

# W. A. LANDMAN AND THE DISCLOSURE OF THE PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY AND AIM STRUCTURES\*

C. G. de Vries  
University of Stellenbosch

## 1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

A few introductory remark about aspects that are related to what is mentioned in the title are warranted to put Landman's work in perspective. This is done to avoid, as far as possible, losing sight of the total person when aspects of his life and work are put into sharp focus. In the Faculties of Education at universities, teachers colleges and technicons where more than a passing acquaintance with the study of education occurs, the name of W. A. Landman is not unknown. This familiarity is not only the result of his having brought forth and expanded on a particular approach in the practice of pedagogics as a science but also especially because for almost two decades he has impressed with the high quality of scientific thinking that has appeared in his writings. His penetrating and direction-giving thought, particularly in the area of fundamental pedagogics, are clearly evident in each scientific contribution that has flowed from his pen.

Landman is not only recognized in South Africa as an authority in the area of fundamental pedagogics and for the outstanding quality of his pedagogical thinking but he has also receive favorable comments from noted Netherlanders such as S. Strasser, R. Bakker, W. Luijpen, and J. H. van den Berg. Landman's works are not only read by noted foreign educationists and philosophers but they even formally prescribe his works for their students (Kilian, 1977: 51). Even M. J. Langeveld, the world-renowned educationist, expresses himself as follows in his response to one of Landman's letters: "It pleases me that the pedagogical continues to develop so nicely in your country" (Landman, no date: 25). There is no doubt about the high regard that his pedagogical proficiency enjoys.

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In connection with a scientist's recognition for his thought, the immediate question that arises is about the originality of his thinking. Although there are those who are of the opinion that Landman, in his search for the essences of the phenomenon of educating or in his constituting categories, clearly is influenced by Heidegger (Turkstra, 1981: 107) and thus these are not entirely the result of his own original thinking; in this respect he receives credit for his broad erudition and for the fact that he is not merely a parrot but takes his own standpoint convincingly and accountably (Schoeman, 1971: 76). The entire matter is put into perspective by Viljoen and Van Zyl when they express the issue as follows: "Who, after all, is so gifted that he does not rely on predecessors—especially Heidegger who has shown a way of thinking?" (1973: 95).

The educationist who wants to remain confident in his scientific engagement knows that he must continually reflect on the methods he uses for his research. Also in this regard, Landman has remained confident in his engagement and decidedly can be seen as someone to whom Van der Walt refers when he writes: "The method as it is used by some educational scientists in South Africa differs markedly from the method as it was formulated by Husserl, Heidegger and Brentano" (1981: 45). His use of the phenomenological method has not remained static but shows an expanding and deepening that has even given rise to a broadening of his view of science. His work has a dynamic character because there is a clear progress observable in his dealing with the phenomenological method as well as in the outcomes or results of his thinking.

Because the way of presenting results is of particular importance in any science, it is necessary to look closely at Landman's use of language. Indeed, he does not use a simple language to carry and convey his thoughts and he has made use of constructions and phrases that are strange to the Afrikaans idiom. Put mildly, it can be mentioned that pedagogics is not written for the person on the street, and that Landman, as the father of essence-pedagogics, out of necessity used concepts and words that had not existed previously. Disclosing a new terrain necessarily brings forth new words and concepts that will not find approval everywhere. The question to which an answer must be found is if his use of language has a clarifying or obscuring influence on bringing the essence of the

phenomenon of educating to light. In terms of this criterion his use of language decidedly has a more clarifying than obscuring influence.

## 2. THE DISCLOSURE OF PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES

In the study of education no one has used the phenomenological method as a founding method more effectively than Landman. In the pedagogical activity structure as well as in the aim structure he has sought the grounds that make possible the appearance of the structures known as the activities and the aim. The phenomenological method, and indeed Landman's use of it, has guaranteed that fundamental pedagogics is and will remain a grounded science.

