

GROUP DISCUSSION IN VOCATIONAL ORIENTATION IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL•

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the development of his vocational choice, an appeal is directed to the pupil to actualize his personal potentialities on the highest level possible. This sometimes requires choices that have far-reaching significance for vocational choice such as choice of school, of a course of study (major), of subject matter and choice with respect to further training/schooling. Research has shown that many pupils are not ready to make such choices when they are confronted with this problem.^(2: 82-86; 16:33)

In this connection, Myers^(12:864) asserts: “The decision making implications of such a system are enormous, especially since many decisions are required of youths quite early in their lives, before their experience prepares them for making choices of such consequence.”

Because of their great number, it is not possible to guide all pupils individually, and it is necessary that this guidance be done in a group context. Orientation in a group context still is an acknowledged part of the practice of vocational orientation. The value of group work is attested by many researchers such as Bilovsky, McMasters, Shorr and Singer^(12:868) who find no differences in realistic vocational choices when individual or group methods are used. In South Africa, Alberts^(1: 113-123) and Garbers^(5: 55) indicate the value of group discussions. Moreover, in a national study^(14: 22) it was established that 64% of those studied attributed the same value to the contribution of individual conferences and class discussions for their vocational choices.

• Die groeibespreking in beroepsoriëntering op die sekondere skool. From C. J. Joubert (Ed.) Beroepsvoorligting op skool. University of Pretoria, **Nuwe Reeks No. 159**, 1980, pp. 21-46.

As an additional example, the 1968 research by Pilato^(12: 870) is cited: groups of pupils were given intelligence and interest test. Before, immediately after, and 55 days after the administration of the tests, they had to make a self-evaluation of their interests and intellectual potentialities as well as indicate their vocational preferences. In a group (class) context, the following treatments were given: after the administration of the tests one group was provided only information about the accuracy of their self-knowledge; a second group only was provided information about vocational structures; and a third group received the first two methods combined. Pilato found that the group only receiving information about the accuracy of their self-knowledge more adequately adjusted their vocational preferences to an attainable level of actualization; The group only receiving vocational information showed no improvement in adjusting their vocational preferences. The group that received information about their own self-knowledge as well as vocational information showed the greatest improvement regarding the adequacy of vocational preferences and choices. It was found that improvements were with respect to the level of actualization and not the area of a vocational field. This increase in the adequacy of choices was maintained 55 days later.

This research by Pilato confirms that:

- (a) group work contributes to making realistic vocational choices;
- (b) self-knowledge and relevant vocational knowledge are necessary requisites for actualizing authentic vocational choices.

According to considerations from overseas, group work can be subdivided into “group guidance” and “group counseling”. “Group guidance” maintains a connection with an orientation program that is content-directed and such group-conducted activities include offering vocational and orientational programs and group testing. “Group counseling” is seen as a group activity where the emphasis is on ‘matters of personality’ rather than on the presentation and discussion of orientational contents. Alberts^(1: 113) follows this approach and speaks of group guidance and group deliberation, respectively. The emphasis of such action falls strongly on the content and on the actions of the group leader while the self-

orienting involvement of the pupil is not elucidated. Where “testing” is used, the usual procedure is: (a) discussion of the tests and what they “measure” or (b) self-estimation – testing –self-estimation, and the difference between the first and second self-estimation is viewed as an indication of the increase in self-knowledge.

Beukes^(2: 85) finds that introducing “test results” without discussing them is of little value. Joubert^(7: 60, 61) holds the view that exploratory media (questionnaires and tests) lead to greater pupil insight if preceded by group discussions especially directed to self-knowledge. The implication of this for vocational orientation practice is that harmony must be brought about between the content and the form of the group discussion so that the pupil will participate in self-orientation.

To insure guidance to self-orientation and ultimately to vocational adulthood means that all pedagogical principles, but especially vocational-orientation pedagogical and didactic-pedagogical principles, must be actualized through the planning and execution of a group discussion. Thus, a group discussion can be actualized in no other way than as a lesson situation, but, because of the design of its content and form, it shows a unique nature that differentiates it from all other types of lesson.

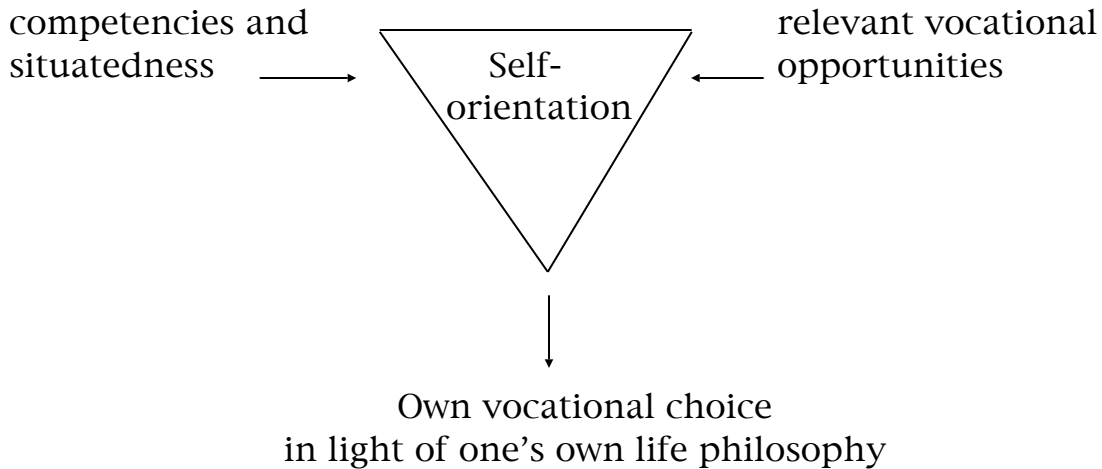
The fundamental didactic form of group discussion is the conversation or discussion. Essentially this is a discussion by which the orienting events of exploring, discovering, evaluating, understanding and accepting are actualized and by which the pupils are supported to self-orientation.

