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**The Teacher who Cares: 21<sup>st</sup> Filipino Teacher**  
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**Abstract**

The concept of care is intended to appropriate it as a primary quality of a teacher before, during and after the teaching process. Learning has become varied so that even extracurricular, co-curricular activities are already venues for learning. All these are possible because teachers primarily provide necessary learning experiences for learners. The paper aims to provide a better understanding of the primary quality of teachers and students in a school setting. Particularly the paper will answer the following questions, (1) How is care depicted as a quality of a teacher; and (2) What does care imply in the utterances of the teacher when imparting his knowledge. The paper is a qualitative in nature. It is an appropriation of the Philosophy of Heidegger particularly on his idea of care. Care will be used as a primary quality of Filipino teachers. The analysis of the paper is divided into two portions. The first part is an introductory description of the idea of care in relation to being a teacher. This will be the grounding of the analysis to the Filipino teacher. The second part is an analysis testimony as means to express the care that teachers embody resulting to the trust that is built in the relationship.

**Introduction**

Martin Heidegger's Being and Time in 1927 was a historical event in contemporary thought. It has influenced philosophy, aesthetics, social studies, etc. Centeno (2007), in his article on Saint Louis Chronicle stated that Being and Time “has arguably shaped the intellectual landscape of the century, and it continues to exert its ground-breaking force till now.” Indeed, it continually does. For the purpose of this research, the focus on Heidegger’s concept of care is utilized. The concept of care is intended to appropriate it as a primary quality of a teacher before, during and after the teaching process. The quality of care is something that is shared with the learners in and outside the walls of the classroom.

Through a system of learning teachers are able to give their commitment in their goal as to provide quality education for every learner. Their testimonies are what learners rely on as source of their development. On the other hand, individuals who cannot afford such privilege but are able to read and have the capacity to understand are able to access books, magazines, or any other printed materials. Others utilize a visual or an audio device to be educated. It is the responsibility of the one providing these materials that learners are able to grasp what they need to develop.

Here in our country, schools are governed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and Department of Education (Dep Ed) through the educational laws. Aside from that, these agencies over time have grown and progressed in their aim of providing better learning experiences through variations in the education system that learning is no longer within just the walls of the classroom. Learning has become varied so that even extracurricular, co-curricular activities are already venues for learning. For example, a learner who learns debate in a class from the teacher can expand such learning in a debate

club. Finally, he can also join completions to measure further what he has learned. All these are possible because teachers primarily provide necessary learning experiences for learners. With this, this research aims to provide a better understanding of the primary quality of teachers and students in a school setting. Particularly the paper will answer the following questions:

1. How is care depicted as a quality of a teacher?
2. What does care imply in the utterances of the teacher when imparting his knowledge?

### **Methodology**

The research is qualitative in nature. It is an appropriation of the Philosophy of Heidegger particularly on his idea of care. Care will be used as a primary quality of Filipino teachers.

The analysis of the paper is divided into two parts. The first part is an introductory description of the idea of care in relation to being a teacher. This will be the grounding of the analysis to the Filipino teacher. The second part is an analysis testimony as means to express the care that teachers embody resulting to the trust that is built in the relationship.

The paper primarily centered on the analysis of the Book of Martin Heidegger's 'Being and Time.' Particularly it focuses on Care as the being of Dasein to represent the primary trait of a teacher in the Philippines, a Filipino teacher (not to be understood as a teacher of Filipino).

To support and appropriate the ideas of Heidegger, the educational law of the Philippines particularly on the roles of teachers in educational institutions will be used. Articles and texts are also utilized in the paper.

Finally, the paper will touch also on the basic idea of testimonial epistemology since teachers are giving testimonies when they are teaching. Such details as inferential and non-inferential knowledge or evidential or non-evidential knowledge and the like will not be discussed since the main purpose of the paper is geared towards metaphysics. It will focus its inquiry on the ontological quality of being a Filipino teacher.

### **Discussion and Analysis**

#### **Care Depicted as a Quality of a Teacher**

Being reveals itself to man's consciousness. It is learned as man constantly affirms his consciousness. Thus, man and Being goes hand in hand in the process of development. When one learns about man one learns about Being. This Being is that radiance of the consciousness of beings. This means that beings are that which perceive this light of Being. Being is, as Heidegger (1996) puts it, "that which determines entities as entities." But how does man know of Being? Being is discovered through one's feeling of nothingness. This nothingness is shown to man through anxiety (angst). This anxiety is revealed in the face of death. According to Heidegger (1953) "angst does not know what it is about which it is anxious... what is threatening cannot approach from a definite direction within nearness, it is already 'there' and yet nowhere." Anxiety is always present yet absent. It is that which hinders man from understanding Being and at the same time opens the possibility of knowing of Being. As a result, it also takes away the possibility of understanding the self since it causes man to dread. Heidegger (1953) states further:

"Angst takes away from Dasein the possibility of understanding itself, falling prey, in terms of the 'world' and the public way of being interpreted. It throws Dasein back upon that for which it is anxious, its authentic potentiality-for-

being-in-the-world. Angst individuates Dasein to its own most being-in-the-world which, as understanding, projects itself essentially upon possibilities.”

