of misunderstanding. If there were newness in Luhmann's classroom, it would be a result of effort not to misunderstand the other. And it is necessary to mention that Luhmann excludes the possibility of the appearance of a radical or unprecedented newness as he says that "pure double contingency, that is, a completely indeterminate situation, never occurs in our societal reality" (Luhmann, 1984/1995, p. 118).

4. Classroom and Natality

"Natality" might be an unfamiliar terminology, but birth is an everyday phenomenon. A process of conceiving, carrying new life inside one's body and then, in due time, putting it out of one's body, or from the another perspective, a process of being conceived, growing up and coming out of the mother's body into the world when he or she feels too cramped in the mother's womb – we call it birth. The concept of natality by Arendt came from this biological phenomenon, namely the first birth. An individual being begins through the first birth, and a society is sustained through first births. However, Arendt calls our attention through her thesis that "natality is the essence of education" (Arendt & Kohn, 2006, p. 171) to a social, political and pedagogical dimension beyond the biological one. This kind of natality which Arendt calls "the second birth" is not just an ideological or metaphorical rhetoric. Her thesis implies a daily, realistic and even universal factuality. In the context of present study, we can rewrite it into that "natality is the essence of the classroom." In other words, the classroom is a space of natality. The characteristics of natality will be categorized into "plurality, contingence and relationality" as presented in our previous studies (cf. Woo, 2013b, pp. 53–58; Woo, 2015, pp. 141–147) and based upon it, we will reconstruct the pedagogical meaning of the classroom.[4]

4.1 Plurality

Birth is not a lonely affair when an individual is born, but a relational phenomenon between the one who is born and the other who gives birth. Birth is inevitably grounded upon plurality. While death is, in a strict sense, an escape from plurality and sociality (Saner, 1975, pp. 148–149), birth is an event of entry into a pluralistic relationship which Arendt calls "the web of human relationships" (Arendt, 1958, p. 183): "Action […] corresponds to the human condition of plurality, to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world. […] This plurality is specifically the condition – not only the *conditio sine qua non,* but *the conditio per quam* – of all political life" (Arendt, 1958, p. 7). The fact that someone is born at every moment, that someone is born as a son, daughter, relative or as a close friend, that a new being comes into the *between (inter)* among people who were called *we* before, that he becomes also a part of this *we,* and lastly that, through it, a new *we,* which is not the same as the old *we,* arises – this is the social, political and pedagogical dimension of natality as the second birth. Plurality

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4　To avoid misunderstanding on the present study, one thing should be mentioned in advance. The present study is not a traditional Arendt research, even though it spends relatively more space on her idea. It is true that the concept of natality is one of the key concepts of Arendt's philosophy and that her statement ("Natality is the essence of education.") is an important inspiration of the present study. However, the main interest of it is not a critical review on her work and its reception in pedagogy, but a systematic reconstruction of her concept of natality from a pedagogical viewpoint, which had not been brought to completion by Arendt herself.

is a condition of action, namely a condition for human beings. In regards to plurality as the human condition, a few terms need to be addressed.

First, plurality needs different individuals as its foundation. People who are born differently, speak and act differently – these are fundamental elements of plurality, namely of natality. "Plurality is the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live. […] Human plurality is the paradoxical plurality of unique beings" (Arendt, 1958, pp. 8, 236).

Secondly, the uniqueness of individuals from the perspective of natality does not mean a static substance, but a dynamic and variable process. This is the case for not only an individual but also for society as a whole.

Thirdly, the dynamic plurality in the individual and social dimensions is unfolded and realized through speech and action. Speech and action for Arendt is a medium and channel to connect people with people, human beings and the world, and an instrument for identifying a being at the same time. "With words and deeds we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth. […] Action and speech are so closely related because the primordial and specifically human act must at the same time contain the answer to the question asked of every newcomer: 'Who are you?' This disclosure of who somebody is is implicit in both his words and his deeds" (Arendt, 1958, pp. 176–177).

