

# CHAPTER III CHILDLIKE LEARNING\*

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## 1. INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

## 2. PSYCHOLOGICAL VIEWS OF LEARNING: AN EXEMPLARY ORIENTATION

## 3. CHILDLIKE LEARNING: A PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

### 3.1 Childlike learning: a genuinely human phenomenon

In searching for the foundations or origins of a child's learning, authors such as Guyer, Hillebrand, Bollinger, Sonnekus and others point out that learning is a *way* in which a child, as a *person*, *finds himself in the world*. As an original way of human living, it is a *potentiality* that is given with being a child. He learns because he is a human being and *as a human being* does. Thus, a child learning is reduced to the fact that he is an *openness-for* and *directedness-to* the world (intentionality). Learning is a phenomenon of intentionality in a child that reveals itself from the beginning as a genuine childlike way of living. In the original and everyday relationship to the world a child directs himself in his *openness* to fellow humans and things surrounding him. In this way he not only discovers

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himself in the world, but also undergoes or *experiences* it or someone as not himself. Such “self-and world-discovery” that also plays out in the earlier moments of a childlike existence are indicative of his possibility or potentiality to learn.

Langeveld, who has done pioneering work in establishing a near-to-life child anthropology\*, indicates that a child is someone who wants to be and to become *someone himself*. This is the basis on which child learning and the impetus for his *willingness* to learn rests.

As an initiative-of-relationships (Buytendijk), the origin of the learning phenomenon, thus, is given with being a child. However, this initiative to learn implies effort in that he wants to actualize it. Learning has a task character requiring active participation in what he is in a learning relationship with. According to Langeveld, a child has the task of overcoming his given helplessness in order to attain the security that provides him with a willingness to participate in the world emotionally. His becoming, as realized by means of the moments of helplessness, security and exploration (Langeveld) is rooted in his willingness to become and to learn and also on a stable, trusting educative relationship between adult and child. To be a child, and in time become an adult, requires sustained educative support in that he cannot properly learn or become without adult accompaniment.

A child actualizing learning, although situated in his initiative itself and made possible by his given learning potential, presents a task for educating. An educator, who

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\* Child anthropology studies the real essence of a child as a human being in relationship to the world.

can vary from a parent at home to a teaching in school, notices his willingness to learn and thus addresses an appeal to a him in his educative teaching, whether it is spontaneous, deliberate or more formal (school), precisely because of a child's potential to learn he anticipates that he will actualize his becoming adult; thus, education, becoming and learning are basic givens in his life and are the foundation for his becoming adult.

To elucidate the original phenomenon of child learning further it is necessary to attend to the fact that a child's involvement in the world always takes its course from a *situation*. He learns because he participates in his situation (Langeveld). In Linschoten's terminology, a situation is the totality of related data to which there must be an action. A child acts when he learns in that, in his openness, he directs himself to the situational data that speak to him by *attributing sense and meaning* to them. This act of giving meaning to an object of learning or to learning material that he *experiences* in a situation is evidence of his *willingness* to learn to acquire a grasp of it. Preeminently, learning is a child's *taking a personal position* as a *totality-in-function* directed to exploring, acquiring and mastering reality. It is aimed at discovering meaning, exposing the meaning that reality itself possesses and through which reality acquires *meaning for me*. Thus, each child shows a given intention to learn. In this way he proclaims his openness and gives concrete form to the fact that he is on his way, someone who *accepts co-responsibility* for actualizing his becoming and learning.

Bollinger also typifies learning as a *phenomenon of becoming* in as much as a child might not *change* properly if he does not *learn* (my italics).

As mentioned, it is indisputable that *adequate* change in a child is brought about through *educating*. Becoming as changing that occurs in a child's life can be understood best if it is interpreted within the context of *double unlocking* (Klafki). To be able to become, a child must unlock himself for reality and, in his turn, an adult must unlock reality for a child. In other words, a child realizes his becoming to the extent that he unlocks himself to reality, but this only can be realized adequately if an adult accompanies him through his teaching. If a child succeeds in making the unlocked reality his own, his change regarding it becomes noticeable in that increasingly he *behaves* like an adult.

The following is a summary of some essential moments of childlike learning, as a genuine human phenomenon:

3.1.1 Childlike learning is an original mode of living by which he finds himself as a human being in the world.

3.1.2 Learning is a phenomenon that confirms his openness-for and being directed-to reality (intentionality).

3.1.3 A child's learning act is rooted in his wanting to be someone himself.

3.1.4 Learning is a human potentiality that a child must actualize continually.

3.1.5 Childlike learning is taking a personal position as a totality-in-function.

3.1.6 As actualized by a child, learning is a matter of meaning-discovery and meaning-attribution.

3.1.7 Basically learning is a phenomenon of becoming because a child's willingness to learn also is a willingness to become. Changing, an essence of becoming, is possible in that a child learns.

3.1.8 Learning has its origin in a child's own initiative but he always is dependent on educating (upbringing) for its proper actualization. Without educating, he cannot learn as he should and thus also not become as he should. The meaning of actualizing learning resides in his becoming a proper adult.

In light of the above brief grounding of learning, the question arises of what this means psychopedagogically.

## 3.2 Learning as a way in which a child-in-education's psychic life is manifested

In chapter II it has been shown that becoming and learning are the two ways in which the psychic life of a child in a situation of educating is manifested, that they are equi-primordially given with his psychic life, and that *he becomes as he learns and learns as he becomes*. Thus, to become adult, he must learn and his initiative to learn do this resides in his wanting to grow up.

Since becoming as a way in which a child's psychic life is manifested is discussed in Chapter IV, in the following exposition, we concentrate mainly on learning.

Although a distinction is made between becoming and learning for the purpose of scientific description, it continually must be kept in mind that in their origin and actualization they form a unity in his psychic life. Therefore, during the following exposition of learning, its coherence with becoming necessarily is mentioned.

### 3.2.1 *A child himself learns*

As a child-in-education's particular *way of living*, learning is manifested as a *potentiality* given with his psychic life. For this reason, learning is qualified as a manifestation of his it. However, this potentiality requires a task of actualization. To be able to learn he must *actualize* his learning potentialities. This includes an active participation in the event of learning by a child himself and is a concrete manifestation of his *initiative to learn*. On the other hand, he is dependent on an adult's educative assistance for the adequate actualization of his learning potentialities. An adult appeals to him to learn and also accompanies him in this actualization. That is, effective learning rests both on his participation in and an adult's (parent or teacher) support-giving teaching.

A child's openness for and directedness to the world are reflected in his original learning relationship with reality. But, what is the foundation of this original learning activity? That is, what carries his learning activity in actualizing his initiative to learn? From a psychopedagogical perspective, from the beginning a child learns by actualizing the different essences of his psychic life, i.e., *experiencing, willing, lived-experiencing, knowing and behaving*. To the extent that these essences are

actualized, it I said that a child's learning activity comes into motion and is actualized.

First, to take a closer look at a child *himself* actualizing his learning, it is important to keep in mind the following coherent moments of the *course of learning*: when he learns he *experiences* reality in the sense that he is involved with learning material, etc. In this experiencing he not only is *aware* of himself but especially that with which he has a *learning relationship*. This motivates several *modes* in his psychic life such as sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining, fantasizing and remembering.