2. Self-knowledge, self-understanding and self-orientation

In essence, accountable vocational orientation means orienting to self-orientation. This amounts to knowing one’s own competencies and situatedness, as well as the relevant vocational opportunities, and integrating these into a vocational choice in light of one’s own philosophy of life and of work. This is represented by the following triad:

Understanding own

Understanding



From a vocational orientation perspective, one's own competencies refer to one's authentic personal "equipment" where personal refers to one's unique human individualness and individuality. These competencies (equipment) must become known by the pupil, i.e., he must arrive at self-understanding or an understanding of himself as a unique person.

A person's situatedness refers to the total meaningful involvement to which he is related and in terms of which he must choose.

Vocational opportunities refer to the opportunities in the vocational world that are relevant to a person's particular equipment and from which he can make choices. Opportunities of actualizing refer to opportunities within which the pupil's positive potentialities can be actualized through effort and that contribute to his personal becoming and ultimately to his vocational competency.

The vocational orientation program at school aims to support youths to a realistic self-orientation regarding their own competencies (self-understanding) after which guidance to responsible self-orientation regarding vocational reality can proceed.

2.1 Self-knowledge and self-understanding

The self is the total unique personal competencies that are co-defined by one's own ways of existence, intentionality, accostedness,

responsiveness, communication, bodiliness, intellectuality, etc. in terms of which a person come to an understanding, i.e., to know or understand the total self.^(8: 27)

To know means to acquire and have at his disposal knowledge or proficiency of a notion of reality that serves to clarify his situatedness in the world. Knowing intensifies into understanding when the essence of a matter is penetrated and insightful knowledge becomes broadened, which contribute to a better understanding of any related matter that might surface. Understanding also refers to knowledge that, in the light of the demands of propriety, norms and values,^(10: 21-22) directs the modes or ways of self-actualization.

2.2 Self-orientation

Self-orientation as vocational choice orientation, assumes an orientation regarding one's personal potentialities, one's opportunities for actualizing them, as well as one's level of self-actualization (including the actualization of vocational choice) as these are meaningfully related as viewed in light of values. Self-orientation is grounded in authentic self-knowledge and self-understanding. The significant aspects of one's selfhood are the self as mystery, as individualness and individuality, as potentiality and as situatedness.

To experience the self as a mystery implies that a person always is more than what he knows, and this makes self-discovery a life long event; the discovery of one's own individuality and individualness make possible an understanding of one's own potentialities by which one can proceed to an anticipated world-design as a vocational choice design. However, a person is always situated; this means that he finds himself in relation to a total world and his Creator. Thus, his self-actualization is formed and tempered by the possibilities and limitations of his unique personal abilities. Also, he must give evidence of an answer to his being appealed to and by this answer he acknowledges obligatory and demanding life values.

3. The formal design of the group discussion

On the basis of the orientation aim that the counselor has in mind, he will choose the form of orientation that will create a particular

relationship between the pupil and the orientation content. When group work involves orientation essences as elementals, a subject-object relationship prevails and the activities are focused on the factualities of the orientation content. When this is so, the basic form of orientation can be play or assignment. There can be mention of discussion as a basic form only when the meaning of the orientation content is discussed, argued, debated, etc. on the basis of one's own experiences, i.e., when the essences are implicated as fundamentals of the orientation content. Essentially, discussion is a subject-subject relationship the essence of which is the dialogue. Discussion in vocational orientation is a particular nuance of discussion as a fundamental didactic form.

The counselor chooses discussion as form because it is the best and most fruitful way to introduce the orientation content, and it also offers the greatest certainty that the pupil will proceed to self-orientation. The counselor also must reflect on the didactic (lesson) modalities that set the orientation event in motion and on the orientation aids he will use to improve the quality of his actions and the quality of the pupil's self-orientation.

4. Aims in the group discussion

Because group discussion in vocational orientation is a matter of educating, it is obvious that all aims of educating will be pursued in the group discussion. Accordingly, the aims are to strive to make the child more adult, independent, responsible, etc. The counselor cannot state these aims (which are categories [essences] of vocational orientation) as aims for a particular group discussion for the simple reason that vocational orientation itself cannot exist without them. Thus, the counselor must look past these general aims and formulate particular aims in terms of particular content.

5. Orientation aims and goals

In the group discussion a distinction is made between an orientation aim and a knowing aim. The orientation aim refers to the share assumed by the counselor in order to make the content available in the most efficient way. The knowing aim refers to the pupil's share in actualizing his self-orientation. Actualizing the knowing aim

(self-orientation) assumes a thorough knowledge of the orientation content. The orientation and knowing aims are made meaningful by the orientation content. If orientation succeeds there is mention of attaining the aim, i.e., of self-orientation and self-activity.

