

DISCUSSION*

1. P. van Zyl:

In using the term **discipline** with respect to orthopedagogics, didactic pedagogics, etc., I eagerly ask a question: Does this not create the impression that they are separate, i.e., independent subjects? Yet, it is pedagogics which is the science or discipline. Even **discipline** is found to be unacceptable because it not only distinguishes but separates, delimits too sharply and, thus, divides. The unity is violated. **Part-perspective** is a tautology because a perspective implies that the whole is not in the point of view. Perspective does not separate observable from unobservable parts. Preference is given to perspective. A sense of overlap is included in the term, and perspective accepts or recognizes that which does not show itself in the moment as being present to complete the whole, and this promotes unity.

2. M. C. H. Sonnekus:

[Establishing] the unity of pedagogics is in the past, but still today there are threats from followers of one or another trend in psychology, e.g., educational, developmental, child, or learning psychology. These advocates hold the outdated view that psychology, irrespective of its underlying anthropology or origin, is a comprehensive science which can be applied to all life situations, including educating and teaching. This is an extremely objectionable practice, such an applied psychology has no validity, and there is no meaningful relation with pedagogics.

Reference also must be made to the erroneous view that, if psychology concerns itself with "the child", it then possesses application value, which still does not qualify it in any sense as pedagogical, since it has not originated from the reality of educating.

A serious objection also must be made against the practice where, in various circles, the name "psychopedagogics" is used without the content qualifying in any sense as pedagogical. In some instances, there are so-called part-disciplines of pedagogics which do qualify

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as pedagogical, such as fundamental pedagogics, historical pedagogics, didactic pedagogics while, at the same institutions, "psychopedagogics" is taught where the contents are psychological and not pedagogical. The unity of pedagogics does not exist at such institutions in so far as the relations of the part-disciplines with "psychopedagogics" are not what they ought to be, and the student becomes rather confused. This is not to say that the pedagogical, particularly, the psychopedagogical, cannot and must not enter discourse with psychology, which can occur under certain conditions, but the latter still cannot be summarily applied [to educating a child].

3. T. A. Viljoen:

Each of the speakers in his search for the **unity of the pedagogical** stress that the keystone for possible unity revolves around the question of "What is **essential** for educating **as such**?" It is precisely the answer to this question which has already brought us far on the way to a unity. Now, however, there is a new call for unity, which requires a **radical empiricism** with respect to the stated question. That is, it requires the use of **phenomenology** as an overarching method, along with the application of other methods, as techniques, which must be phenomenologically interpreted for the sake of the unity of the pedagogical.

However, there are two slogans which threaten this unity:

(a) It is said "The word 'phenomenology' must not be used too assuredly. We must follow its course without saying so." This slogan really stems from the dwindling of phenomenology in Europe and, especially in the Netherlands.

(b) The second slogan is "The time of practicing science for the sake of science is forever past--especially in pedagogics." Accordingly, we must practice science for the sake of improving practice.

Only as a pure science can pedagogics promote its unity--not with the question of practical needs, but with the question of the essentials of educating, as stated above. Indeed, a pedagogue is called to show the **implications** of his/her findings for practice, but this does not mean these implications are the aim of his/her science.

In addition, a pedagogician remains a pedagogician. There really is no such thing as a fundamental pedagogician, a sociopedagogician, a psychopedagogician, etc. They always remain pedagogicians (as builders of the unity as a systematic whole of pedagogical knowledge), but each from one or another perspective. Therefore, there also is no such thing as the **pedagogical** outside its perspectives. It is precisely in its perspectives that pedagogics (as a unity or not) is embodied.

4. M. J. Bondesio:

There is little trouble about the unity of the pedagogical in so far as its driving motive is primarily the "clarification" of the phenomenon of educating because:

(a) all problems of the distinguishable perspectives figure within the framework of a general pedagogical problem;

(b) conclusions or judgments formulated from a specific perspective implicitly or explicitly overlap the terrain delimited by a problem or question, because the hermeneutic involvement with this piece of reality asks for an authentic synthesis within the framework of the general problem.