In a speech that Landman delivered on 12 February 1969 in accepting his professorship in the Department of the Philosophy of Education, he made the following fundamental pronouncement: "If the point of departure is the pedagogical reality and phenomenological fathoming follows, it is brought to light that the pedagogical is an exclusively anthropological matter" (Landman, 1969a: 4). However, he warns against approaching being human from a prejudged human image such as talking of being human "... as a historically determined, drive-propelled and drive-captivated being", because then it is not only incomplete but also incorrect for him to even talk of "anthropology". The phenomenologist strives for a radical rescuing from prejudgments as they arise in a number of anthropological conceptions as well as for an ontological-anthropological reflection. An ontological anthropology means that the human being is considered in his existential totality. In an ontological understanding there is a striving for a description and elucidation of the essentials of being human or for that which being human really essentially is (Landman, 1969a: 4).

For the grounding of his pedagogical activities Landman then also looked for ways of human being-there that are founded in a person's being-in-the-world that can be understood as [ontic] characteristics of being human. In 1969 he indicated *being-with*, *temporality* and *being-someone-oneself* as three examples of ontological criteria that also can serve as anthropological criteria in

order to see or reflect on and deal with human being in ontological-anthropological ways. That the concept being-with is derived from the work of Heidegger, temporality from that of Oberholzer and being-someone-oneself from that of Langeveld is not relevant; the fact is that, for our purpose, he made wide use of them that resulted in his pedagogical activity structure. The following pedagogical criteria stem from the mentioned anthropological criteria (later called categories):

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|------------------------|---|
| - Being-with           | venture-with-the-other<br>greatfulness-for-security<br>responsibility-for-relationships       |
| -Temporality           | hope-for-the-future<br>task-of-designing-potentialities<br>fulfilling-destination (adulthood) |
| -Being-someone-oneself | respect-for-own-dignity<br>task-of-self-understanding<br>freedom-to-responsibility            |

It is interesting to point out that at the end of 1969 Landman used the same anthropological criteria, now called categories, to allow pedagogical categories to stem from them, i.e., to determine what the pedagogical significance is of anthropological categories such as being-in-a-meaningful-world, being-with, temporality and being-someone-oneself (Landman, 1969b: 60-68). The anthropological categories and criteria had the same names but the pedagogical categories and criteria were named differently. Between the naming of categories and criteria, at this stage there appeared yet another difference for Landman, although it is difficult to reconcile with his standpoint at the end of 1969 when he writes: “ ... pedagogical criteria are categories with universally valid evaluative content and significance” (Landman, 1969c: 471). In his *Aanwending van die pedagogiese kategoriee in die Fundamentele Pedagogiek [The application of pedagogical categories in fundamental pedagogics]* (no date) he unambiguously states his standpoint when he writes: “When the same names are kept the fact that criteria are categories-for-evaluating is emphasized” (Landman, no date: 42). In *Inleiding tot die Fundamentele Pedagogiek [Introduction to fundamental*

*pedagogics*] (Landman & Gous, 1969b) he refers to Oberholzer's categories of *safe space* and *openness*, with *address-listen to* (as his own addition to pedagogical categories) that stem from the anthropological category of being-in-a-meaningful-world. It seems that at this stage Landman is still strongly influenced by Oberholzer who clearly distinguishes between "reflecting" and "judging" and indicates that " ... in addition to pedagogical categories, pedagogical criteria must also be designed" (Oberholzer, 1968: 325). According to Roos (1980: 113) in 1971 with the appearance of *Denkwyses in die Opvoedkunde [Modes of thinking in education]* there is a departure from Oberholzer's standpoint and criteria are now viewed as categories in the form of questions.