On the basis of a theme or topic announced in the syllabus, the counselor will state an aim for himself that really is still an unformulated idea, thought or plan, e.g., “to bring the pupils to an understanding of their own intellectual potentialities.” On this basis, stating the orientation aim is formulated more clearly. This aim is an overarching concept or idea within which is visualized that which is deemed relevant for a particular group of pupils and in terms of which a series of orientation aims is formulated. The orientation aim always ought to be operationalized; i.e., it ought always to begin with a particular skill such as classifying the essences of ... or distinguishing between ...

By reducing the theme of the syllabus, the counselor selects the essences (elementals) for a particular group and formulates and orders them as a series of successive orientation aims. In any orientation aim, it must be indicated beforehand what orientation activity the pupils must carry out in order to attain it.

6. Reduction of orientation content

Here the counselor must disclose the essential facts that are meaningful for understanding the problem raised by the theme. This means he must illuminate the core facts of a matter that support an insight into them. To do this, interpretations, opinions, deductions, etc. are temporarily put aside. It must be emphasized that the matter is not analyzed into its elements; only those aspects that show the essences of the matter have to be identified. This requires that the counselor thoroughly know the subject content. In addition, he must select those essences that will be meaningful to the particular group on the basis of their experiences, their phase of becoming, their potentialities, etc. Thus, the essences of intellectual potentialities for one group might be sensing, perceiving and thinking, for another imagining and fantasizing, and yet for another evaluating, convergent and divergent thinking.

Because of the dangers of generalizing, an exhaustive handbook only can have limited value. Two additional requirements regarding the reduction of the content are that the essences must be formulated so the pupils can acquire a clear, meaningful and coherent image of the theme as such, and that the essences in relation can provide a solution to the problem, i.e., that they can make self-orientation and self-activity possible.^(17: 33-37)

The content by which the counselor is going to center on these essences can be chosen from several sources such as an encyclopedia, biographies, newspaper reports and journal articles.

In terms of the essences of the orientation content and their refinement, the counselor can construct questionnaires to facilitate self-evaluation.

7. The didactic modalities in the group discussion

Since the didactic modalities are what set into motion a lesson as well as a group discussion, and by which the different phases of the course of the orientation can be differentiated, it is necessary that the principles of actualization, the modes of learning (as ways of knowing) and the teaching aids (orientation aids) be clarified from a vocational orientation perspective.

7.1 General principles of actualization^(18: 202-203)

Actualization is closely related to the orientation and knowing aims because on the basis of his activities a pupil proceeds to self-exploration, self-discovery, self-evaluation, self-understanding and self-acceptance in order to engage in self-actualization. In a group discussion there is guided activity (guided orientation) and self-activity (self-orientation).

The principle of individualization^(18: 203) refers, in group discussion, to the pupil's own share in the group discussion. There are few other types of lessons in which the principle of individualization is so prominent as in a group discussion.

In a group discussion the pupil is supported, in actualizing the orientation event, in establishing his own individualness and individuality, and self-actualization is made possible by understanding the pupil's own unique personal competencies and opportunities for actualizing them. The pupil's freedom of responsible self-actualization is acknowledged since one can choose for him. Self-individualization serves self-discovery^(18: 207) and emancipation regarding one's world of vocational choice with which his entire life world is co-involved.

The principle of socialization,^(18: 203) in connection with the group discussion, means that the pupil finds himself in relation to and in co-involvement with others.^(10: 83) Socialization means encounter, communication and identification. Through identification the pupil is able to identify himself with, e.g., the parent and counselor as representatives of the image of vocational adulthood. Socialization makes possible the actualization of shared values^(7: 6) since the rendering of services and self-actualization, also to the advantage of others, is emphasized.

The didactic modalities are meaningful because they initiate and direct the pupils' actions. Tempo differentiation is an important matter in a group discussion. That is, because a group discussion is not a matter of giving a lesson, and formal "tests" and examinations do not take place, the pupils have the opportunity to follow their own tempo in order to assimilate the orientation content. By actualizing the principle of tempo differentiation, the child is supported to evaluate his own personal competencies and opportunities for actualizing them so that an orientation effect can be assured. The counselor should control the tempo such that it is not determined primarily or exclusively by the adult (counselor) or the group but in such a way that each individual is given the opportunity of differentiation so that meaningful self-evaluation is possible.

7.2 The modes of learning^(18: 193-197; 17: 94-101)

The modes of learning are one of the structural aspects of the didactic modalities (along with the above general principles and teaching and learning aids) out of which a "type of lesson" is

allowed to crystallize.^(18: 193) Thus, on the basis of the modes of learning actualized in a particular lesson, a valuing, experimenting, demonstrating, explicating, drill or practice lesson can be differentiated. The modes of learning distinguished here are sensing, perceiving, thinking and remembering. Since there is no learning effect facilitated in a group discussion but rather a knowing effect (self-orientation), all of the modes of learning are actualized in a group discussion and they serve directly to actualize the essences of knowing. Thus, in planning a group discussion, the counselor cannot omit one or a few of the modes of learning that are going to figure prominently in that discussion.

Sensing, as a personal, affective experiencing,^(18: 195) is closely connected with wondering about the self as a mystery by which knowing, as an intuitive foreknowing, through questioning and venturing deepens into the exploration and discovery of, e.g., one's own personal competencies.

Perceiving essentially is a reduction, an activity by which the essential (the real) becomes manifest.^(18: 195) Through perceiving, knowing as understanding is possible and there can be, e.g., delimitation, clarification and appropriation. Perceiving and knowing, as understanding, make possible knowing the self as individuality and individualness by which one's identity and uniqueness continually become clarified.