Regarding the part-disciplines (perspectives), which explicitly "control" practice as a final motive, they presume that the unity of the pedagogic is troublesome. To plan and design an educative practice(s) requires that they give form to the unity of the phenomenon of educating, in the most concrete sense of the word. A synthesis of insights from the various disciplines, thus, is necessary to maintain the unity of the pedagogical in designing a specific practice, and to guarantee the course of this practice-in-function.

With respect to phenomenology as a comprehensive method of scientific research, problems are anticipated if all methods are viewed as steps or techniques of the phenomenological method. The question arises about where the identity of phenomenology and other methods lie if the differences are not **methodologically** demonstrable. In this case, is phenomenology nothing more than a scientific research method, i.e., a philosophy of science?

5. C. J. G. Kilian:

This evening, it strikes me that all speakers and participants have a need to stress the unity of pedagogical thinking. One now can ask the question of why, at this stage, there is such an ardent search for unity in pedagogical thinking. I believe many this evening have already answered this, and I think one answer is that we want to maintain the character of independence of our scientific discipline. Under no circumstances do we want to be an applied science. Professor Sonnekus has stressed this again so aptly.

In this sense, I also think we can try, once again, to return to the original object of study of pedgogics, i.e., "the pedagogic".

However, in all modesty, I ask that we not throw overboard thoughts of perspective; that is, there must be a unity in multiplicity. This means that there also can be a fundamental pedagogician, psychopedagogician, etc. The important thing to remember here is that, possibly we must give up the whole idea of **part**-perspective or **part**-discipline. The easiest way is to emphasize the word "pedagogical" each time, and talk of a **pedagogical** perspective, a **pedagogical** discipline, and to refer to "various" pedagogical perspective, and then eliminate the word **part** and, in doing so, emphasize the **unity**.

Regarding an incidental remark about the whole idea of structure vs structures, about which Professor Van Zyl also spoke, for me, it is encouraging that Professor Van Niekerk talked about "macrostructures" and "microstructures" (plural form), because I plead for the use of the plural form, not to arrive at a splintering, although this is a danger connected with its use. I readily concede that the use of the plural form (i.e., structures) can easily give rise to an "absolutizing", to use Van Zyl's term, but even so, I feel that all the important aspects mentioned by him, and which can be called possible "pedagogical truths", still can each form a structure. His entire explanation of what "time" is, when, and how it elapses separately, together, and within each other is a construction of each of these pedagogical truths. In other words, there is something such as a time-**structure**, a space-**structure**, an educand-**structure**, each of which is a distinct, distinguishable structure which must be organized within the unitary structure of the pedagogical. I believe that one can talk of a **unitary** structure with distinguishable **sub**-structures (**infra**-structures) or, to use the words of Van Niekerk, **macrostructures**, with distinguishable **microstructures**.

6. P. van Zyl:

With respect to colleague Kilian's plea for the retention of the use of the plural form **structures**, only the following is clarified:

The interpretation that each of the components mentioned by me has a unique structure, and that those of time, space, educand, etc. each can be subjected to a separate structural analysis is underlined. Time, educand, educator, aim, etc. each show a unity which must be respected. However, when they are related in an educative situation, as a situation of relationships, they appear as **components of this interconnected unity**. Allow me to illustrate this in terms of a building, without comparing educating to a building. A window, a door, a wall each has its own structure, but window, door, and wall, as part of a whole, are something else. A new unity or structure is formed. In the **interconnected whole** of the building, the meaning of each is different than it is outside this structure.

An analysis of relationship, sequence, and aim is possible, but educating is a structure-in-function in which relationship, sequence, and aim are tied together, and then there can be talk of sub-structures. In such a context, they are components of a whole which is more than the sum of its parts. The same holds true for the educative relationship. There is general reference to three relationships: authority, trust, and understanding. The educative relationship simultaneously is a relationship of authority, trust, and understanding. In their connections within an educative relationship, a new meaning is manifested which cannot be brought to light by each component or sub-structure separately. The whole always says more than the parts. Naturally, it is a problem which, in the distinctions, the simultaneity of all the features of educating cannot be expressed. In the course of time, one can be expressed after the other. In the phenomenon, they are simultaneous and, thus, a unity. They presuppose each other. The fact that the situation and the relationship change lies in the essence of the situation of educating. During time, it is attuned to elevating its level, as well as in the being of a person (educator and educand) as initiative of relationships.