In the first place, to really experience means to *be or to become aware* of what I am in contact. Such an awareness of learning content, indeed, is a *sensing* of it. Depending on the degree to which a child's emotional life is *stable* (by means of a feeling of safety, security, self-confidence, etc) sensing *something* such as learning content, a particular object or a fellow person appearing in his field of vision can be sharpened to an *attending* whereby a child purposefully perceives, thinks, remembers, etc. That is, a stable sensing, which is strongly *emotional* in nature, makes it possible for him to give *attention* to something. This enables him to know and eventually possess the learning content on a *knowing* or *cognitive level* by perceiving, thinking, remembering, etc.

However, experiencing reality, especially during learning, also is propelled by a child's *willingness* to learn. He only learns adequately if he shows the will to do so. This *willpower* or *strength* supports him in experiencing

effectively, and this implies that it determines the quality of his experience of learning material.

If his willing is weak, his readiness to stay involved with the content and thus paying attention to it also is weakened. This leads to his emotions stagnating on the level of sensing because his attending fluctuates, interest fades, concentrating is inadequate, and more. In this respect, we are talking about *emotional lability* in his sensing that results in ineffective learning. A stable sensing, the result of a stability in his emotional life (free of tension, feeling secure, self-confident, calm, under control, etc.) and is the foundation for effective learning. Thus, his *willingness* to learn is defined by his emotional (affective) life means lived experiencing security, certainty, trust, etc. and this is the basis for a stable sensing as well as for effective learning. In contrast to this, labile sensing is characterized by “unrest” or problems in his emotional life by which the course of learning is impeded or even miscarries.

When a child’s emotions are stable, he can attend and direct himself cognitively to the learning material by perceiving it, thinking about it, analyzing it, ordering it, and finally integrating it (via remembering) into his existing knowledge or *posses experience*. Such making the learning content “one’s own” by a child means that he not only lived-experiences this content as meaningful but that he also invests it with meaning. It follows logically that that if his emotional lived experiencing is *stable*, his knowing lived experiencing via perceiving, thinking etc. is ordered and he lived experiences the totality of the learning event as meaningful; it also means that his



willingness to get the learning content under control will be strengthened increasingly.

When experiencing the learning content from the level of sensing via attending to actualizing the cognitive modes of learning, a child *lived experiences* the *experienced content*. That is, he gives *meaning* to what is experienced as learning content on an emotional as well as a knowing level. He lived experiences meaning in the experienced content and becomes emotionally prepared to venture, explore and learn to *know* and to remain knowingly or cognitively with the content. This meaning then “congeals”, as it were, in his lived experiencing of it by giving personal meaning to the content. He lived experiences it as valuable, serviceable, useful, interesting, or as senseless (e.g., too difficult, above one’s ability, of little meaning, etc.) and the sedimentation of these positive and/or negative meanings become integrated into his existing possessed experience. His possessed experience, in so far as these meanings are relevant to the current learning, include both the *positive* and *negative* lived experienced means of the learning event. Consequently, a child who achieves adequately in school generally has invested his learning activities (experiences) with positive meaning, although it can happen that periodically he lived experiences certain learning situations (content) as less meaningful. In contrast, a child with learning problems is someone who experiences problems in a learning situation, these experiences are invested with negative meaning (lived experiences), and he gets bogged down in the learning situation. As his sensing becomes labilized, he finds it difficult to *attend* effectively, and he is unable to adequately perceive, think and remember in his directedness to the learning material.

Thus, a child really learns only to the extent that he succeeds in learning to *know* the learning material on a cognitive level.

To *know* the learning material assumes that a child actualize his knowing modes of learning (perceiving, thinking, etc.) that make it possible for him, in ordered ways, to analyze, to think about, to synthesize, to structure and eventually to integrate the meaningful content into his existing possessed experience. Such *knowledge* of the content, however, always rests on a stable sensing and adequate attending, both of which accompany his effective learning.

When a child knows the learning content he not only possesses a specific piece of material, but now is able to use and employ this knowledge and (skills) in other learning (life) situations. He newly acquired knowledge becomes meaningfully integrated into his existing possessed experience, is empowered to continually *behave* differently. As he learns more, his possessed experience is broadened and his *behaviors* in school, at home or wherever he might be are more autonomous, responsible and of greater mobility in different spheres.

By learning, a child continually changes his *behaviors* in the direction of a more adult way of living. However, the totality of the activity of learning is carried by the fact that he *experiences, wills, lived experiences* and learns to *know*, each of which, separately and as a unity, is discernable in the ways he *behaves* in a learning situation. His actualization of these essences of his psychic life, seen in their particular coherences, is visible as particular *behaviors* and this actualization forms the basis for

changing his behaving to a more adult way of living. The *course of learning* is made possible because he is experiencing-ly, willing-ly, lived experiencing-ly and knowing-ly in a learning situation; this is actualized by the modes of learning (sensing, attending, perceiving, etc.), and is reflected concretely by his present and future behaviors. This means that his modes of living *change* such that he increasingly *becomes* more adult. His behaving shows a progressive obedience to the requirements of *propriety* peculiar to the world of an adult [in a particular societal context].

Since the above has considered only how learning, as a mode by which a child's psychic life-in-education is actualized and takes its course, especially in terms of a child's share in this, it is necessary to attend to an adult accompanying a child [in this learning].

### **3.2.2 An adult accompanies a learning child-in-education**

Educating, as an inter-human event between an adult and a child who is becoming adult, manifests itself as accompaniment. A grown-up's task of educating is to accompany a child from the beginning of his life until adulthood. This accompaniment received by a child while learning is recognizable in an adult teaching him. Van der Stoep says, "Educating is realized in teaching and the meaning of teaching is rooted in educating". Langeveld's statement that a child only becomes properly human if he is brought up means, in light of Van der Stoep's statement, that a child's properly becoming adult now is intertwined with the teaching he receives from the beginning.

Educating is realized hand-in-hand with content, and it is an adult's task to place this content within a child's reach by means of his teaching. To become adult, a child must learn this content and make it a part of his possessed experience.

Such content appears on a child's path as knowledge, norms, values behavior codes, skills, etc. and this requires the effort of both adult and child for it to be learned. An adult must unlock the content for a child, while a child must learn it. Although he has the potential to learn, for its proper actualization he must be accompanied by an educator (parent, teacher, etc.). Educating is necessary for the proper actualization of his psychic life and the significance of this is that it leads eventually to a him becoming an adult.

From a psychopedagogical perspective, the question now arises "how must an adult accompany a learning child such that he is assisted effectively to adulthood?" An answer is in the already mentioned differentiated modes of educating/accompanying, namely, emotional (affective), a knowing (cognitive) and a normative (meaning giving) educating or accompanying.

Rienstra says that effective educating rests largely on a climate of warmth, intimacy, affection, trust and authority. A child needs a secure and safe space from which he can go out to the world and explore it. His lived experiencing of safety is supported by such a safe and intimate milieu of educating (teaching), and the emotional educating he receives is the direct outcome of this. When he is adequately supported emotionally, he is prepared to venture into an alluring, strange, sometimes threatening

world. The concrete manifestation of this venturing relationship is seen in his wanting to learn and to become grown-up.

