HEIDEGGER'S HERMENEUTIC METHOD IN TERTIARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Heidegger's hermeneutic method and his account of pedagogy are useful in teaching students how to think and write. This paper interprets the method of thinking which Martin Heidegger taught to his students and indicates strategies that have been used to introduce that method to New Zealand students in an online course. The method appears to philosophers as a technique of conceptual analysis, although Heidegger may not have agreed with that characterisation or its use in this way. To tertiary teachers it is one framework that they may use to teach a strategy and techniques under the rubric of critical thinking. The use of the method of procedure proposed is well within the capabilities of teachers in practical subjects such as business, management, medicine and law. Students in the author's business analysis course say that a hermeneutic strategy forces them to struggle, but ultimately they report satisfaction at their increased abilities and believe that they have gained something efficacious.

Key terms: distance education, thinking skills, writing skills, critical thinking, hermeneutics, Heidegger.

INTRODUCTION

This paper records an attempt to make business students think differently, which here means to think in manner that was previously closed-off to them. The innovation occurred over three years and modified a second year course in the degree Bachelor of Business that The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand offers online. Initially, the course, called "Business Environmental Analysis", described several conceptual models that may be used to analyse business environments (such as Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats and Porter's Five Forces model) and required that the students applied these models to the situation of businesses. Students collected newspaper clippings into a scrap book and mapped information into a framework for analysis. Courses like this are common in Western business degrees, but equally common is the dissatisfaction that comes when teachers and students dwell upon their limitations. Managers have always known that things do not work out in the way that management techniques and modelling might indicate. As one of the many concerned with the deficiencies says:

> The manager who acts only logically in subservience to an idea is guaranteed failure. Management technology leaves out something that is crucial to management success. [np] What management technology leaves out is what managers understand as – but, out of embarrassment before the high status of science and mathematics, seldom talk about – a feel for things. (Hummel, 1990, p.3)

Hummel sings an old tune which many theorists harmonise – there is a gulf between theory and practice in the discipline of business management (See for example, Mintzberg, 2004). The new course, which is to be renamed as "Business Analysis Skills", is directed at the development of thinking skills. It refuses to see much value in prescriptions and formulae, and instead asserts that students, like managers, are on their own and must learn to cope with the reality of their situation.

The course still makes use of models and addresses business contexts, but the purpose of the course is now to teach a skill – specifically a particular skill that some might see as belonging in the stable of "critical" thinking (Mason, 2007; McPeck, 1990). It is an ambitious programme when one reflects with an American educator well versed in such teaching, that "the development of critical thinking is really a mysterious internal process" (Meyers, 1986, p.71). It is in the theoretical foundation of that skill that the innovative character of the reform is found. The skill or technique of thought, as it is understood as the basis of the online course, is developed from the German philosopher Martin Heidegger's account of hermeneutics. Heideggerian hermeneutics is understood by considering the theory of hermeneutics which Heidegger argues, his examples of its use in his own formal philosophy, and its use in his work with students particularly at the Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, in a long period which began shortly after the Second World

War. Heidegger was prohibited from teaching from 1946 to 1949 by a French de-Nazification tribunal (Chapter 20, Safranski, 1998, p.332; Young, 1997). The relevance of this burst of history will become clear shortly.

The new course is designed for students in a situation where their time is limited and thus they are unlikely to do much preparatory work for their assignments. The students' orientation is towards credentialing and not learning, and the arrangements are consistent with:

> … the realities of cramped teaching schedules, large class size, limited class time and voluminous course content militate against most attempts to create … positive learning environments. (Meyers, 1986, p.54)

The salient strategic response to this situation is to make the online course itself about three compulsory assignments and to ensure that the professor religiously adheres to the criteria for student success in those assignments, which, in turn, means being exceptionally clear about what it is that the students must do. This shows itself in an aversion to words like "analyse" and "critique", an a precise presentation of both course materials and assignments (For elaboration on the difficulties of writing instructions for students, see Meyers, 1986, p.70). Something about the nature of the tasks, and the precision of task definition, is indicated in the mark schedule that is used with students, and which is attached as Annex A.

The present paper orients us to the issues involved in teaching skills, provides a discussion of hermeneutics as a method that might be of use when students think-write, and records some of the thoughts of a teacher who taught this method in a business analysis course.

