

these modes of becoming and of how they show themselves in the life-world? As a mode of becoming, *exploration* is understood as the child's initiative to go out to the world. From the beginning, the child has at his disposal the potentiality and the will to explore and to investigate the world. By exploring the world, the child proclaims his *wanting to be someone*; this is a positive sign that the child is becoming. Langeveld, who initiated this concept (*exploration*), sees it as a basic given in the psychic life of the child in so far as it is connected with his becoming. He says that the child only explores his world adequately if he experiences security and safety in the situation of education.

It is peculiar to the secure child that he *voyages in* his world, encounters things and people, actively enters into relationships with them, and gradually *learns to know* them. In this respect, the following statement by Langeveld is meaningful: "Child and world mean something for each other on condition that the child is active, goes out of himself, comes to the world — in short, if he explores it and experiences it."

How is exploring, as a mode of becoming, actualized? Without going into detail, it is clear that exploration cannot be thought of apart from the child's initiative to learn and that each moment of exploration, whether *willed* or *non-willed* (not purposeful), results in learning. This means that there is no exploration unless the child learns something, thus acquires definite knowledge of that which he explores and researches. In addition, exploration, as such, cannot be thought of occurring outside of the activity of learning since the child, when exploring the world, always becomes aware of something (sensing), perceives something, thinks about something, etc.

The quality as well as the separate modes by which he explores depend on the child's level of becoming in the sense that a young child has a preference for exploring his world bodily by means of touch, smell, taste, seeing, etc. The older child, already having such possessed experience at his disposal, explores his world more by thinking, comparing, analysing, and interpreting. There already exists a greater distance between the older child and his world than is the case with the younger child since the former has a larger and more comprehensive *possessed-experience or knowledge* at his disposal. However, a child does not only explore his world bodily or by thinking. A person is a totality and

explores his world as such; therefore, the above-mentioned differentiation must merely be seen as a shifting accent in his exploring, depending on the particular level of becoming on which he finds him-<sup>self</sup>

When a child manifests exploration, he already indicates his *emancipation* or initiative to be and to become more *independent* (Sonnekus). It is the aim of all upbringing to support the child in his exploring so he progressively becomes emancipated. As the child progresses on the way to adulthood, his level of becoming increasingly becomes more emancipated to a point in time when the adult's upbringing becomes superfluous. A child becomes emancipated to the extent that he learns to know and to possess reality. The educators must be inclined toward welcoming this emancipation because it is a positive sign of the child's progressive becoming adult.

Characteristic of the child's emancipation is the gradual *distan-tiation* which takes place, by which is meant the independent taking of a position toward the world around him. As the child grows older and learns more, his possessed experience (knowledge, skills, insights, etc.) increases qualitatively and quantitatively, and this offers the child the possibility to more objectively judge matters, relationships, codes of behaviour, norms and values.

*Distan-tiation* also takes place between the child and his educators and is a sign of the progressive detachment between educator and educand. This occurs, however, only on the basis of the experience of safety and security in the situation of upbringing and if this fails, *distan-tiation* likely will not take place.

This distancing, to which the child comes, is accompanied by a *differentiation* of the various potentialities of the child. From the beginning, the child lives in a profound relatedness with the world around him. Bollinger says that child and world form an inseparable unity. Though this unity is never broken, as the child becomes older, more flexible, and especially acquires language, this event of differentiation becomes more conspicuous and the child is presented as someone who himself more sharply analyses, makes finer distinctions, and maintains his own point of view on reality. This event of differentiation, which is especially discernible on an understanding (cognitive) level, according to Sonnekus, is a strong indication that the child is becoming a proper adult.



To finish the consideration of the question of where the change in the child's becoming is noticeable, we can see that it also is noticeable in the extent to which the child succeeds in *objectifying* reality. This means that the child, in his involvement with reality, must be able to distance himself and take an objective attitude which is directed at identifying and defining what really is concerning a particular matter or object. Objectification means the acquisition and cultivation of an objective relationship toward life (Sonnekus) without one's personal feelings being forced into the foreground. Van der Stoep says that the adult searches for these moments of objectification in the life of the child since objectivity is a condition for a detached judging of particular facets of reality with which a person (child) inevitably deals each day.

From the above discussion of the different modes of becoming by which the child's becoming different is evident, it should be clear that this change is not possible without learning, and it cannot be adequately actualized without education. Further, it can be accepted that these modes of becoming can be used by the educator, as well as by the scientist, as criteria to judge the progress the child is making toward becoming adult. This means that the modes of becoming can be used as psychopedagogic criteria and this makes it possible to judge the actualization of the psychic life of the child-in-education as this is manifested in his becoming and learning.