An adult's task is to affectively accompany a child so that he is prepared to "navigate" in the world, to learn to know and give meaning to it. A stable educative situation, whether at home or in school) is a condition for effective learning. To the extent that a parent or teacher succeeds in stabilizing his emotional lived experiencing, adequate learning can occur. A stable sensing, which is both the basis for and the onset of all learning, is inseparably connected with an adult's affective accompaniment. Mutual trust, consistent authority, affection for and understanding the child-ness of a child are the pillars on which a healthy emotional life rests. This provides a child with the *will to experience* his world (learn content), learn to know it and lived experience it by giving meaning to it himself. A stable sensing makes it possible for him to pay attention to the learning content, and attending is a condition for eventually possessing it cognitively.

The complexity of an adult lifeworld and the content at its base simply are not accessible to a child. Hence, teaching is required to unlock and clarify this content for him. To encounter a child in his willingness-to-know and to understand, an adult must accompany him knowingly or cognitively. As he experiences reality many questions arise and an adult has the task of answering them. The meaning he gives to the content of the lifeworld largely is supported by the way(s) in which an adult succeeds in laying open this meaning for him. This especially is valid for acquiring a cognitive grasp of it. By teaching, an adult

continually directs a child's *attention* to the meaningfulness of the learning content. This implies that while cognitively accompanying him, he appeals to a child to perceive, to analyze, to think, to order, to remember and eventually to integrate the meaning of this content into his possessed experience.

It is important to keep in mind that an adult's success cognitive accompaniment is supported greatly by the extent to which he succeeds in adequately accompanying a child affectively, i.e., in stabilizing him affectively. Both the affective and cognitive modes of accompaniment not only support a child to learn *successfully*, but, at the same time, they are ways of helping a child interact with the learning content in order to receive meaning from as well as give meaning to it. Mastering this content has moments of knowing, understanding, grasping, insight and remembering that are the basis for his future learning. The cumulative effect that the meaning-filled content has and that becomes embodied in his possessed experience is the source from which he draws each time he is confronted with new learning content. By means of the different mode of accompanying, an adult unlocks the meaning of the content to which a child gives meaning, and the result of this is observable in his behaviors.

From the above brief comments, it is clear that educating as accompanying form the necessary obverse side of a child's [self-] learning and [self-] becoming. Thus, he learns because of his learning potentialities that are given with his psychic life-in-education, but for self-learning and self-becoming, he is continually dependent on an adult's educative teaching that effectively actualizes his learning and becoming on affective, cognitive and normative levels.

So far the argument has been directed mainly to the fundamental bases of learning as ways in which the psychic life of a child-in-education are manifested. It is stated clearly that child learning is possible on the basis of the essentials given in his psychic life, i.e., experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and behaving. Although already mentioned, it is necessary to clarify further the different modes of learning in order not only to decide what each essentially is and contains, but also to see how they, in their inseparable interwoven-ness, constitute the totality of a child's learning event.

### 3. CHILDLIKE MODES OF LEARNING

In order to show the coherence between the essences of a child's psychic life (i.e., experiencing, willing, etc.) and the modes of learning, it is necessary to point out that the psychic life functions as a unity. In a child's relating to the world, his psychic life is actualized as a totality. Thus when he experiences reality, especially in so far as he learns, he senses it. That is, he is *aware* and *becomes aware* of the material that must be learned. If his emotional life is stable, he pays attention to the learning material with which he is concerned (experiences) and he comes to know it on a cognitive level by perceiving it, thinking about it, by remembering it, etc. Thus, the modes of learning are means by which and through which he experiences the learning material and learns to know it.

At the same time, a child's *willingness* to learn is observable as his initial sensing proceeds to attending and this makes it possible for him to effectively perceive, to thinking-ly gain insight into the learning material and

eventually to remember it. Thus, a child's willingness is observable in his actualization of the modes of learning. On the other hand, the level on which they are actualized also is an indication of his willpower. If his it is weak, an effective actualization of the modes of learning is unlikely while, in contrast, a strong willpower makes this possible.

As a child *experiences* learning material and *will* learn it, he also is involved in giving it sense and meaning (i.e., *lived experiencing* it). Sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, etc. are not the only ways in which a child reveals his willingness to learn, but he also shows this in the ways he gives sense and meaning to (lived experiences) the learning material. This lived experiencing of sense and meaning primarily is pathic/affective (emotional), on the level of sensing and, to the extent that his sensing is stable, he proceeds via attending to a gnostic/cognitive level of perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing as well as remembering.

Knowledge, as the outcome of all learning, also assumes that a child comes to *know* and master the material. Now the question is how he learns to know it. He learns to know the material by first sensing it. Sensing provides him with the foundation on which all knowing rests. Even though "knowledge" on this level is vague, unstructured and without detail, and even though there is little understanding and insight, it is the "birth" of all knowing. Sensing *initiates true* learning to *know* the material which, via attending, first is actualized on the level of the cognitive modes of learning such as perceiving and thinking. Thus, objective knowledge is the outcome of actualizing the modes of learning from sensing via



attending to and with the cognitive modes of learning where a child becomes aware, understands, grasps and remembers. He thus learns to *know* the learning material via actualizing the *modes of learning*.

To the extent that, via the modes of learning, he *experiences* the learning material, *will know* it and give meaning to it (*lived experience* it), he also is expressing the fact that he *behaves* in a particular way in a learning situation. The modes of learning also are modes of behaving by means of and through which he expresses his initiative to learn. A nice example of this is that a child who is motivated to learn *behaves* decisively in a learning situation. Consequently, his learning is goal-directed and this implies that he is actualizing the different modes of learning effectively.

In summary, this means a child finds himself in a learning situation as a totality-in-function and he actualizes his psychic life accordingly.

Before turning to the modes of learning, as such, it is emphasized that the event of learning takes a unitary course. Because the actualization of the different modes of learning form a definite course, they should not be thought of as being actualized apart from each other. This must be kept in mind when, below, we discuss the modes of learning separately. Gradually it will become clear that they are only distinguishable from each other and each one constantly intersects, supplements and predisposes the others.

### **3.1 Accompanying [concomitant] modes of learning**

### 3.1.1 Sensing

From a learning point of view, sensing is the *beginning* or *onset* of all learning. Thus, Sonnekus and Van Niekerk correctly qualify sensing as the mode of learning that precedes or *initiates* all learning. From the beginning, a child has the initiative to learn (learning intention), but this initiative contains the possibility to learn that first becomes actualized only when he senses something. Sensing is an initial becoming aware of the learning content with which he is concerned. Thus, content exists only in so far as he senses. A bare beginning or becoming aware of content, however, means that he does not yet know or understand. Hence, essentially sensing is foreknowledge (pre-cognitive) which means that he merely has a vague “knowing”, not yet a real knowing or understanding. On this level, knowing still is intuitive, vague, diffuse and unstructured. Even so, sensing not only contains the possibility that eventually he will comprehend or understand, but in reality, it is the precondition for actualizing that possibility. Consequently, sensing is the onset or beginning of all learning and provides the foundation for all gnostic/cognitive (knowing) learning.

