

## CHAPTER 5

### AN EXAMPLE OF A SITUATION-ANALYSIS OF A CHILD WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND THE RESULTING DESIGN OF AN ORTHODIDACTIC PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter one it is hypothesized that an accountable orthodidactic practice can only be brought about by means of an interpretation of the pedagogical categorical structure for an orthodidactic situation. In other words, orthodidactics must be a science of convergence in so far as it must particularize macrostructural essences into microstructures with the aim of putting its own practice into motion.

In chapter two, the establishment of constituents of a disharmonious teaching situation reveals that, among other things, the orthodidactic task is to interpret and particularize fundamental pedagogical-, psychopedagogical- and didactic pedagogical-essences for its own practice, in which subject didactic insights play no small role.

In the present study there is particular concentration on the interpretive possibilities of didactic pedagogics and psychopedagogics, especially as they figure forth in the activities of teaching and learning. This topic is presented in chapters three and four. Fundamental pedagogic essences are not discussed explicitly but their implicit significance for orthodidactic practice has been evident throughout.

In the present chapter there is a discussion of how the various perspective-essences can be converged by means of an empirical investigation of limited scope that first makes diagnostic data available and second by presenting an example of the design of an orthodidactic program of providing help.

Before proceeding to such a discussion, brief consideration must be given to the possibility of an orthodidactic lesson model.

## 2. THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ORTHODIDACTIC LESSON MODEL

It is commonly emphasized that providing orthodidactic help proceeds by means of lessons and that, in its essential structure, an orthodidactic lesson cannot differ from an ordinary didactic lesson. *“Orthodidactics” (Othos-didaskein) remains, by the nature of the matter, “Didactics” (Didaskein), while a child with learning difficulties learns inadequately but not by different [modes of learning].* From this it follows that the lesson structure also includes the basic data that an orthodidactic lesson interprets.

The orthodidactic lesson design at most can be distinguished from an ordinary didactic lesson design in so far as, in its nuances and particularizations, it is directed to the learning image of a particular child with learning difficulties. Lessons are designed for him with the aim of avoiding particular underactualized modes of learning or of the greater utilization of adequately actualized modes, etc. in order to change a disharmonious teaching event into a harmonious one.

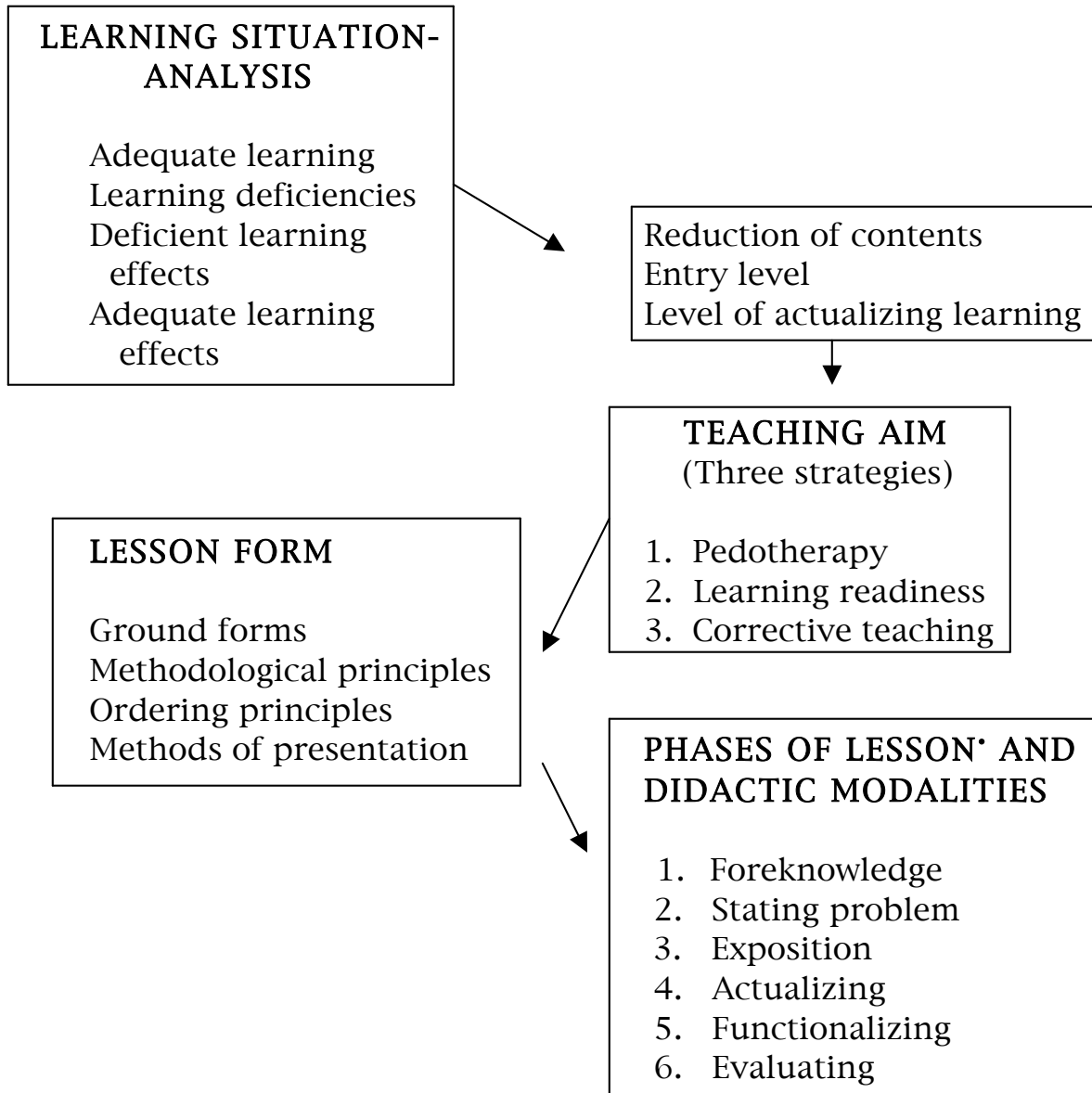
Therefore, an orthodidactic diagnostic or learning situation-analysis of a child implies not only necessary preliminary work *but in truth forms an integral unity with an orthodidactic lesson design.*

Thus, e.g., a learning situation-analysis at least makes available contents in reduced form, a related level of entry and an image of the level on which learning is actualized. Hence, an orthodidactic teaching aim is directed to these basic data and cannot be brought about in its differentiated-ness without them.

In chapter two *educative distress and an inadequately actualized psychic life* were indicated as constituents of a disharmonious teaching situation with the result of *an inadequate learning effect* (or particular learning deficiencies). Thus, an orthodidactic teaching aim continually incorporates a differentiated-ness regarding the above-mentioned moments. In summary, this amounts to three strategies each of which is taken up in the

teaching aim or that in particular circumstances can be applied as separate strategies, namely, pedotherapy, learning readiness programs and corrective teaching.

Against the background of these few cursory remarks, the following model of providing orthdidactic help is offered:




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\* The first five phases of the course of a lesson are continually repeated; they also are characterized by checking and correcting.

### **3. AN EXAMPLE OF AN ORTHODIDACTIC PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE**

#### **3.1 An image resulting from a learning situation-analysis/orthodidactic diagnostic**

##### **3.1.1 Identifying data**

Susan, 7 years, 7 months, first grade.

##### **3.1.2 Statement of the problem**

Her mother says that Susan is in first grade for a repeated year, that she continually cannot fend for herself, and that her scholastic problems are in reading, spelling and computing. Although there has appeared to be a degree of improvement, reversals and mirror writing arise frequently, and her word-recognition is very poor.