Teach the skills of business

People who try to be helpful often urge those in business and their advisors to be creative, resourceful and innovative – skilful and masterly. Educators consider the perspectives of business and academia in the selection of skills that should be taught in business courses (Howard, 1989; Howard, Litzenberg, Schneider, & Fairnie, 1990; Sadler-Smith, Sargeant, & Dawson, 1997). Thus, it is no longer necessary to argue that business courses should teach thinking skills because such skills associate with innovation and entrepreneurship and have strong support in both business and academics. Yet the notion of 'skills' itself is contentious, as indeed is the notion of 'thinking skills' (Johnson, Siegel, & Winch, 2010). If the task is to bring a method of thinking into the lives of students we are obliged to say something of our presuppositions regarding the nature of skills and thought. The first observation about this is that tertiary business education is premised on the notion that students learn in order that they might apply what they have learnt subsequently in their life of work. This entails the premise that it is possible learn an intellectual skill in one context and with one content, and have that learning somehow be relevant in a further context and with fresh problems. If you can juggle with cups you can juggle with spoons sometime next year.

It is not possible in a course taught with the techniques of distance education to distinguish between writing and thinking. In the business environment to a large extent – and in the student environment totally – thinking is writing and writing is thinking. To examine what you think you must write it down. Having written there is now material for thought. The emphasis in the course is not communication. Rather, the focus is new ideas and the ability of the student to generate something original. Whether this is consistent with the well entrenched call to emphasise "composition" in business education is unclear. A study in 1925 for example (Heilman, Kiekhofer, Ruggles, Sharfman, & Marshall, 1928, p.54 & p.56), records that business teachers regarded English composition was the most important subject matter in business courses and that philosophy was something not taught which should be

taught, along with "Transportation"!

Common thinking about intellectual skills derives from the analogy with physical skills. The new course adopts the manta of skills although the extent to which this is sound with regards either curriculum or pedagogy is an unresolved question for teachers. In response to this predicament we might ask a Heideggerian question: what is the foundation of a situation where the concept of skill is an issue? The immediate Wittgensteinian answer is that skills appear useful as a vehicle for marketing/selling courses and thereby generating income. That is a leading use of the word "skill". As consumer legislation deems it advisable that whatever is marketed is demonstrably sold the business educator acquires curriculum direction from institutional marketing experts. Here, in the real-time of the real-world of modern education we find the home of "intellectual skills", which enduringly draw their fortitude from understandable physical examples such as juggling and swimming. That the curriculum is influenced by institutional needs is an example of the "strange alliance of forces" which educational philosopher Paul Standish says shapes contemporary further education (Standish, 1997, p.440). Perhaps the skills manta is a part of the new managerialism for it certainly relates well to markets. The pedagogic aspect of this, which Standish also identifies (Standish, 1997, p.448), relates to Heidegger's notion that in modernity, publicness levels or averages everything, and thus the expectation is that the students will all reach the same standard which is the given standard for meeting the course requirements. If the task is to have students display new, innovative thinking, then the issue of measurement in the context of student grading looms large. The marking schedule in Annex A suggests one way to address this dilemma and Riley (2009) provides a relevant analysis of pedagogy from Heidegger's perspective.

Hermeneutics as a method of thinking-writing

Student autonomy

An initial comment about pedagogy must be made before we consider how hermeneutics can enlighten pedagogy. It is to emphasise the importance of the student's doing their own original and creative work. So far as intellectual labour is concerned, this is one of Heidegger's themes and it influences the business analysis course. In many lectures Heidegger urges his students to think their own programme – the teacher's task is difficult, he says, because the teacher must let the student learn. However, as experienced professors know too well, if one stands right back very little happens. The balance between supervisor support and student autonomy is the subject of a recent enquiry at the University of Auckland (Overall, Deane, & Peterson, 2010). Their empirical work confirms what we expect:

> … the more academic and personal support students received from their supervisors, the more positively students evaluated their supervision. In contrast, the degree to which supervisors encouraged students to think and act autonomously was not uniquely associated with students' satisfaction but was the strongest predictor of students' research self-efficacy (Overall et al., 2010, p.18).

We need not dwell on the diversity of students, institutional requirements, and the structured development of degrees – the Auckland team canvass the complexities. The Open Polytechnic's course forces students at every turn to confront their situation and their problems themselves – alone they must struggle. The tutor is encouraging, sympathetic, available, and only too willing to explain what is required. What is required is in the course materials, in 45 email messages which the students receive during a 17 week course, discussed by students on the course forum, and explained in private telephone calls and email exchanges. The challenge for the tutor is not to

contribute to the content of the student's project.

