

Relating Prologue & Dialogue: An Assessment Through Ancient Greek Educational Thought

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Abstract

The concept of prologue is not a concept that is frequently discussed in the history of philosophy or the history of thought in education. This study aims to investigate whether the concept of prologue can be used together with the concept of dialogue. At the same time, it tries to reveal the relationship between the concept of prologue and education. The extent to which the prologue aligns with dialogical pedagogy is also examined in the study. In this context, the perspectives of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle—three pivotal figures in the history of philosophy—are analyzed. These views are discussed in the context of their opposition to the sophists, but specifically in terms of education and the concepts of prologue-dialogue. First, the distinctions between dialogue and rhetoric are investigated to determine the significance and role of the prologue. Subsequently, the relationship between prologue and dialogue is established within Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle's views, which are closely related to education. It is aimed to evaluate the views of these three philosophers especially in the context of the prologue. The educational dimension of the concepts of prologue and dialogue are assessed, and recommendations are provided in the conclusion.

Keywords: Prologue, Dialogue, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle.

Prolog Ve Diyalog İlişkisi: Antik Yunan Eğitim Düşüncesi Aracılığıyla Bir Değerlendirme

Öz

Prolog kavramı felsefe tarihinde veya eğitimin düşünce tarihinde üzerinde sık durulan bir kavram değildir. Bu çalışma, prolog kavramının eğitimde diyalog kavramıyla beraber kullanılıp kullanılmayacağını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Aynı zamanda prolog kavramının eğitimle ilişkisini açığa çıkarmaya çalışmaktadır. Çalışmada proloğun diyalojik pedagojiyle ne kadar örtüştüğü dikkate alınmıştır. Bu bağlamda, felsefe tarihinin üç önemli filozofu olan Sokrates, Platon ve Aristoteles'in görüşleri incelenmiştir. Bu görüşler sofistlerle karşıtlığı bağlamında ancak eğitime ve prolog-diyalog kavramlarına özgü olarak ele alınmıştır. Öncelikle diyalog ve retorik arasındaki farklar incelenerek prolog kavramının önemi ve konumu saptanmıştır. Ardından Sokrates, Platon ve Aristoteles'in eğitimi yakından ilgilendiren görüşlerinden hareketle prolog ve diyalog ilişkisi kurulmuştur. Bu üç filozofun görüşlerinin özellikle prolog bağlamında değerlendirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Sonuçta ise prolog ve diyalog kavramlarının eğitimsel boyutu değerlendirilmiş ve öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Prolog, Diyalog, Sokrates, Platon, Aristoteles.

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Introduction

Compared to other living beings, humans possess a highly developed capacity for communication and social organization.² As a form of social structure established by humans, education inherently involves various modes of communication. Individuals who reflect on education have introduced a variety of theories in pedagogy. Pedagogical theories also encompass conflicting viewpoints. Historically, philosophical and religious approaches have, at times, been transformed into pedagogical theories. In other words, pedagogy has often been intertwined with philosophy and religion. A similar dynamic applies to the relationship between science and education. In the history of educational thought, the concepts of dialogue and monologue can be evaluated in relation to fields such as philosophy, science, and religion.

In ancient Greek thought, the process from riddles to dialectics³ can be identified as the starting point for following the path of dialogue in education. As Hadot points out, in ancient philosophy, “the education of the subject” is discussed.⁴ By this expression, Hadot refers not merely to the transfer of knowledge, but to the cultivation of the individual’s inner capacities, the shaping of character, and the development of wisdom through philosophical inquiry. In contrast, modern education is often said to be focused on “information.” This focus implies that knowledge is treated primarily as external content to be accumulated, memorized, and transmitted, rather than as something to be actively discovered and internalized by the learner. The reasons for this shift toward information-centered education stem from numerous events and intellectual currents that became evident around the seventeenth century and have grown stronger since then, including the rise of empiricism, rationalism, and positivism, as well as historical developments such as industrialization and the competition among nation-states. With knowledge becoming centralized, educational processes have shifted from generating knowledge or the subject’s discovery to memorizing it. The subject’s memorization of knowledge has placed them in the position of acquiring knowledge externally during the educational process. This has resulted in the acceptance of a passive individual. Hadot’s distinction suggests that the contrast between ancient and modern approaches to education can be explained through the opposition between dialogical and monological modes of education. In dialogical education, the learner is regarded as an active participant in a process of questioning, reflection, and exchange, whereas monological education treats the learner as a passive recipient of pre-determined truths. In this context, the distinction between dialogical and monological modes of education lies deep in the history of philosophy.

However, while theories on education have been developed, the concept of the prologue has not been considered as much as dialogue and monologue. In this study, I will primarily focus on the concept of the prologue while presenting the relationship between the concepts of dialogue and monologue with education by examining the thoughts of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle in Ancient Greece. To do so, I will proceed with the following question: Can the concept of the prologue, in addition to dialogue and monologue, be addressed within the history of educational thought?

In the history of philosophy, for example, Aristotle includes the concept of the prologue in his *Rhetoric*. According to Solmsen, in this work, Aristotle sought to bring rhetoric closer to philosophical thought and to make it serve philosophy.⁵ In other words, Aristotle attempts to reform rhetoric. In other words, Aristotle attempts to reform rhetoric. However, when viewed from the perspective of the relationship between rhetoric and education, Aristotle’s rhetorical work lacks the educational depth inherent in Plato’s concept of dialogue. It can be argued that the contemporary meaning of the term “prologue” remains limited to that used in Aristotle’s rhetoric and its current

² Sinan Canan and Mustafa Acungil, *Dijital Gelecekte İnsan Kalmak* (İstanbul: Tuti Kitap, 2018), 36.

³ Giorgio Colli, *Felsefenin Doğuşu*, trans. F. Demir. (Ankara: Dost, 2007), 64-65.

⁴ Pierre Hadot, *Ruhani Araştırmalar ve Antik Felsefe* (İstanbul: Pinhan, 2012), 263; 306.

⁵ F. Solmsen, “Giriş Aristoteles” *Retorik* içinde, trans. Mehmet H. Doğan (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, 1995), 7-16.

use in dictionaries.

In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle draws on the use of the prologue in poetry and theatre. He discusses how the concept can be applied in rhetoric. Accordingly, the prologue serves to inform and prepare the audience regarding the subject and objective. Thus, the prologue is described as offering a small preview or a “taste” of what is to come.⁶ However, the concept of prologue cannot be limited to Aristotle’s rhetorical work only. Just as dialogue carries multiple meanings in education beyond the everyday conversation between two individuals, it is possible to approach the concept of the prologue similarly.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary (as well as many other dictionaries) defines *prologue* as follows: 1: The preface or introduction to a literary work. 2: a: A poetic speech, often in verse, addressed to the audience by an actor at the beginning of a play. b: the actor speaking such a prologue. 3: An introductory or preceding event or development. The concept of the prologue originates from the combination of *pro* and *legein*. The connection of the word *legein* with *logos* can be observed in the Merriam-Webster dictionary’s entry for *legend* (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). It is crucial to focus on the concept of *logos* here. *Logos* was used to mean “the word in which inner thought is expressed, the inner thought or mind itself”.⁷ In addition to referring to inner thought and inner speech, the concept of prologue also refers to the past. In particular, the prefix *pro-* conveys a sense of precedence. An example of this prefix in ancient Greek thought can be found in Aristotle’s term *propaedeutic*. Cevizci defines *propaedeutic* as follows: “In Greek, especially in Aristotle’s theory of science, the name given to the totality of knowledge or the type of science that must be acquired before starting a research on a science; before turning towards the knowledge of a field of existence”.⁸ Similar to what *propaedeutic* signifies, human beings do not engage in educational dialogues with a completely blank mind. Based on these explanations, we can consider the prologue a form of “preparation” for dialogue. The prologue can be understood as the prior abstractions an individual has reached before engaging in dialogue—abstractions that remain open to discussion. However, if the prologue is to be evaluated under the principles of dialogical pedagogy, it is crucial to determine the nature of this preparation and its intended purpose. In this study, I will seek to clarify these aspects, particularly by examining the distinction between rhetoric and dialectic.