Already she represents the school in a negative light, especially because she also can keep no friends and is extremely alone. Her teachers lament that she is undisciplined and that she continually interferes during a lesson and that they find her to be very annoying. She is excessively dependent and demanding in a variety of ways.

##### **3.1.3 Summarized person image**

###### **3.1.3.1 Historicity**

Susan finds herself in a complete family and has a ten-year-old brother who is asthmatic and who also does not achieve well in school. Her physical development progresses normally but she attained her milestones at a slightly older age than normal. She first walked at twenty-two months but on the other hand at fourteen months she spoke understandable little sentences. Because of viral infections between her sixth month and fourth year, she developed a very high fever and as a result was hospitalized one time for two weeks.

She is in a family in which marital tensions readily arise. Her mother attributes these tensions to the fact that her husband “has not yet completely grown up”. Her father blames them on his wife’s continual attempt to dominate.

The quarrels are often about dealing with the children. The father is a harsh person who concerns himself little with the children and consequently there is not a strong attachment between them and their father.

The relationship between the mother and Susan is particularly strong, to such a degree that she openly recognizes that she spoils her a lot and that, in general, she is overprotective. On the other hand, she is very stern with her son and is aware that she is often impatient with him.

The mother works fulltime and usually only gets home after 6 PM. The children are under the care and supervision of a trustworthy domestic servant who also sees to it that the children complete their homework each afternoon.

The parents are not sympathetic members of their church and religious practice plays a very small role in the family life as is evidenced by the fact that the children do not receive any religious instruction.

Susan attended a nursery school for a year before her school entry. Before she started school at 6 years 3 months of age, the nursery school seriously questioned her school readiness. However, tests at school found her to be ready but her mother considered her to be definitely not ready for school.

Initially Susan didn’t want to go to school at all. From the beginning she had little success with reading and spelling but otherwise there were no complaints on the part of the school about her progress. The teachers had come to the point of complaining to the mother about Susan’s excessive seeking attention. However, the mother did not get the impression that she experienced serious problems with her schoolwork. Hence, it was a great shock when she was not promoted to grade 2.

Susan had already gone through the school's program for making a child ready for school for the second time and in spite of this her progress is still not as desired. An analysis of her earliest progress report shows that an average symbol of 3\* was given to her physical-motor development, 4 for her native language (that includes speaking, verbal understanding, poetry and reading preparation), 4 for independence and work tempo and 3 for assignments, social adjustment and attention).

### 3.1.3.2 Actualizing psychic learning

#### a) Intellectual ability

On the New South African Intelligence Scale (N.S.A.I.S.) Susan obtained a total intelligence score of 97 with a verbal score of 95 and a non-verbal score of 101. The quality of here intelligence appears to be normal.

She achieved best on the "block design" (with a scale score of 12 out of a possible 20) and on "verbal reasoning" (11/20). She faired poorest on "memory" and "comprehension" where she obtained a scale score of 6 and 9 respectively.

It commonly appears that her *intelligence, as a given potentiality*, is inadequately actualized: Indications of pathic-affective lived experiences such as are shown in a labile directedness and inadequate attending entail arriving at an inadequate gnostic-cognitive position. This is deduced from the fact, among others, that she often answers relatively "easier" problems incorrectly and answers more "difficult" ones correctly.

#### b) Psychic life structure

##### (i) Intentionality structure

Susan is a neat little girl who initially had appeared to be reserved and distrustful and in due course had begun to participate in the

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\* On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is very good and 5 is very poor.

conversation. However, she continually asked about her mother. Throughout the entire investigation she continually showed a poor venturing attitude. However, when she eventually began talking, she was not quiet for a moment, and she experienced difficulty executing the research [tasks].

An analysis of her discourse (as a functional use of language) disclosed the following tendencies:

- Her formulations are limited. Language is not readily available and she searches for words and expressions;
- Her discourse is “content-less”; she speaks for the sake of speaking; her talking serves as a foothold in a search for safety and security in an unfamiliar situation;
- Pathic-affective “outbursts” such as screaming (for no specific reason), giggling, while there is a conspicuous lack of emotional lading observed in her use of language. Meaningless repetitions of phrases and words are common;
- Linking up with the above: Susan is easily distractible and it seems that she often “forgets” what she is involved in saying and that half-completed sentences often arise;
- She shows an unclear “sloppy” pronunciation;
- It bristles with language errors, some of which are allowable in light of her level of becoming. Others are of a serious nature: She consistently talks of “om” where she means “omdat”, of “hom sin” instead of “syne” or “hare”, etc. [In Afrikaans]. (Possibly the result of the domestic servant’s influence?).

The implementation of various performance media have brought to light a more detailed level of intentionality: An inadequate intentionality is manifested where the assigned task does not result in a specific achievement (See the Rorschach inkblot medium and the Columbus Series of Langeveld) and also when the media do not require that a *formal* gnostic-cognitive position be taken (e.g., the Guide-it).

However, when the tasks are such that taking a gnostic-cognitive position is a precondition for adequately handling them, it appears that her intentional directedness “gives way” and a labile, changing and even waning structure is shown.

(ii) **Gnostic-cognitive structure**

Susan continually gives evidence of an unordered gnostic-cognitive position. Her easy distractibility and hyperactive behaviors are themselves an indication of a *labile sensing*. Further evidence of this is found in the fact that she is attuned to the conspicuous, the playful and the effortless. However, when she has directed her sensing to concrete objects, there are indications of a more stable sensing in so far as she then has appeared less distractible.

She indeed is able to *attend* selectively, i.e., to proceed to direct her gnostic-cognitive potentialities to a specific object of attention.<sup>1)</sup> However, it seems that this is only momentary and that her attending show a meta-stable character. Because of her unreadiness to take a gnostic-cognitive position, her level of attending changes from adequate to inadequate depending on the gnostic-cognitive requirements the task contains. She creates the impression that she often avoids a “difficult” task and her attending is directed to easier, more pleasant and obvious matters. Thus, she shows an “adequate” attending on the “Guide-it” but it seems that the real task is gradually thrown to the wind. Her ultimate aim is an attempt to hold the small ring in front of each gate in such a way that it must “catch” and guide the little ball before it can fall through [the hole]. Thus, her “adequate” attending can be interpreted rather as a falling back on sensing. Should she be referred to the original task, her labile attending again clearly enters the foreground.

With respect to her *perceiving* as a gnostic-cognitive mode of learning it must be emphasized that the quality of her actualization of it, in no small degree, is influenced by the quality of her attending. (This observation holds true for all of the gnostic-cognitive modes of learning). She often gives evidence of an inadequate (auditory and visual) perceiving, but when an appeal is made to attend adequately such perceptual inadequacies disappear. She awakens the suspicion that she is someone who is not [actively] directed at *looking* and *listening* in a situation, as if she doesn't feel involved and in this way she wants to seclude herself in her world.



*The resulting perceptual “deficiencies” must continually be evaluated in light of these remarks, but it is admitted that such a perceptual style can promote authentic perceptual deficiencies.*

Her *visual perception* seems to be excessively global-identifying in nature,<sup>2)</sup> and that an articulated or analytic perceiving breaks through with difficulty. The Behn-Rorschach protocol gives clear evidence of a global-diffuse perceiving (18 W responses out of a total of 24) and also an inadequate perceptual analysis (only 4 of the 18 W responses are W+). This is definite evidence of an inadequate perceptual synthesizing and ordering, and this is entirely expected in the light of the above. This is illustrated in the following, as well as other responses:

Plate II: “Here drops of water run down everywhere”.