Although initially Landman had formulated pedagogical criteria that had stemmed from the anthropological criteria (12 February 1969), only after that was human being-there referred to as founded in his being-in-the-world; this does not mean that he only "discovered" the anthropological category of being-in-the world later. From the beginning he had no doubt that the first category of reality or the first category of being human is Dasein or his being-in-the-world (Landman, 1969c: 465). Later in the same year he appropriately formulated being-in-a-*meaningful*-world (emphasis C d V) known as one of his four anthropological categories that has being-in-the-world as a fundamental condition or precondition for the further description of categories (Landman, 1969b: 55).

This particular approach was necessary to arrive at the twelve main categories that Landman used to present his pedagogical activity structure. The words emphasized in the pedagogical criteria that stem from the anthropological criteria (categories) of being-with, temporality and wanting-to-be-someone-oneself, are the same as what are used in a recent publication in which all structures are indicated with their essences (Landman *et al.*, 1982: 111). The pedagogical categories of giving-meaning-with-increasing-responsibility, gradually-breaking-away-from-lack-of-exertion and exemplifying-and-emulating-norms that stem from the anthropological category of being-in-a-meaningful-world is taken up in the essence table of Landman's activity structure with the words *meaning*, *exertion* and *norms*. These pedagogical categories appeared for the first time somewhere between 1969 and 1972, i.e.,

between the appearance of *Op soek na Pedagogiese Kriteria [In search of Pedagogical criteria]* and *Leesboek vir die Christen-opvoeder [Textbook for the Christian Educator]*. In *Aanwending van die pedagogiese kategoriee in die Fundamentele Pedagogiek* (no date) we find the twelve pedagogical categories that stem from the anthropological categories and that also form the core of Landman's activity structure. In 1972 in his *Leesboek vir die Christen-opvoeder* Landman presented the preconditions for the course of genuine pedagogical activities and then showed further how this ought to progress in an educative situation where the educator does his educative work from a Christian foundation (Erasmus, 1972: 51). Thus, Landman went further and is not satisfied with universally valid contents and the significance of the categories and essences of the structure of activities but also made provision to include contents from a Christian foundation [as a philosophy of life matter].

### 3. THE DISCLOSURE OF THE PEDAGOGICAL AIM

Education has advanced on a long path from the time that J. F. Herbart (1776-1841) had said that pedagogics borrows its aim from ethics and its means from psychology (Gunter, 1969: 212). The progress that was made necessarily also is connected to other aspects of pedagogics such as, e.g., the place of a philosophy of life in the aim of educating and the question of the scientific justification of such a step. Landman himself was accosted by the complexity of this matter and then in no small way provided an entirely original contribution. Although it is not seen as the aim of this paper, the place of a philosophy of life in the aim of educating cannot be completely left out of consideration.

Already in 1969 in one of his most known works, i.e., *Inleiding tot Fundamentele Pedagogiek*, he left no doubt about his view of the aim of educating. Educating does not occur in a person's life for its own sake but for the sake of what results from it. Fundamental pedagogics will first learn to know the event that is known as educating and then Landman continues as follows: "Bringing to light the components and moments, deeper relationships and references of the event including illuminating its formal aim" (Landman, 1969b: 45). He had turned down [the idea of] an aim that might be

formulated from outside because in his view this would be unscientific. At this stage he was also very decisive about what philosophy of life contents would be able to provide the formal aim so that it could become enlivened in the educative situation. For him this was a post-scientific matter.

In light of later pronouncements and standpoints by Landman that had given rise to the question of a “turn” or “change” in his pedagogical thinking (Van der Walt, 1977: 68), it is interesting to indicate that he continually remained true to what he viewed as the task of pedagogics. He expressed himself as follows about this: “Pedagogics must thus autonomously decide about its own formal aim as deduced from the thinking-intuiting analysis of the phenomenon of educating that shows itself as an educative event” (Landman, 1969b: 46).

From this no other conclusion can be drawn than that pedagogics, naturally in terms of recognized scientific methods, itself must decide on the particular contents that should be given to its formal aim as well as on the way in which this should be done within the limits of scientific permissibility.