Secondly, a stable sensing always *accompanies* or *escorts* a child’s learning on all levels of its course; therefore, sensing also is labeled as an accompanying/concomitant mode of learning (Sonnekus, Van Niekerk). A stable sensing is the outcome of a stable (restrained, calm, controlled) emotional life and is the basic precondition for effective learning. Without a stable sensing, a child’s learning cannot take an effective course or be effectively

actualized. In contrast, symptoms of a labile sensing are feelings of anxiety, tension, uncertainty, frustration, etc. that have the effect that a child cannot learn as he should be able to. Such sensing interferes with attending (concentrating) and thus hinders adequate perceiving, thinking, remembering, etc. Hence, sensing can either contribute to the promotion or to the failure of the course of learning. Hence, one can deduce that although sensing is essential for all learning, each child senses differently because of the uniqueness of his being a person.

The nature or structure of a child's sensing while he learns can be influenced by his personal situation, his potentialities, the quality of his interpersonal relationships at home and in school, etc. A child continually gives meaning to all facets of his existence and to the extent that this meaning is favorable or unfavorable, it can stabilize or labilize his sensing [via the resulting quality of his emotional life].

At this stage it ought to be clear that sensing primarily is actualized on a pathic/affective (emotional) level, and because of its particular nature, it forms the warp and woof of the further course of learning on a gnostic/cognitive level. Thus, sensing not only initiates all learning but it also continually accompanies [is concomitant with] learning on a knowing or cognitive level.

A child's experiencing, the structure of his willing, the extent to which he lived experiences sense and meaning, the quality of his activities of knowing as well as his behaviors thus are discernible and evident in the way(s) he finds himself as a sensing child in a learning situation.

Moreover, because of the particular nature of sensing as a mode of learning, it is important to consider a few modalities or essential categories of it that already have been referred to briefly. Here the aim is to illustrate concisely the nature, structure and level on which sensing, as a mode of learning, is actualized.

The following modalities are distinguished:

**a. Sensing is the beginning of all learning**

As the beginning or onset of all learning, it initiates it. A child becomes involved with what he will learn because he senses it.

**b. Sensing accompanies [is concomitant with] all learning**

A stable sensing accompanies learning to a knowing or gnostic/cognitive level. To effectively attend, perceive, think, etc. always presupposes a stable sensing.

**c. Sensing is premediated with the emotional (the pathic/affective)**

Stability, calm, certainty, control and level-headedness in his emotional life stabilizes sensing, while anxiety, tension, uncertainty, confused educational and interpersonal relationships, frustrations, etc. destabilize it. Sensing is subjective and always is *my* unique sensing.

**d. Sensing is pre-cognitive**

This means that sensing does not result in real or objective knowledge but is on a level of pre-knowing. This “knowing” is very subjective, vague, diffuse, unstructured, intuitive and unordered. As the first concerned involvement and being conscious of something (content),

it is the base on which all knowing, structuring, ordering, etc. is built. Understanding and insight on a gnostic/cognitive level, therefore, only are an extension of what a child initially senses. In this light, sensing is the “birth” of all knowledge.

**e. Sensing is time-space bound**

Erwin Straus and Sonnekus, who each have made an extensive study of sensing as a mode of living and learning, stress its time-space nature. Child modes of living such as touching, smelling, tasting, hearing and seeing are concrete sensory, in their totality become sedimented as a unity in sensing as a mode of learning and indicate this being time-space bound as a matter of “here-and-now”. Consequently, a child has a wealth of sensations (positive and negative) that he builds up with the passage of time also builds up within a definite space or spaces (house, school, church, society, etc.), the effects of which are evident in his learning activities.

This time-space nature peculiar to sensing also means that it takes place on a concrete level, especially with a younger child, and has far-reaching consequence for his learning.

**f. Sensing is preponderantly subjective**

It is stressed once again that each child’s sensing is unique in that it is a way by which he gives personal meaning to all with which he has a concerned involvement. A child’s (person’s) mostly is a-rational and not always explainable. Thus, he gives a unique meaning to the learning event and this especially is evident on the level of sensing.

In conclusion, it is necessary to heed that the different modes of sensing are actualized as a unity in the act of sensing. Finally, in so far as it is a mode of learning, sensing is inseparably connected with the further course of learning, i.e., with all of the other modes of learning.

### *3.1.2 Attending*

Van Niekerk views attending as an important precondition for all Gnostic/cognitive learning. A child only can learn adequately, i.e., really learn or know the material, by attending. This mode of learning accompanies and escorts all cognitive learning (knowing).

The effective actualization of the knowing modes of learning, i.e., perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing, as well as remembering, is determined by the extent to which a child succeeds in attending to [the content to be learned]. Without attending, an effective actualization of the cognitive modes of learning is not possible and, necessarily, the learning effect also will be delayed.

Where sensing is the *first* concerned involvement with the content, attending is a readiness to *remain* concerned. The original intention to learn, as this shows itself on the level of sensing, now is accentuated because of a child's willingness to master the learning content. Thus, a child *decides* to pay attention and consequently it never occurs automatically. A precondition for adequate attending, however, always rests on a *stable sensing* because the latter removes obstacles that prevent a child from paying attention. Obviously, a labile sensing lets attending

fluctuate, weaken and diminish; then the possibility for effective learning is excluded.

When a child attends, the gnostic/cognitive modes of learning are directed to the content because his *will* to master the material is strengthened. In everyday language, we say that he is “motivated” to learn when he fixes his attention on his work. It is not strange that parents and teachers continually admonish and appeal to children to pay more attention to their work.

Where sensing involves a child in learning content, attending is directed to an unraveling and analysis of learning material. A child will want to remedy a situation via attending whenever he experiences wonder on the level of sensing – such as a feeling that he does not have complete knowledge or understanding. This aim is reached when the quality of his attending is such that he can adequately perceive, think, remember etc.

It must not be overlooked that a teacher has the important accompaniment task of stabilizing a learner’s sensing and to direct his attending on this basis. This matter is returned to later.

By means of a brief synthesis, below some of the modalities of attending, as they arise during the course of learning, are considered:

**a. attending is an accentuation of the [original] intention to learn**

Based on a stable sensing, attending is viewed as a continuation of the original intention to learn found on the level of sensing and as an accentuation of it.

Attending is a mode of behaving that directs a child's total learning potentialities to the object of attention. It is supported by a stable sensing, and it predisposes a child to take a Gnostic/cognitive attitude. Thus, attending represents an elevation in the level of his intention to learn in that it is supported by a decision to remain involved with the content;

**b. attending accompanies (is concomitant with) gnostic/cognitive learning**

As already mentioned, attending is a basic precondition for, as well as an accompanier of all gnostic/cognitive learning. Thus, effective learning by means of perceiving, thinking, remembering, etc. only can be actualized when a child attends. At the same time, a diminished attending is a reduction in the quality of his perceiving, thinking, etc. Although a stable sensing lays the foundation for attending, its quality also can be influenced by the valence of the learning material, an instruction, external factors, etc. Whether the data in a learning situation positively or negatively influence a child's decision to pay attention always depends on the stability or lability of his sensing. However, if his attending has a positive direction, then, at the same time, the gnostic/cognitive modes of learning are directed and this makes effective learning possible. Hence, attending implies intensified Gnostic/cognitive activities such as concentrating, increased attending and making an effort.