This pedagogy is consistent with Heidegger's 1951-52 account of teaching and learning:

> Teaching is even more difficult than learning. We know that; but we rarely think about it. And why is teaching more difficult than learning? Not because the teacher must have a larger store of information, and have it always ready. Teaching is more difficult than learning because what teaching calls for is this: to let learn. The real teacher, in fact, lets nothing else be learned than – learning. His conduct, therefore, often produces the impression that we properly learn nothing from him, if by "learning" we now suddenly understand merely the procurement of useful information. The teacher is ahead of his apprentices in this alone, that he has still far more to learn than they–he has to learn to let them learn. (Heidegger, 1968, p.15)

Students do complain that they are not being given "the answers" and it is a shock for some to discover that there are no answers. Much formal Western education cultivates the belief that the teacher knows and the student must learn from the master: this, students interpret as meaning that there are important facts already known and that the teachers job is to facilitate the student's memorising of these facts. The hegemony of science lends support to this popular belief. In business education – where legitimately science and humanities courses abut in the one award – it is understandable that the students are unable to differentiate the radically different nature of courses.

Finally in relation to student autonomy, the image of the thinker is that of the solitary labourer, Zarathustra on his mountain, Wittgenstein in Norway or Ireland, or Heidegger in his elevated and isolated hut in the Black Forest. Intellectual work is solitary – a personal struggle – and it is alone that the business person acquires the intellectual foundation for leadership in

the real-world. This contrasts with accounts of modern pedagogy which emphasise the social nature of learning. Jones, for instance, cites Hutchin's example of what is involved in learning to berth a ship, to conclude "learning is now re-conceived as a social outcome achieved by the mnemonic effects and actions of a groups using received sets of cultural tools to frame some sort of meaning" (Jones, 2010, p.12) . A profound difference between Jones' socio-cognitive theory of learning and the solitary thinker is that the objective is not an issue in relation to the ship. The solitary thinker retreats to the mountain to minimise the environment and thus to facilitate contemplation, hardly something to be encouraged as the ship births. Hutchin's example does accord with the real-world experience of business and we may therefore expect that socio-cognitive theory will also have a place in business education, alongside the methods which the present paper advances.

Hermeneutics as method

Three of Heidegger's leading concepts are introduced below. Together they are sufficient to sketch a Heideggerian concept of hermeneutics, one specifically drawn for teachers. Whilst hermeneutics is well known as the method by which Jewish and Christian scholars interpreted the Bible, it became popular in philosophy as the method of enquiry which Hans-Georg Gadamer develops in his book Truth and Method (2004), and which Blacker considers in relation to business practice (Blacker, 1993). It is Gadamer's claim that he at first follows, and then departs from, his teacher, Heidegger. The present paper and the pedagogy it reports does not follow Gadamer: its author is suspicious that Gadamer becomes intellectually wayward and departs too radically from his teacher (this is a common enough conclusion, see Dostal, 1994, for example). Instead, the focus is on Heidegger's development of hermeneutics which has only become available to English readers in the last two decades.

There are three discernable involvements of hermeneutics in Heidegger's corpus: (1) hermeneutics as an integral part of fundamental ontology (the way that human beings exist), (2) hermeneutics as a foundational aspect of regional ontology (which is about how human beings consciously interpret all

that they know, and which is the focus of Gadamer's work), and (3) hermeneutics as the method of enquiry which Heidegger himself uses to dramatic effect. The present paper describes Heidegger's hermeneutics as a method of practical enquiry, but the wider context as of this as it develops in the first two Heideggerian projects must be first explained because they influence how we should interpret the method. Although Heidegger's hermeneutics is set out in his classic work Being and Time (1962), this is a difficult work for beginners, although it does provide a helpful, concise summary for those who already understand the cardinal concepts.

There are three concepts which are central to Heidegger and which are relevant in the construction of a hermeneutic pedagogy. These concepts are (1) thrownness, (2) being ahead of yourself, and (3) the hermeneutic method of questioning.