Turkstra (1981: 112) believes that Landman’s description of the educative aim corresponds, in principle, with “self-responsibility and self-determination” with which M. J. Langeveld so aptly typified the aim of educating, i.e., adulthood. This [adulthood] amounts to a time in a person’s life when “he must accept responsibility for determining himself”. Landman’s description reads as follows: “Educating must lead to the awakening of personal responsibility in [a person’s] relationships with the lifeworld. The aim of educating then is to become an adult person by making personal decisions unconditionally and in awareness of his responsibility for the claims that his lifeworld makes of him” (Landman, 1971:32). Basically this amounts to the same idea that Langeveld promotes. He also does not view adulthood as a “complete” or “final” stage but as an elevation in dialogue and choice, by implication, the adult becomes increasingly more the adult that he can and ought to be.

Landman does not obtain the aim of educating from outside of the educative situation but for him it is nothing more than the

actualization of the relationship, sequence, and activity structures with an eye to attaining the educative aim. The pedagogical aim structure to which all acts and activities must be directed in order to be classified as educating is really essentially the universally valid contents of the form of being human to which the child is on the path. He distinguishes the following as contents of adulthood:

- (i) Meaningful existence
- (ii) Self-judgment and self-understanding
- (iii) Respect for human dignity
- (iv) Morally independent choosing and acting
- (v) Norm identification
- (vi) Philosophy of life (Landman, 1971: 9).

In one of his later publications the word “responsibility” is not taken up but he complements it with morally independent choosing and acting, i.e., “... assuming responsibility for one’s own way of living independently.” Thus, by implication it is taken up.

With respect to designating contents of adulthood, Landman was not the first. Already in 1963 Gunter (1963: 11), calling it the “core” of adulthood, indicates *independence, freedom, responsibility* and *self-discipline*. Where Landman does distinguish himself as the first and original thinker is in denoting the essences of each of the six categories of the pedagogical aim structure. Here he stands out to such an extent and is clearly seen as a pioneer that it can be said that in the South African phenomenologically oriented pedagogical literature today no other categories and essences in describing the aim structure figure as much as those of Landman. In presenting the essences Landman shows his fine sense for the use of the most descriptive word or words to clearly convey a particular idea. The essences are not only presented with a word but indeed with words and concepts that convey a very clear and illuminating message. It can be said that Landman allows the pedagogical activity structure too little involvement in the aim structure, i.e., more emphasis should be placed on indicating the activities that are focused on a particular [essence of the] aim structure. This would result in a more structured table but this would include the risk that educating is so rigid that it always moves on a fixed course. Landman’s designation attests to the unpredictability of activities. A particular

activity does not always have a specific aim although it can have an original directedness to this aim. Also, a specific action can be directed to more than one aim. Despite the tabulation of categories and essences the openness of acts and activities remains present. With the disclosure of the contents of the activity and aim structures Landman corroborates that educating takes its course in a way that cannot be described as “cause and effect”.

The ground-breaking work that Landman has done in this regard speaks very clearly if it is viewed against the background of a pronouncement by his primary teacher and mentor, C. K. Oberholzer, who in 1968 had asked the question if there is any meaning in an adult intervening with a child and if there is any meaning in devoting oneself to working on a child’s future. He then answers himself as follows: “Each person must answer this question for himself since their answer will fall completely outside of the framework and competence of science” (Oberholzer, 1968: 423). Landman has illuminated the universal sense and meaning of the activity called educating without violating the task and limitations of science.

#### 4. APPLYING THE ESSENCES OF THE ACTIVITY AND AIM STRUCTURES

It is important to indicate that Landman did not bring to light his essences of the activity and aim structures, and also the relationship and sequence structures, against the background of science for the sake of science. He saw as his full-fledged task the use of already known essences to shed additional light on and acquire knowledge of essences that are hidden in other structures. In one of his works he states this as follows: “In the pedagogical situation this involves the realization of the following with an eye to the eventual actualization of the aim structures:

- (i) *Giving-meaning-with-increasing-responsibility* to all of the essences and coherencies of:
  - a) the pedagogical relationship structures,
  - b) the pedagogical sequence structures” (Landman, 1973: 147).