Plate VIII: “This looks like colors”.

Plate X: “They are all spiders”.

Confirmation of this vague, global-diffuse mode of perceiving is found with almost all of the media, but the above examples suffice.

Moreover, with the help of differentiated diagnostic media it seems that her visual perceiving is deficient with respect to adequate discrimination, sequencing, pattern- and figure-completion and spatial orientation.

With respect to her *auditory perceiving* there also is mention of inadequateness of which problems of discrimination, memory and sequencing are prominent. Her temporal orientation that is directly related to motor-auditory perception is also very poorly differentiated:<sup>3)</sup> She cannot yet distinguish among the concepts “yesterday”, “today” and “tomorrow”, she does not know the days of the week, and with respect to the number line, she does not understand what is meant by the concepts *before* and *after*. However, with the help of the pin-board medium she is able to grasp their meaning but only after they are explained in detail and are practiced.

Mindful of the findings of Rispens,<sup>4)</sup> that there is a clear relationship between articulation and auditory discrimination, her articulation

problems take on a new dimension and possibly they can be related to her inadequate auditory discrimination.

In addition, she experiences problems with sensorimotor integration. Her eye-hand coordination is below par while her fine motor coordination is also not as desired. Her handwriting is a good example of this: She has a firm grasp of the pencil, and she pushes it very forcefully on the paper. (Although below par, the problem is not viewed as being serious).

Susan shows a *body image* that is not adequately differentiated: Although her laterality has already differentiated itself into a complete right-sidedness, and although she can to a degree already [make movements] across the midline, she still shows problems, especially with her sense of direction.

As far as her *thinking* going out to reality is concerned, there also is mention of deficiencies in actualizing thinking. Mindful of the fact that thinking as a mode of learning is closely related to perceiving, it is not strange that often her thinking is not directed to solving a particular problem. Various moments in the investigation pointed to these tendencies: She handled the Blocks from the N.S.A.I.S without acquainting herself with the real problem. Eventually the original problem faded away and her attending and thinking became absorbed in immediate and coordinated problems. Therefore, she creates the impression that the blocks are approached arbitrarily and that her activities are determined by “fleeting” associations. In other words, her thinking activity is restrained by a labile sensing.

On the Formboard (N.S.A.I.S.) she gives evidence of lived experiencing a problem but here she shows an inadequate actualization of thinking in so far as there is mention of unorderedness, a deficient classification and schematizing. In truth, her solutions occur on a trial-and-error level and when this doesn't yield fruit she reverts to pathically flooded, infantile behaviors, e.g., by wanting to force the different elements into a particular position.

Susan's *remembering*, as a mode of learning, shows an inadequate actualization. She achieved poorest on the Memory items of the

N.S.A.I.S. As a consequence of a pathic lability she mixes the contents with the possessed experiences from her own visits to the zoo. Her reproduction of the contents of the item reads as follows: “One day an uncle and auntie took their two children to the zoo. They had looked at all of the animals and then ate delicious ice cream. After this took place their dad decided they must go home”.

Her response gives clear evidence of an associative giving of form but because of her labile affectivity she allowed the remembered contents to be colored by irrelevant possessed experiences.

All the same, it seems that contents memorized by drill work are well remembered.\* Bible verses, recitations, etc. are no problem for her because memorizing has the benefit that irrelevant possessed experiences are gradually eliminated, and that the contents remain accessible to a child as a “package”. The act of memorizing, moreover, does not place as high a demand on attending as an accompanying mode of learning because as the memorizing progresses, the quality of attending required decreases.

However, when remembering has an adequate attending as a precondition, where her remembering must be paired with the ordering, synthesizing and systematizing of facts,<sup>7)</sup> it is evident that then she inadequately joins in. What is more, when the remembering must occur via auditory perception (as in the above memory-item), it becomes all the more problematic because the quality of her listening falls under suspicion.

With respect to *imagining* and *fantasizing* as modes of learning it seems that Susan can scarcely create an unreal world of imagination. Her concrete-bound expressions on the projective media are characteristic of this inability, and it is not surprising that in implementing play media such as the Von Staabs she doesn't show the slightest indication of an illusive level of play. Rather her play occurs on the level of a playful handling [of the toys], with the

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\* Sonnekus and Ferreira<sup>6)</sup> assert that remembering by a school beginner is still strongly associatively bound, and that the memorization of cognitive content still occurs mainly by means of drill work.

exception of momentary breakthroughs to a level of constructive play.<sup>8)</sup>

Her inadequate imagining and fantasizing also are manifested in an inadequate spatial visualization that, in its turn, has a restraining effect on the spelling of words. (See chapter four, 2.3).

In summary, it appears that Susan has difficulty in being able to take an adequate gnostic-cognitive position because of an inadequate actualization of the modes of learning. The latter especially takes out its vengeance on a psychic-linguistic level because an adequate mastery of speaking, reading, spelling and computing presuppose a flexible dealing with concepts and ideas that are the culmination of an integrated actualization of the modes of learning.

### (iii) Pathic-affective structure

Susan gives evidence of an extremely labile emotional life that, among other ways, is expressed as anxiety, tension, insecurity, a “manic” cheerfulness and aggression. She is excessively dependent, she appears as very infantile and is continually seeking attention.

Confirmation of a labile pathic structure of lived experience is found on all of the expressive and projective media. [On the Behn-Rorschach]: a high percent of A responses, the predominance of CF- and YF- responses over FC- and FY- responses, various combinations of S responses, a loose succession and content responses such as “water”, “sand”, “stones” and “color” were found.

Also striking is the complete absence of H responses. Together with the data from other media, interpersonal relationship problems are indicated. Projective expressions on the Columbus series indicate a lived experience of loneliness and a lack of friends. Her responses to the familiar “school plate” (Plate 18) of the Columbus series gives unambiguous evidence of this: “One is playing, and then a little boy runs past and will not play with the little girl who does not have a little friend, and there sits another one who doesn’t have a little friend, and then she eats her bread”.

The mother figure is experienced as a friend, as someone who “plays with my dolls”, “as someone who does everything for me”. The father figure is conspicuously absent and figures nowhere in the diagnostic data.

Indications were found of the experience of being blocked that is not only limited to the formal school contents but also is found over the entire range of her becoming a person. She is spiritless with respect to her educative situation at home, she “hates” going to school, and she only wants “to stay with mamma the entire day”. She shows an unwillingness to explore, emancipate and distantiate that, under all circumstances, leads back to an experience of educative distress. Therefore, it is not surprising that she also shows feelings of inferiority and a blocked future perspective.

#### **(iv) Normative-meaning giving structure**

Linking up with the foregoing observations, Susan shows herself as a docile child. This docility, however, contributes to confusion and uncertainty because the parental norms exemplified to her are often inconsistent and even contradictory. Thus, e.g., her father places a high premium on academic achievements while her mother doesn't care about that. He was clearly not pleased with her early school progress report while her mother had allowed her to understand that here achievement was good.

It is not at all surprising if there is a duality with respect to particular life values. She is confused and uncertain with respect to norm identification, a problem that is made worse by the parents' inadequate presentation of such norms.

She shows a deficient sense of responsibility, not only with respect to her schoolwork but also regarding the few house chores assigned to her. The parents' exercise of authority is extremely inconsistent and this contributes to the acceptance of and a practicing to an adequate sense of responsibility often not succeeding.