Thrownness and being ahead of oneself

Few of Heidegger's concepts are as well-known as thrownness. The cardinal observation that founds this notion is simple enough, but the concept appears in different ways in each of the three "involvements of hermeneutics" mentioned above. The rudimentary notion of thrownness relates to time and our human situation. We are always in the "now". Our total circumstances are given to us and absolutely unalterable. We are a part of a "world", Heidegger might say we are "worlded", or as is said to business students "you are in the here-and-now and must deal with all that confronts you". Heidegger's notion of "the lived world" or "Being-in-the world" (Dasein) is succinctly summarised by Heelan as the "existential sharing by a community of a common way of life and common media of communication" (Heelan, 2010, p.3). You are always thrown into your situation. This is most characteristic of our human situation, our way of being. The concept of thrownness is based upon Heidegger's observation of our human situation. Because we all have direct experience of this situation, we are inclined to support his observation. In Heidegger's challenging words:

> This characteristic of ... [human] Being—this 'that it is'—is veiled in its "whence" and "whither", yet disclosed in itself all the more unveiledly; we call it the "thrownness" of this entity into its "there"; indeed, it is thrown in such a way that, as Being-in-the-world, it is the "there. The expression "thrownness" is meant to suggest the facticity of its being delivered over. (Heidegger, 1962, p.174)

If we do not ponder our situation as beings involved in the world, our true circumstance are veiled or hidden from us. The importance of this in relation to hermeneutic method is threefold. First, the focus is on you (we might say "personally" but that word has unhappy associations with theory in psychology). You are to think and your thoughts will be your own – it is not possible to escape and have someone else, or a textbook, provide the thoughts. The reference to Heidegger's life in the introductory section is more than a contextualising artifice. We are to consider everything ourselves in relation to our thrown situation. Thus, when we read an author, all that we know about that author and their circumstances is relevant – but not relevant because those circumstances influenced the author, but relevant because they influence us as we read. The student herself reads and this is always an integrated matter involving her own complex relationships, the total situation into which she is thrown and from which she cannot escape. This takes us to the second relevant matter about thrownness in relation to the hermeneutic method.

Second, everything that exists in your world is relevant and available to you, indeed inescapable. Teachers of the method know that whatever a student does in the course is undertaken as a student in a course, and instructive exercises that say "put yourself in the shoes of the manager" lack realism. It is probably more accurate to say that there is no student at all, but rather a human being involved in a world that includes the course assignment. Realism is being-a-student, having the-student-situation, and having the-home-family-business-financial circumstances that the student (a) brings into the course, and, more correctly, (b) participate in the course.

This situation includes what we might call the "emotional state" of the student, both in terms of their history and in terms of the moment when they think as a student involved in coursework. Heidegger uses the word "Befindlichkeit" to refer to the foundational disposition of the human being, which we might understand as including mood and vague feelings about our current situation. Adult students sometimes carry pressing emotional turmoil into courses and thus they are unlikely to be able to think as is required. Befindlichkeit is like this, but more. According to the translators of Being and Time (Heidegger, 1962, p.172), Befindlichkeit is sometimes "attunement". It may also mean the "state in which one may be found" (Translator's comment, Heidegger, 1962, p.172). Heidegger's leading example of Befindlichkeit is Stimmung, which translates as "mood" but this captures only one part of Heidegger's notion and is excessively psychological. Stimmung originally refers to the tuning of a musical instrument. A prominent American scholar glosses Heidegger and pursues the scope of Befindlichkeit:

> Heidegger suggests that moods or attunements manifest the tone of being-there. As Heidegger uses the term, mood can refer to the sensibility of an age (such as romantic), the culture of a company (such as aggressive), the temper of the times (such as revolutionary), as well as the mood in a current situation (such as the eager mood in the classroom) and, of course, the mood of an individual. (Dreyfus, 1991, p.169)

Thus, a vital multi-dimensional concept emerges. The relevance of this in the teaching of business analysis is that it opens doors to the student's engagement with course matters in a very full manner. No longer is the course a confined slice of a student's life. Business analysis is not abstract, unrelated to the student, scientific, objective, or purely intellectual. It is like business itself – something that takes over oneself. Accordingly, an important realisation for students is that there is no separation between their personal situation and their business, work or school life. If you doubt the relevance of your personal situation

in your work life, try working when you are in pain. Adult students worryingly report that they have three children, a spouse and a full time job and thus find it difficult to study. Incidentally, the word "study" is also of concern in the present context: "study" all too often involves the belief that there is something important to grasp and regurgitate, when in the present course "study" means contemplate, ponder or ruminate within the full situation as a being worlded. Further it is unhelpful for tutors or students to impose into discussions dichotomies such as school and home, work and leisure, public and private. The slaying of dichotomies is a topic we shall return to shortly in the section on questioning.