For those who teach, anxiousness comes to their being because their testimonies are at some point unreliable. Hume would say:

“The reason we place any credit in witnesses and historians, is not derived from any connection, which we perceive a priori, between testimony and reality, but because we are accustomed to find a conformity between them. But when the fact attested is such a one as has seldom fallen under our observation, here is a contest of two opposite experiences; of which the one destroys the other, as far as its force goes, and the superior can only operate on the mind by the force, which remains.”

For this reason, testimonies of teachers are not reliable and prone to error and be the cause of disbelief among their recipients, the learners. They, the teachers, might ask their credibility to give such testimonies (lesson, etc.). they may question their expertise. They may feel that they fall in a fallacious argument: *Argumentum ad Verecundiam*; meaning the fallacy of appealing to the testimony of an authority outside his special field. Good thing, there is a system that Philippines is following, a law that would define one becoming an authority to teach. Sarmiento (2009) in his book *Education Law and the Private Schools* states: Art IX sec 44 states the minimum qualification for a faculty for the different grades and supported by appropriate credentials. Provisions for pre-school, elementary and secondary are stated in Art IX sec 44 (a-b) respectively. In addition, they are required to pass the licensure examinations as stated in RA 7836 on professionalization of teachers. The trust given to the teacher is guarded by law that they may legally impart knowledge to young learners and not lead them astray. In this context the anxiousness of a teacher depends on his capability to qualify as based on the law.

On the other hand, for Higher Education institutions, since learners have more experience and have more reason to believe a testimony or not, a higher requirement is provided by the law. In Art VIII sec 35.1a provides that for undergraduate programs a teacher must be:

“a holder of a master’s degree; to teach mainly in his/her major field and where applicable, a holder of appropriate professional license requiring at least a bachelor’s degree for the professional courses. However, in specific fields where there is dearth of holders of master’s degree, a holder of a professional license requiring at least a bachelor’s degree may be qualified to teach.”

Teachers are rigorously being required by law to accomplish many endeavors before being qualified to teach. “A man being an expert or an authority on some matter cannot be a matter of mere inspection in the way that his being white or tall is” (Coady, 1973). This means that following the requirements of the law will not determine the actuality of a teacher but only be a means in becoming a teacher. These qualifications give a teacher an edge to be an authority in imparting knowledge. The teacher might still lead his learners to inauthenticity. His anxiousness can still entangle him in the world. A fear that even if he qualifies from what is stated in the law does not determine that he is really qualified. Heidegger would say that it is fear, “fear is angst which has fallen prey to the world. It is inauthentic and concealed from itself” (Heidegger 1996). However, if the teacher sees this anxiety as an opportunity, then the result will be different. If “Angst reveals in Dasein its being toward its own most potentiality of being, that is, being free for the freedom of choosing and grasping itself.” (Heidegger, 1996) How can one take this angst as an opportunity, a venue for development?

Heidegger, at section 42 of Chapter VI: *Care as the Being of Dasein*, gave an introduction of how ontologically the Roman Goddess of Care shaped Dasein’s being as

care. It is presented by a narrative of the ancient Latin author Gaius Julius Hyginus in an old fable as follows:

"Once when 'Care' was crossing a river, she saw some clay; she thoughtfully took up a piece and began to shape it. While she was meditating on what she had made, Jupiter came by. 'Care' asked him to give it spirit, and this he gladly granted. But when she wanted her name to be bestowed upon it, he forbade this, and demanded that it be given his name instead. While 'Care' and Jupiter were disputing, Earth arose and demanded that her name be conferred upon the creature, since she had furnished it with part of her body. They asked Saturn [Time] to be the arbiter and he made the following decision, which seemed a just one: 'Since you, Jupiter, have given its spirit, you shall receive that spirit at its death; and since you, Earth, have given its body, you shall receive its body. But since 'Care' first shaped this creature, she shall possess it as long as it lives. And because there is now a dispute among you as to its name, let it be called 'homo' for it is made out of humus (earth)."

The tale speaks of existence means to care for the other. It is the responsibility of every being to care for oneself, others, and the world. "Care is here seen as that to which human Dasein belongs for its lifetime" (Heidegger 1996). This is also recognition that Dasein's limited existence at some point will reach an end. However, this does not mean that Dasein's existence will only lead to anguish, instead it will project a life that is full of carefulness towards the self, others, and the world. "Ontically all the human being's behavior is "full of care" and guided by his "dedication" to something" (Heidegger 1996). A human being's action in its secondary quality is always in relation to something because according to Heidegger (1996) Dasein "cares for life."

The tale in relation to the teacher has the qualities of a Dasein in teaching. The teacher first must understand that his primary quality is care. As shown in the tale it was Cura who molded the clay, as such it is the quality of Cura that is first imbedded in the clay, thus a teacher cares first and foremost for the learner. The teacher, recognizing physical (earth) and spiritual development of learners helps them in their development. He cares for himself as an authority for the development of his learners (care for others). Finally, it is to value their lifetime that every life of the learner is something to be cared for (a teacher who cares for life).