Let me explain the origin of my desire to bring attention to the concept of the prologue. This idea emerged while reflecting on the connection between education and culture. I was inspired by my master’s supervisor, Zekeriyya Uludağ’s interpretation of Alija İzzetbegović’s statement, “*Culture is the prologue in the sky*,” within the context of the relationship between education and culture.⁹ The connection between education and culture is, in my view, robust and deeply significant. I believe this connection remains an area that has not been fully explored scientifically and is highly open to interpretation. The phrase “*Culture is the prologue in the sky*” assigns a meaning to *prologue* that goes beyond its everyday use. Concerning the human process of acquiring knowledge, this expression evokes sources such as the heart and the soul. For example, viewing the formation of culture as *a prologue in the sky* evokes the notion of personal experience in the communication between God and humans in Kierkegaard’s philosophy. This expression signifies an unbounded entry into the process of human knowledge creation. Similarly, Buber defines faith not as a state of emotion within a person but as “*an entrance into reality*”.¹⁰ The statement “*Culture is the prologue in the sky*” points to the sky as the starting point of culture and, ultimately, to the idea of God. Philosophically, this statement can be interpreted as an attempt to reach the *first*. The metaphysics of science rejects personal experience, boundlessness, and uncertainty in the endeavor to go to the *first*. I believe that individuality

⁶ Aristoteles, *Retorik*, trans. Mehmet H. Doğan. (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, 1995), 197-198.

⁷ Francis E. Peters, *Antik Yunan Felsefe Terimleri Sözlüğü*, trans. H. Hünler. (İstanbul: Paradigma, 2004), 208.

⁸ Ahmet Cevizci, *Paradigma Felsefe Sözlüğü* (İstanbul: Paradigma, 1999), 715.

⁹ Conversation with Zekeriyya Uludağ, (May 2019).

¹⁰ Martin Buber, *Tanrı Tutulması Din Ve Felsefe Arasındaki İlişkiye Dair Araştırmalar*, trans. A. Tüzer. (Ankara: Lotus, 2000), 15.

and undefined boundaries were similarly present in the thoughts of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle in Ancient Greece. In medieval scholastic thought, however, the prologue is quite explicit. It is transmitted to people in a monological manner without requiring dialogue. In this sense, can the prologue, like dialogue, serve as a key concept for better understanding and analyzing educational theory, particularly within the intellectual tradition of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle of Ancient Greece? With these questions and perspectives in mind, I sought to incorporate the concept of the prologue into evaluations based on the concepts of dialogue and monologue.

1. Discussion Framework, Problem Statement & Method

Educational theory may not originate from a single mind or be homogeneous. An educational theory may encompass a bundle of ideas as long as it does not contain significant principal inconsistencies. I use the term *educational theory* to refer both to the understanding of education over a long period and to the collection of internally consistent and detailed perspectives on education. It is natural for there to be notable differences between educational theories from different periods or between those developed by different theorists. For example, according to Bayraktar (2022), the influence of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle in ancient times strengthened the relationship between dialogue and education. In the modern era, the relationship between monologue and education has been strengthened by philosophical movements centered on knowledge, such as empiricism, rationalism, positivism, and logical positivism. Furthermore, events such as industrialization and the competition between nation-states in science and technology have also influenced education. In this context, knowledge of the particular and science have gained prestige over the last few centuries. Natural science's understanding of reality has become fundamentally prominent, shaping human understanding and the social sphere. Knowledge acquisition processes have been reduced to either external reality or internal phenomenal processes such as perception and sensation. Human imagination has been sought to be structured according to daily life and practice. Although doubt is the basis for certain knowledge, the focus has been on the fruits (science and knowledge) rather than the roots (metaphysics) of the tree. The traditional acceptance of a soul has been abandoned, and a connection between the human body and animals, guided by a mechanistic understanding related to learning, has been established. When the basis of sensation and perception was inadequate, reason was sought to be brought into play solely through disciplines like mathematics and based on phenomena. Knowledge of facts was primarily associated with computability and utility. Education was designed to distance itself from speculation, prioritize facts and objectivity, and pursue progress through science. Individuals were intended to be fully integrated into society, serving ideology in many nation-state examples, and following a positive thought system. All of these can be cited as some of the theoretical reasons that only reinforced the transfer of knowledge and, consequently, monologue in education.¹¹ The approaches of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle in ancient times will be explored in more detail in this study.

However, recognizing these differences clearly is not always easy. To discern such distinctions, specific criteria of analysis are necessary. In theoretical research on the history of educational thought, focusing on the concepts of dialogue and monologue serves as a criterion of examination. When considered as a subheading within educational sciences, the concepts of dialogue and monologue are frequently used in the literature on dialogic pedagogy. It's certainly normal to encounter the terms dialogue and monologue frequently in the literature on dialogic pedagogy. However, I can say that I've almost never encountered the concept of prologue, even in the dialogic pedagogy literature. Therefore, prologue could be added to these two concepts. The prologue is just as viable as dialogue and monologue in illuminating the relationship between education and humanistic fields such as philosophy, religion, and science. Particularly in the history of philosophy, it can be instrumental in assessing the educational dimension within the philosophical views of Ancient Greek philosophers.

¹¹ Olcay Bayraktar, *Varlık Ve Bilgi Ekseninde Eğitimin Temelleri* (İstanbul: İnsan, 2022), 49-52, 127-129, 144-145.

In order to bring the notion of the prologue to your attention, I would like to begin with some reflections on dialogical pedagogy. Dafermos' approach demonstrates that dialogue is more than just an ordinary or casual conversation; rather, it is a profound form of communication between different subjectivities.¹² This reminder ascribes meaning to "dialogue" in the context of human existence and education. Similarly, Sabey, drawing on Bakhtin, states: "...Our existence unfolds in response to a dynamic world populated and partly authored by actual and potential interlocutors. In short, human ontology is always already dialogic."¹³ It is impossible to disagree with these two assessments. Let us add to Dafermos and Sabey's evaluation the following evaluation of Bakhtin. Bakhtin considers the activation of internal dialogue and the use of the background necessary for effective understanding.¹⁴ Can we employ the notions of internal dialogue and background here to analyze the concepts of dialogue and prologue together? All these statements demonstrate that dialogue has become a matter of pedagogy in terms of human education. What Bakhtin calls active understanding and internal dialogue deserve to be considered alongside the concept of prologue. In this sense, although we focus more on the concept of learning, dialogic pedagogy is two-sided. As Noddings states, dialogue is a form of teaching and learning in which neither the teacher nor the student is active alone, but rather is based on mutual communication.¹⁵ Let us consider the four evaluations presented in this paragraph through the use of the concept of prologue in Ancient Greece. Let us consider these three perspectives concerning the use of the prologue in Ancient Greece.

The prologue is often used as a term in theatre. Ancient Greek thinkers are known to have had a close connection with theatre. Ancient Greece established many ways of thinking through theatre. In theatre, the prologue prepares the audience for the play. However, more importantly, the greatest degree of abstraction occurs during the prologue phase.¹⁶ Making abstractions in the midst of dialogue is quite difficult. This difficulty arises from the fluidity of dialogue. In dialogue, a person may turn inward. However, the very possibility of dialogue requires communication with someone other than oneself. Given this requirement, even though dialogue speaks to the internal realm, is it ontologically sufficient to explain internal processes? Even if responding to a dynamic world is presented in dialogue, where and how is the human response organized? How one responds to a dynamic world is by having a preliminary draft, akin to a prologue, before entering into dialogue. A prologue often contains a draft. A draft-like prologue means that the speakers are prepared and open to mutual interaction both within and after the dialogue.

In order to bring the concept of the prologue closer to dialogue and monologue, we can look particularly to Ancient Greece. For this, we should also consider the abovementioned views of the literature on dialogical pedagogy. Plato's philosophy, which we usually explain together with the concept of dialogue, asserts that learning is an act of recollection. In the context of this theory of recollection, the concept of the prologue can serve as a useful tool for better explaining Plato's educational thought. While explaining what is happening within one of the speakers, the prologue concept can be brought closer to the dialogue. Is not one of the ways to sustain dialogue in an educational setting ensuring that speakers also possess a kind of *preliminary draft*—a prologue within themselves?