#### **3.1.3.3 The disharmonious teaching event**

In order to acquire a totality image of a child's learning-being-in-the-world the image of the actualization of her learning must be related to the educative events in which she has participated. Before that, some comments about the parents' historicity must be made for the sake of better understanding their intervention with their children.

#### **a) The mother**

The mother is from a family where a strong patriarchal structure was maintained. Everything had revolved around her father: his word was the law and no disagreements were tolerated. He was a righteous and dynamic person who could also be sympathetic and approachable. She identified herself strongly with her father, and she viewed him as the ideal husband and father.

Her only brother was extremely overprotected by her mother and as a result today he has quite a few personality problems. However, she had not received much love from her mother. Her father despised weaklings such as her brother.

She had progressed academically to the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and had not attained any post-school qualifications. "In spite of this", she is a successful businesswoman, "that once again shows that [school] learning is not everything". She attributes her success to the fact that she, just as her father, is very enterprising and has a knack for working with people. Also she earns much more than her husband.

#### **b) The father**

The father is a late lamb of parents of advanced age. His brothers and sisters were already married and because his parents did not have the chance either to bring him up or to possibly have rejected him, he was shuttled around among his brothers and sisters. Thus he has little idea of a normal family setup and recognizes that he does not know what the obligations and tasks are of a father in a family.

He is a dependent person; he does not take the initiative in family matters and does not show the image of a strong father figure.

According to the mother she never tries to compare him with her father because he will come off the worst.

However, she gladly wants her husband to be a stronger figure and she promotes the father's self-image in a variety of subtle ways.

The father is a very active sportsman that entails that especially on weekends he is often away from the family.

**c) Disharmonious educative moments in terms of fundamental [pedagogic] relationship structures**

In accordance with the interpretive and particularizing character of orthodidactics (See chapter one), an educative shortcoming can best be shown for a particular practice by evaluating it in terms of pedagogical criteria. Limited space only allows for an evaluation of Susan's pedagogical situatedness in terms of disharmonious relationships, although disharmony in the sequence (course), activities and aims also will receive passing attention.

**(i) Disharmonious relationship of trust**

Superficially it can be asserted that the mother-child relationship attests to an adequate trust: A particular authentic relationship within which the mother, in her own words, "is completely happy and satisfied", and where she sometimes has a bit of unhealthy fear because her child does not receive enough pampering.

However, on further inquiry it seems that the mother uses the Susan as an object for her own security and as a means of allaying her own conscience. The fact that she comes home only after 6 PM so accosts her conscience that she does everything for her child and places the minimum of demands and requirements on her. A typical evening is described as one where she finds the children at home in front of the television and they immediately eat the evening meal while watching television. Since the domestic servant does the cleanup work, they continue to relax until Susan falls asleep on her mother's lap.

The mother readily admits that when they are by each other, from her side not much more occurs than a mere bodily coddling. Thus, it seems that a pedagogic association is brought about and that there can even be mention of a pedagogic encounter. Because of an inadequate assumption of responsibility, a pedagogic engagement cannot flourish and the encounter reverts back to a pedagogic association.

The mother recognizes that the educative moments that present themselves often are ignored because she “doesn’t want to create drama after a tiring day”.

Thus she denies her responsibility to interfere educatively with Susan out of fear that her pedagogic intervention will damage the relationship of trust.<sup>9)</sup> When she does intervene, the trust wanes in each case because her intervention “usually” amounts to raving and shouting.

These actions make her husband become cantankerous and irritable and then he is inclined to protect the children from their mother. This not only leads to a further impairment of the relationship of trust among the father, the mother and the children but also to a further confusion of the children with respect to the normative.

There is not really a harmonious relationship of trust between Susan and her mother, among other reasons, because the trusting educative encounter cannot flourish into a trusting educative intervention. She does not fulfill the child’s expectation of the elimination of her educative distress. Therefore, Susan no longer experiences her mother as an authentic educator. She experiences her as someone who does not expect much from her, as someone who does not care if she grows up or not, as someone who all the same offers here physical security. *Therefore, it is obvious that the inadequate relationship of trust between mother and child serves as a foundation for affective lability.*

The above discussion also gives evidence of a vaguely defined educative aim, micro-structurally as well as macro-structurally. A confusing-appearing educative aim, moreover, emerges from the unaccountable view that the school alone is responsible for a child’s



acquisition of knowledge and that the parents have no responsibility in this regard. The result of this is that Susan also does not have at her disposal a presumed aim of becoming [an adult] or that, at most, it is extremely vague.

There is little mention of a relationship of trust between the father and Susan. According to him, he has a dislike for little children and during their babyhood he never picked his children up or coddled them. Nowadays he has too little time at his disposal to give Susan or her brother attention.

Although he is more approachable and less strict (sic!) than the mother is, it seems that he cannot bring about an adequate relationship of trust because he *will* not involve himself with educating his children. He has a negative attitude towards the children and, according to the mother, remarks such as the following are typical of his disposition towards the children: “You (the son) don’t suffer from asthma. There is nothing wrong with you and you don’t start anything because you are afraid to play rugby”. Towards Susan: “When I see you, you irritate me so much with your childishness and attention seeking that I could scream”.

It is clear that functional “educative” activities such as these are in direct conflict with the realization of a harmonious relationship of trust, *and that it necessarily serves as a feeding ground for a labilized emotional life of Susan*. She experiences her father as someone who is always too busy, who doesn’t have time for her, as someone with whom she dare not identify herself because he will not have it.

Susan’s [two] teachers emphasize over and over that she is a particularly demanding child and that she is only satisfied when she has captured their undivided attention. This has caused them to establish a degree of distance [from her]. Both readily admit that in many respects their relationship of trust with Susan progresses disharmoniously.

Therefore, it is not surprising that Susan dislikes going to school, that she does not identify herself at all with her teachers and experiences herself as troublesome and in the way. *This not only*

*contributes to a further labilizing of her emotions but, in truth, this influences the entire range of her being a person as manifested in an extremely unfavorable self-image.*

**(ii) Disharmonious relationship of understanding**

The parents interpret Susan's excessive attention seeking at best as a trait of amiability and friendliness by which she wants to show her love for her parents. That her parents do not interpret her excessive search for attention as a symptom of a deeper-lying educative distress necessarily points to a disharmonious relationship of understanding.

The parents' inadequate understanding of Susan's experiential world comes to the fore in excessively simplistic and one-sided pronouncements of which the following serve as good examples:

- Her nightmares are attributed to too much television. The father refuses to go to the child because he views the nightmares as her just reward.
- The child is held back in her previous grade because she had not pleased her teacher.

The parents are not able to understand that there is a parallel between the child's level of becoming and the inadequate actualization of learning. One actually gets the impression that the child's inadequate learning achievements do not bother them. Perhaps this explains the mother's remark that Susan had been brought to the [University of Pretoria] Child Guidance Institute simply "because the teachers have insisted on it for so long".

Such an inclination is to be expected, especially if it is kept in mind that the domestic servant supervises the children's homework in the afternoon. In addition, the parents recognize that, as a rule, they do not ask the child about her school activities and that they specifically do not encourage her to achieve better scholastically.

Susan experiences her parents as people who don't really understand her distress, a matter that necessarily must intensify her

experience of insecurity. The latter once again gives rise to a further under-actualization of the gnostic-cognitive modes of learning that result in poor learning achievements.

The teacher recognizes that she often becomes annoyed if Susan has not adequately mastered the learning material after repeated explanations. "I know that Susan can achieve better but she often creates the impression that she is mischievous". From this it is clear that her teacher also does not maintain an adequate relationship of understanding with Susan and that she does not understand the child's affective distress.