**c. attending is a selective activity**

As already mentioned, attending is a mode of learning that directs a child's *gnostic/cognitive potentialities* to an object of attention. This means that something specific becomes the *focal point* of his attending and surrounding



data temporarily recede into the background. Attending is directed to something specific. In everyday life we say we cannot give attention to more than one matter at a time. That is, in essence it is *selective*, and the moment attention is paid to something, that something becomes the *center* of one's immediate field of interest. By attending, a child's *knowing modes of learning* are actively turned to the matter. Consequently, it is possible for a child to really learn to know the content since moments such as identifying, delimiting, comparing, ordering and integrating are always present. The eventual learning result of sustained attending is understanding and insight, what we can call *knowledge*.

Next is a brief discussion of the gnostic/cognitive modes of learning that, in the course of learning, in their actualization always are preceded by and also accompanied [sustained] by sensing and attending.

### **3.2 Gnostic/cognitive modes of learning**

The Gnostic/cognitive modes of learning, sustained and accompanied by a stable sensing and attending during the entire course of learning, is the crowning of a child's learning activities. Together with sensing and attending, they constitute the entirety of the course of learning and the resulting effect congeals in and shows itself in his possessed experience.

Even though, in its actualization, the course of learning is a unity, still, for the sake of greater clarity, the particular nature of each individual mode is examined separately. However, the coherence of the different modes are later brought to the fore later and considered.

### *3.2.1 Perceiving*

According to Erwin Straus and Sonnekus, perceiving, just as all of the modes, is qualified as an original mode of living. It is not a stimulus-response process but rather is a means by which a person is intentionally directed to the world. During perceiving, a person (child) is not aware of one or another process that takes place, but rather is aware of the object of his perceiving. Thus, perceiving always is a perceiving of something (Husserl), something in relation to a perceiver, something with meaning. Erwin Straus calls sensing the first seeing and perceiving the second seeing. As such, perceiving is a more distanced, objective view compared with our original sensing something. It is directed to reality as it is, to what is true for everyone. Hence, it is related to the universal, the objective and the generally valid as these are found in the matter, object, the learning material, etc. itself (Sonnekus).

The vagueness, lack of clarity and structure that exist on the level of sensing become clearer and more ordered during perceiving. As a *gnostic/cognitive mode of learning* it is directed to what is problematic, especially to analyzing, comparing, considering, ordering and synthesis what is perceived.

A person who perceives is willingly directed to the real nature of what he experiences. He wants to be aware, to know, to grasp, to understand it. Here the question arises is how perceiving is actualized during the course of learning.

A child perceives when he attends to something of which he is aware (senses) and with all gnostic/cognitive modes of learning, perceiving is accompanied [sustained] by a stable sensing and is actualized by attending. The quality of a child's perceiving is related directly to the degree to which he succeeds in attending effectively. With a diminished attending, there also is a decline in the quality of perceiving.

When perceiving is scrutinized more closely, some of its most important modalities are distinguished next:

**a. Perceiving is global-identifying**

As noted, in perceiving, a child is directed to reality as it is. An act of perceiving occurs within a framework of time and space. By attending, his perceiving is directed to something specific that comes into the foreground. All of the data encompassing his perceptual field temporarily recede into the background and the object of perception becomes delimited, defined and outlined, that is it is identified globally. That is, the perceived object is identified within a definite space and time (here and now). This results in the object becoming the focal-point of his attending and is perceived as it is. In truth, identification means the eventual exposure of the real identity of the object or a recognition of its essentials. However, it is emphasized that this global-identifying activity peculiar to perceiving at first is a mere recognition of "something" as an object, a thing, learning content, etc.: it is the identification of "something" as a *whole*.

Although this activity is still characterized by vagueness, inadequate recognition [of something specific], rudimentary ordering, etc., still, it is the beginning of the

gnostic/cognitive moments in perceiving with respect to analyzing, synthesizing and ordering. Secondly, it is important to keep in mind that the different moments [modalities] of perceiving are actualized as a unity and that one modality inevitably implicates the others. Consonant with this view, the real or actual identity of what is perceived first is laid bare (identified) to the extent to which this initial global-identifying, as the beginning of gnostic/cognitive activity, is completed by analyzing, synthesizing and ordering.

#### **b. Perceiving is analyzing**

Connected with the activity of global-identifying during perceiving is analyzing where the learning content (object) is stripped of its global quality, especially as this is experienced on the level of sensing and global-identifying. That is, the at first vague and unstructured nature of the object of learning experienced by a child on the level of sensing (e.g., hearing, seeing or touching) now, by attending, is elevated to listening, looking and feeling. This analyzing enables a child to perceive detail or finer details, and to strengthen his grasp of a larger whole. That is, in analyzing, detail is brought out while, at the same time, the structure of a whole becomes more graspable. Analyzing the learning material makes understanding and insight possible and promotes Gnostic/cognitive learning.

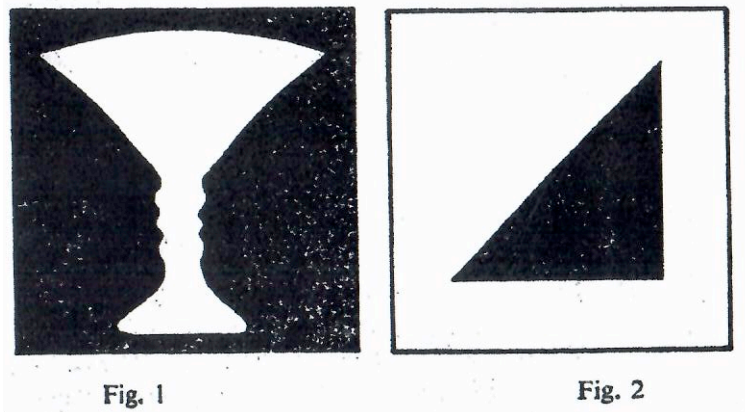
#### **c. Perceiving is synthesizing**

Synthesizing means to form a comprehensive whole from parts or subparts. It revolves around the activities of combining, uniting and putting together. As a modality of perceiving, synthesizing is united with the initial global-analyzing and analyzing moments and is enabled by them.

Synthesizing is the crowning of what a child perceives via global-identifying and analyzing. The gnostic/cognitive understanding of the nature and structure (coherence) of a perceived object is ascribed to the synthesizing power (function) peculiar to perceiving. By synthesizing, the different parts of a larger whole, laid bare by analysis, are put together again into a whole, the result of which is more than the sum of its parts.

However, it must be understood that the different modalities of a child's perceiving are *not actualized separately* but as a total activity.

