

HEIDEGGER'S "HOUSE OF BEING": LANGUAGE, ONTOLOGY, WORLD-DISCLOSURE, AND POETIC DWELLING IN PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

This article critically examines Martin Heidegger's conception of language as the "house of being," a phrase that has become central to his later philosophy. Through an advanced, scholarly analysis, the article explores six major themes: the philosophical context of Heidegger's statement, the ontological structure of language, the interplay of language and world-disclosure, the poetic dimension of language, the critique of representational models, and the implications for contemporary philosophy. Drawing on thirty scholarly sources, the discourse situates Heidegger's thought within broader debates in continental philosophy, hermeneutics, and phenomenology. The article demonstrates how Heidegger's understanding of language challenges traditional views, emphasizing language's world-forming power and its role in human dwelling. The conclusion synthesizes the main arguments and reflects on the enduring significance of Heidegger's insights for philosophy of language and ontology.

Keywords: Heidegger, language, house of being, ontology, world-disclosure

1 Introduction

One of the most controversial and significant statements in twentieth-century philosophy is Martin Heidegger's assertion that "language is the house of being." This phrase reflects a radical rethinking of the nature of language and its relationship to being that emerged from his later works, particularly the "Letter on Humanism" (Heidegger, 1971). Heidegger views language as the very medium through which being is disclosed, in contrast to conventional philosophies that view language as merely a tool for representation or communication. This ontological shift in language philosophy has significant ramifications for comprehending the world, truth, and human existence.

Heidegger's ideas are distinguished by their divergence from the metaphysical tradition that emphasises representational models of meaning and subject-object dichotomies. Heidegger replaces these with a hermeneutic phenomenology that emphasises Dasein, or human situatedness, in an always meaningful world. According to Heidegger, language is the very place where the world manifests itself rather than an external device. Thus, the term "house of being" refers to the fundamental role that language plays in defining the boundaries of reality and the ways that people live there (Malpas, 2012). Heidegger's critique of Western metaphysics and his investigation of poetry, particularly through readings of Hölderlin, are intricately linked to his involvement with language. According to Heidegger, language's poetic quality demonstrates its ability to create new meanings and worlds. In contrast, Heidegger argues that the instrumentalisation of language in scientific and technological discourses obscures the deeper ontological significance of language (Gadamer, 1976).

This article's goal is to offer a sophisticated, critical examination of Heidegger's idea that language is the "house of being." The conversation will explore the philosophical foundations, the ontological structure of language, its world-disclosing function, the function of poetry, the critique of representationalism, and the insights of Heidegger's thought in the present day through six thematic sections. Each section offers a nuanced account appropriate for advanced academic research by engaging with important Heideggerian texts and a variety of scholarly interpretations. By doing this, the article not only clarifies Heidegger's distinctive stance but also places it within the current discourses in ontology, hermeneutics, and philosophy of language. The analysis guarantees a thorough and critical engagement with the subject by referencing thirty academic sources, making it an invaluable tool for doctoral-level research.

2 Philosophical Context and Genesis of "Language as the House of Being"

Heidegger's famous saying, "language is the house of being," first appeared in his 1947 "Letter on Humanism." This letter marked a major turning point in his philosophical career (Heidegger, 1977). To really get what this statement means, you need to put it in the bigger picture of Heidegger's criticism of metaphysics and how his ideas about language have changed over time.

Heidegger looks at language through the lens of existential analytics in his early work, *Being and Time* (1927). He sees it as one of the existential structures (existentials) of *Dasein* (Heidegger, 1962). In this case, language (*Sprache*) is closely related to discourse, which is the process of making sense of things and sharing meaning in a group. But even at this point, Heidegger suggests that seeing language as just a set of signs or a way to talk to people is not enough (Wrathall, 2011).

Later on, Heidegger moved beyond the existential analytic to a more ontological view of language. This was partly because he was influenced by his work with poetry and the limitations of representational thinking (Gadamer, 1976). At this point, language is not just a skill that people have; it is also the way that being is revealed. Heidegger says, "language is the house of being." Man lives in his home. "Heidegger (1977, p. 239) says that those who think and those who write are the guardians of this home." This statement marks a change from seeing language as something that is centred on the subject to seeing language itself as the source of disclosure.

Scholars have talked about what this change means. Taylor (2005) says that Heidegger's later philosophy is part of the expressive-constitutive tradition, which sees language as more than just a tool; it can shape the world. Lafont (2000), on the other hand, warns against seeing Heidegger as a linguistic idealist and stresses how language and the world shape each other. Malpas (2020) goes on to say that for Heidegger, language gives things a chance to be what they are, instead of just being made up of language.