### (iii) Disharmonious relationship of authority

Because of the meaningful connections with each other that the pedagogical relationship structures show, it is necessary that by virtue of the disharmonious relationships of trust and understanding that the relationship of authority miscarry.<sup>10)</sup>

Mention is already made of the parents' inconsistent exercise of authority. In this way the exercise of authority often is un-pedagogical because it is not an intervention that springs from an intimate educative encounter. It is not an activity with pedagogic engagement as a basis but is an unwilling activity carried out under compulsion. It is especially the father who transgresses in this respect simply because the mother will not apply corporal punishment herself, and he is forced to discipline the children in the evening.

No wonder that Susan experiences her parents as not understanding, as persons who hinder her in adequately developing her wanting to be-someone.

It was also mentioned that the parents admit to an inadequate exemplification of the demands of propriety. Little attention is given to the demand of accepting responsibility and exercising the demands of propriety. She is not addressed about her disobedience, lack of exertion and inadequate involvement with norms. Therefore, she experiences norms as having no authority or at least as if she didn't have to heed them. Their distorted meanings thus

cannot be done away with, and her inadequate involvement with them must necessarily result in a reinforcement of her labile emotionality.

#### **3.1.3.4 Learning outcome**

The preceding deficient actualizations of learning must necessarily promote particular deficiencies in learning outcomes because the child's hesitant and unprepared entry into the teaching event, her labilized emotional life and the concomitant taking of an inadequate gnostic-cognitive position all have the consequence of inadequate learning effects.

Since the junior primary phase of schooling is almost exclusively involved with the acquisition of reading, writing and computing skills, an orthodidactic investigation is also directed to these acquisitions. The following reading-, spelling- and computing-images are obtained for Susan.

##### **a) Reading- and spelling-image**

Really there is no mention of a reading- and spelling-image as such simply because Susan shows an almost total inability.

She does not have an adequate symbol-awareness at her disposal. It seems as if the insight has barely begun to break through that words are representations of a piece of reality. She is able to recognize a few monosyllabic [Afrikaans] words, or rather to construct them by spelling, such as "os", "is", "kop" and "lig".

Symbol confusion is common and reversals also often arise. Meaningless spelling is more a rule than an exception. Thus she spells "tietkk" for "soet", and "sietie" for "gaan uit" (the "s" in mirror writing).

Recognizing and naming letter symbols are left largely to her whims. Letter confusions that arise often are the following: "y" for "g", "m" for "n", "p" for "b", "d" for "p" and "e" for "a".

From the nature of the matter her visual analysis and visual memory are far below the mark, but it seems that when she has

different word elements at her disposal she is capable of a synthesis. Because of an absent global concept, her attempted synthesis, however, is the result of piecing together sound elements with the necessary result of phonetic spelling: “ari” for “are” and “onPr” for “onder” that in writing she always sounds out to “o-n-di-r” (hence the fact that the “e” is missing).

She shows a degree of skillfulness with respect to the formal act of writing. Her letter forming is good but it appears that she handles the writing material clumsily, especially in so far as the pressure of the pencil on the paper is very strong.

### **b) Arithmetic image**

Although Susan can count to fifteen, there is still little mention of an authentic notion of number.

She is not yet able to classify perhaps because of an inadequate grip on concepts of classification such as “some”, “a few”, “none”, etc. In addition a number does not function as an abstract indication of an aggregate. She is not in a position to recognize six blocks that are continually arranged in front of her in various ways (e.g., three groups of two each, and two groups of three each) without counting them beforehand.

Susan cannot count backward from 5 or carry out the simplest “abstract” manipulations such as  $3 + 2 =$  , or  $3 + = 5$ . (She indeed correctly answered the first three questions from the problem test of the N.S.A.I.S., but it must be kept in mind that these manipulations occurred in terms of blocks).

### **3.1.3.5 Synthesis**

The above discussions unquestionably show that Susan finds herself in a situation of distress. Because of the disharmonious actualization of the essences of educating, she experiences an intense insecurity that is manifested in despair, anxiety, decreased self-confidence, an obscured future perspective, etc.

This affective lability is not only a hindering factor in her intentional going out to and concerned involvement with the world but it also has the effect of a weakened appeal that is directed to her. Therefore, her behaviors show an inadequate actualization of becoming as reflected in [the quality of] her exploring, emancipating, distancing, differentiating and objectifying.

Consequently, she shows an inadequate readiness to learn. Her sensing is highly labilized and since this is not only the first concerned involvement with the contents but also accompanies the gnostic-cognitive modes of learning this means that she cannot devote herself to attentively learning the contents. Her possessed experiences that give rise to experiences of anxiety, insecurity, etc. sporadically and spontaneously intrude themselves into the learning situation and these irrelevant contents even mix with and supplant those contents that she must devote herself to attentively learn.

*Therefore, Susan is not able to adequately attend and thus it is obvious that her learning progresses inadequately.*

Inadequately actualized gnostic-cognitive modes of learning result in her showing particular deficiencies in actualizing learning. The adequate actualization of learning presumes an adequate unfolding of all of the particularized aspects of the various modes of learning. Because of her inadequate participation in practice opportunities that are limited by the parents' overprotection, the progressive thriving of the particularizations of the modes of learning are severely restrained. The already mentioned overprotection, as well as the daily absence of the parents mean that Susan does not receive adequate opportunity for and guidance regarding auditory and visual discrimination, the discovery of distinctive characteristics, spatial orientation, etc.

On the perceptual-motor level she shows the following handicaps to a greater or lesser degree:

- Failures in form perception.
- Deficiencies in visual and auditory discrimination (that imply a handicapped analysis and synthesis).
- Failures in visual memory.

- Uncertainty about direction.
- Sequencing problems that in a wider connection include balance, rhythm, and awareness of time.
- Problems of sensory-motor integration.

The question of whether her learning image can be a result of a psycho-neurological dysfunction can be raised because it is known that with particular children who have perceptual-motor deficiencies, a diagnosis is made of “minimal brain dysfunction” or “psycho-neurologically learning handicapped”.<sup>11)</sup>

Although consideration of such a possibility can be entertained, the necessity of a diagnostic of this possibility from an orthodidactic perspective is strongly prescribed. The question that can be legitimately asked is whether or not the confirmation of a psycho-neurological dysfunction will be able to clarify the problems of a particular child with learning difficulties. How such a child is dealt with further does not depend on the label or category that is attributed to him or her. In order to be able to deal further with such a child an accurate as possible learning image of him/her must be acquired and a neurological diagnostic can hardly contribute to it.

*The conviction is that, in all cases, the child's problems lead back to moments of inadequate personal actualization of which the to be distinguished affective, volitional and cognitive aspects make a cumulative contribution to the problems that he or she manifests on a psycho-linguistic level.*

Together with a “sick” parental guidance [of their children] in terms of, among other things, taking responsibility, breaking away from lack of exertion, fulfilling one's destination [i.e., adulthood], the worthiness of being human and self understanding,<sup>12)</sup> her deficient actualization of learning results in an inadequate self-image or self-concept. This means an inadequate interpretation of the self within a personal-social dimension. Indications of this are found, e.g., in an excessive egocentric focus, overdependence, problematic social relationships, etc.

### 3.2 Providing orthodidactic assistance

### 3.2.1 Reduction of learning outcomes via the actualization of learning

If a child's learning outcomes are related to her actualization of learning, this forms a unity in so far as deficiencies in the actualization of learning are manifested in particular deficient learning effects.