Thinking makes synthesis possible whereby the meaningful relations among concepts (essences) are brought into relief and can be appropriated. Thinking makes possible knowing as being oriented whereby the self as potentiality can be understood. Knowing one's own personal competencies and opportunities make possible an understanding of one's own situatedness as a result of which one can proceed to self-actualization as a world designed through vocational choice. Such objectification and anticipation are in essence matters of structured knowing or thinking.

Remembering implies calling up already acquired insights and thought structures.^(18: 195) It is closely connected with knowing the self as situatedness and with an understanding of the responses already given to one's being appealed to, i.e., responses given in the

light of values. Remembering is related to knowing as a response in terms of an understanding of the sense and meaning ascribed to self-actualization.

7.3 Orientation aids

In the practice of vocational orientation connected with the school, a distinction is made between group exploratory aids (exploratory media) and orientation aids. Aids for group exploration are, e.g., group exploratory media (standardized group tests) that are implemented for the sake of forming a person image.^(15: 101-102)

Orientation aids serve to make the counselor's guidance (orienting) and the self-orienting of the pupils as effective as possible. Orientation aids that can make the counselor's actions more effective are, e.g., a blackboard, transparencies, films, prints and tape recordings.

Orientation aids implemented to support pupils to self-orientation are, e.g., self-evaluation scales relevant to one's own personal competencies,^(15: 116-132) and vocational study memoranda^(4: 92-100) connected with vocational opportunities.

8. The relation between the course of orientation and the phases of a group discussion

8.1 The course of orientation*

Self-knowledge through exploring

Exploring means investigating or studying life reality phenomena whose essentials are still unknown and concealed. Modes of exploring are, e.g., questioning, expecting, venturing, breaking away and attentively staying with.

In a group discussion perspective this means the pupil experiences himself in the group discussion as a mystery but that his intuitive

* Professor C. J. Joubert was the first to postulate the essences of the course of orientation. This view of the course of orientation constitutes both the point of departure and focal point for many additional research themes in Vocational Orientation Pedagogics.

foreknowledge, through the activity of questioning (that arises from his inherent wondering about reality), also about his personal potentialities, deepens into an attentive remaining with one's own competencies so they can be perceived. By breaking away from self-satisfaction and by a willingness to enter the unknown, the expectation arises that the level of actualization of self-knowledge will be elevated through self-discovery.

Self-knowledge through discovery

When the previously unknown is discovered through exploration, the essences of selfhood become evident and insight and perspective regarding self-being are consequently mastered. Among others, the essences of discovery are perceiving, identifying, recognizing and becoming acquainted with.

Discovery, as "dis-cover", results in the person perceiving and recognizing his own selfhood as individuality and individualness. Consequently, he can identify himself as subjectivity, as different and as unique. Because he gradually understands himself, he can become familiar with and appropriate his own personal competencies in their possibilities and limitations. Understanding what one is able to be leads to the emancipation of the being-someone-oneself within each opportunity for self-actualization.

Self-knowledge through evaluating

Evaluating refers to the level of value or quality of the discovered essences and their actualization. Among others, the essences of evaluating are deliberating, interpreting, considering and questioning.

From a group discussion perspective this means that discovering the essences of self-being increasingly must be evaluated in light of opportunities for their actualization so the meaningful relations between self-knowing and knowledge of opportunities becomes clarified. On the basis of Gnostic-cognitive knowing, as deliberating, the opportunity is offered for evaluating the design and establishment of a world through interpreting one's own personal potentialities in the light of opportunities for actualizing them. The

self, as anticipating potentiality, can represent one's own being-able to be as optimal self-actualization and thus arrive at taking apposition and acquiring a perspective. In essence, evaluating is the meaningful consideration of one's own person structure in light of values. Knowledge from questioning one's own fellow person's talents compel the person to give a meaningful answer, as a level of actualization.

Self-knowledge through understanding

Understanding means acquiring a perspective on the meaningful relations among the essentials. Among others, the essential activities of understanding are unlocking, having insight and knowing. Knowledge and insight are the result of the unlocking on the level of actualization the person, as total person structure, is capable. Understanding what is and can be means an appreciative knowing of self and world. Understanding is the natural outcome of the experiences and achievements by which the flexibility of the opportunities for actualization are discovered. Flexibility also implies a knowledge of limitations that inevitably brings up the issues of acceptance and of giving meaning.

Self-knowledge through acceptance

Acceptance means a readiness to proceed to self-actualization as the essences of selfhood are accepted. In this way, one's limitations can be conquered through their acceptance as a real encounter between one's limited equipment and the relevant opportunities for actualizing them that the person chooses and by which he is chosen.

Through acceptance, the situatedness of the self is given meaning by which the person's freedom toward responsibility is preserved, his initiative of relationships is sustained and he is not delivered over to his own facticity.

Self-knowledge through actualization

Self-actualization means implementing what is essentially meaningful in each opportunity for self-actualization by a willingness to work. Among others, the essences of actualization are

implementing, designing, accepting responsibility, actualizing meaning and emancipating.

Through actualization, self-knowing becomes the person's answer to his being appealed to, and he proceeds to give sense and meaning to the implementation of his personal competencies during the opportunities for their actualization. This means to allow the acceptance of responsibility for realizing meaning to emancipation in work to flourish. From a group discussion perspective, this means that actualization is the crowning of the orientation event because through optimal self-knowledge the youth can penetrate to the meaningful relations among his own equipment and the achievable level of actualization within the opportunities available to him.