In order to grasp the educational views of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, one can begin with a specific philosophical question: What is it in communication and education that transforms dialogue from contingency into reality? At first glance, it appears that the ability to speak is what brings dialogue from contingency into reality. However, since dialogue is not confined to the faculty of speech alone, it can be associated with education and learning. This

¹² Manolis Dafermos, "Relating Dialogue And Dialectics: A Philosophical Perspective," *Dialogic Pedagogy: An International Online Journal* 6, (2018): A3. <https://doi.org/10.5195/dpj.2018.189>

¹³ David Sabey, "Relational Becoming: Considering Classroom Dialogue in Ethico-Ontological Terms," *Dialogic Pedagogy: An International Online Journal* 10, (2022): A1-Z29, A1. <https://doi.org/10.5195/dpj.2022.459>

¹⁴ Mihail Bakhtin, *Karnaval'dan Romana Edebiyat Teorisinden Dil Felsefesine Seçme Yazılar*, trans. C. Soydemir. (İstanbul: Ayrıntı, 2001), 55-58.

¹⁵ Nel Noddings, *Eğitim Felsefesi*, trans. R. Çelik. (Ankara: Nobel, 2016), 68-69.

¹⁶ Ayşegül Yüksel, "Antik Yunan Tiyatrosunda Komedyanın Evreleri," *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi* 33(1-2), (1990), 557-569.

is because dialogue, particularly educational, extends far beyond the mere production and reception of sounds in speech.

The transformation of dialogue from contingency into reality implies that, from a philosophical perspective, dialogue is not understood as a mere monotonous reality. Rather, philosophy challenges the notion of dialogue as nothing more than a faculty of speech or the exact transmission of a message. This philosophical perspective makes dialogical pedagogy meaningful. Up to this point, we have emphasized that dialogue cannot be reduced to speech alone; its significance lies in its deeper relation to knowledge and the human subject. At this stage, it is helpful to distinguish between two dimensions of dialogue: contingency and reality. The dimension of contingency, rather than reality, is what connects dialogue with meaning, whereas the dimension of reality links dialogue to scientific knowledge. In this study, and in line with the Socratic tradition, our focus will be on contingency. Potentiality exists both in the emergence of the dialogue text and in its ability to enter the inner world of the interlocutor after it has been communicated. Thanks to the contingency dimension, what is conveyed in dialogue can fragment and dissolve, only to be reassembled internally, acquiring new meanings. From the perspective of the Socratic tradition, it can be said that dialogue possesses an aspect capable of addressing the soul. When considered solely in the context of addressing the soul, the contingency dimension becomes more dominant. The strength of this argument lies in the following: If dialogue were not a contingency directed toward the soul, then what would occur in speech would be monologues disguised as dialogue. In addition, the student inevitably thinks inwardly when understanding and learning through dialogue.

The question that ancient philosophers sought to answer may be the following: Where does the inner voice come from during thinking? This question is particularly challenging because the answer brings metaphysical differences of opinion into play and makes them more pronounced. What the inner voice conveys during dialogue may not often be haphazard and uncluttered. The source of the inner voice has not been clearly identified. However, ancient philosophers believed that the inner voice had a source and that this source contained a vast amount of organized knowledge. The inner voice arises from prior preparation, previously known information, and past thoughts. It often speaks in conjunction with external information or opinions. At the same time, it also “creatively” generates new knowledge and ideas. It is a generally accepted view in modern social science that new knowledge and views arise only from the collision of ancient knowledge and new knowledge added to the old. This view is actually a metaphysical acceptance. The Platonic dialogue does not say otherwise, and even in Plato’s dialogues, the opposite does not occur. However, Platonic philosophy tries to overcome this assumption of reality and draw attention to the contingency by adding that learning is an act of recollection.

When considering the introduction and discussion context above, one might think that the concept of the prologue comes close to what dialogue and monologue evoke in education, yet still does not fully align with them or achieve the same depth. We must first examine the differences between Sophist and Socratic thought to determine this. Then, we should evaluate the educational theories of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle of Ancient Greece. As is evident, these evaluations are entirely theoretical, and the method of this study is philosophical speculation. When dealing with a theoretical problem, philosophical speculation is employed to understand and explain a subject and propose a new claim. Therefore, this study will draw upon the analytical, evaluative, speculative, and integrative aspects of philosophy, as described by Brauner.¹⁷ In such studies, explaining the problem situation in a theoretical and historical-systematic progression without resorting to practice is desired. The framework that informs this approach is the critical analysis of various educational situations.¹⁸

¹⁷ Charles J. Brauner, “Eğitim Felsefesi” *Eğitim Felsefesi Yazılar* içinde, ed. S. Büyükdüvenci (Ankara: Yargıçoğlu, 1987), 49-55.

¹⁸ Veli-Matti Värri ve Jani Pulkki, “Why Ontology Of Education,” paper presented at *ECER 2015, Education And Transition* (September 2015): 8-10.

2. Prologue in Ancient Greek Thought

2.1. Educational Differences Between Sophists and Socratic Thought

In antiquity, the distinction between dialogue and monologue became evident in education. According to Reboul, the first pedagogical difference that lies deep in the history of philosophy is between the Sophists and Platonic philosophy.¹⁹ The difference in perspective between the Sophists and Plato is closely tied to the dialogue-monologue distinction. This difference can also be described as a contradiction. Reboul defines contradiction as “*the conflict between two principles, each of which is legitimate in itself*”.²⁰ Drawing from Reboul’s assessment, it can be argued that many pedagogical theories throughout history have, in some way, aligned themselves with either the Sophists or the Platonic tradition.

Dialogue and dialectics had a foundation before reaching the sophisticated level of understanding found in Plato. A significant number of pre-Socratic natural philosophers did not attribute sufficient importance to dialogue.²¹ In other words, the path of dialogue was not as prominent as it later became in Socrates and Plato. Colli’s assessment broadly outlines the educational process before Socrates and Plato. In ancient Greek thought, dialectics was built upon the enigma (*riddle*), which is explicitly evident in Heraclitus. It opens towards a theoretical richness in the tension between being and nothingness in Parmenides. Through Zeno’s paradoxes, the environment of discussion emerges as a challenge. With the Sophists, the goal of prevailing in debate becomes more pronounced. At the center of this dynamic is a riddle—or, in today’s terms, a problem. By presenting a riddle, one challenges the mind of the other. In a way, riddles also encompass questioning and inquiry. Thanks to Parmenides and Pythagoras, research is carried out on the mysterious. Instead of the deception of the external and material, there is a shift towards the internal and spiritual. It is thought that the unity in the invisible is stronger than the harmony in the visible. In these inquiries, counter-argument remains an indispensable tool. Arguments refute one another and build upon each other. While thinking, intermediate paths are found, and conclusions are reached.²² Within this educational approach, two distinct perspectives emerged in terms of purpose: one is dialectic, and the other is rhetoric, which is rooted in the Sophists’ understanding. The fundamental difference between rhetoric and dialectic in Ancient Greek thought is reflected in Colli’s statement: “...*In dialectic, one struggles for wisdom, while in rhetoric, one fights for wisdom directed toward power...*”.²³

We encounter the following general framework when we look at the subject with Socrates at the center. Socrates states that he knows only that he knows nothing. In the pursuit of truth, he advises individuals to listen to their inner (divine) voice. The individual must recall and hear this voice, transforming it into knowledge. In this sense, Socrates embodies a form of wisdom that uncovers the search for truth, meaning, and knowledge through questioning. On the other hand, there is the monologue style, which claims to know too much, attributes a function to any knowledge depending on its use and the benefit it provides to itself, and restricts access to knowledge beyond its own scope. Although the monologue style is grounded in argumentation, it is embodied in the rhetoric of the Sophists. In Plato’s and Aristotle’s texts, such a style is explicitly opposed and is not seen as a wise approach. According to Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, wisdom is open to speculation, interpretation, and understanding, and dialogue is the path to attaining it.