Thus, e.g., a combination of inadequate attending, temporal-spatial disorientation and under-actualized gnostic-cognitive modes of learning results in reversals and garbling words or meaningless ways of spelling.

A phonetic way of spelling again implies an inadequate concept of "word". Among other things, concept of word means handling a word as separate from the lived experiential, as an articulated, global, abstract representation that can be constructed without sound and that can be recognized without the laborious patching together of each separate letter into a phoneme and from the phoneme into a word.

Thus a phonetic way of spelling is an indication of an inadequate actualization of the gnostic-cognitive modes of learning, especially in terms of thinking, imagining and remembering. Because of the inadequate conception of the global word, the child is continually dependent on auditory perception in terms of which the word must be constructed by sound. And since Susan shows auditory discrimination problems and an inadequate attending, it is not surprising that her word construction (that really amounts to phonetic spelling) results in meaningless spelling.

The above reduction clearly discloses the *entry level* for providing orthodidactic help. It appears that Susan still cannot firmly link together the relationship between the sound of the spoken language and the language symbol as a sign or representation of that sound. Because of a variety of factors such as an inadequately differentiated temporal-spatial orientation, the basis of which is reducible to perceptual-motor problems, she is not able to adequately recognize graphemes or phonemes.



Hence, this means that Susan shows perhaps a retardation of two years in the basic skills, reading, spelling and computing. From the beginning reading, spelling and computing instruction progressed disharmoniously and therefore the level of entry cannot be found any other place than in the beginning event of unlocking in the formal teaching situation.

### 3.2.2 Reduction of the actualization of learning in terms of adequately and inadequately actualized modes of learning

It has been emphasized repeatedly that in his diagnostics an orthodidactician must make an as careful as possible determination of the level of actualization of the various cognitive modes of learning. By this is meant that he must determine which of the various modes of learning will be the most readily “available” for a harmonious unlocking of the learning material.

The underlying idea here is that the orthodidactic lessons will be designed such that they will direct a stronger appeal for the adequate actualization of the modes of learning. In this way, there is a better chance to allow a harmonious teaching event to be set in motion. On the other hand, those modes of learning identified as inadequately actualized and by means of practice an attempt is made to also bring their under-actualization to a more adequate actualization.

The problem that the orthodidactician confronts in this respect is that there is no objective norm available in terms of which such a determination can be made. The different modes of learning cannot be weighed *against each other* because there is not a comparable learning situation in terms of, say, remembering and perceiving that can be created. By its nature, learning is always a unitary act in which all of the modes of learning are implicitly present. The different modes of learning are only distinguished in so far as the *act of learning is differentiated into various gnostic-cognitive directions.*<sup>13)</sup>

Attending in its accompanying character is always involved with the actualization of the gnostic-cognitive modes of learning and therefore should be able to be considered as a norm. However, the problem is that the actualization of attending is restrained by the same factors as the gnostic-cognitive modes of learning and that it cannot serve as a constant norm. Thus, Van Niekerk<sup>14)</sup> interprets the gnostic-cognitive modes of learning as differentiated ways of attending because, on the one hand, they are constitutive of the act of attending and, on the other hand, they cannot be actualized without taking a position of attending.

Thus, it appears that the state of the actualization of each mode of learning must be evaluated *in itself* and that such an evaluation occurs primarily in terms of the orthodidactician's understanding attitude of knowing. In order to obtain a global image and to bring about a degree of comparability, a polarity profile is compiled in terms of adequateness and inadequateness [of actualizations]. In this way he can then determine what modes of learning can be anticipated in his lesson design and what (at least provisionally) must best be avoided.

A polarity profile of Susan's actualization of learning as seen from this follows: (See p. 222).

### **3.2.3 The program of providing orthodidactic assistance**

The discussions of Susan's learning image give clear evidence of three problem areas, namely a labilized emotional life, an inadequate readiness to learn and an inadequate attending with the result of the inadequate taking of a gnostic-cognitive position as especially shown in the state of her actualization of the modes of learning.

An accountable program of providing orthodidactic assistance thus must embrace these three problem areas. However, it must be remembered that the three problem areas have their point of accumulation in particular deficient learning effects. This means that all three problems can easily be viewed as separate quantities

POLARITY PROFILE\*

		First evaluation	Second evaluation
Attentive perceiving	Visual memory	-3	+1
	Visual discrimination	-3	-1
	Form perception	-4	+1
	Foreground-background	-1	+2
	Sense of direction	-3	0
	Haptic perception	+3	+3
	Auditory discrimination	-2	+1
	Sequencing	-3	-1
	Auditory memory	+1	+2
Attentive thinking	Concrete	+2	+2
	Schematic	+1	+2
	Abstract	-4	-2
Attentive remembering	Recalling	+1	+1
	Memorizing	0	+1
Attentive imagining and fantasizing	Creative	-3	-1
	Representative	-3	0

- Scale: +5 +4 +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 -4 -5  
(Adequate) (Inadequate)

(See p. 228)

and they can just as easily be segregated into isolated quantities. However, each requires the attainment of particular aims and therefore it will be attempted to elevate the help Susan receives to the following three strategies:

First strategy: Pedotherapy

Second strategy: Learning readiness program

Third strategy: Corrective teaching

Because Susan's affective distress is such that even the completion of two learning readiness programs in school had little effect, it was decided to start only with the first strategy, namely pedotherapy. Further it is realized that pedotherapeutic sessions as detached, accompanying, concentrated moments of corrective educating will

make no contributions without the cooperation of the parents. Thus, regular weekly sessions of parental guidance were planned.

The parental guidance is directed to two important moments, namely:

- Continual orientation with respect to the child's learning world as experiential world, with emphasis on the role of disharmonious moments of educating as originating factors; a discussion of the child's attained learning effects in comparison with her achievable level of learning; pointing out [home] educative deficiencies and their effect on the second-order [school] teaching situation; the connection between her level of actualizing learning and deficient learning effects, for example.
- Guiding the parents as pedotherapists with emphasis on, among other things, the fundamental [pedagogical] relationship, aim and sequence structures.

### 3.2.3.1 First strategy: Pedotherapy

Pedotherapy is planned as follows:

#### a) Objectives:

- Emotional stabilization by eliminating anxiety and insecurity with the aim of a readiness to attend adequately.
- Change meaning of negatively interpreted contents.

#### b) Aims:

- Avoiding anxiety-laden possessed experiences.
- Gradual introduction of the above-mentioned possessed experiences with the aim of favorable redefinitions through guidance.
- Accompaniment to a stable pathic-affective taking a position through *exercising* adequate relationships of authority, trust and understanding.
- Change meaning of specific persons such as the unfavorably interpreted mother, father and teachers.

- Accompaniment to forming a positive self-concept.
- c) Form: Play-, image- and conversational-therapy.
- d) Function of the orthodidactician: Planning and accompanying.
- e) Function of the child: dependent.

It must be emphasized that in practice the above aims resulted in further detailed aims (which will not be dealt with further).

However, thanks to the excellent cooperation of the parents, it appears that the pedotherapeutic sessions had progressed successfully to such a degree that the pedotherapy could be supplemented with the second strategy much earlier than what was originally anticipated.

### 3.2.3.2 Second strategy: Preparing the child for learning

#### a) Objectives:

A more adequate actualization of the psychic life, more specifically, a practicing to an adequate attending, perceiving, remembering, thinking, imagining and fantasizing.

(The polarity profile gives evidence of a greater "availability" of perceiving on an auditory and haptic level and a lesser availability of visual perception. Therefore, exercises of visual perceiving will be especially concentrated on).