Fourthly, plurality means multiperspectivity. Using a metaphor of a table, Arendt shows what coexistence in multiperspectivity means. "To live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common, as a table is located between those who sit around it; the world, like every in-between, relates and separates men at the same time" (Arendt, 1958, p. 52).

Arendt is not interested in investigating the foundation of commonness, which connects people around the table. There is "no common measurement or denominator" (Arendt, 1958, p. 75). What Arendt stresses with "polis" (Arendt, 1958, p. 198) or the "metaphor of the table" (Arendt, 1958, pp. 52–53), where people show themselves to each other through speech and action, is a social reality that the participants of the world look at the same thing and experience the same situation in spite of their different positions and perspectives. According to her, a common world is not "the table" itself, but the phenomenon of simultaneously being-around, namely coexistence in multiperspectivity. The common world exists only under the multiperspectivity towards the world. "The end of the common world has come when it is seen only under one aspect and is permitted itself in only one perspective" (Arendt, 1958, p. 58).

4.2 Contingency

The fact that human existence does not end with the first birth but experiences continuously renewed second births through speech and action, is of a great importance for pedagogy. While the first birth lies in most cases, whether it is thanks to the accumu-

lated practical experiences or to the advances of medical technology, biologically and medically in the boundary of predictability and controllability, for the second birth this is not the case.

> It is in the nature of beginning that something new is started, which cannot be expected from whatever may have happened before. This character of startling unexpectedness is inherent in all beginnings and in all origins. […] The new therefore always appears in the guise of a miracle. The fact that man is capable of action means that the unexpected can be expected from him, that he is able to perform what is infinitely improbable. And this again is possibly only because each man is unique, so that with each birth something uniquely new comes into the world. […] Speech corresponds to the fact of distinctness and is the actualization of the human condition of plurality. (Arendt, 1958, pp. 177–178)

Arendt's suggestion of "speech and action" as a philosophical metaphor for natality means, to stress it repeatedly, that it has to be understood in a social, political and pedagogical dimension. A human being speaks. However, it does speak the words not only repeatedly which has already been spoken before, but also the words differently from what it has acquired, or even create new words which it has never heard before. It speaks what it planned to do, but sometimes it is not able to speak out every word that it planned to say, and even sometimes gushes what it has never thought of. A human being is born, in a metaphorical and realistic way, into an existing grammatical system, but it creates a new unprecedented one. A human being acts. It does act but does not stay in the boundary of the existing custom, tradition and norm systems. It crosses over the boundary and contributes, intentionally and unintentionally, to a creation of a new order and norm. From the moment of birth until death, it speaks and acts unceasingly. Arendt's concept of natality is not a teleological one. In other words, a human being is not born mainly to create a new thing and produce it repeatedly. Regardless of the first or second birth, we are not born with the purpose of speaking a new word or of unconventional acting. Rather, birth symbolizes and *is* itself a beginning of a radical newness on an individual dimension. Participation in the world through speech and action implies that this radical newness is generated and unfolded in dynamic plurality and contingency. It is neither predictable nor controllable: "Without action to bring into the play of the world the new beginning of which each man is capable by virtue of being born, 'there is no new thing under the sun'" (Arendt, 1958, p. 204).

4.3 Relationality

Natality elucidated by speech and action is relationship oriented. We need to pay special attention to the fact that Arendt defines "action" as an "activity that goes on *directly between men* without the intermediary of things or matter." (Arendt, 1958, p. 7, emphasis by authors). The reason why speech and action are unpredictable and uncontrolla-

ble is that they are relational events *between men.* They do not occur in the inner world of an isolated individual. In other words, speech and action are only possible because of the relationship. "Action, as distinguished from fabrication, is never possible in isolation. Action and speech need the surrounding presence of others. […] Only action [and speech] are entirely dependent upon the constant presence of others." (Arendt, 1958, pp. 23, 188). These others, alter egos, are essentially different from the I and exist out of the boundary of the intentionality of the I. The first and second birth, more so the latter, have a characteristic of relationality. The relationality of natality is neither an exclusive space nor a monopolistic achievement of a subject, but an intersubjective process. It is a sort of co-existential dynamic conglomerate, not just a static-quantitative plurality. "Although everybody started his life by inserting himself into the human world through action and speech, nobody is the author or producer of his own life story. In other words, the stories, the results of action and speech, reveal an agent, but this agent is not an author or producer" (Arendt, 1958, p. 184). In this context, it is natural that Arendt suggests "the unpredictability of its outcome, the irreversibility of the process" as well as "the anonymity of its authors" (Arendt, 1958, p. 220) as characteristics of her concept of action. As mentioned above, natality is not about God who is never born, but about a being that is born into the existing world, into the web of human relationships. In the beginning of human beings was the relationship.