Rhetoric and dialectic originate from more or less the same roots. Nevertheless, rhetoric diverges from dialectic. In rhetoric, rather than delving deeper, it is possible to speak in a language accessible to the public in order

¹⁹ Olivier Reboul, *Eğitim Felsefesi*, trans. I. Gürbüz. (İstanbul: İletişim, 1991), 57-59.

²⁰ Reboul, *Eğitim Felsefesi*, 73.

²¹ Ernst Cassirer, *İnsan Üstüne Bir Deneme*, trans. N. Arat. (İstanbul: Remzi, 1980), 17.

²² Colli, *Felsefenin Doğuşu*, 51-57, 61-66.

²³ Colli, *Felsefenin Doğuşu*, 84.

to impress listeners. The habit of thinking fostered solely by mutual discussion does not lead to depth but instead skims the surface. At a certain point, the goal of prevailing in rhetoric shifts the emphasis from mutual dialogue to a single dominant speaker.²⁴ At first glance, one might assume that the Sophists' approach does not contradict the dialogical style of education, as it teaches the art of debate. At this point, Derrida's assessment is instructive. According to Derrida, "*What Plato targets in sophistry is not the Sophists' recourse to memory, but the fact that in this recourse they substitute the aide-mémoire for the living memory, the prosthesis for the organ; it is the perversion that replaces a limb with a thing; this perversion here is the substitution of mechanical, passive memorization for the active revitalization of knowledge, for reproducing it in the present.*"²⁵ Derrida highlights the difference between Plato's understanding of learning as an internal act of recollection and the Sophists' rhetorical reduction of memory to a mere material organ. However, in terms of Plato's views, I have to ask: In learning, which is equated with recollection, is knowledge recalled only through the method of dialogue? The dialogue method is, of course, valid for Plato's educational thought. However, recollection and interiority refer to pre-existing knowledge within the individual—thus pointing to a kind of internal and preliminary speech already present in the subject.

Internal and preliminary speech is also the subject's preparation for dialogue. It is the subject's mental presentation of the dialogue they envision before engaging in it. As Bakhtin states, the speech that emerges with dialogue is also called text.²⁶ The prologue, however, precedes the text in all circumstances, whether it takes the form of dialogue, monologue, or plain text.

To conceive of memory solely as a material organ is to treat the mind as a mere repository in education. From the Sophists to the present day, this notion has persisted to a great extent. According to Colli, since the birth of rhetoric, "*writing and memorization*" have been emphasized for technical reasons. Rather than improvising by considering mutual understanding and present meaning, efforts have been directed toward influencing the public through pre-preparation (akin to training).²⁷ According to the philosophical tradition of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, such an understanding of rhetoric constitutes an obstacle to philosophy.²⁸

One factor that turns rhetoric into an obstacle to philosophical dialogue is the treatment of memory as solely a material organ. In addition, it is clear that the sophists' aim to prevail in the debate on education was to make monologue, not dialogue, dominant. This is because the Sophists sought to cultivate in their students not a state of mind that actively revitalizes knowledge and brings it into being during dialogue, but rather the ability to excel in debate by developing rhetorical competence. In this case, "mutual discussion" cannot be seen as dialogue. From the Sophists' perspective, mutual discussion requires a preliminary preparation and making the preliminary preparation superior. In other words, to argue is not to seek truth but to compel the other person to accept a pre-determined truth. This amounts to a mere exchange of messages. The concept of the prologue is functional in both Plato's dialectic and the Sophists' rhetoric; however, it is clear that their use of it differs in substance.

Referring to Ancient Greece, Heidegger speaks of a kind of primordial truth in the processes of concept and theory formation. According to him, this primordial truth does not eliminate difference or seek identity in order to prevail. The idea of truth, which constantly seeks an identity with reality, ties its feet to the ground as in rhetoric and does not open itself to the horizon and completeness of abstract thought.²⁹ The primordial truth Heidegger describes is the site of the realization of the prologue, which I argue is present in the thoughts of Socrates, Plato, and

²⁴ Colli, *Felsefenin Doğuşu*, 83-84.

²⁵ Jacques Derrida, *Platon'un Eczanesi*, trans. Z. Direk. (İstanbul: Pinhan, 2012), 62.

²⁶ Bakhtin, *Karnavaldan Romana Edebiyat Teorisinden Dil Felsefesine Seçme Yazılar*, 334-336.

²⁷ Colli, *Felsefenin Doğuşu*, 86.

²⁸ Martin Heidegger, "Eğitim ve Siyaset Arasındaki Çizgi," trans. B. S. Gür and C. Kayan, *Muhafazakâr Düşünce Dergisi* 2(5), (2005): 53-73. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/muhafazakar/issue/55978/767588>

²⁹ Heidegger, "Eğitim ve Siyaset Arasındaki Çizgi," 65, 67.

Aristotle. It is the realization of Begović's expression "prologue in the sky" in Socratic thought. This kind of prologue enables dialogue because it does not eliminate differences. Since it emphasizes the dimension of truth, it allows one to turn inward and meaning. It does not carry the monologue problem since it does not identify with the truth of any other person and remains in the draft dimension. The Sophists' rhetoric, on the other hand, is vastly different from this understanding. Although Sophistic rhetoric proposes a dialogue based on mutual discussion, it ultimately aims at prevailing, thereby eliminating differences. In Sophistic rhetoric, the goal is not the pursuit of truth but the identification with the truth of the privileged figure—often the teacher. Consequently, the prologue belonging to a single person will dominate before the dialogue even begins. A pre-preparation aimed at dominance is also a form of prologue.

In this context, the foundation of educational communication in the thoughts of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, in other words, the contract of education, places the student at the center. However, it emphasizes the student's inner dimensions and individuality. Kant argues that Socratic dialogue should be used in education, even though it is slow in yielding results and challenging in practice. According to Kant, the distinctive criterion for employing Socratic dialogue in education is not to instill certain ideas but to uncover the student's own thoughts.³⁰ Dialogical pedagogy asserts that communication within the educational environment should not be as superficial and simplistic as it is in Sophistic rhetoric. Similarly, Socratic thought always refers to the inside. This study, however, has argued that the inner dialogue occurring within human beings in the philosophy of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle can be explained through the concept of the prologue. Nonetheless, I would like to pose a few additional questions regarding Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. What are the conditions that strengthen dialogue in the educational environment? Additionally, what ensures that what is internal can be safely expressed externally in educational processes? When we answer these questions from the Sophistic perspective, we encounter a "competition" drive based on the expectation of superiority and power. However, from the perspective of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, these questions can be addressed in two ways. First, through the concept of parrhesia. The second answer lies in the fact that dialogue (and education) is fundamentally voluntary.

Parrhesia is one of the terms that express Socrates and Plato's opposition to rhetoric. *Dialogue* is a technique in which the game of parrhesia is played. Instead of long, continuous texts, interrupted and reciprocal dialogue is preferred. The term parrhesia describes a form of speech in which individuals, without engaging in rhetoric, express all their thoughts directly (from the mind) and sincerely (from the heart) in mutual conversation. This also implies the ability to remain silent when necessary, as well as the commitment to speaking only what one believes to be true and connected to truth itself. The negative meaning of parrhesia is blabbering. However, philosophers do not use the concept in this negative sense. In its negative connotation, parrhesia ceases to be mere freedom of speech when it risks losing its connection to truth by descending into ignorant or aimless speech. With Socrates and Plato's objections to the Sophists, parrhesia evolved into an educational concern. In Plato's approach, parrhesia is regarded as a personal virtue rather than an institutional right.³¹ In this regard, Plato also speaks of the importance of loving individuals who are true to themselves.³²

The voluntary nature of education is the second factor that ensures the safe external expression of what is internal. Voluntariness means that education is not compulsory, contrary to the post-industrialization era. More specifically, education in Ancient Greek culture and civilization was regarded as a form of leisure activity. As Hadot states, in Plato's dialogues, Socrates notes that they have ample time and leisure³³. Similarly, in Aristotle, it is almost

³⁰ Immanuel Kant, *Eğitim Üzerine*, trans. A. Aydoğan. (İstanbul: Say, 2017), 97-98.