We now come to what is distinctly hermeneutic in the hermeneutic method. This is the theory which Heidegger develops in the years prior to Being and Time and which he develops for use with his own students. The theory is the topic of the present section, whilst the following section considers this when it is constructed into a method that may be taught to students. Heidegger develops this theory as an account of the human being, and definitely not as a method of enquiry for students. Nevertheless, the present author finds both explicit and implicit support hermeneutics as a method in Heidegger's many lectures to his own students. When faced with students, you have to say something, and they demand some guidance on what to do in their assignments.

What is the foundational theory of hermeneutics as method? Again, the basic ideas is straight-forward. It is based on the observation that each and every one of us is at all times concerned with our future. We are in the now but we are pressing into the future. If you walk, you walk into the future. If you think you are thinking in the now but thinking about or of the future. In one sense you will arrive in that future, but in a more profound sense you never arrive in the future, you remain in the now.

The method of hermeneutic questioning

Teachers associate questioning with the method of Socrates. In Plato's celebrated play, Meno, for example, by skilful questioning Socrates leads a slave boy to insights about virtue (Plato, 1961). The truth

of the conclusion is apparent to the boy because the reasoning appears to come from within himself: Socrates does not tell the boy anything (allegedly). In the sequence of questions the wise-man leads the student to a conclusion that the wise-man has already drawn, which is why he is "the wise-man". The topic is set with a leading question:

> MENO: Can you tell me, Socrates–is virtue something that can be taught? Or does it come by practice? Or is it neither teaching nor practice that gives it to a man but natural aptitude or something else? (Plato, 1961, p.354)

This contrasts with hermeneutic questioning in three ways. First, the opening question is not set out in precise, accessible manner – the student must struggle to gain entrance to the topic. This requires that the topic must emerge from a situation and manifest as something worth the student's effort. It must hold potential as a topic that might lead somewhere of intellectual interest (in the philosophical context) or practical relevance (in the business context). Second, the wise-man is not able to direct the student's thinking with leading, insightful questions – the tutor does not know the direction of thought that the student will pursue and it defeats the purpose of the exercise if the student records the tutor's direction of thought. Third, neither the student nor the tutor can know the outcome of the student's thinking until it has occurred. It is always possible that the student will not think anything. Confused or mild thinking is still thinking, and the evidence is that all students think, hence the challenge is to make their thinking coherent and worthwhile. To anticipate what will soon be said about pedagogy, this challenge relates more to their confidence than any other single factor.

A strategy that Heidegger uses in many of his texts is to seek the ground for dichotomies. For example, the distinction between mind and body which Descartes elaborates – ask, says Heidegger, what is a human being that such a distinction can be made? Seek the unity or the ground that enables the distinction to be meaningful. This is a special case of the general

notion of asking questions which became known with Socrates. It is, however, cast as it is for Heidegger in ontology, not an example of the Socratic Method. In the work with students, because they are concerned with concepts, and not with ontology, it would be possible to argue that this is a refinement of the Socratic Method. However, it is terminologically construed, the important aspects of this when used with students are (1) that it is a "seeking back" into the foundation of a distinction, (2) that meaning or sense to be made is to be decided by the student in the student's own terms, (3) the thinking must not be trivial or empirical, but genuinely about the meaning within thinking-writing.

Students in the business course, found Heidegger's strategy understandable when it was used with them in concrete examples. Noticeably, their projects frequently raised traditional dilemmas of philosophy. For example, 'freedom' kept appearing, the notion of 'purpose', and existential challenges such as the meaning of life. One student, as the outcome of an enquiry into a Maori organisation became involved with the nature or aroha,

The emphasis on Heideggerian questioning – thinking backwards and not accepting given topics – is, at least so far as the present author knows, new to business education. It is not new in other disciplines, however. The Continental philosopher James Marshall indicates how the lack of thought that sometimes enters into positivist research questions in policy development projects can have unfortunate consequences. Precise questions, those which invite scientific investigation, are often not helpful in the context of policy reform. He says research questions in contracting situations are "givens" or in courses they are "determined" by the methodologies adopted in tertiary education courses (Marshall, 2006, p.81). In both situations there is a narrowing of what is deemed relevant. The method of questioning which the present paper advocates is a counter to such narrowing, and it appears consistent with Marshall's programme to reform social science research in the context of policy development:

> This chapter's claim is that a research question itself has to be problematized. ... I will exemplify how problematizing a given research question may require a rethinking of that research question, its subsequent reformulation, and the selection of a different research methodology. (Marshall, 2006, p.82)

He uses "problematized" in the manner of Foucault. The research question given in a policy research contract or a student assignment is a written question that is addressed by thought and responded to in writing. Again, it is evident that thinking and writing are one. In the example of policy research Marshall discusses, it is the research subjects themselves who set out to challenge the research questions and to good effect (Marshall, 2006, p.91). The parallels with the live real-world business situation are apparent. When there is an investment in the wrong enquiry or the wrong service, or the wrong product, it is the enquiry, service or product that imposes itself upon the business person. The need for thought comes from the totality of the situation, and the researcher / student / business manager confronts exactly the hermeneutic situation that Heidegger describes.

Pedagogy

The course materials were altered to introduce thinking skills specifically. As the introduction says, "it is" important to understand that this course as about your learning to think and write. The first module assists you with these tasks in a direct way. Subsequent modules provide you with some useful starting points for your own deliberations". The skills are then described and examples of their use given. Students relate well to clear simple instructions even if the instructions entail complex challenges. There are wee exercises (which experience in distance education with mature students tells me will be completed by very few students) and traps built into the initial pages. For example, there is a tradition in such courses to request that students introduce themselves either to their tutor personally through communications online (once

they were posted in envelopes provided) or though an online forum to all the students in the course. In this course the invitation to introduce onself is a departure from normal practice. It asks the student to critique the process of introductions. Why might the lecturer encourage this practice? Who might benefit and how might they benefit? Who might be set at a disadvantage though this practice, and is it in the student's interest to become involved in introductions? Accordingly, the 'introductions" section is about being critical-minded, not sheepishly following instructions, and not allowing yourself to be led by others. In short, it is about thinking for oneself – a vital ingredient to the development of thinking skills. Only about 15% of the students identify the "trap" and respond with ideas. This is consistent with the normal situation in vocational credentialing courses in distance education with adults; students only read that which they deem is vital to the completion of assignments and examinations.

The marking schedule (Annex A) is tailored to the requirements of the hermeneutic method. It begins with the abstract, which is to be a "stand-alone" statement of the principal findings that are the student's new ideas. Then there are marks allocated for the statement of a leading question that is "researchable" though thought. The development of explicit subsidiary questions is also rewarded. In making judgements about such things the tutor must be aware that in many cases this is the first time the student has ever been required to produce something genuinely original that relates to a real-life situation. The challenge for the student is to abandon the search for a "right answer" that is to be found in the course materials, or a book or in dialogue with the tutor: the questions must come from the student's own deliberations. The ability to sustain a line of argument is also rewarded. The argument does not have to be about anything in particular or very profound but it must take us from one thought to the next in a manner that holds some form of intellectual credibility. Where assertions are made about anything important they must be supported by facts or arguments. When facts appear they must be supported by academic references if they relate to theory or references to company documents if (say) they relate to a company. Websites are seldom legitimate sources for work at the

second year of an undergraduate degree. They can be ways to stimulate thought behind the scenes and point the student in the direction of appropriate sources.

Frequently, the most dramatic upheaval from the point-of-view of the student is the tutor's refusal to find them an essay topic. With this they think "something is not right here". Students often enter courses expecting clear instructions on what will be required of them to achieve a good grade. Instead, they are told to think and write about something new and different. Their thinking and writing must achieve a standard. The description of the standard does not help much because you cannot think and write in the abstract. Always you think and write about something, and it is this something which is not given. There is a broad topic given, but that is deliberately cast as being too wide for an essay. Many students find in this a parallel with business ownership and with life: what do I do now? What do I do when there is no-one to tell me what to do.

The tutor seeks to engage each student in a conversation about this early stage of their project. Most frequently it is an email conversation in private, but it sometimes occurs on the course website in public, and sometimes it may be by telephone. By far the most profound difficulty faced by most students is a lack of confidence. "Take a deep breath and write! See what you can do and we can work from there." Many have bizarre expectations about how they should be able to perform our about the work habits of others, for example they think that people can sit down for a day and keep generating ideas and script. The most successful assignments are the product of short sessions over more than a month. As Bertrand Russell said in his essay "How I Write", the ideas would "germinate underground", when you really do not feel you are thinking about anything particular (Vol.10, Russell, 1992, p.36).