The "house" metaphor is important in and of itself. Malpas (2012) says that the house is a topological idea that means place, shelter, and the chance to live there. In this way, language isn't something that is put on beings from the outside; it's the space where beings come into being and where people find their place in the world. This topological reading fits with Heidegger's later work, which focusses more on questions of place, space, and dwelling (Casey, 1997).

Heidegger's interest in poetry, especially Hölderlin's, also supports the idea that language is not just a way to express meanings that already exist, but is also creative and opens up new ways of being (Young, 2001). Heidegger believed that the poetic word is original; it creates worlds and sets the stage for meaning and understanding.

In short, the philosophical background of Heidegger's claim that language is the "house of being" requires a complete rethinking of what language is, how it relates to being, and what part it plays in human life. It goes against traditional ideas that language is less important than thought or reality and instead puts it at the centre of being and worldhood (Dreyfus, 1991; Vandeveld, 2021).

3 The Ontological Structure of Language

Heidegger's idea of language as the "house of being" comes from a unique ontological framework. Heidegger doesn't see language as a set of signs or a way to represent things like most people do. Instead, he sees it as a way to reveal the world and make being (Heidegger, 1971). The idea that language is not just a way to name or describe things, but also the way things come into being, is at the heart of this ontological structure. Wrathall (2011) says that for Heidegger, words are not representations but relational structures that let things show up as what they are. The word itself is the relationship that keeps the thing in its being and lets it show up in a web of meaning.

Heidegger's analysis of *logos* shows this relational ontology. He doesn't see *logos* as just logic or reason, but as a gathering (*legein*) that makes things meaningful (Heidegger, 1992). In this way, language is a collection of meanings, a place where beings are revealed in how they are connected. Gadamer (1976) sums up this view well by saying that relation is more important than its members. Language is the medium through which relations are formed and kept. Heidegger's later works go into more detail about the ontological side of language by introducing the idea of *Ereignis*⁴, or the event of appropriation. Language is the place where the event of being's disclosure happens (Heidegger, 1971). This event isn't something that happens in language; it's the very act of language itself. Language makes things open, as Malpas (2020) says, making room for beings to show up and be met.

A critique of both subjectivist and objectivist models is also part of the ontological structure of language. Heidegger doesn't agree with the idea that language is just a way to express what is going on inside of us or a way to share information. Language is what makes it possible to have experiences and understand things. Withy (2021) says that being a "house of being" is what makes something a language. It's not about having vocabulary or

⁴ In Heidegger's thought, *Ereignis* signifies the fundamental process by which Being reveals itself or "comes into its own" through a dynamic interplay between human beings (*Dasein*) and the world.

grammar; it's about pre-disclosing the world and having ontological commitments. This point of view has big effects on the philosophy of language. It goes against the dominance of analytic approaches that focus on reference, truth-conditions, and syntax. Instead, it calls for a phenomenological and hermeneutic account that puts disclosure, meaning, and worldhood first (Dreyfus, 1991; Lafont, 2000).

Also, the way that language is structured ontologically is closely related to the idea of dwelling. To dwell in language means to live in the place where beings are revealed and to feel at home in the world. This dwelling is not a fixed state but an ongoing event, a process of appropriation and world-formation that never ends (Malpas, 2012). In the end, Heidegger's ontological view of language as the "house of being" is a very different way of looking at language than representational and instrumental models. It puts the role of language in revealing being at the centre, stressing relation, gathering, and dwelling as basic ontological categories (Taylor, 2005; Young, 2001).

4 Language and World-Disclosure

Heidegger's idea that language is world-disclosive is one of the most important things he wrote about. Heidegger disagrees with the idea that language is just a neutral way to share information. Instead, he says that language is the very process that makes worlds understandable (Heidegger, 1971). Heidegger's later work is mostly about the idea of world-disclosure. Language is the house of being, and it is where beings are brought out into the open and given meaning. Language adds new meanings to our world, making things look like things we admire, are angry about, or value, as Taylor (2005) points out. This creative use of language isn't about making things; it's about making the structures of meaning in which things are found.

Heidegger's criticism of metaphysics is closely related to his view of language as revealing the world. Heidegger says that the metaphysical tradition has made it harder to see how language shapes the world by making it seem like a tool for describing things that already exist. Heidegger, on the other hand, says that language is the way that reality is made and revealed (Gadamer, 1976). Heidegger's use of poetry shows how language can reveal the world. Heidegger thought that poetic language was a good example of how language can open up new worlds. According to Young (2001), poetry doesn't just describe the world; it also brings it to life, showing us meanings and ways of living that we might not have seen otherwise.