³¹ Michel Foucault, *Doğruyu Söylemek*, trans. K. Eksen. (İstanbul: Ayrıntı, 2012), 17; 10-11; 59; 68.

³² Platon, *Devlet*, trans. Ş. Yeltekin. (İstanbul: Araf, 2012), 106-108.

³³ Pierre Hadot, *İlkçağ Felsefesi Nedir?*, trans. M. Cedden. (Ankara: Dost, 2017), 302.

an educational goal for free citizens to make the most of their leisure time.³⁴ Viewing education as a leisure activity eliminates coercion and creates the conditions for dialogue. Noddings underscores the absence of coercion between Socrates and his students.³⁵ Heidegger also refers to Socrates when critiquing the contractual approach to education. Since Socratic dialogue is not based on a contractual framework, Heidegger emphasizes the voluntary nature of education and its resistance to commodification.³⁶ Unlike scholastic thought and the modern period, the fact that education did not include compulsory conditions in Ancient Greece is the condition that made the concept of dialogue successful.

In the Ancient Greek perspective, education is this kind of activity. This represents a fundamentally different understanding from the meaning attributed to school in scholastic and modern times. In this regard, education was structured as a highly flexible, relaxed, and non-formalized process, where the immediate acquisition of knowledge was not obligatory.

From the perspective of dialogical pedagogy, we can pose the following question to Sophistic rhetoric: Is the dialogue between teacher and student merely the exchange of mutual messages that arise within the communication process? A message predetermined before dialogue, as seen in Sophistic rhetoric, can be regarded as a kind of prologue. However, a prologue that involves preliminary preparation, as in Sophistic rhetoric, serves as the key to monologue rather than an effective dialogue. Traces of a prologue similar to that of the Sophists might also be found in the Middle Ages and the modern era. In the thought of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, the prologue can also be linked to dialogue. However, just as dialogue takes on a different form in these philosophers compared to the Sophists, it is reasonable to anticipate that their understanding of the prologue would likewise diverge. To better grasp this distinction, it is useful to examine some of the fundamental ideas of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle that shape their conception of education.

2.2. Factors Determining Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle's View of Education

The Socratic method “...left its mark on the whole future development of human civilization through the Platonic environment of thought...”.³⁷ Socrates' teaching and Plato's dialogues are broadly instructive for the character of education.³⁸ Even today, educational theories that seek to sustain the dialogical approach continue to engage with the Socratic method. In this context, it is essential to consider why Socrates chose dialogue. According to Cassirer, Socrates was not content with the methods of the natural philosophers, which were limited to merely explaining their ideas. Instead, he sought to engage directly in dialogue with individuals to understand them.³⁹ An orientation toward life characterized his philosophical personality, and he deliberately distanced himself from the mere presentation of theories. Following Socrates, his approach and intellectual style shaped nearly the entirety of antiquity.⁴⁰ Some of the reasons for Socrates' preference for dialogue are as I have quoted from Cassirer, Hadot, and Foucault. However, can it be argued that his style and thoughts extended further, bringing the concept of the prologue into discussion alongside dialogue?

Socrates had a prophecy of uncertain origin, believed to have come from the Temple of Delphi. It is possible to associate this with the concept of the prologue. The ambiguity of its source is significant when speaking of a prologue that facilitates the transition to dialogue. A similar uncertainty of origin applies to the inner voice of the

³⁴ Ahmet Cevizci, *Eğitim Felsefesi* (İstanbul: Say, 2018), 51, 53.

³⁵ Nel Noddings, *Eğitim Felsefesi*, trans. R. Çelik. (Ankara: Nobel, 2016), 5.

³⁶ Heidegger, “Eğitim ve Siyaset Arasındaki Çizgi,” 70.

³⁷ Cassirer, *İnsan Üstüne Bir Deneme*, 18.

³⁸ Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon, “Socrates and Socratic Dialogue” in *Encyclopedia of Educational Theory and Philosophy*, ed. D. C. Philips (Washington DC: Sage, 2014), 775.

³⁹ Cassirer, *İnsan Üstüne Bir Deneme*, 17.

⁴⁰ Foucault, *Doğruyu Söylemek*, 20.; Hadot, *İlkçağ Felsefesi Nedir?*, 303.

human being, which Socrates emphasized. Could there be a connection between Socrates' reasons for preferring dialogue and the uncertainty of the source?

If a governing center is to be assigned to human beings and language, it would be the individual's inner state. Educational theory is a field that should be shaped by the fundamental question: What is a human being? Today, as Socrates recognized, the most distinctive feature that sets education apart from other scientific disciplines is its foundation on the defining distinctions of human beings. The most significant of these distinctions is the inner dimension of human beings. The inner aspect of human beings possesses a character that is both difficult to explain and somewhat uncertain in origin. Since Plato further developed Socrates' ideas, the concept of ambiguity can be explored in greater depth through Plato's perspective.

In contrast to the Sophists' view of knowledge, Plato's pursuit of true and reliable knowledge aims at reaching the most general idea of being. Attaining immutability within being constitutes the search for truth as the highest pursuit.⁴¹ For Plato, knowledge acquired through contemplation and inquiry into existence, guided by wisdom, originates from the soul.⁴² This knowledge is not merely bodily. The sensory processes of knowledge, which exist at the physical level, are refined through thought and directed towards truth, ultimately transforming into ideas and the Idea of the Good.⁴³ The soul's journey on this path is an individual pursuit. Only human beings can engage in this process, for one can contemplate existence precisely because one is capable of conceiving non-existence.⁴⁴

According to Plato, human maturation in terms of knowledge and morality is achieved through the cultivation of the soul. This is done by turning inward and aligning oneself with the highest good. In Plato's philosophy, knowledge and truth are inseparable from the good; in fact, knowledge and truth themselves are good. Conversely, ignorance and the avoidance of truth are considered harmful and evils of the soul.⁴⁵ The human pursuit of truth is a spiritual ascent.⁴⁶ In this sense, Plato presents a creative and rational conception of the universe and humanity rather than a mechanistic or evolutionary one.⁴⁷ Plato's understanding of human nature enables education to occur within the dialogue framework. According to Plato, education should ensure the continuity of a strong character, a measured life, and consistency between words and actions. The goals set for human beings are also the goals of education. These educational objectives extend from the use of fables in early education to primary instruction, from the seven liberal arts to dialectics, which represents the highest level of education.⁴⁸

Objectives such as seeking truth, attaining being, identifying the soul as the source of knowledge, guiding the soul toward truth, and uniting the concept of the Good with the highest Idea appear ambiguous when viewed through the lens of contemporary scientific understandings of reality. Given such indeterminate goals, Plato's philosophy does not establish human education on a fixed and predetermined body of knowledge. None of these objectives eliminates the individual thinking processes of the individuals in the dialogue; on the contrary, they stimulate independent thought. The epistemic content employed in the educational process evolves within the framework of these orientations and inquiries. The prior knowledge of those participating in dialogue always exists in a draft-like state. Certain aspects of these drafts are refined within dialogue, emerging as correct and valuable. As the dialogue progresses, individuals transform these drafts into knowledge. However, possessing a draft is intrinsically linked to the progression of dialogue and the pursuit of truth. This preliminary draft state, present in the student, is also

⁴¹ Platon, *Diyaloglar*, trans. M. Gökberk. (İstanbul: Remzi, 2010), 506; 577; 584–585; 613–614.; Platon, *Devlet*, 236; 244; 250; 252.

⁴² Platon, *Diyaloglar*, 24–26; 490; 495; 163; 171; 564–565.

⁴³ Platon, *Diyaloglar*, 507–511.; Platon, *Devlet*, 239–242; 252.

⁴⁴ Platon, *Diyaloglar*, 197–199, 577–592.

⁴⁵ Platon, *Diyaloglar*, 73–74; 82; 121–122.

⁴⁶ Platon, *Diyaloglar*, 92; 111.

⁴⁷ Hadot, *İlkçağ Felsefesi Nedir?*, 22–23.