8.2 The actualization of the course of orientation within the phases of the group discussion

Just as lesson phases can be distinguished in the course of a lesson^(18: 232-238) so can phases be differentiated in the group discussion. It was already indicated that the essences of actualization, namely, exploring, discovering, evaluating, understanding and accepting are elevated in level during the actualization of the course of the group discussion.

Below the relations among the orientation event and the phases of the group discussion are explained with particular reference to self-knowledge through orientation.

As an introduction, it must be shown that group discussion in the current lesson (orientation) differs with respect to unlocking new content, evaluating and functionalizing.

Unlocking new content occurs by introducing the pupils, under the control of the counselor, to the content for which they have been prepared. Thus, it is clear that a greater demand for preparation is placed on the pupils for a group discussion than for an ordinary lesson. By evaluating, the concern is not only with knowledge of the subject content but more particularly with self-orientation in light of the essences of the content. The essences of evaluating such as

deliberating, interpreting, considering and questioning must be actualized. Functionalizing is involved especially with the self-orientation of the pupils through understanding the relation among one's own competencies and opportunities for their actualization, especially the relevant vocational opportunities. In the group discussion, the learning event is secondary to the orientation event where self-orientation is primary. Just as does the subject matter teacher, the counselor fulfills the task of an expert and must be trained as an expert.

.1 Actualizing foreknowledge^(18: 233)

Under the counselor's guidance, the pupils are expected to call to awareness (remember) knowledge at their disposal that is connected with a particular theme. The meaningful relations among the existing (possessed) knowledge and the new knowledge must be explicated. The course of orientation begins with exploration and self-knowledge is a consequence. The pupil enters the group discussion situation with the essences of his personal competencies and relevant opportunities for actualizing them still concealed or undiscovered such that he experiences himself as a mystery. Through, e.g., perceiving, effort and breaking away from the unknown, his intuitive foreknowing can proceed to an active staying with the reality being presented so that its essentials can be unlocked.

.2 Stating the problem^(18: 234)

Stating the problem allows them to function in the group discussion as something meaningful, stimulating and questionable.^(17: 40) This allows the pupils to become aware of the inadequacy of their knowledge and motivates them to achieve the knowing aim (self-orientation aim).^(18: 234) Stating the problem provides an additional progression in the elevation of the level of self-knowing, the essential aspects of which are, e.g., questioning, expecting and striving.

From a vocational orientation perspective, stating the problem must be meaningful, be on the pupils' level of readiness and be realistic so that it motivates them to strive for self-orientation. Stating the

problem also must be functional so the pupils can experience that their additional self-knowledge can lead to a meaningful self-actualization.

8.2.3 Unlocking new content^(18: 235-237)

Self-knowledge through exploring is elevated in level to self-knowledge through discovery, the essences of which are, e.g., recognizing, identifying and becoming acquainted with. The offering of the content occurs by the pupils having been thoroughly prepared for it. Unlocking the essences occurs by the counselor, in his preparation, reducing the contents to their essences. Self-knowledge through discovery is possible in terms of these essences. Perceiving and recognizing one's own individuality and individualness become possible. To an increasing degree, it becomes possible for the pupil to identify his own uniqueness and singularity.^(6: 34-36)

Unlocking the content makes self-knowledge through discovery possible, which is a precondition for self-knowledge through evaluating. It is possible that self-knowledge through evaluating will already begin during the unlocking phase by means of deliberating, but this will only be actualized with optimal significance during the evaluating phase.

8.2.4 Evaluating

Evaluating serves the pupils to arrive at self-understanding and self-acceptance through self-judgment and taking a position. In essence, this means that the pupil comes to understand himself as possibility. The essences of evaluating are deliberating, interpreting, considering and questioning.

Exploration through actualizing foreknowledge and discovery through unlocking the new content serve to reduce the orientation contents to their elementals or essentials. With this, the first aim of categorical forming is actualized.^(20: 29)

The most important task of the counselor is to ensure that the content is understood correctly, i.e., that mistakes and

misunderstandings regarding the orientation content are eliminated so the pupils accurately and insightfully appropriate it. In this way the counselor helps the pupils actualize the orientation content.

However, the pupils must assimilate the orientation content into their own insights, which means they must be able to do something in terms of them. Thus, the elementals must be changed to fundamentals. Kruger^(9: 47) states this as follows: “where the elementals offer the possibility of entering into, accepting and possessing the content, the fundamentals concern the mastered content and, ultimately, what the child can do with that content.”

Evaluating means self-judgment by interpreting, considering and questioning one’s own personal competencies and opportunities for actualizing them in terms of the essences that become clarified. Evaluating makes it possible for a child to come to an understanding of himself as situatedness because he must answer the appeal to evaluate his personal competencies and opportunities in terms of definitive values and proceed, in accordance with them, to self-actualization (also vocational choice).

It is necessary and relevant to say that the above is not a matter of self-estimation, the most important shortcoming of which is a subjective judgment based on faulty knowledge as was indicated by Nel and Sonnekus.^(13: 66-67)

From a group discussion perspective, evaluating is essentially criterion-directed and formative because it (i) occurs in terms of the orientation content, and (ii) it indicates the extent to which the pupils have appropriated the orientation content such that self-acceptance and self-understanding have occurred.