5. The Classroom – The Space of Natality

Firstly, the classroom is a space of plurality. This means more than the fact that there are just a large number of people in it. The "web of human relationships" constituted by existentially unique individuals with multiperspectivity is not just a functional-mechanical network. It is the social-existential condition, which enables any function to perform at all in a classroom. It is the semantic foundation, which endows to every function in the classroom with pedagogical meaning. The web of human relationships as condition and foundation of the classroom is dynamic and variable, because like every individual, it is born continuously. Continuous birth means continuous appearances of new beginnings. "Birth is an event, and it does not rely upon plan" (Dunne, 2006, p. 14). Therefore, a classroom, though it might be seemingly the case, is not a place where a sort of functionalistic mechanism or idealistic teleology in the name of pedagogical intentionality can dominate. The classroom is a place where not only the student, but also the teacher himself experiences his second births. Students have to give an answer to the teacher's question "who are you?" and the teacher cannot avoid an answer to the same question either. The fact that the classroom is a space of plurality means that every member of the classroom inevitably experiences the individual and social renewal through the process of question asking and answering. A human being is not made, but born. The classroom is a space of natality.

Secondly, the classroom is a space of contingency. This does not mean that the intentions to educate are unnecessary or that a teaching plan is meaningless. The intention

to educate is a universal element, which a teacher has to recognize and hold on to, and planning and preparing to teach are essential virtues of a good teacher. However, what is not to be ignored is that all good intentions and excellent techniques do not guarantee the success of a teacher centered educational practice in the classroom. A skilled teacher is a necessary condition for the intellectual, emotional and moral growth of students, but not a sufficient one. The teacher can facilitate the students to speak and act, but cannot predetermine what and how they speak and act. The second birth through speech and action is neither forseeable nor predeterminable. To stress Arendt once again, "the fact that man is capable of action means that the unexpected can be expected from him, that he is able to perform what is infinitely improbable. And this again is possibly only because each man is unique, so that with each birth something uniquely new comes into the world" (Arendt, 1958, p. 178). The classroom as a space of natality means that it is a place where a new idea, a creative personality, a new dimension of relationships, un-precedented norms and rules are created through a responsive way of coexistence and cooperation. The birth of an unprecedented thing means an interruption and stoppage of a tradition. However, there is no new beginning without disconnection. We need to pay attention to the fact that authors in contemporary pedagogy define the pedagogical meaning of the Arendtian concept of natality with images such as "interrupting and be-ing interrupted" (Masschelein, 1996, p. 103, translation by authors), "disjunctive space" (Biesta, 1999, p. 209) or "gap between past and presence" (Levinson, 2001, pp. 30–31) which are very unconventional ways of defining education. The classroom is not a space of continuity, causality and teleology. Teaching in the classroom is not about making a human being who is already a complete being (Biesta, 2013; Ricken, 1999b, p. 228), but "a matter of continual beginning" (Levinson, 2001, p. 16). In this sense, it is neces-sary to listen with an open mind to the advice of Edgoose that the "teacher needs to keep aware of the miraculous dimension of the interactive classroom life" and that "teachers have to believe in the unpredictable and indeed miraculous nature of change [in class-room as a space of natality]" (Edgoose, 2010, p. 403). Because birth appears "in the guise of a miracle" (Arendt, 1958, p. 177), the authentic meaning of the classroom can be discovered only when the limit of pedagogical intentionality is acknowledged and the so-called "economy of expectations" (Edgoose, 2010, p. 398) is broken. The class-room as a space of natality means that it is a space of contingency.