This gave rise to the fact that in a review after the appearance of this work it was written: “In the present publication once again it is clear what an eminent methodologist Landman is” (M. O. Oberholzer, 1973: 84).

For Landman it was necessary not to leave the essences that he illuminated in words or concepts but to descriptively illuminate them and further disclose coherencies. For example, with respect to the activity structure we find that “giving-meaning-with-increasing-responsibility” must occur because the child “ ... must *exercise* giving meaning and this occurs if the following ESSENCES OF GIVING MEANING are actualized:

- a) Attributing-meanings. Meanings are given to persons, events, etc. (Landman *et al.*, 1978: 72). [only one essence appeared in the article but the other essences appearing in Landman follow--GDY]
- b) Testing-meanings. The child must be helped to test if the meanings he attributes are correct and appropriate.
- c) Lived-experiencing meaning. The personal meaning (i.e., meaning-for-me) of what is valuable must be accepted and felt.
- d) Living meanings. The child must be helped so that what is really meaningful (important, valuable) becomes part of his way of life.
- e) Meaningful acts. Meanings, the valuable, must be transformed into acts, and in this connection, the child must receive meaningful teaching.
- f) Meaning elevation. The teacher helps the child give meaning on yet a higher level. He must give meaning in accordance with his level of becoming.

In broad strokes Landman’s work can be divided into two main streams: the first extends to approximately 1977 within which the main emphasis falls on constructing pedagogics as an autonomous science and the following period within which the main emphasis falls on the serviceability of fundamental pedagogics for the practice of educating and teaching.

## 5. SUMMARY

In summary, in disclosing the activity and aim structures with their various essences, Landman has accomplished groundbreaking work in the sense that he was the first to enter this terrain and in doing so to bring to light a corpus of knowledge that is unique and has never existed before. He has done more than just this: he introduced the essences hermeneutically and thereby threw additional light on the essences of schooling and giving lessons that were still hidden. It also is important to point out that South African educationists not only have taken note of Landman's thought but they have made use of it in their own writings.

As educationist Landman's aim was to be scientific but then only to justify his work scientifically. In this he has had excellent success; his work must also be understood and evaluated against this background.

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## AUTHOR'S ENGLISH SUMMARY

### W. A. LANDMAN'S REVEALING OF THE PEDAGOGIC ACTIVITY AND PEDAGOGIC AIM STRUCTURES

From the foregoing discussion it is obvious that Landman had made a fundamental and essential study of the phenomenon of education. In revealing the pedagogic activity and pedagogic aim structures with their essences, he did pioneer work in the sense that he was the first to enter this field and to bring about knowledge that is unique. He did more than just revealing the essences, he revealed them in a scientific and hermeneutic manner so that the ensemble of these essences became clear. Essences, which are indispensable for the appearance of the activity and aim structures, cast more light upon other structures in the pedagogic situation, as well as upon school and didactic structures.

Landman revealed the activity structure from within the following anthropological categories: being-in-a-meaningful-world, co-

existence [being-with], temporality and wanting-to-be-someone-oneself. This is the only way to lay the foundation of the pedagogic activities as activities performed by a human being in the pedagogic situation.

Landman did not bring the aim of education from outside the pedagogic situation, but to him the aim of education is nothing else than the fulfillment of the pedagogic relationship, sequence and activity structures. The pedagogic aim structure as the aim on which all the pedagogic activities are focused, is essentially the general contents of adulthood.

Landman proved himself as the most influential educationist in South Africa today. It is an honor to pay tribute to him for the scientific way in which he served the science of education.