Orientation aids can be used to facilitate, systematize and accelerate self-evaluation. Self-orientation aids, however, must satisfy the demands of validity, reliability and usability, and the point of

departure must be criterion-referenced* and not norm-referenced evaluation.

.5 Functionalizing^(18: 237-239)

From a vocational orientation perspective, functionalizing refers to the understanding and actualization of meaningful relations. As already stated, self-evaluation makes self-understanding and self-acceptance possible.

The essentials of understanding and acceptance include acquiring insight, appropriating, conquering, giving meaning and choosing. Self-evaluation involves an insight into one's own competencies and opportunities for actualizing them. Appropriation occurs by giving meaning to one's potentialities and limitations by which a person is able to choose in accordance with the level of his self-actualization. Understanding and acceptance make knowing oneself as situatedness possible. [The situation the pupil finds himself in is constituted by relationships: the relationship with the creator from whom he hears his being appealed to and to which he must answer, and the relationship with his potentialities (and also limitations) that call to be conquered and controlled].

Relations Between the Course of Orientation and the Phases of the Group Discussion

COURSE OF ORIENTATION	PHASES OF GROUP DISCUSSION
Exploring: sensing perceiving effort breaking away	Actualizing foreknowledge Stating the problem

* Criterion-referenced evaluating indicates whether the operationalized orientation aims are actualized, and by using these criteria the counselor can., e.g., judge, according to the pupil's profiles, (a) whether they can **differentiate** among their own potentialities, and (b) whether the pupils show a reliable value preference in their interests, etc. (Norm-referenced evaluating involves testing and examining for the purpose of grading and promotion.

attentive staying with
questioning
expecting
striving

Discovering: recognizing identifying becoming acquainted with	Unlocking new content (counselor and pupils) Actualizing new content (counselor guides pupils)
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Evaluating: deliberating interpreting considering questioning	Evaluating (self-evaluating)
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Understanding and accepting: insight appropriating conquering giving meaning choosing	Functionalizing (in all opportunities for actualization)
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Actualizing:
implementing
designing
assuming responsibility
actualizing meaning
emancipating

The essences of actualization are implementing, designing, accepting responsibility, actualizing meaning and emancipating. Actualization is the pupil's answer to his being appealed to; from a group discussion perspective this means that the pupil's positive competencies will be actualized in terms of relevant existing opportunities as well as in terms of future opportunities. This implies that functionalizing will not only occur in the group discussion situation but in every situation of self-actualization. Accepting responsibility makes meaningful self-actualization

possible, and this leads to increased emancipation until vocational adulthood eventually is reached.

9. Orientation content for group discussion•

As already stated, orientation content is selected with the purpose of actualizing an aim, i.e., a knowing-aim and a self-actualization aim. The orientation event only can be actualized in terms of content. Understanding one's own competencies in connection with one's own opportunities must be actualized as a level of self-actualization. The orientation task of group discussion lies precisely in the fact that all of the personal competencies and opportunities must result in a positive work and vocational disposition [so the pupil finally practices his vocation as a calling that is of benefit to himself, fellow persons and his Creator].

9.1 Authentic personal equipment as content of self-orientation

A distinction is made among: bodiliness, intellectuality, sociability and spirituality.

9.2 Opportunities for actualization as content

Opportunities for actualization are all of the opportunities within what a pupil finds himself and in which he ought to actualize his given potentialities by means of effort and work. From an early age a child finds himself in particular situations that can be typified as opportunities for actualization that have an obvious significance for vocational choice. Such situations are family life, school life, church life, political life, community life and vocational life.

9.3 Level of vocational choice as content

Responsible, optimal, meaningful, suitable, authentic vocational choice.

9.4 Philosophy of life as content

• The orientation content is explained in great detail in the previous paper by C. J. Joubert. For the sake of completeness, this is referred to briefly here.

Christian, national.

- 9.5 Work values from the perspective of a Christian philosophy of life as content

Religious, self-actualization, social, thankfulness, material values.

10. Preconditions for the effective course of a group discussion

- (a) Thorough planning by the counselor, which includes determining the orientation aims and reducing the orientation content to its essences.
- (b) Thorough preparation by the designated pupils.
- (c) The availability, systematizing and unlocking of orientation sources such as library materials, brochures, etc.
- (d) Insuring that all participants in the group discussion are treated similarly so all can freely participate in it.
- (e) Creating opportunities for sharing ideas, chiming in and deliberating.
- (f) Thorough control by the counselor so the focus is on the theme and the level of discussion is authentic.
- (g) Thorough selecting and ordering the orientation essences so that self-evaluation can occur.

11. Benefits of a group discussion

- (a) A large number of pupils can be guided to self-orientation by means of a group discussion.
- (b) Pupil participation insures that the interests of all of the pupils are maintained where a one-sided presentation by the counselor can result in boredom and moralizing.
- (c) Group participation insures an elevation in the level of understanding of the orientation content and the actualization of the orientation essences as the pupils' skillfulness in obtaining and correlating information as well as formulating and reaching conclusions is cultivated.
- (d) Group discussion has the advantage of group activity and through deliberating, reasoning, etc. with others, self-knowledge is facilitated.

- (e) Both the gifted and less gifted pupils have the opportunity to participate in the discussion.
- (f) Group discussion provides the opportunity for identifying pupils who need individual assistance.