#### b) Aims:

##### (i) Visual discrimination

- *naming* objects, activities, persons and animals in pictures.
- *comparisons* among various objects, seasons, situations, activities, etc (similarities and differences).
- *sorting* objects according to type, size, color and form

(vegetables, flowers, fruits, etc.).

- *discrimination* among “letter-like” forms.<sup>15)</sup>

(ii) Visual memory

- Naming just-perceived concrete objects.
- Naming missing objects (while the child closes her eyes, the orthodidactician removes an object from among those objects she has just perceived).

(iii) Visual conceptualizing

- Naming objects described by the orthodidactician (e.g., “Something that is large and red, has four wheels, four doors, windows around it. It is used to go from one place to another”).
- Describe a picture after the child has looked at it.
- Completion of pictures on paper. Must fill in the missing parts.

(iv) Form constancy

- Identify objects of the same size.
- Arranging objects from largest to smallest.

(v) Auditory discrimination

- Listening exercises to determine specific sounds by attending according to instructions. There are a variety of possibilities here such as determining if the sound is near or far, hard or soft, high or low, etc.
- Identification of sounds such as the jingling of keys, the shuffling of feet, the tearing of paper, etc.
- Distinguishing language sounds such as words that show a particular correspondence in sound but differ in meaning.

At a more advanced stage it is expected that a child can provide a word in a little rhyme that rhymes with another word.

For example (in Afrikaans):

Vissies wat kom kossies soek  
Pappa vang hul aan die h--- [hoek]

- Identification of beginning, middle and end sounds in particular words.
- Distinguishing sequence of sounds in words. E.g., put a pair of pictures on a flannel board such as a “boom” [tree], a “sak” [sack] and a “mot” [moth]. The orthodidactician says the words very slowly so that the child can clearly distinguish the sequence of sounds: b-o-o-m. The child points to the picture of the word analyzed into the different sounds. The word is said slowly until the separate sounds are distinguished in the right sequence. Gradually the tempo is increased until the word is again pronounced as a whole.

(vi) Auditory memory

- Listen attentively to sentences and repeat them.
- Listen attentively to instructions, repeat them while carrying out the activity.
- Name four words to the child; after a short time-interval repeat three words and ask her which word is not named.

(vii) Sensory-motor integration

- Place a number of little mats of two sizes here and there on the floor. Explain to the child that a long sound represents the larger mats and a short sound the smaller ones. Tap, play or blow a combination of long and short sounds, e.g., long, short, short, long. According to the pattern of sound, she must jump on a large mat, a small mat, a small mat and a large mat.

The foregoing exercises for preparing a child to learn [making ready to learn] not only involves the exercise of perceiving as a mode of learning but also presume the exercise of the accompanying modes

of learning [sensing and attending] as well as the other gnostic cognitive modes of learning.

Further, it is clearly stated that the foregoing must be viewed only as a few examples of a large and wide variety of perceptual-motor exercises that are available.

Finally, it must be emphasized that these are not the only aims that were set. Left-right orientation-, eye-hand coordination-, auditory visualization-exercises, etc. are examples that are presented to the child in due course.

For the sake of the activity of computing [arithmetic], this section is concluded with a few exercises for thinking adequately:

(viii) Thinking exercises

- Comparison. The child is guided to the discovery of similarities and differences in terms of concrete objects.
- Sorting and classifying. Guiding to relationship concepts such as “belong with”, “belong to”, etc.

Initially let her classify in terms of one common characteristic such as *heavy* and *light*; later in terms of additional characteristics such as size, color, form, etc. In this connection it is especially important that she be guided to independent judging and deciding.

### 3.2.3.3 Third strategy: Corrective teaching

#### a) Introduction

It will probably be noticed that the program for preparing the child for learning [learning readiness program] is focused on perceptual skills within a scholastic context, and that, in truth, there is a close connection and even a degree of overlap with the third strategy, namely corrective teaching. As a further consideration, since the learning readiness program and the pedotherapy take their course



by means of formal lessons, the program of providing orthodidactic help is an integrated unity.

With the pedotherapy and learning readiness program far advanced, and where decided progress is on record, it is decided to proceed to the formal corrective teaching.

Before proceeding to corrective teaching, it was decided to try to confirm the favorable comments of Susan's parents and teachers, as well as my own observations by re-evaluating the actualization of her psychic life, among in terms of comparable media.

Above and beyond finding a more stable emotional life is found (the Rorschach protocol, e.g., had shown a *controlled* anxiety in contrast to an *uncontrolled* anxiety reflected on the Behn-Rorschach), now an image of the adequate actualization of learning was found, the results of which are indicated on the polarity profile. (See p. 222).

However, what is not indicated on the profile is the almost dramatic improvement in the actualization of the accompanying modes of learning (sensing and attending). All of the media now give evidence of a concerned involvement with her world, and she is increasingly [actively] directed to her task assignments in a *looking* and *listening* way. In comparing the Blocks on the N.S.A.I.S. (the first investigation) and the Kohs-Blocks (the re-evaluation) the child had a qualitatively better achievement. Greater methodical-ness, purposefulness and (learning) readiness can be observed. Although she had not always achieved success, she now turns herself to the problem by thinking and greater indications are found of a willing readiness.

## **b) Corrective teaching**

### (i) Objective:

In accordance with the curriculum for Grade 1, to bring Susan to an adequate mastery of the acts of reading, spelling and computing.

### (ii) Aims:

- Establishing connections between concrete objects and the spoken and written word.
- Recognizing words in short, simple sentences.
- Constructing sentences by using available vocabulary.
- Expanding basic vocabulary in terms of which the child discovers “unfamiliar” words and adds them to her vocabulary.

It is well to understand that the above aims can and must undergo additional particularizations. It must be remembered that the orthodidactic curriculum is reduced from the school’s curriculum, that quantitatively it is seen as an attenuation of it. Consequently, the lesson contents can be continually and repeatedly presented by means of finely particularized aims.

With the establishment of a program for providing orthodidactic help, the following is an example of a lesson design to show the course it must take by means of a series of lessons.

### **3.2.4 Example of designing an orthodidactic lesson**

The aim of the discussion of this example is, on the one hand, to show the unique nature of the orthodidactic lesson and, on the other hand, to emphasize that such a lesson cannot differ essentially from an ordinary didactic lesson.

#### **3.2.4.1 Reducing the learning material**

A short reading lesson from the familiar “Mossie en Baas” series for beginners is used as a basis for the orthodidactic lesson.

On the basis of Susan’s inability to recognize words, it is decided that the learning material will be reduced to merely a verb (“loop”) [run] and a proper name (“Baas” – the name of a parrot). The words are extremely appropriate because Susan knows the letters that appear in them.

#### **3.2.4.2 The teaching aim**

- a) **The lesson aim:** Learning and exercising a basic word. Exercising will occur to the level of recognition in contextual sentences.
- b) **The learning aim:** Exercising the basic word “loop” to conceptual understanding.

### 3.2.4.3 Stating the problem

#### a) Problem formulation

Via actualizing foreknowledge Susan is guided to the discovery of a gap in her possessed knowledge. The few monosyllabic words of which she is familiar will be presented to her to be read, but also a pair of unfamiliar words among which are “loop” and “Mossie”.

#### b) Problem solution

- a. Making a connection among the activity, the object and the spoken word.
- b. Making a connection between the written and the spoken word.

### 3.2.4.4 Planning the form of the lesson

#### a) Choice of ground forms

In light of the fact that play will not promote adequate sensing and attending with Susan (See chapter three, 2.2.4), but rather can have a labilizing effect, this ground form is avoided for this lesson.