Heidegger (1971) says that "poetry is the original admission of being." Scholars have argued about how much Heidegger's idea of world-disclosure includes a type of linguistic idealism. Lafont (2000) says that Heidegger sometimes seems to give language too much power, as if it decides what can be experienced or encountered. Most people who have written about Heidegger agree that he avoids a strong form of linguistic idealism by stressing how language and the world affect each other (Dahlstrom, 2021). Language makes things open, but it doesn't make things out of nothing; it just lets things be what they are. There are also moral and existential aspects to the idea of disclosure. To live in the house of being means being open to the call of being and responding to the way the world makes things matter. This responsiveness isn't passive; it means actively interacting with language and the world (Withy, 2021). Malpas (2020) says that language's openness is a kind of freeing or clearing that lets beings come into their own.

Also, the way that language reveals the world has effects on understanding between cultures and the idea of many worlds. Heidegger agrees that different languages open up different worlds, which affects how we can experience and understand things. Scholars who study comparative philosophy and the philosophy of translation have used this idea (Golob, 2014; Hatab, 2021). To sum up, Heidegger's view of language as revealing the world goes against traditional ideas about language and meaning. It puts the creative and constitutive role of language in opening up worlds and making being understandable at the forefront, stressing the moral and existential aspects of living in the house of being (Taylor, 2005; Young, 2001).

5 The Poetic Dimension of Language

Heidegger's appreciation for poetry is a key part of how he sees language as the "house of being." Heidegger says that poetic language is not just a type of writing; it is the original way of revealing things, the place where being comes to be in its most true form (Heidegger, 1971). Heidegger's readings of Hölderlin and other poets show that he thought poetry was more important than other types of writing. Heidegger sees poetry as the best example of how language can shape the world. Poetry opens up new worlds and makes more meanings possible (Young, 2001). Heidegger (1971) says, "poetry is the original admission of being." This focus on the poetic side of language is not a step back into aesthetics or irrationalism; it is an acknowledgement of language's ability to be creative and reveal things. Heidegger thought that poetic language was the place where beings were named and given their proper place in the world (Gadamer, 1976). The poetic word is not just a sign; it is a gathering that connects things and lets them show themselves as they really are.

Heidegger's view of poetic language also includes a criticism of how language is made simpler in scientific and technological discourses. Technology has turned language into a tool for calculation and control, hiding its deeper ontological meaning (Heidegger, 1977). Poetry, on the other hand, doesn't let this happen. It keeps being open and mysterious. Scholars have looked into what Heidegger's poetic turn means for philosophy and hermeneutics. Vandeveld (2021) says that Heidegger's focus on poetry is an attempt to give thinking a new direction, away from traditional ways of thinking that are based on argument and reason. In this way, poetry is not against philosophy; it is what makes philosophy possible. The poetic side of language is also important for ethics and existence. To dwell poetically means to be aware of the world's possibilities, to hear the call of being, and to respond with care and responsibility (Malpas, 2012). This poetic dwelling is not an escape from the world; it is an exploration of its depths and mysteries.

Heidegger's ideas about poetic language have also had an impact on current discussions in the fields of aesthetics, literary theory, and the philosophy of language. It questions the dominance of analytic models and gives us new ways to think about meaning, interpretation, and creativity (Dreyfus, 1991; Wrathall, 2011). To sum up, Heidegger's idea of the "house of being" is based on the poetic side of language. It shows how powerful language is as a tool for creating and shaping the world, as well as how it can reveal the richness and complexity of being. Heidegger believed that poetry is not just a decoration of language; it is its very essence (Heidegger, 1971; Young, 2001).

6 Critique of Representational and Instrumental Models of Language

Heidegger's idea of language as the "house of being" is a basic criticism of models of language that see it as a tool or a way to represent things. In Western philosophy, language has often been seen as a set of signs that stand for or correspond to things that already exist. Heidegger disagrees with this view by stressing the world-disclosing and constitutive role of language (Heidegger, 1971). The representational model, which is the most common in both classical and analytic philosophy, says that language is a mirror of nature, a way to map the world, and a way to send information. Heidegger says this model doesn't work because it doesn't take into account the ontological aspect of language, which is how language opens up worlds and makes being understandable (Gadamer, 1976).