The following example is used to illustrate this unitary activity within perceiving:



Taken from Bigot, L.T.C., p.32

When a child is asked to look at Figure 1, immediately it is delimited or defined. This implies a perceiving activity during which Figure 1 is brought to the foreground and

surrounding details (Figure 2, the different words and sentences, the table on which the book lies, the different items in the room, etc.) become vague and temporarily are in the background. Figure 1 as something on a general level in the midst of other particulars surrounding it. The particular identity of Figure 1 (what it precisely is) is not necessarily ascertained because it is a global unity that is seen. When this unity is analyzed, the following subparts might be noticeable: a white and black background, a square, a white vase and two black faces. Synthesizing, which arises spontaneously out of the analysis, makes possible the judgment that it is two black faces against a white background. In this way, the real identity of the matter (what it really is) also is laid bare. The perception of Figure 2 can be described in precisely the same way. This example also is valid for other learning events, e.g., learning to read, to write, to figure, etc. However, it is clear that attending, based on a stable sensing, always is a prerequisite for actualizing perceiving as a Gnostic/cognitive mode of learning and, in particular, the different modalities of concern.

#### **d. Perceiving is ordering [organizing]**

Peculiar to each act of perceiving is ordering. Following Straus, Sonnekus indicates that during perceiving different questions arise as well as answers (descriptive speech) to these questions. Perceiving, then, already is a way of ordering, especially in and by descriptive speech (Sonnekus). By naming something perceived, , not only is it delimited from surrounding data but its real identity is laid bare.

Perceiving a book on a table and calling it “book” is an act of delimiting, synthesizing and identifying. This ordering

is not only concerned with the object in focus but also the data immediately surrounding it. Also, perceiving any learning material, a specific object, etc. gives rise to an inexhaustible source of references. For example, perceiving a book also refers to an author, to specific content, to its owner, to its publisher, etc. Within this frame of reference, there is further ordering by which the essential nature of the matter itself is illuminated.

It is important to keep in mind that perceiving, as a gnostic-cognitive mode of learning, is inseparably connected with language--the medium by which the generally valid meaning of what is perceived is brought to the fore. Further, it is obvious that perceiving is intertwined with thinking, remembering, imagining and fantasizing—all of which are gnostic-cognitive modes of learning. Perceiving, as it were, is the beginning of thinking while, to a large extent, thinking completes perceiving. Our possessed experience, among other things, is the sedimentation of memory, influences our perceiving. If we already know something, our perceiving is facilitated, while a deficient possessed experience (knowledge) restrains and impedes effective learning.

### *3.2.2 Thinking*

A person's relationship to the world is a questioning-answering [dialogical] activity. It is peculiar to a child that, from an early age, he asks questions and seeks answers to them. Such a questioning attitude shows that, early in life, he is acquainted with the problematic in reality.

Straus refers to this questioning attitude as the origin of thinking since it is a search for answers and solutions. He says, “(t)he ability to question, to speak, and, it should be added, to think, point to a common source. An investigation of the act of questioning necessarily leads to an investigation of thought and speech. The act of questioning is the beginning and the origin of thought”.\*

Thinking is pre-eminently a gnostic-cognitive mode of learning that complements perceiving and all of the other modes of learning and it is directed to ordering, to conceptualizing and to attaining solutions. It is initiated by a problem. This thinking confrontation with the problematic (learning content) in reality compels a child to seek solutions by such actions as planning, analyzing, comparing and ordering. Thinking is a gnostic-cognitive activity that is interspersed, e.g., with moments of exerting, struggling, resisting, reversing and overcoming, each of which, separately and jointly, must lead a child to a better understanding of and solution to a problem.

Sonnekus states that a thinking child is directed from his perceiving reality, as objective reality, to the world of thinking—a world in which the objective, the conceptual, insight and understanding are in the foreground. Also, Straus emphasizes thinking as a mode of living directed to knowledge of and knowing something as it is. Thinking has the character of breaking-through (Straus) involving a distancing from an initial *sensing* to a level of *attentively* trying to master the learning content.

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\* See Straus, E W.: *Phenomenological psychology*, p.167.



For a good understanding of this break-through character of thinking, it is necessary to consider the inseparable coherence of thinking and language. Langeveld and Nel indicate by the so-called “genetic [developmental] parallelism” between language and thought that language really serves as the steppingstone or channel for thought even though thought is genetically [developmentally] prior to the course of language acquisition. If a child’s acquisition of language does not progress as desired, his thinking his thinking is handicapped accordingly. Conversely, the effective acquisition of language means to bring about a gnostic-cognitive access to the conceptual (Bollinger, Dufrenne). By means of language, a child is in a position to distance himself from a sensory world and, by thinking, to enter a world of the abstract, of thoughts and concepts.

Against this introductory background, some important modalities of thinking are looked at:

**a. Thinking is abstracting**

A leap from concrete reality to a world of the abstract is possible on the basis of the active function of thinking as a mode of learning. Although, as a mode of learning, thinking cannot be separated from perceiving, still, to a large extent, it is complementary to it and is a further analyzing, ordering, synthesizing, and especially abstracting data that have become available during perceiving. During thinking, the concrete data, e.g., that come to the fore while perceiving are exceeded and handled in terms of concepts and thoughts. Also, the objectivity peculiar to perceiving is not possible without the active support of thinking.

Essentially, abstracting is distancing. That is, in thinking, a child distances himself from the concrete data that now remain in existence only in terms of symbols and thoughts.

### **b. Thinking is conceptualizing**

To abstract really means to think on the level of the conceptual. To understand this modality of thinking, attention must be paid to the coherence of thinking and language.

Dufrenne puts this connection as follows: “We cannot think without speaking, and the way in which we use language reveals the way in which we think, and ultimately it is the measure of our intelligence”. By means of language, we distance ourselves from the immediately perceivable while this distance also is partially abolished by a meaningful concept. The concept becomes, as it were, a substitute for the concrete object, while the latter, in its turn, is the origin of this meaning-filled concept.

Thinking transforms the world of the concrete-visible into a world of concept, and this implies abstracting from reality that, at the same time, means a distancing from it.

By thinking, we also order reality, and this occurs by means of language since for us it is the “means” (concepts) for establishing the basis on which meaningful ordering is possible. Thinking by a child thus is handling reality (learning material, content) on a conceptual level and it is preeminently a gnostic-cognitive affair.

### **c. Thinking is ordering**

Although ordering also is a modality of perceiving, it also is viewed as an inherent function of thinking since perceiving already is the beginning of thinking and since the activity of thinking itself brings about order.

Thinking is a gnostic-cognitive activity directed to ordering reality from a multiplicity to a unity. However, this ordering during thinking rests on implementing language that serves as a means for ordering. Thought achievements such as analyzing, schematizing, synthesizing, comparing, generalizing, etc. are possible because this possibility of ordering is inherent to language itself.

Ordering reality from a multiplicity to a unity means that a thinking child is busy analyzing, reasoning about, comparing, etc. reality with a view to a synthesis or understanding of the essential nature of reality itself.

Childlike thinking is directed to the order that lies in reality itself. By thinking he will disclose it and give [explicit] order to it in order to strengthen his grip on and understanding of it. Without such ordering, he stagnates on the level of the concrete and a symbolic world remains inaccessible to him.

#### **d. Thinking is solution-directed**

It has already been noted that childlike thinking is directed to reality as a problem. During thinking, he searches for a solution to the problem. This implies a pathic-affective readiness to overcome particular Gnostic-cognitive resistances and stumble blocks. This activity is carried by a strong willingness that makes it possible for

him to have and to show the perseverance and cognitive effort needed to solve the problem.