12. Demands placed on the counselor^(19: 48-56; 7: 29)

- (a) A fundamental knowledge of pedagogics, in general, and of vocational orientation pedagogics, in particular.
- (b) Knowledge of the level of becoming and the possessed knowledge of the pupils so the beginning (entry) level of the group discussion allows all pupils to participate.
- (c) The effective handling of the group discussion so that role reversal (speaker and listener), format and procedures are used to advantage.
- (d) The tactful correction of word usage, reasoning, pronunciation, assertions, formulations, etc., so the group discussion gives evidence of relevant, logical considerations.
- (e) The effective influencing of the emotional climate of the group discussion so that affective stability is insured without dampening initiative.
- (f) "Fruitful moments" must be noticed and used by the counselor in the group discussion.
- (g) The counselor must possess the insight and skill to identify, order and formulate the essences of the orientation content brought to light during the group discussion so the pupils can proceed to self-orientation with respect to that content.

13. Factors that can allow the group discussion to fail

- (a) Degeneration of the group discussion into a dispute, chatting, etc.
- (b) Demanding too much with respect to completeness, precise formulation, etc.
- (c) Conduct or attitude of the counselor that smothers the pupil's readiness to participate.
- (d) The attitudes of the pupils themselves such as over-sensitivity, experiences of inferiority, ignorance, differences in conviction, etc.

- (e) Inadequate reduction of the orientation content.
- (f) Poor judgment regarding the different states of becoming and the possessed experiences of the various groups and individuals.

14. Criteria for judging the level of self-actualization

Knowing one's own competencies and relevant opportunities makes self-actualization possible in light of values. The criteria for judging the level of self-actualization are stated as questions.

- (a) Has the pupil arrived at authentic self-discovery, self-evaluation, self-understanding and self-acceptance and a readiness to actualize his own competencies and relevant opportunities?
- (b) Is the pupil convinced that he must never damage his own human dignity or attack that of another by his self-actualization? Attacking the human dignity of another is possible, e.g., by reducing his personal competencies to mere quantitative numbers, profiles, etc.
- (c) Does the pupil's level of self-actualization attest to an authentic, intense and lasting accountability and responsibility? From a self-actualization perspective, accountability means actualizing one's competencies as talents, and responsibility means this is done in correspondence with the level of actualization achievable.
- (d) Has the pupil arrived at his own, independent norm identification as the appropriation of a basic philosophy of work? [From a self-actualization perspective, this means the pupil will use his competencies in accordance with the mandate of God and in the service of fellow humans].
- (e) Has an elevation in level occurred in the pupil's self-actualization, especially in light of what his competencies allow him to do?
- (f) Has the youth gained an insight into the meaningful relationships among himself, his fellow humans and related matters connected with self-actualization, and is a meaningful and adequate level of actualization shown in this regard?

- (g) Do his expectations and hopes express a view of reality (realistic) in terms of his own competencies and opportunities, and does this serve to increasingly clarify a meaningful vocational future perspective?

EXAMPLE OF A GROUP DISCUSSION

Syllabus theme 2.8.3 (grade nine)

- .8 The relation between personal competencies and vocational fields.
- i. Social competence.

THE TEACHING AIM

- (a) The lesson aim (orientation aim)
To orient the pupils in terms of the concept fellow humanness.
- (b) The learning aim (knowing aim)
 - Pupils must arrive at self-orientation regarding their own social abilities.
 - Pupils must arrive at an understanding of the level of actualization of their social abilities.
 - Pupils must discover, understand and accept the vocational significance of their social abilities.

STATING THE PROBLEM

- (a) Formulating the problem
By actualizing foreknowledge and stating the problem, the pupils are guided to formulate the problem for themselves, namely, “what does fellow humanness (sociability) mean, what demands does it require of me and what is the vocational significance of this?”
- (b) Problem solution
During the group discussion phase of exposing (presenting) the new content, the following descriptions of the reduced essences of the orientation content appear on the chalkboard so the pupils can proceed to self-exploration and self-discovery:

Social (co-human) abilities

1. Communication potentiality
The ability to establish relationships with others, communicate ideas and concepts, feelings and convictions and to be able to bring another to a particular opinion.
2. Propriety and justness
To enter into suitable, fitting and just ways so everyone's rights and privileges are respected.
3. Helpfulness, tolerance, patience
A readiness to assist another, to accept another's shortcomings, and to be able to continue to provide service without getting frustrated or dejected.
4. Compassion and tact
Behaving with reasonable consideration and in observance of another's feelings, attitudes and opinions.

THE COURSE (PHASES) OF THE GROUP DISCUSSION

Actualizing foreknowledge

This theme was already begun in grade eight (Themes 2.4.3, 2.8.4, 2.9.1, etc.). Thus the pupils have at their disposal knowledge that can be recalled. Introductory questions also are asked such as "who already took part in the debate competition?", "Who has helped a person in need?"

Stating the problem

From the relevant foreknowledge the pupils are guided to experience a defect in their knowledge of what sociability (co-existentiality) precisely is, how it can be differentiated and what vocational meaning it contains. Thus, the pupils, e.g., arrive at the following questions: "What is meant by (co-existential) social competence, what demands are posed by this and what is its vocational meaning?"

Unlocking and controlling the orientation content

Pupils who have prepared themselves initiate the discussion. They place in their midst the content by means of the vocational description of four pre-selected vocations, namely, policeman, lawyer, geologist and pastoral psychologist. During the presentation (unlocking), the counselor writes the essences of the

orientation content on the chalkboard. • By further questioning, discussion and deliberation, additional essences are brought out, clarified, ordered and formulated.