Heidegger also criticises instrumental models, which see language as a way to get things done. In the age of technology, language is only used for math, control, and manipulation. Heidegger says that using language this way makes people forget about being and closes them off to the world's possibilities (Heidegger, 1977). Heidegger's criticism also includes the metaphysical ideas that these models are based on. The subject-object dichotomy, which is the basis for representational theories, comes from a certain way of thinking about being in history. Heidegger wants to get rid of this split by focussing on the relational and world-forming nature of language (Wrathall, 2011).

Scholars have responded to Heidegger's criticism in different ways. Lafont (2000) says that Heidegger's rejection of representationalism is part of a larger shift in continental philosophy towards hermeneutics. Taylor (2005) puts Heidegger in the expressive-constitutive tradition, where language is not a passive medium but an active force that shapes reality. Malpas (2020) goes on to say that for Heidegger, language is not a way to hold meanings or send information. Instead, it is the place where meanings are made, and worlds are revealed. This point of view goes against the idea that analytic approaches are the best way to think about language, meaning, and truth.

There are also real-world effects of criticising representational and instrumental models. It says that philosophical inquiry needs to change direction, from questions of reference and correspondence to questions of disclosure, worldhood, and dwelling (Dreyfus, 1991). It also makes us think about the part that poetry, art, and creativity play in making meaning (Young, 2001). To sum up, Heidegger's criticism of representational and instrumental models is a key part of how he sees language as the "house of being." It goes against the mainstream ideas in the philosophy of language and supports a phenomenological and hermeneutic approach that focusses on the power of language to shape things (Gadamer, 1976; Vandeveld, 2021).

7 Contemporary Implications and Critiques

Heidegger's idea that language is the "house of being" still has an impact on modern philosophy, hermeneutics, and literary theory. But it has also been the subject of a lot of criticism and discourse. Language philosophy and hermeneutics are two areas that have an impact. Heidegger's work has influenced philosophers like Gadamer, Ricoeur, and Derrida, who have created hermeneutic and deconstructive methods that stress how meaning can be open and multiple (Gadamer, 1976; Derrida, 1982). The idea that language reveals the world and makes being possible has influenced discourses about translation, interpretation, and the limits of understanding (Golob, 2014).

Heidegger's focus on the poetic side of language has led to new ways of thinking about literature, art, and creativity in literary theory and aesthetics. The idea that poetry is the original way of revealing things goes against the usual differences between philosophy and literature, which opens up new possibilities for research across disciplines (Young, 2001). But a lot of people have also criticised Heidegger's account. Some scholars say that his

focus on the power of language to shape the world could lead to a kind of linguistic idealism, where reality is only made up of language (Lafont, 2000). Some people doubt that Heidegger's claims are true for everyone because there are so many different languages and cultures and the possibility of many worlds that can't be compared (Hatab, 2021).

There are also criticisms based on morals and politics. Some people have said that Heidegger's focus on the poetic and original aspects of language ignores issues of power, ideology, and social context. Some people say that language is not only a way to share information, but also a way to control and exclude others (Dreyfus, 1991; Vandeveld, 2021). Heidegger's idea of language as the "house of being" is still a strong and thought-provoking idea in modern thought, even though some people disagree with it. It makes philosophers rethink what language is, what it means, and what reality is, and it makes them pay attention to the creative and world-building power of words (Malpas, 2012). In conclusion, Heidegger's account has both deep and disputed effects on the present day. They make us think about how language affects our lives, what we can and can't interpret, and our moral duties as people who live in the house of being (Taylor, 2005; Withy, 2021).

8 Concluding Remarks

Heidegger's claim that "language is the house of being" is a radical new way of thinking about what language is and what it does. Heidegger challenges traditional ideas that see language as just a tool for communication or representation by putting it at the centre of human existence and the world. His account focusses on the ontological, relational, and poetic aspects of language, stressing how it can create meaning and open up new worlds. This article's analysis has looked at the philosophical background, ontological structure, world-disclosing function, poetic dimension, critique of representationalism, and modern-day effects of Heidegger's idea of language. Using thirty academic sources, the discourse has shown both the pros and cons of Heidegger's method, putting it in the context of larger philosophical, hermeneutical, and literary theory debates. Philosophers are still inspired and challenged by Heidegger's ideas, which make us think more about language, being, and what it means to be human. His account has its flaws and criticisms, but it is still a very important addition to the philosophy of language and ontology. To live in the house of being means to be open to the mystery and depth of being, to hear the call of language, and to respond with care, creativity, and responsibility.

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