However, it must be clearly understood that the entirety of a child's psychic life is functioning during this thinking activity and thus the totality of his learning potentialities are in function. In his thinking search for a solution, he calls on his possessed experience (memory), i.e., on all relevant knowledge, means and skills at his disposal as well as on his immediate perceiving, imagining and fantasizing, all of which make it possible for him to clarify the problem.

By means of a synthesis, it appears obvious that thinking, as a gnostic-cognitive mode of learning, is not only abstracting, conceptualizing, ordering and solution-directed, but also it strongly supports and supplements the other modes of learning.

### *3.2.3 Imagining and fantasizing*

In attempting to understand imagining as a gnostic-cognitive mode of learning, it is first necessary to show the difference from and connection with perceiving. Lersch, Sartre and Sonnekus have shown that perceiving is a mode by which a person is directed to the *real* world. A perceived object is self-present and directs an appeal to a perceiving person. On the contrary, imagining shows an entirely different relationship to reality in the sense that an imagined object is not really present but is, by an act of imagining, *represented*\*. Lersch puts it as follows: "In contrast to the reality character of perceiving is the

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\* Compare Lersch, P.: *Algemene psychologie*, Aula: Utrecht, 1966, pp. 412 et al.

copying character of imagining. By this “copying” character peculiar to imagining, Lersch means that the vividness of perceiving, with its richer differentiations, sharper outlines and superior details, is never realized in an act of imagining. Perceiving assumes an involvement with a real world, while imagining constitutes an unreal world (Sartre) or a “reality-in-distance”. Thus, it appears that imagining stands in a special relationship to perceiving and, as such, represents a more distanced relationship to reality.

On the other hand, no matter how “irreal” imagining might be, necessarily it is connected with previous perceptions since *someone* imagines *something* himself (Minkowski) and this imagining finds its origin (fully or partly) in reality. This implies that the “content” of what is imagined, in one way or another, leads back to reality. However, this latter statement does not mean that imagining always needs to be merely “reproductive, but it also can contain creative moments.

In this respect, imagining can exceed the data of perception since something new or additional is added that does not exist in the original perception. However, it is possible that such imagining can be true to or foreign to reality, the latter when it is strongly connected with one’s fantasy-life. Thus, by imagining, a child can exceed reality and place himself in a world of the unreal, also on a gnostic-cognitive level. Imagining not only contains the possibility of distancing oneself from and exceeding reality, but it also makes room for creative intercourse with it. In addition, it is clear that although imagining in essence is not thinking, it does make thinking possible (Sonnekus) and it can give rise to and initiate it.

With regard to fantasizing as a mode of learning, it is, in comparison to imagining, an even more distanced relationship with reality. Fantasizing or fancying is an important dimension of a person's unreal, imaginary world (Sonnekus). In this connection, often there is mention of *imaginative fantasy* because of their affinity.

According to Lersch fantasizing is an activity by which someone distances himself toward the unknown, the future, what is not real and may never become real. For Lersch, fantasizing is a "free play of images" significant and meaningful to that person. In this way, a fantasy world is a "productive" world that can have a strong pathic-affective flavor but that still makes gnostic-cognitive creations possible. On this basis fantasizing is an activity by which a child can "escape" reality and "lose" himself in a world in which pathic-affective feelings, wishes or desires run rampant. On the other hand, this also embodies the possibility for a predominantly gnostic-cognitive creative level, to think creatively, understand, penetrate, etc. Evidence for this is found in the fact that science, to a large extent, is served by original and creative fantasy dreams

Although, as modes of learning, imagining and fantasizing have a strong pathic-affective side, as far as the course of learning is concerned, both are actualized on a predominantly gnostic-cognitive level. This means that actualizing these two modes, during the course of learning, is directed primarily to knowing, planning, creating, etc. Thus, fantasizing also enables a child to distance himself from reality, to exceed it to a "new" reality for him to understand, but especially one in which

he can think and work productively and creatively. All of the preceding activities primarily have a cognitive flavor and stand in direct or indirect service” to a child’s course of learning.

Below, some modalities of imagining and fantasizing are considered:

**a. Imagining and fantasizing exceed reality**

When it is stated that these two modes of learning make exceeding reality possible, this does not mean they have nothing to do with reality as such. Besides, their content itself largely is “borrowed” from reality. However, it is possible that the forms their content takes can be unreal, real or never can be real. Such imagining and fantasizing usually have a strong emotional or affective flavor recognizable in particular human strivings, desires, wishes, expectations, etc. Although such image- and fantasy-moments are not always in step with reality, this is not necessarily a negative connotation because often this gives rise to original or new thoughts, ideas, projects, creations, etc., each of which not only has particular relevance for learning but also can be *culture-creating*.

Especially as far as learning is concerned, imagining and fantasizing are on a gnostic-cognitive level by which a child distances himself from reality and exceeds it. Especially it is imagining that enables a child both to *represent* reality to himself and to transform it into a “new” reality. By means of imagining and fantasizing, a child exceeds the immediately perceivable world and finds himself in a world of the abstract with its primarily gnostic-cognitive flavor.

### **b. Imagining is representing**

As noted, imagining is an activity by which a child can represent reality (objects, learning content, etc.). This implies creating something on a gnostic-cognitive level without an object or content being present concrete-visibly. Such representative imagining is stripped of concrete-visible elements while also being based on a child's possessed experience being represented anew on an abstract, non-perceptual level. This act of imagining rests first on previous perceiving while the possibility of representation is based on the active support of thinking and remembering as modes of learning. Whether this imagining an objects, content or events is more or less faithful to reality depends on the quality of previous perceptions, on the significance or meaning a child has attached to what is imagined, on whether he has effectively integrated this into his existing possessed experience etc. That is, the quality of a child's possessed experience (i.e., the outcome of his experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing-life and behaviors) is a decisive factor in whether or not imagining is faithful to reality.

### **c. Imagining and fantasizing are creative**

It is peculiar to imagining and fantasizing that, as modes of learning, both can have a creative moment. Thus, a child, by means of imagining, is able to not only represent reality but also to transform it into a "new" reality. In this respect, he exceeds the data of his previous perceptions since he has added something "new" to them. Such imagining, then, is as combination of existing and new data. It is evident that this creative moment peculiar to imagining can be extremely fruitful from a Gnostic-cognitive perspective.



When fantasizing is examined, it is seen as a mode of living- and of learning that that pre-eminently lends itself to creativity on a gnostic-cognitive level. It is a means by which a child can express original thoughts and, with this, a new reality can be created. By means of fantasizing a child is supported by his possessed experience but he also exceeds it because he is busy creating.

### ***3.2.4 Remembering***

In fathoming remembering a child's mode of *living* and *learning*, the latter qualification indicates we are not dealing here with the obsolete notion of memory as a function of consciousness but rather as a genuinely human phenomenon.

In contrast to the psychology of consciousness that remembering is a cognitive function along with others such as perceiving, thinking, etc. and that it has the functions of imprinting, of retaining and registering past impressions, Straus describes remembering as a human mode of learning that is entwined inseparably with one's being situated in time.