⁴⁸ Platon, *Devlet*, 107–120; 256–273; 76–78.

evident in Socrates, who guides the dialogue through questioning. In Plato's dialogues, Socrates frequently introduces his own preliminary outline, continually "engaging" with the subject through intermediate discussions. Socrates' draft is also open to change. What enables this draft-like state is inner speech. Furthermore, the existence of this draft state is made possible by the acknowledgment of ignorance and the preference for orientation and inquiry over fixed epistemic content. Ultimately, it is this draft-like state that enables mutual influence within dialogue.

As in Plato, Aristotle also examines knowledge through the concept of being, aligning it with the goal of comprehending existence. The philosopher founded metaphysics on the concept of being as the study of totality and principle. Principles or causes can be highly diverse, and concepts such as Good, beauty, and preference can all serve as principles.⁴⁹ In Aristotle's philosophy, dialectics is an inquiry into first principles, yet clear proofs may not always be available for such principles: "...for principles are the first elements of all the rest...".⁵⁰ Wisdom does not only mean having knowledge. Likewise, an attempt to understand based solely on sensory perception does not constitute wisdom. Wisdom is to be able to contemplate about the things that are furthest from the senses. Such contemplation is not driven by utility; rather, wisdom is experienced purely through the desire to know and through observation for its own sake. Sense, experience, or habit are also necessary. However, contemplation is superior to these and is a wise attitude. The purpose of contemplation is truth.⁵¹

According to Aristotle, the soul and body must be educated together, incorporating both rational and non-rational aspects. Through education, it is necessary to access the intellect embedded in the soul, as the soul, not the body, possesses reason. The pursuit of virtue and the search for truth is rooted in a spiritual foundation.⁵² The goal of education is to attain happiness and virtue. In order to realize this goal, education is directed toward the mind and the soul. However, the physical aspect of human beings must not be neglected. Happiness and virtue can be attained through education grounded in inquiry. In this inquiry, one must start from the first principles. Inquiry should be oriented toward the first cause or the origin of the good. Rather than striving to reach the realm of Ideas, as in Plato's philosophy, seeking the source of goodness and happiness provides more tangible and attainable content for human beings.⁵³

It can be said that Aristotle does not present a fixed or predetermined body of content in his educational objectives and perspectives. For instance, his emphasis on contemplation (*theoria*) as a means of pursuing truth, the priority he places on soul education, the effort to reach first principles and ultimate goals, and the search for virtue⁵⁴ and righteousness all indicate that he does not advocate a rigid educational framework. In Aristotle's philosophy, the fact that principles can diversify and change is an open door left to individual differences and dialogue. Furthermore, as Heidegger's emphasis on primary truth reminds us, the effort to reach first principles is closely tied to the concept of the prologue. The expression "Culture is the prologue in the sky" also evokes a similar effort to go to the first.

It can be observed that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle guide individuals toward goals that can only be personally understood and experienced. Incorporating their perspectives allows for a concise summary of the argument I seek to present.

⁴⁹ Aristoteles, *Metafizik*, trans. G. Sev. (İstanbul: Pinhan, 2016), 19; 81; 85; 109; 147.

⁵⁰ Aristoteles, *Metafizik*, 6.

⁵¹ Aristoteles, *Metafizik*, 14-17; 47; 57-59.

⁵² Aristoteles, *Nikomakhos'a Etik*, trans. S. Babür. (Ankara: BilgeSu, 2012), 27-29; 115-120. Aristoteles, *Politika*, trans. M. Temelli. (İstanbul: Ark, 2013), 381.

⁵³ Aristoteles, *Nikomakhos'a Etik*, 9-21.; Aristoteles, *Politika*, 374-375; 381; 384-405.

⁵⁴ Although Aristotle himself presents virtues such as justice and courage, he frames education as a process in which individuals develop the habit of finding the middle way, rather than explicitly defining all virtues, relying instead on the principle of moderation.

The philosophers mentioned above left the door open to domains of uncertainty, such as the search for truth, integration with being, and the pursuit of first principles. If human beings were not approached with these uncertainties, the conditions enabling dialogue in education to transition from contingency to reality and back to contingency would be eliminated. Uncertainty is the key to bridging contingency and reality. Without an acceptance of uncertainty (impenetrability) in human understanding, the monologic transmission of informational content becomes normalized. The fact that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle grounded their understanding of human beings in an ambiguous concept, such as the soul, has allowed dialogue to merge meaning with depth and individuality. Thus, the “uncertainty” in conceptions of humanity and the goals set for individuals strengthens dialogical education. Uncertainty and contingency create the conditions necessary for the co-construction of meaning by participants in dialogue. Dialogical education cannot be founded on fixed, predetermined discourse as knowledge; rather, in dialogue, the flow of conversation addresses human indeterminacy. It is precisely this indeterminacy that fosters human creativity. For this reason, from a dialogical perspective, the philosophers mentioned above established educational objectives through philosophical questioning rather than fixed epistemic content. These objectives are largely concepts such as truth, being, theory, and wisdom, which modern science often deems ambiguous. However, despite their reliance on such indeterminate concepts, the Socratic, Platonic, and Aristotelian traditions successfully attained knowledge through dialogue. Nevertheless, it remains necessary to further elaborate on the process of attaining knowledge.

The content attributed to the concept of theory is what makes knowledge possible in terms of the contingency and reality of dialogue. Aristotle was the philosopher who advanced this point. According to Hadot, Aristotle’s treatment of the concept of theory, particularly concerning contemplation, differs significantly from its modern interpretation. Aristotle describes a unique conception of truth and a theory that accompanies life.⁵⁵ It cannot be said that Aristotle entirely abandoned Socrates’ effort to avoid presenting mere theory, as his philosophy retains the dimension of individuality and the experiential aspect of life, rooted in the soul. The concept of contemplation (theoria) is not exclusive to Aristotle. According to Buber, Greek philosophy successfully integrated vision with thought, a tradition that extends as far back as Plotinus.⁵⁶

The emphasis on theory gives a chance to evaluate dialogue and prologue together. Through the concept of contemplation, sensory and perceptual processes such as sight can be integrated with inner thought. The unity of sensation and inner thought exemplifies the connection between prologue and dialogue. In Plato, the intellectual engagement between the realm of ideas and human thought, or in Aristotle, the individual’s contemplation of principles through theoria can be understood within the framework of the “prologue in the sky.” This is because the prologue serves as the compilation and presentation of all preliminary discussions. For Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, the search for truth ultimately leads to this point. It begins with the prologue and concludes within it. Similarly, the endpoint is often the initial starting point when writing a philosophical text. Normally, the prologue in a text generates more limited content compared to the dialogue. Additionally, the prologue in texts tends to emphasize the nature of the search itself and the objectives it pursues. Therefore, the prologue does not encapsulate everything, even when interpreted through its contemporary meaning. However, the content attributed to the prologue in Ancient Greece extends beyond this limited scope.

According to Colli, mystery and reason were thought to be compatible in Ancient Greece, and their sequential relationship was actively sought.⁵⁷ This continuity and harmony serve as indicators of the prologue that precedes dialogue. In this sense, the concept of prologue represents the mysterious, while dialogue serves as the outward

⁵⁵ Hadot, *İlkçağ Felsefesi Nedir?*, 262.

⁵⁶ Buber, *Tanrı Tutulması Din Ve Felsefe Arasındaki İlişkiye Dair Araştırmalar*, 54-55.