Third, the classroom is a space of relationality. In fact, relationality is not an exclu-sive motive of natality. Most of the pedagogical theories take it as a premise for effective practices. However, what is critical is how faithful they reflect the characteristics of the *between (inter)* of the educational relationship. To be precise, the *between* is neither me-chanical conditioning nor subject-centered acknowledgement of others, nor even an ed-ucator-leading dialogue (Masschelein, 1991; Woo, 2012). The concept of the *between,* upon which the Arendtian concept of action is based, is constructed with the premise of the presence of the other. Action is a confrontation with and response to the presence of the other who experiences continuous second births. The question "Who are you?" and the answer to it are not done on a pragmatic dimension. Rather, it is a scenario-less drama performed on an ontological stage. The teacher and students are intersubjectively

participating in the classroom drama in which neither an exclusive authority nor intention of someone can dominate. Otherness of the other slips from the grasp of the I. The classroom as a space of natality is a web of relationships with others. The teacher and students are participating in this web as just a part of it. Therefore, the classroom is always full of newness and unexpectedness. It is dynamic and open to surprises.

6. Conclusion

We investigated in the present study three perspectives to elucidate the "*something more* at work beyond the teacher", namely modern organization theories, systems theory and the ontological-genealogical concept of natality by Arendt. We would like to refer briefly to a few remarks.

Firstly, it is necessary to recognize that the classroom is a place, which cannot be reduced to a few elements. Theories investigated in the present study suggest that the classroom can only be characterized with paradoxes such as "organized chaos, combination of order and disorder, preserving unprecedented newness." This space of high complexity is intransparent, rarely dependent on causality and is continuously updated with new identities.

Secondly, in this sense, it is necessary to critically review the educator-centered optimism (or even His almightiness) of modern pedagogy. If we make a reductionist approach to the process of teaching and learning as well as every occurrence in the classroom, we will inevitably confront a gap between an idealistic desire and realistic phenomenon. Although the role and responsibility of the teacher was supposed to be the most important element in the rhetoric "something more at work *beyond the teacher*", the three approaches investigated in the present study are commonly skeptical on educator-centeredness when trying to identify the coexistence and interaction in the classroom. With regard to the identity and role of the teacher, and particularly with regard to the difficult situation of the teacher vocation mentioned in the beginning of the present paper, one thing needs to be referred to. If we burden the teacher with this undefinable role and responsibility of "the something more" in the space of opaqueness, impossibility of communication or unpredictability, it would be nothing but an excessive demand for the teacher. The teacher needs to accept the fact that not only students but also he or she is a being of natality. It is necessary to recognize that his or her identity is continuously on the way of new birth and to admit the limitation of educational intentionality as an educator.

Thirdly, the classroom elucidated by the three approaches in the present study is a space of intransparency, uncertainty, unpredictability. Though they are more or less different according to their theoretical perspectives and focuses, there is at least unanimity on the fact that the realization of educational intentionality is not guaranteed in the classroom, which is a critical question that can be raised with regards to the possibility as well as necessity of education. We may also confront again the old question of pedagogy: does a teacher educate or does the relationship, interaction (or more generally,

inter) educate? Particularly in the case of systems theory, we can thematize the concept of pedagogical subjectivity between the strong constructivistic subject and subjectless multiperspectivity. In the case of natality, powerlessness or even meaninglessness of the pedagogical subject can be an object of further discussion. Not only the paradigm shift from education as making and upbringing to education as interaction and communication, but also further differentiation of the concept of interaction and pedagogical subject is needed. In this sense, pedagogy remains open to diverse theories from its neighboring sciences and even in various disciplines within the boundary of contemporary sciences of education.

Fourthly, with regards to the genealogical character of the classroom, we need to pay special attention to the concept of natality. The classroom implies more than a constructivistic effort of its participants. There is something more at work in the classroom than rules, which reduce to double contingency at the end. The classroom is a space where not only contingency-reducing strategies are practiced to understand more about each other, but also the teacher and his or her students experience their own second births in coexistence and cooperation.[5]

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