*Third question: How is the change in the child's becoming brought about?*

To this stage, the meaningful connections among education, becoming, and learning (all with a view to the child's becoming adult) have been discussed in terms of the essential role of affective, cognitive, and normative education. In addition, it was shown that change, as an essential of child becoming, is noticeable in the different modes of becoming which are based on upbringing, on the one hand, and on the child's learning activities on the other. *How* change is brought about was referred to only briefly.

It was stated above that a child can change only if he learns; the question now is, what does this involve? (Only some of the main points are mentioned here because learning is treated in greater detail in the next Chapter.)

As already mentioned, learning is an event which is actualized from the earliest moments of the child's existence. It is an action peculiar to humans and is actualized in an authentically human way. (This is not to deny the obvious fact that animals "learn". But they do not learn as humans do; there is a qualitative difference that cannot be ignored.) The activity of learning is actualized in different ways, which are known as *modes of learning*. In this respect, it must be mentioned that Sonnekus (*Die leerwêreld van die kind as belewingswêreld*, translated as *The learning child*) in 1968 already established a basis for understanding child learning in terms of different modes of learning. Sonnekus and his co-workers list the following modes of learning, among others: sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining, fantasizing, and remembering.

It must be stated that from the beginning of the child's existence these modes of learning form a meaningful unity which, when actualized, constitute the totality of the activity of learning. Because of the child's fundamental openness and directedness to the world, in his *going out* to the world (experiencing), he is continually *attending* to that which surrounds him. This attentive way (Van Niekerk) in which the child finds himself in the world makes it possible for him to distinguish between self and things as well as between self and other persons. In fact, this means a *sensing* of myself as a *first becoming aware* that I stand in relation to something other. Sensing, as the primary mode of *becoming aware* and *being aware* of things, matters, objects (learning content), persons, etc., is the foundation and *beginning* of all learning. As a mode of learning, sensing is primarily *fore-knowing* (pre-cognitive) in nature but it forms the basis on which all activities of knowing (learning) are built.

As the child is accompanied by the adult in his going out to the world by learning, depending on the safety and security which he *experiences* in the situation of education, a stable sensing is created which is the basis for real attending (Van Niekerk) and with this the child stands in a relationship of learning. When the child attends, he shows the *will to learn to know* things (learning content) as they are. Attending is a sharpening of the original intention to learn (sensing), and it is aimed at understanding and knowing the learning content. This intensification of sensing via attending enables the child to, e.g., *perceive, think, remember*,



the learning content on a more cognitive level. The *knowing-directed* modes of learning (perceiving, thinking, imagining, fantasizing, and remembering), which begin with sensing and are made possible by attending, provide the child with the possibility of learning to know and to possess reality. In this way the child not only comes to new knowledge but his existing possessed *experience* is continually broadened and deepened.

It is understandable that this expanding of the child's possessed experience, in and by which he continually *behaves differently*, is not possible without the educative instruction of the adult. The reason is that the structure of reality is immensely complicated and the content which lies at its basis is not always attainable or understandable without instruction. The home, the school, and others having to do with the child's upbringing and instruction, rightly, have the responsibility for unblocking the complexities of reality for the child. Although the child must himself learn, the attainment (possession) of life contents requires the adult's educative instruction. Thus, the child manages on the basis of the fact that he learns, but this changing or becoming continually remains the task of education for all adults.

In accordance with the particular meaningful connections among upbringing, becoming, and learning, as these were discussed with respect to the above three questions, we will return to the basic psychopedagogic question, namely, *how are becoming and learning*, as modes of manifestation of the psychic life of the child-in-education, *actualized in particular*? In other words, what lies at the basis of the child's modes of becoming and learning, and, finally, by what means is their actualization made possible?

As already mentioned, this actualization happens by means of the fact that the child *experiences* and, in a *willed* manner gives sense and meaning to his experiences, that is, he *lived-experiences* reality. In this way, the child obtains *knowledge*, masters certain skills, etc. all of which make it possible for him increasingly to *behave* as an adult.

Before we take a further look at how the psychic life of the child-in-education is actualized by experiencing, willing, lived-experiencing, knowing, and behaving (here used as psychopedagogic categories or essences), it is necessary once again to keep the following facts in mind:

- As far as its structure is concerned, the psychic life is a totality, and it is actualized as a totality by the child in his relation to reality;
- *Becoming* and *learning* are the *modes of manifestation* of the psychic life of the child-in-education;
- Experiencing, willing, lived-experiencing, knowing, and behaving are *essences* of the psychic life of the child by which his becoming and learning are *actualized*;
- Because the *structure* of the psychic life is a *totality*, the above-mentioned essences can only be distinguished but not separated from each other; consequently, it is necessary to talk about *essential meaning-connections* among the differentiated structures;
- The actualization of the child's becoming and learning takes place within the framework of the *situation of upbringing*;
- When the essences experiencing, willing, etc., are used to elucidate and describe the *actualization* of the child's becoming and learning, they are used as *psychopedagogic categories*.

