

Encounter as Confrontation with the “Other” – the Existential Dimension of Collaborative and Educational Change in Otto Friedrich Bollnow’s Perspective

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Abstract:

The main objective of this paper is to reinterpret collaborative learning and educational change through the lens of Otto Friedrich Bollnow’s existential pedagogy. The study argues that authentic change is not a linear, cumulative process aimed at harmonious consensus. Instead, it requires the inclusion of “discontinuous forms of education,” where the category of the encounter (*Begegnung*) with the “Other” takes center stage.

The research relies on hermeneutic analysis and critical discourse analysis of philosophical and pedagogical texts. It synthesizes the assumptions of Bollnow’s anthropology (the core of the author’s doctoral dissertation) with the ethical philosophy of encounter by E. Levinas and J. Tischner, as well as contemporary theories of discontinuity in education (J. Koskela).

The analysis concludes that profound transformation in group work occurs discontinuously, through the shock and crisis caused by the collision of differing perspectives. The paper advocates rejecting the dominant, technocratic model of collaboration based on smooth facilitation in favor of a pedagogy that embraces existential risk (*Wagnis*). Designing future learning processes must ensure space for unpredictability, where the educator acts as a companion in crisis, and collaboration becomes an “event” opening the path to a “new beginning.”