⁵⁷ Colli, *Felsefenin doğuşu*, 66.

expression of what is contained within the prologue—communicating it to others. A dialogue directed outward, alongside a prologue that internally precedes it, can be associated with the concept of theory, which has yet to be tested in reality. However, when theory is de-emphasized, and practice or reality is solely prioritized, the prologue becomes confined to its conventional meaning.⁵⁸ From the point of view of this limitation, it is possible to present the prologue before the dialogue and to present a summary of the course of the dialogue in the prologue. Yet, such a prologue aligns more closely with monologue rather than dialogue. A prologue produced by a philosophical understanding in which theory is relegated to the background is an obstacle to the awakening of excitement about the dialogue and the voluntary participation of the subjects in the dialogue. By contrast, Socrates' concept of Daimon functions as an inner voice that motivates the subject and fosters enthusiasm for dialogue. As Kalaycı notes, Aristotle's notion of eudaimonia, which signifies happiness, is intrinsically linked to Daimon as a kind of divine force.⁵⁹ Daimon is the internal realm where individuals conduct their first preliminary dialogue and formulate their initial draft. As this preliminary conversation and draft evolve, the subject's connection with God emerges. This connection is established through discourse, yet since it lacks a clearly defined external interlocutor and remains an internal dialogue, it takes the form of a prologue. Thus, Daimon can be understood as an aspect of the concept of God. Buber suggests that God and human beings encounter and communicate with one another, yet, according to Buber, modern philosophers have overlooked or bypassed this form of communication.⁶⁰ However, in Ancient Greek thought, especially after Socrates, the idea of human communication with the divine is well established. The concept of God gains significance in interpreting the prologue concerning Daimon, as well as in perspectives such as the belief that learning is a process of recollection.

In Socratic thought, it is considered natural for human beings to experience contradiction at the source of truth. The inner voice is always present, yet it is experienced as an internal debate rather than a command. The significance and nature of this inner voice can best be illustrated by comparing it with medieval scholasticism. According to Hadot, philosophy became subordinate to theology in scholasticism. In this sense, rather than serving as a way of life in itself, philosophy became part of the Christian monastic tradition.⁶¹ In monastic life, the idea of God does not manifest as an inner voice engaging in debate.

The ability to experience contradiction at the source of truth ensures that the prologue remains a sketch that humans strive to reach and complete. Such a sketch serves as the dynamic force that transitions the subject's search for truth through dialogue from contingency to reality. Accepting the manifestation of God as an inner voice within the individual ultimately instills confidence in the student. Within the teacher-student relationship, the student gains trust in their own ability to construct knowledge.⁶² Thus, before Socratic dialogue, the prologue functions as a preliminary outline inherent to each subject engaged in dialogue. Similarly, a theory remains a mere draft unless it is tested in reality (practice). However, the theoretical framework is essential for the attainment of knowledge.

The prologue is not a preordained truth in Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Moreover, it is not directly open to the outside and may contain contradictions and uncertainties. Socrates' statement, "The only thing I know is that I know nothing," can be understood in this context. In this sense, not knowing is related to the inaccessibility of the inner self. Heidegger highlights Socrates' refusal to separate the mind and the heart, as well as his assertion that contradictions may exist at the very source of truth, which he presents as an educational justification. Heidegger also notes that Socrates establishes a connection between ignorance and knowledge. Accordingly, the driving force

⁵⁸ I believe that pragmatism fails to follow the path of dialogical pedagogy because it holds that a theory is meaningless unless it has been tested in reality.

⁵⁹ Nazile Kalaycı, "Daimondan Eudaimonia'ya: Aristoteles' te Mutluluk," *Cogito Aristoteles Special Issue* 77, (2014): 257-258.

⁶⁰ Buber, *Tanrı Tutulması Din Ve Felsefe Arasındaki İlişkiye Dair Araştırmalar*, 30-35.

⁶¹ Hadot, *İlkçağ Felsefesi Nedir?*, 249.

⁶² This form of communication, which is established through mutual recognition and aimed at self-actualization, has also been acknowledged by existentialist philosophers.

behind Socrates' claim, "The only thing I know is that I know nothing," is ignorance itself.⁶³ The idea that the prologue situates inner knowledge of the heart, which is more uncertain and inward, alongside reason, which turns outward to engage in dialogue, suggests that the prologue functions as a kind of inner energy source. Thus, the prologue can also be conceptualized as something hidden within the conscience or heart. Even though the draft aspect of the prologue disappears once dialogue begins, the prologue remains a continual process of reconstruction within the ongoing flow of dialogue.

Ignorance is an acceptance that mobilizes the search for truth. However, how does one come to recognize and accept one's own ignorance? The points Socrates makes regarding *Daimon* and Plato's notion of recollection both refer to an individual's search for the prologue inscribed within oneself. At first glance, this search might suggest that human beings are predetermined by God. However, from the perspective of interpersonal dialogue, this individual quest signifies a state of indeterminacy rather than predestination. In seeking the prologue within, one inevitably experiences a sense of emptiness, which in turn leads to the recognition of one's ignorance. With this realization, the process of knowing and knowledge becomes valuable. Through this awareness, the goal of self-realization (self-knowledge) emerges, sustaining inner dialogue as an ongoing process. Therefore, in Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, theory directs the individual to a knowing process related to life through such mobilizing perspectives.

In the philosophies of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, knowing constitutes the manner in which human beings engage with reality and Being. It is a subject that demands careful scrutiny, while knowledge itself is regarded as a profoundly valuable existential reality. The relationship between knowledge and being is inherently linked to the idea of God. All three philosophers recognized the interconnection between philosophy and religion and acknowledged the solitary contemplation of the divine within the inner processes of human cognition, a domain of profound introspection. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle developed their understanding of dialogue and knowledge with the awareness that they could not wholly penetrate human beings regarding their inner knowledge processes.

Since the processes of knowing cannot be wholly penetrated, man can only be guided in the process of knowing. The path to knowledge outlined by the three philosophers is both individual and hierarchical. As one ascends in the hierarchy of knowledge, individuality and active engagement increase. In this hierarchy, the individual transitions from passive to active knowing. The individual can rise from sensation and perception to reason, comprehension, soul, and conscience. The hierarchy of knowledge acquisition is a process that a person must actively construct within themselves, driven by the acknowledgment of ignorance.

In Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, what should be emphasized in the relationship between knowledge and education is the active nature of knowing. One reason for the frequent use of a motto such as "know thyself" is that the individual is actively engaged in the process of knowing. The motto "know thyself" in Ancient Greek thought can be understood in this context. As Cassirer states, in Ancient Greek philosophy and philosophy in general, self-knowledge is a widely accepted and presented goal.⁶⁴ Methodological expectations aligned with an educational aim, such as self-knowledge, can be understood through the connection between the concepts of dialogue and prologue.

When philosophy's call for human self-transformation is considered alongside the Socratic concept of *Daimon*, the prologue and the dialogue complement each other. The unity of prologue and dialogue constitutes the very foundation of philosophy. Philosophy is an act; it is the pursuit of being through dialogue with others. Within this framework, prologue and dialogue cannot be understood merely as theoretical constructs; they become matters of life and education. The goal of self-transformation and inner reflection eliminates hierarchy and monologue between teacher and student in the classroom. First, an inherent draft within the individual—a prologue—is

⁶³ Heidegger, *Eğitim ve Siyaset Arasındaki Çizgi*, 70-71.

⁶⁴ Cassirer, *İnsan Üstüne Bir Deneme*, 13.

necessary, followed by dialogue to complete this draft. Bringing what is in the soul into life does not imply conformity with external circumstances. Active knowing by turning to the soul is not the passive participation of the individual in society but rather the establishment of personality and individuality.

The prologue is the speech energy that connects a person to life for self-development. This energy strengthens participation in dialogue. The prologue serves as a prerequisite for one to turn inward, preserve, and cultivate what lies within. However, when the source of the prologue is fully determined, and everything is explicitly defined, the opposite effect occurs. Such a prologue aligns with monologue rather than dialogue. To prevent it from becoming a monologue, the content and function of the prologue are crucial. This can be better understood by examining it in the context of the Middle Ages.