## 2.2 The essences of the psychic life as psychopedagogic categories

### 2.2.1 *Experiencing as a psychopedagogic category*

#### 2.2.1.1 CLARIFICATION OF THE CONCEPT

In exploring the etymological basis of the word experiencing, we see that in German this word comes from "fahren" which means "to go" or "to be in motion" and in this motion "to reach" something.

The prefix "ex" in "experience" means "to undergo something". Further, the verb "experiencing" ("erfahren") means *to come to know something, to learn to know, to become aware and to feel something*.

Bollnow also asserts that experiencing comes from the word "fahren" which in everyday colloquial speech previously meant that one moves around in space.

The prefix "ex" in experience has the meaning that something is *reached or encountered* in the moving. In this encounter there is something *learnable* for the person, he *learns to know* that which he reaches. Important in this respect, Bollnow says, is the *personal going to things, the self-involvement with the things of*



which he becomes aware. What a person experiences by means of a story or through the medium of a newspaper, does not have the same impact as does being there oneself. It requires a personal *taking part, effort, difficult work*, etc. Consequently, it is obvious that a person benefits little by someone else's experiencing; he must himself experience and by this experiencing, *learn*.

#### 2.2.1.2 Some essential characteristics of child experiencing

When one begins from the standpoint that child experiencing is an authentically human phenomenon which arises in the child's relationship to his world, it is important from a psychopedagogic point of view to keep in mind the following essential characteristics of experiencing:

**2.2.1.2.1** Experiencing is essentially the way by which the child's openness-for and being-directed-to (intentionally) reality are actualized;

**2.2.1.2.2** Experiencing lays the foundation for a person's (child's) establishing relationships with fellow-persons and things in the life-world;

**2.2.1.2.3** Experiencing means a *moving to*, a going into or entering reality. By the act of experiencing, the child becomes involved with reality and the whole of the child's psychic life comes into motion. As an example, from the beginning, the child is busy creating a world for himself by his bodily movements. Bodily movements such as touching, grasping, reaching, feeling, seeing, etc. all are ways of moving by which the child experiences his world. The child not only goes to but *under-goes*, that is, the child is also influenced by the world around him.

**2.2.1.2.4** Experiencing implies *activity*, and thus an action which says something about the child's *willingness* to do something, to handle things, to learn, to investigate, to explore, to make choices, etc. As an experiencing child, he is someone who learns and, on the basis of these experiencing-learning activities, is continually advancing the actualization of his becoming.

**2.2.1.2.5** Experiencing means *reaching* reality. This reaching contains a *first acquaintance* with reality which forms the basis for an eventual understanding of it. So, the child not only

reaches reality on a concrete level by touching, tasting, smelling, hearing, or seeing but also reaches it by perceiving, thinking, imagining, etc. by which real knowledge is obtained.

**2.2.1.2.6** Experiencing is also recognizable by the fact that it is a *willed* action. When the child experiences, there exists the *intention* to "steal" reality. This disposes the coming into motion of different aspects of the psychic life of the child such as sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, etc. in and by which the child's grip on reality is strengthened. This implies that the child explores the world, that he distantiates himself from it, objectifies it and eventually emancipates himself.

**2.2.1.2.7** Experiencing is also essentially orientation which, according to Van der Stoep, means defining "your own place" in terms of given landmarks. It is a known fact that human bodiliness is the medium by which a person communicates with the world and, as such, it forms the centre of orientation. Merleau-Ponty says my body involves me in the world. In and by bodiliness, the child experiences things and others in his world, and it forms the "instrument" of experiencing. Child orientation shows this in that something is experienced as near, far, behind, in front, above, under, left, right, ... etc. depending on the position of the body in space, now viewed as the centre of orientation for experiencing and lived-experiencing. On the other hand, there is mention that the child in his bodily being involved with things, especially via senso-motor modes of experiencing such as touching, grasping, feeling, and tasting, comes to the knowledge, for example, that something is warm or cold, rough or smooth, large or small, bitter or sweet in the light of which he becomes oriented. As an essence of orientation, child experiencing shows that an active self-involvement is required by which reality gradually displays a particular relief (i.e., certain things, etc. stand out against a background). Such orientation, however, first attains a real cognitive flavour as soon as the child acquires language, since language, in this respect, is the means for ordering, distantiating, and objectifying.

**2.2.1.2.8** Experiencing also means learning to know. All experiencing leads to knowledge which varies from a pre-conceptual or intuitive knowing (Sommerkus), built upon an attunement to things and a trust that they are as they are immediately