It is important the tutors do engage individual students as the course proceeds. Apart from the motivational aspects and the opportunity to teach, when a course does not require an examination the opportunity for fraud needs to be closed-off. At present the cost of a first year university assignment written to order and delivered through the internet is something

between US$50 and US$300. The work comes after being screened through the popular software that checks for plagiarism and unless the tutor knows the student it is extremely difficult to detect this kind of fraud. Unfortunately, the high value of credentials, the commoditisation of education, and distance education are leading progenitors of academic dishonesty.

Relationship to conceptual analysis

Some might be inclined to say that what occurs in a course with students is a form of conceptual analysis, and that the intrusion of Heidegger into the work contributes little to the outcome. It is usual to accept that when we think we think with concepts. However, this thought itself is an abstraction and already we have the thinking and the thinking about thinking. The method of hermeneutics is an attempt to stand aside from such ingredients in the process of conceptual analysis. This can be explored more by considering the integral way that hermeneutics appears in practical teaching.

Whilst hermeneutics as a method of enquiry (1, above) is the focus of the pedagogy developed, hermeneutics as fundamental ontology (2, above) also has its effect on teaching practice. This is apparent in the way that the tutor urges students to enquire into the "personal" or "individual" aspects of situations. For example, in thinking about business the notion of 'profit' often occurs. This could be pursued in the manner of Wittgenstein (in his work about conceptual analysis with the example of 'games'), it would be possible to ask about the use of the word "profit" in different contexts and by different business people. Drawing upon Wittgenstein's discussion of chess (for example) we could urge students to determine the rules of the game of business (Paragraph 197, Wittgenstein, 2001, p.68). However, in the current course, questions about profit are flavoured with concerns about how the notion relates to the involved individual – the student is encouraged to pay no heed to the thoughts of others, those beyond oneself, particularly those who write heavy books. Perhaps the contrast with Wittgenstein should not be made too loudly for Wittgenstein can appear quite Heideggerian at times, for example:

186. "What you are saying, then, comes to this: a new insight–intuition–is needed at every step to carry out the order '+n' correctly."–To carry it out correctly! How is it decided what is the right step to take at any particular stage?–"The right step is the one that accords with the order–as it was meant." (Wittgenstein, 2001, p.64)

Wittgenstein problematizes "as it was meant" and in this example he continues to consider the abstract notion inherent in numerical addition for humankind. Incidentally, Wittgenstein's discussion continues with considerable relevance to these issues in paragraphs 209-215 (Wittgenstein, 2001, p.71). Nevertheless, the possibility is always there that "as it was meant" could refer to "as it was meant by you". It is this latter possibility which comes through in the business course because of Heidegger's influence. The question that is always hidden within each student's thoughts can be posed – what are you that you can think about business? This is Kant's classic question: what is a Newton that he can engage with nature and produce Newtonian physics? It is also the question which with Heidegger directs us to fundamental ontology as the direction of enquiry.

Finally, the course described does not appeal to every student. For many there is an initial period of shock when they discover that the answers are not to be located in a book and nor will their tutor tell them the answers. The expression "thrown in at the deep end" is appropriate. Years of schooling in a positivist paradigm has engrained students with the notion that others know and they must find out. Yet at the same time students intuit that the world of practice does not follow the book. In the earlier version of the course the student was rewarded for the location of information and the categorising of this information using rules which were accepted without question. In the new version their task is undefined, and they must themselves produce a topic and thoughts about that topic. Their appeals for assistance are met with encouragement and kindness, but not with answers. There are no rules and this does accord with the experience of life.

Conclusions

Educators often say that it is important to teach their students practical skills that they can use in the workplace, and this is the orientation of degree courses at the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand. It is one thing to require new ideas, but quite another to acquire them – if this is what we require of our students it behoves us to indicate how they are to proceed. The present paper argues that the work of one major philosopher is of direct use in the development of thinking-writing skills which are consequential competencies for business practitioners. Even in the allegedly practical subject of business management, philosophy is of use. The methods that develop in philosophy for philosophical enquiries can be applied elsewhere.