By analyzing remembering as a phenomenon in a human child's lifeworld, Straus shows that remembering is, first, a being conscious of the *past*. Thus, a person remembers the past (e.g., memorized learning materials) in the *present*. Things, occurrences and persons remembered thus are not present but they are *re-presented* and are "present in absentia" (Sonnekus, Straus).

Second, remembering is a description of events in the *past tense*. It is a temporal (time) relation describing events in the past in relation to the present and future. During acts of remembering, past and future meet each other in the present.

Third, remembering is an activity of someone in the *present* in contrast to the past and future. Basically, remembering thus means self-awareness, i.e., he is aware of his *actual present* and reflects on himself as someone who has done this or that in the past, or to whom particular things happened to him in the past. In the words of Sonnekus, remembering is a reflecting, viewing or thinking by a person as seeing himself as he was, from a distance. Thus, through remembering, a person can examine his becoming in time (historicity) and judge and evaluate it in relation to his present and future.

This human mode is especially interpreted as one of learning because remembering is pre-eminently a gnostic-cognitive mode. As with *all* knowing modes of learning, the adequate actualization of a child's course of learning relies on both *a stable sensing* and on *effective attending*.

As already noted, remembering, as a knowing mode of learning, is a mode through which a child can "call up" or recall in the present learning content that he had acquired in the past. Remembered learning content is specific content that was experienced in the past when it was given meaning through lived experiencing and that he already knows. Thus, it is *willed* into the present by remembering, representing and putting in the present in "absentia". As it were, a child "stimulates" a relevant possessed experience and implements it here-and-now in a learning

situation. Such possessed experience and also the relevant fore-knowledge mentioned enable a child to establish meaningful relationships with, to obtain nodal points of and to find connections with the new knowledge (learning content) with which he is confronted in a learning situation.

Further, concerning the course of learning, remembering is an act by which a child *willingly integrates* the newly experienced learning content with his existing possessed experience that he meaningfully lived experienced and knows. Thus, remembering is not only an act by which a child revives existing possessed experience in the present, but it also is an act through which the newer learning content is *integrated* in the present with his possessed experience. To the extent that the course of learning is effective, and especially if remembering is actualized effectively, the effect is that a child's possessed experience is continually expanded, broadened and deepened. However, it must clearly be understood that a quantitative increase as well as a qualitative deepening in his possessed experience is an outcome of the successful actualization of *all* of the modes of learning during the course of learning. None the less, remembering is the crowning of a course of learning in that in coherence with all of the other modes, it enables a child to integrate the newer knowing with his existing knowledge (possessed experience).

In light of the above, attention now is paid to some of the most important modalities of remembering:

a. Remembering is putting [something from the past} into the present (recalling)

Without unnecessary repetition, remembering makes it possible for a child to recall or put relevant possessed experience into the present. Here the act of remembering reaches back to knowledge based on former perceiving, thinking, etc. and revives it in the present. Placing such possessed experience in the present means that the learning material **memorized [learned] in the past, is remembered here-and-now** is t a child's disposal.

With respect to the quality of **remembering, or putting** existing knowledge in the present, the following are noted:

First, it is influenced and determined by the quality of a child's sensing and attending. A stable sensing and attending, the latter resulting from the former, make it possible for him to remember effectively. In contrast, a labile sensing, and paired therewith, a deficiency in his attending, hinders remembering learning content. This implies that certain gaps (forgetting) will be noticeable in putting learned content into the present.

Second, and in connection with the above, the quality of his remembering is influenced by the way past learning was actualized. If there is an indication of effective learning, i.e., effectively actualized all of the modes of learning in the past course of his learning, it is likely that he will remember better. That is, effective learning counteracts so-called forgetting. Adequate learning assumes a real understanding of the content and that it has been meaningfully integrated with existing possessed knowledge (possessed experience).

Third, it is important to heed that the so-called "recalling of previous knowledge or putting it in the present during

remembering assumes an active functioning of the other gnostic-cognitive modes of learning. In addition to a child reaching back to his [previous] perceptions, thinking, etc., when remembering, he also is actively thinking, making particular representations, etc.

This coherence with the other modes of learning confirms again that learning is actualized as a unitary event and that the modes of learning at most can be distinguished but not separated from each other.

**b. Remembering is integrating**

As mentioned above, remembering also is characterized by the function of integrating. This function, peculiar to remembering, especially refers to the acquisition of *new* knowledge. That is, the new learning content a child has learned to know through perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing, and to which he has attributed personal meaning, is “added” to his existing knowledge. However, this integrating is not only “adding” *new* knowledge to, but it also is an act by which new knowledge is connected meaningfully with existing knowledge. That is, through this integrating function, existing possessed experience is continually expanded and there is a qualitative deepening as well as a quantitative increase of a child’s possessed experience.

Regarding the controversial question of whether *repetition* promotes remembering or not, repeating more recent content promotes remembering in so far as it is practicing particular skills or insights. Of course, this does not imply “meaningless” repetition, pure drill-work or imprinting but rather practicing certain skills or knowledge that enables a child to perform effectively, e.g., a volley in

tennis, tumbling in gymnastics, a step-by-step solution to a scientific problem, etc. Thus, in itself repetition is not meaningful, but meaning is found in the new knowledge that is practiced becoming more functional or can be applied by a child to perform or demonstrate a definite activity properly in a learning situation. In this respect, there is a meaningful connection between remembering and repeating.

#### 4. A SYNTHESIS: CHILDLIKE LEARNING

Against the background of the preceding psychopedagogical perspective on a child's learning, it is emphasized again that learning is a way in which the psychic life of a child-in-education is manifested. It is actualized as a totality because of the initiative from a child himself and also on the basis of the educative support received.

By means of a brief synthesis, it is seen that the following important points are contained in the above explications:

- 4.1 Learning together with becoming are given potentialities of a child's psychic life and he learns and becomes in a situation as an experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and behaving child;
- 4.2 As a totality, learning especially is actualized in terms of the particular modes of sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing as well as remembering, each of which, together and separately, is a manifestation that a child experiences, wills, lived experiences, knows and behaves in a learning situation;
- 4.3 When actualized, a child's learning takes a particular course (course of learning) that begins with sensing. If his

sensing is stable, attending becomes possible and is actualized that enables a child to perceive, think, imagine and fantasize as well as remember in an ordered way. Also, actualizing the modes of learning in their coherence as a totality is seen as culminating in or emptying into a child's possessed experience. In this way, his possessed experience continually is filled, enlarged and qualitatively deepened;

4.4 A child's possessed experience is the sediment of what he has learned (content) and invested with meaning. It influences and determines greatly his future learning activities. That is, it can have an influence (positive or negative) on his his experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and therewith his behaving in future or new learning situations;

4.5 Because of the profound coherence of learning and becoming, a child's becoming is actualized as he learns. An elevation in a child's becoming points to changes occurring in his life precisely because he learns. Possessed experience as sediment or outcome of his learning is reflected in his becoming and is reflected in his finding himself progressively acting as an adult;

4.6 It is important to note that a child himself actualizes his learning but, for its proper, accountable actualization, he always is dependent on on the educative teaching of an adult (e.g., parent, teacher) as accompaniment during learning and becoming. Without such educative teaching, he cannot become a proper adult.

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