In the Middle Ages, the human intellect was believed to require direct divine assistance to possess the abilities granted by God. However, there was also the notion that humanity had lost this divine aid.⁶⁵ As a result, the ideal of education changed, along with the determinism of the inner voice. The formation of the inner voice was no longer left to the individual. According to Bayraktar, the foundation of interest and curiosity that characterized participation in education during antiquity was lost. Although the lessons in the seven liberal arts were maintained, their objectives were directly altered to align with the intricacies of Christian doctrine. Philosophy was subordinated to the introduction of Christian teachings. These changes were closely linked to shifts in the relationship between philosophy and religion, as well as to evolving perspectives on knowledge and existence.⁶⁶ Similarly, an authority emerged that sought to regulate the inner voice. The authority is no longer the individual himself. This transformation altered the content of the prologue and the way individuals were oriented in the educational process. While medieval Christian scholasticism frequently emphasized the concept of meaning, the practice of internal debate was lost. If an authority clearly states the prologue, the meaning expected to be reached with the dialogue is actually lost. In the Middle Ages, meaning became a singular, predetermined truth that governed life in a direct and didactic manner. This shift marked the loss of the search for truth and, consequently, the loss of dialogue among individuals engaged in that search. Even when truth was acknowledged, it was presented in a purely transmissive manner. The difference between the concept of the prologue in Socratic and Scholastic thought, as Buber describes, is akin to the contrast between a quiet voice and a resounding, thunderous one.⁶⁷ In medieval thought, the prologue reverberated as an authoritative and obligatory declaration.

Conclusion

Can it be argued that the dialogue method, which became prominent in Socrates and Plato, serves only to refute the other person? Most researchers in dialogical education would answer this question with a firm no. In this study, in the part where rhetoric is discussed, the position of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle likewise indicates a negative response as 'no'. In the subsequent part, I aimed to reveal the substance of this response by further deepening the perspectives of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. From the perspective of educational processes, the dialogue method encompasses much more than merely disproving an opponent's argument. The breadth of dialogue stems from its ability to direct individuals toward internal thought processes. However, in terms of inner thought, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle employ numerous ambiguous concepts, such as theory, being, soul, and Daimon. These concepts cannot be fully explored within the scope of dialogue alone. Therefore, in this study, we recognized that the fundamental views of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle should be examined through an encompassing concept that both precedes and completes dialogue.

⁶⁵ Cassirer, *İnsan Üstüne Bir Deneme*, 20-21.

⁶⁶ Olcay Bayraktar, *Varlık Ve Bilgi Ekseninde Eğitimin Temelleri* (İstanbul: İnsan, 2022), 110-114.

⁶⁷ Buber, *Tanrı Tutulması Din Ve Felsefe Arasındaki İlişkiye Dair Araştırmalar*, 139.

In post-Socratic Ancient Greek thought, the concept of the prologue extends beyond the meaning of a mere preface. The prologue transforms a vague or loosely formed inner voice into a structured draft that precedes dialogue. The concept of the prologue is meaningful when used together with dialogue. It cannot be claimed that knowledge is acquired solely through the prologue, entirely from and within the individual. Dialogue is what occurs between two people, whereas the prologue belongs to each individual within the dialogue. During a dialogue, speakers present their own prologue. Through the interaction of prologue and dialogue, they attempt to discover the universal both within themselves and collectively. Every dialogue, ultimately, contains a prologue. The prologue serves as the foundation that makes dialogue possible. Within the reality of dialogue, the prologue can be understood in relation to its subject and purpose. A prologue that precedes dialogue does not rigidly determine the content; as such rigidity would negate the very essence of dialogue.

The prologue can function as an educational concept that, when considered alongside dialogue, explains the processes of cognition, consciousness, thinking, and learning that belong to the individual today. However, the prologue cannot be reduced to just one of these aspects. On the other hand, the concept of dialogue alone is not sufficient to fully explain all internal processes and the goals related to human development. Although the subject or student participates in dialogue, they are often immersed in their own internal experiences. It is not always possible for the teacher to access this depth and uncertainty. In this case, the prologue is considered a silent conversation within oneself and represents the individual's internal preambles within the dialogue. During mutual dialogue, there is always a voice that precedes external speech, which belongs entirely to the individual. This inner process is the true counterpart of transformation through education, the process of becoming human, and the development of individuality. This transformation should be considered alongside the concepts discussed in the study—concepts that are often regarded as ambiguous by science. When approached in this way, the ontological foundation of dialogue, as directed toward the individual, can be completed with the concept of the prologue. The prologue serves as a call for the learning subject to turn inward. Only when individuals are alone with their thoughts and originality and begin to engage in deep reflection can they establish a connection with existence. Because the subject, who is in the process of education, forms a relationship with existence by constantly moving back and forth between dialogue and prologue.

A dialogue based solely on the prologue of a single person becomes unproductive; in reality, it is a monologue disguised as dialogue. Educational theories that are monological in essence and character but make partial use of the dialogue method are, in fact, monologues with the appearance of dialogue. Because when the prologue part is fixed on a single subject in terms of content, individuality is erased. In contrast, the philosophical traditions of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle place great importance on individuality within the process of philosophical inquiry. Without a prologue, dialogue risks remaining superficial, preventing individuals from turning inward and seeking deeper meaning. At this point, the phrase “know yourself” and the doctrine of being oneself become significant. The foundation of self-knowledge is the prologue that precedes dialogue. The loss of the prologue after Ancient Greece is the loss of the original meaning and contributions of the dialogue.

If we do not establish the relationship between prologue and dialogue, we are left with only two alternatives: the relationship between dialogue and monologue or between prologue and monologue. However, we cannot complete dialogue with monologue because monologue does not correspond to the draft and preparatory state that the concept of prologue evokes and implies within the speaking process. In this sense, monologue aligns with the search for certainty in modern science. Yet, the learning process cannot be built upon such certainty, especially in its internal dimension. Monologue does not fully reflect the individual's state before engaging in dialogue. By contrast, prologue is a concept that stands closer to dialogue, remaining more open to interaction and transformation than monologue.

I believe that scientific approaches claiming to fully and completely explain the inner processes of knowledge formation are problematic. The internal process must remain within the human being, preserving a degree of ambiguity. The internal should persist in a continuous draft state. In this study, I do not claim to have fully explained what happens inside through the concept of the prologue. Rather, I suggest that the prologue can be considered a concept suitable for the subjectivity and variability of internal processes and that it may complement dialogical pedagogy. When we limit the process of knowledge formation solely to dialogue, it seems as if we lack a key concept to address what happens internally. Monologue is a concept that explains what occurs outside the subject who forms knowledge. Dialogue, in contrast, turns inward, yet it provides a much better explanation of what happens externally between two subjects than monologue does. Dialogue even surpasses mere explanation—it situates the formation of knowledge within the subject on a proper foundation, one that is both libertarian and humane in terms of the subject’s interaction with the external world. However, even psychology, which directly examines internal human processes, has yet to explain them fully.

In post-Socratic Ancient Greece, the prologue and dialogue remain distinct and cannot be equated. The prologue serves only as a draft for the dialogue. In contrast, the monologue is the acceptance of the draft as it is, adherence solely to the prologue, and the expansion of what is already contained within it. Just as in the “prologue in the sky,” there exists a prologue related to the first source of truth. The prologue carries an openness to the contradictions present in this initial source of truth. However, an individual may choose to continue this contradiction only to the extent they find necessary. The way to minimize contradiction is through dialogue. Conversely, monologue does not emerge from contradictions—it is the sudden and complete elimination of them. This is why monologue is incompatible with the uncertain aspects of human nature. In my view, what turns an educational activity into a monologue is not only the removal of dialogue but also the complete fixation and rigid determination of the prologue. In this sense, monologue eliminates the possibility of revising or modifying the draft.

Let us imagine for a moment that we are compiling a dictionary of dialogical pedagogy. Such a dictionary might, in some ways, contradict the fundamental principles of dialogical pedagogy. However, we are merely entertaining the idea. It would be possible to include prologue as a significant and functional sub-concept of dialogical pedagogy within this dictionary. In fact, a concept like epilogue could be developed as a new research proposal. Also, the concept of epilogue could be examined in a similar way to this study and incorporated into such a lexicon.

Considering the prologue as a complementary element of dialogue can contribute to future research on dialogical pedagogy. This study focused on Ancient Greece. However, when examining the Middle Ages and the Modern Age, can it be argued that the prologue became embedded in monologue by being fixed within a specific reality? Perhaps, as a continuation of this article, it would be worthwhile to explore philosophical movements and psychological approaches in the Middle Ages and the Modern Age through the lens of the prologue and monologue concepts.

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