Heidegger does not set out to influence business students, he sets out to influence everyone and those with a business orientation can benefit from Heidegger as much as anyone. Tertiary teachers familiar with the work of philosophers are well capable of drawing upon their methods of enquiry and using these to advantage in courses for students. Heidegger's rendition of hermeneutics holds a potential that has yet to be realised within business education.

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ANNEX A: MARKING SCHEDULE

This schedule occurs within a report that is usually of about three pages and includes material designed to propel the student into the subsequent assignment. The student's name is altered.

Criteria	Your mark	Available
Abstract: Clarity, directness, and focus. The abstract must "stand alone", which means that if it is the only thing read, it makes sense. Strong on logical development and focus. Probably best not to use headings in an abstract. Needs to be one whole statement. Coverage good (which is an advantage of headings!)	7	10
Questioning: Quality of the initial question and immediately derived questions. This is about how you find, define and initially develop a precise topic. You need something that involves real-world problems: not a simple scientific question. George, you have been willing to settle for a question which appears mundane: has concern about this really been a worry to you? If you do make progress with it, we might ask, so what? I read on in the hope that you show me otherwise.	11	20
Questioning: Presence and quality of questions that sustain arguments and overall insightful use of the technique of questioning. You are heading off into what is distinctly your own line of thinking George and that is excellent. Some scope to improve the way you present your ideas. You say: Uscher-Pines, Barnett, Sapsin, Bishai, Balicer (2008) state 'Why do a SWOT Analysis? At its most functional level a SWOT analysis will help you obtain information and assess a situation' (p.6). Good, you have found something to attack! And it is a legitimate academic source. You are in the real field of play George. This is good: The theory that I have developed, attempts to combine the simplicity of the SWOT analysis model with the deeper analysis of the Porter five forces model. You have tried to create something new. That is a most important first step. The quotations you give are rather meandering and need to be more brought into a consistent line of thought. However, you are asking how it is that we can have different models and what might be the commonality within them.	17	20

Lines of argument: Creativity and originality of lines of thought. Do not be upset if you do not gain high marks here: these marks are reserved for exceptional performance. To earn these marks George you need to do something beyond the ordinary, which means a very original idea which is well developed. Your ideas do not reach the dizzy heights.	2	10
Lines of argument: Identification of critical words and expressions and your attack on the critical words. This is your showing you are aware that key words in themselves create problems of understanding. It begins with "identification" alone. This may be no more than a sentence of caution. Good on the identification although leaving scope to make more of the problematic words as a vehicle to advance your argument. Nevertheless, critical thought is being shown at times.	12	20
Supporting your thinking: Substantiation for facts and the work of others. This is the use you have made of the academic literature of business and management. It also relates to the use you make of company information from industry sources. In all cases the material is to be used to support your own line of reasoning. "Background" information about theory is not of much interest – you can assume your tutor is already familiar with such information or can read the originals. You are heading the right way, but have to follow more exactly what the course materials say. For example, George, if you are going to depend on a theorist for something important, make sure it is a significant person. It is no more difficult to read major figures in the discipline than it is to read people who write about them. Try not to quote nobodies – use the nobodies to identify key theorists and pick things from their work to facilitate your thinking. You use Wikipedia and that is not appropriate in an essay at the second year of a degree. See my earlier email on the reasons that pertain. Now Wikipedia says: Porter's framework has been challenged by other academics and strategists such as Stewart Neill, also the likes of Kevin P. Coyne and Somu Subramaniam have stated that three dubious assumptions underlie the five forces: This is exactly what you want. The people they name are the people you should search for, locate, use, and cite. Still, be careful to make this a contribution to your own line of thinking. Wikipedia is a useful tool to locate relevant materials, very much so in this case. Take great care with chunks of material that is found on web sites. Sentences from your essay are on http://www.themanager.org/strategy/BeyondPorter.htm for example. You have to move beyond the raw. Also, without the most careful acknowledgement of sources you run risks of course disqualification. Often, you do cite the sources although not always correctly.	4	10

Bibliography: Technical correctness of referencing. George, you cannot afford to miss out on these marks. They are for a technical exercise. See the email that I sent to everyone about the requirements of APA and some tricks to make the set-up easier. Also there is a full account of APA on our website. Final note: As I have said in email to everyone, the problem with plagiarism is not theft. I am not concerned with your morals, George. What is of concern in this course is that you think/write new things yourself. If you uplift things from others you deny yourself the chance to show me your thinking skills at work.	3	10
Total	**56**	**100**