Although testimonies are epistemic in nature, the researcher will present it in relation to Heidegger's idea of Care. Since testimonies are social care is evident. Both relate to the self and the recipient (other/learner). Testimonies are very common sources of knowledge, though many individuals are not aware of it as a source for knowledge. For example, in churches testimonies about God's graces would be given priests. Even in some congregations wherein members share their experiences. These are all testimonies. Moreover, in schools, teachers give testimonies in their own way as integrated in their methodology of teaching. They teach the lesson and add related experiences or rationality that would support such subject matter. For instance, when a teacher discusses a literary work, it would be at some point necessary for the teacher to present his personal experiences to justify an action in the said discussion of the literary work. Or he could rationalize to justify such actions. According to Coady (1973) "we rely upon testimony because we have each personally observed a correlation between expert (or authoritative) reports and the kinds of situations reported in a large number of cases."

However, why is it that some learners, be it at the church, community, group of friends, or in a classroom, have difficulty in understanding? There must be some conditions. Is it merely about being open? Is it about trusting the other?

First of all, testimonies are forms of sharing information with another, a passing of one's known information to the other. O'Brien (2006) states "information transfer is usually

accompanied by knowledge transfer." Heidegger puts it as "being-together-with." Since there is sharing of information there is care for the other.

Testimonies are previously acquired knowledge by a speaker passed to a listener. According to O'Brien (2006) "testimony cannot generate knowledge; it merely passes it from one person to another." For example, if person A experienced a certain C and when A meets person B and shared the experience C such experience is not considered new knowledge since A only shared what is already known by A. Another example, person A reads a novel C and shared such novel to person B. A is not giving out new information since C is available for B to be known. It just so-happen that A was able to share C before B can actually know it for himself. O'Brien (2006) states further "beliefs acquired via testimony may be secondhand - they are beliefs that have been passed on to you by someone else - but they are not second rate, and they may be on occasion amount to knowledge." Though testimonies do not generally generate knowledge, the information given must not be taken for granted since such testimonies can be cited as information that can also be shared in the future. And as a giver of testimony, one must accept such thrownness of situation, that the information that one has is actually not one's own information. This recognition is an authentic possibility of being. It is concerned about the possibilities of its recipients. "Dasein is a being which is concerned in its being about that being. The 'is concerned about...' has become clearer in the constitution of being of understanding as self-projective being toward its own most potentiality-for-being. (Heidegger, 1996) This potentiality is a possibility for authenticity.

### **Testimony of the Teacher**

The teacher is a source of development for the learners through information that they give. This information is given by means of testimonies either based on their personal experiences or learned from others. The authority of the teacher is his capability to impart knowledge to an acknowledging listener, which is the willingness of the listener to listen. According to Broncano (2012) "A condition for testimony to work adequately in this kind of context is that B conferred a certain kind of epistemic authority to A. In doing so, he recognizes himself as being dependent on the speaker." The listener trusts the testimony as there is a sense of dependency towards the speaker. Thus, every testimony of the teacher is an act of care since the learner is dependent on him. Every act of trust shown by the learner is a result of the care given by the teacher.

Since there is a built trust that the teacher and listener, social trust is formed. "The reason why trust is so central in the epistemology of testimony is that trust can be viewed as a very entrenched attitude in our lives." (Broncano 2012) Trust goes hand in hand with care. The care shown projected by the teacher is reciprocated by the trust shown by the learner. There is mutual understanding between the speaker and the listener both for the teacher and the listener vice versa. For example, as the teacher speaks the listener listens. On the other hand, if the learner asks a question the teacher responds to the question. There is reciprocity of actions. There is collaboration of trust given by the learner and care by the teacher. "Testimony takes part in the variegated forms of social cooperation which our collective life consists of; and as -cooperative acts." (Broncano 2012) Testimony is an act of the speaker to and for the learner. In addition, it is also an act of the learner as listener and as able to speak when necessary. Trust then must be present in the atmosphere of learning before any other connection can be made and through the care that the teacher implicates in all his actions makes trust possible. As a result, a bond is created.

## Conclusion

Testimonies are not harmful. It is very beneficial for learners, especially in the school setting. One only needs to listen and take note of what is being stated. However, it is also one of the most dangerous since one's testimony could be erroneous. Thus, one needs to have credibility in giving testimony. As a listener, one should be cautious of these errors.

The education laws are there to assist learners in checking the credibility of the teachers. On the other hand, teachers being qualified by the law are only a means to an end or more appropriate means to a journey. Either way the education laws that we have are guidelines, a basis in checking for qualification of schools to be able to function. As teachers continue to seek ways to make themselves credible to the learners. Teachers will also be affirming their authority in giving such testimony that is in its particular field. Thus, a partnership is but inevitable for both.

Finally, care as the primary quality of a teacher is always maintained. This is to ensure that the learning process is always for the development of the learner and the self. As a result, there will be no anxiousness among the learner, teacher, and the learning process.

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