The actualization of the content occurs under the guidance of the counselor who ascertains that the pupils' insights into and actualization of the essences are accurate. For example, he makes sure that the pupils know precisely what communication potentialities, etc. are, that the pupils correctly understand the relationship between communication potentialities and vocational choice.

Evaluating

Self-evaluation in terms of a questionnaire and profile:

(a) A self-evaluation questionnaire in terms of the mentioned reduction of the orientation content and by means of questions regarding the child's world of experience.

The pupils' task is to "estimate your own ability to communicate, to practice justice, to provide assistance and to show compassion." The following questions are provided:

EVALUATE YOURSELF REGARDING THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL (CO-EXISTENTIAL) COMPETENCIES:

Circle the appropriate numbers:

1 = always; 2 = often; 3 =sometimes; 4 = actually never.

• In introducing the essences, the counselor can use the inductive, deductive or a combination of the two methods as follows:

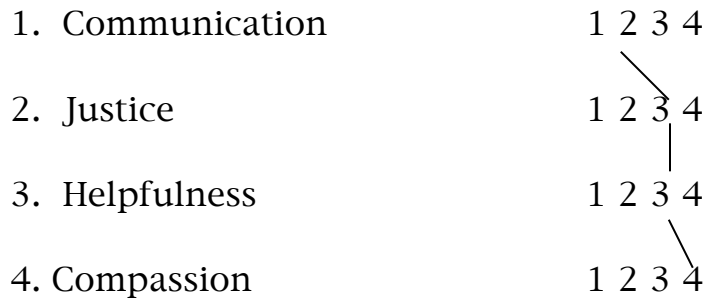
- (i) He can introduce the core concepts that come to light during the presentation and/or discussion on the chalkboard and then, with the class, proceed to a formulation (inductive)
- (ii) He can introduce the essences on the chalkboard as headings and then place the core concepts under the headings and then proceed to a formulation (deductive);
- (iii) He can fullyn describe or formulate the essences beforehand and provide them to the class so they, during the presentation, can themselves classify the particulars under the headings (provisional classification).

1. Communication potentialities	
Do you make friends easily?	1 2 3 4
Do you find it easy to chat with strangers?	1 2 3 4
Do you easily take part in discussions?	1 2 3 4
Can you clearly state your position in a class discussion?	1 2 3 4
Do you find it easy to persuade others to accept your opinions?	1 2 3 4
Do you find it easy to formulate an idea or thought so others easily understand it?	1 2 3 4
Do you find it easy to convey your real feelings during a discussion?	1 2 3 4
2. Propriety and justice	
Are you inclined to respect each person's point of view?	1 2 3 4
Are you inclined to see another person's side of the matter?	1 2 3 4
Can you easily settle a difference in opinion with another?	1 2 3 4
Do you find it easy to be fair under difficult circumstances?	1 2 3 4
Do you find it easy to be objective in a dispute?	1 2 3 4
3. Helpfulness, tolerance and patience	
Are you inclined to care for a sick person?	1 2 3 4
Are you inclined to be patient with someone who experiences many difficulties or is sickly?	1 2 3 4
Do you find it easy to have patience with old persons?	1 2 3 4
Are you inclined to help others solve their problems?	1 2 3 4
Do you find it easy to remain tolerant in spite of how another acts?	1 2 3 4
4. Compassion and tact	
Can you easily enter into another's situation?	1 2 3 4
Can you enter another's situation such that you do not hurt the other's feelings?	1 2 3 4
Can you handle an uncomfortable situation diplomatically?	1 2 3 4
Can you tactfully inspire and spur another on?	1 2 3 4

(b) The pupils must compute their averages from the questionnaire and draw a graph or profile of their own (co-existential) social competencies, as is shown in the following example:

SOCIABILITY (CO-EXISTENTIALITY) PROFILE

Name: _____ Class: _____



Vocation _____

(c) Then, as an example exercise, the group can discuss the profile(s) of one or two vocations.

(d) Then the pupils can reflect individually on the demands of the vocations they are considering and the profiles that correspond to their own.

(e) As an additional application, the group can carry out the following exercise:

“To what degree are social competencies necessary for the following persons in the successful practice of their vocations?” For each vocation, indicate the degree of sociability with 1, 2, 3, 4 (as above).

VOCATION	SOCIAL COMPETENCIES			
	Communication	Justice	Helpfulness	Compassion
Lawyer	4	4	3	3
Pharmacist				

Archaeologist

Forester

Electrician

Physician

Financial adviser

Surveyor

Researcher

Teacher

Mathematician

Accountant

Traffic officer

Nurse

Veterinarian

Machinist

Functionalizing

Because self-orientation is attained with regard to their own social ability, the pupils can actualize their own social potentialities in a more goal-directed, meaningful way in terms of available opportunities.

Summary

The group discussion is aimed exclusively at involving the pupils in ways of self-orientation by the orientation event. To be able to achieve this, the basic didactic form of conversation must be

expertly refined to narration by which all of the pupil's knowledge is brought up to standard and only then can one proceed to a discussion. The discussion must center on the essentials of the content, but much more. Not only must an inventory of content be compiled, the content also must be classified and ordered (organized). The aim of self-orientation can be actualized in terms of an effective synchronization of the form, content and course of the discussion.

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