Where structuring will be used as an overarching principal of ordering, conversation is chosen as a ground form because the orthodidactician can exercise control over this and can canalize the themes at will. Because Susan is inclined to compulsive chatter, an attempt is made to focus the conversation clearly and purposefully on the lesson and learning aims. Therefore, the following particularizations [nuances] of conversation are applied after due consideration: address, point out, direct and accompany.<sup>16)</sup>

The ground forms of assignment and example are closely connected with the above particularizations and thus will also function in the lesson. Their choice is obvious and thus they deserve no further justification.

### **b) Methodological principle**

Since it is believed that a child with learning difficulties must be guided to the discovery of grammatical rules, the *inductive* principle will be used although a deductive approach also will arise on occasion.

### **c) Principles of ordering the learning material**

As discussed in chapter three (2.2.3), the learning material will be ordered within the overarching principle of structuring. In order to somewhat temper Susan's labile sensing and attending, the course of the orthodidactic lesson will occur within a structured environment with consistently handled rules of behavior. Apart from a physically-adequately-structured room within which matters such as space, time, activity, movement and noise are taken into account,<sup>17)</sup> the structuring also implies structured activities with the child. This means an active provision of help to the child in those situations that she cannot structure adequately. Hence, her program of assistance is designed with the aim of guiding her step by step to the elimination of those factors that lead to her being in a disharmonious teaching situation.

Linking up with the above, the learning material is ordered *linearly* because it is deemed that the learning material must be systematically analyzed into details and then again put together into a whole. Only in this way can the acts of reading and spelling be mastered.

### **d) Methods of unlocking (presenting)**

Mainly the *preparatory* conversation and the question-and-answer method.

### **e) Orthodidactic modalities**

- (i) **Teaching and learning aids:** Chalkboard and flashcards, tape recorder.
- (ii) **Principles of actualization:** Reduced learning tempo, individualization and activity.
- (iii) **Modes of learning:** It has been mentioned that the third strategy can only begin after particular aims have been reached in the first and second strategies. As the polarity profile shows there is a dramatic improvement in Susan's general actualization of learning but especially with respect to a resulting greater learning readiness and more adequate attending. Also visual and auditory perception have improved noticeably. Even so, it still appears as if auditory perception is more readily "available" for the lesson presentation.

Since an appeal to visual perception cannot be ignored, special care will be taken to accommodate visual perceiving as far as possible such as, e.g., avoiding letters that show a strong resemblance to each other.

In light of the above, it is decided to anticipate the following modes of learning for the lesson: auditory and visual perceiving, thinking, remembering, imagining and fantasizing.

#### 3.2.4.5 The course/sequence of the lesson

##### a) Actualizing foreknowledge and stating the problem

- (i) Enlivening the lesson

In light of Susan's inclination to speak easily and a lot, she was asked to tell about a pleasant experience from her recent past. On occasion she was purposefully guided by suitable questions to tell about a specific event from her experiential story. The event was then used as a starting point for a gradual and subtle appearance of her reading and spelling difficulties:

*First step:* Susan telling about a weekend outing to a holiday resort.

*Second step:* By questions her course of thinking is pinned down to a specific experience or event. For example: “Mama and I hid ourselves on a little mountain road, and papa and brother searched long for us before they found us”.\*

*Third step:* Question:

“Don’t you think we should tell this nice story/event to grandpa (in a nearby town)?”

“He doesn’t live in Pretoria”.

“Then you must write a letter to him and relate it to him”.

In all likelihood, the expected answer then will be: “I can’t yet write”.

In this way Susan is guided to experience a problem. The reader will note that the lesson enlivenment results in stating a problem, a more adequate accompaniment and support with an eye to the required stabilized emotionality. The appearance of a child’s problem in the conversation often leads to a labilized emotionality and the orthodidactician must be mindful of this. Should he ascertain such lability through intuitive sensing and pedagogic observation, he has no other choice than to reverse the course of the lesson. By means of a re-enlivenment, even from another angle or by other relevant possessed experiences, he must attempt to guide the child to experience a problem on a gnostic-cognitive level. It is of cardinal importance that a child with learning difficulties recognize and understand his/her learning deficiencies/gaps in knowledge on a gnostic-cognitive level because only then can a meaningful question appear on his/her horizon of learning.

Moreover, it must be emphasized that the general talking gradually becomes structured in order to increasingly stabilize Susan’s sensing and attending.

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\* The importance of these steps is especially in the affective stabilization (first step), and the appeal to a stable sensing and attending (second step). The latter especially can arise in the distancing that occurs by reflecting on an experienced event.

To this point the contents of the lesson are fundamental contents (or possessed experiences) that through the actualization of remembering as a mode of learning ought to contribute to a more stable sensing and attending.

Only in the following step is there an intervention with the fundamental contents *when an appeal is directed to changing meaning* (i.e., the fundamental contents must be transformed into elemental contents).

*Fourth step:* Orthodidactician:

“ But indeed you can read all of the particular words!”

“Show me that you can read these words”.

When two flashcards with the [Afrikaans] words “os” and “lig” that are familiar to her are shown with the instruction to “read” them, the enlivenment of the lesson has already proceeded to:

(ii) Actualizing foreknowledge

After successfully reading the above words, a flashcard is shown with the same instruction, but now one of the words is unknown, namely, “loop”.

Because she cannot carry out the task, perhaps she will *formulate* her *problem*: “I can’t read this word”.

The actualization of foreknowledge, moreover, involves naming relevant letters such as o, s, l, i, g and p. The use of some auditory and visual discrimination exercises offered during the phase of making her ready to learn are repeated if it seems that she still experiences problems with the above letters.

Since the enlivenment of the lesson, actualizing foreknowledge and stating the problem are necessary for a harmoniously setting an orthodidactic lesson into motion, a *slow tempo* is maintained. *Continual control* and *repetition* are already the order of the day. *Guided activity*, as a principle of actualization, implies that

functionally the orthodidactician takes a position *beside* the child (and sometimes *behind* her).

## b) Exposition

It must be emphasized beforehand that linking up with the child's foreknowledge will be found and that this, in itself, will give rise to a continual control and repetition.

The lesson is an integrated reading and spelling lesson and the two activities will be considered alternately.

*First step:* In order to find a link with the foreknowledge, a series of four words, one of which differs, is presented to Susan orally. Through auditory discrimination she must distinguish the one that is not the same and name it aloud:

Mossie Mossie Baas Mossie

And for the sake of finer differentiation:

Baas Baas Baas Raas  
Koop Loop Koop Koop

*Second step:* To decrease the guiding aspect of the above exercise at the cost of greater self-actualization, the exercise is repeated, but the child now sits with her back turned to the orthodidactician. Now she is dependent only on *listening* and she can no longer depend on the supplemental information from lip reading.

*Third step:* In accordance with van Schenk and Korndorffer,<sup>18)</sup> it is believed that a well-differentiated spoken word-image is a precondition for an adequate act of reading and spelling. In order to intensify the sound of "loop" (and for the sake of variation, a few other words such as "Mossie", "Baas", etc.), i.e., to firm up an image of the sound, Susan is instructed to close her eyes and, when listening to the word, to "say" it *silently* to herself. After appropriate repetitions she must then pronounce it *aloud*. Particular emphasis is placed on the pronunciation of the word, but



at the same time an exaggerated, modulated pronunciation is discouraged.

At this stage a few matters must be given attention:

- The fundamental contents are now presented as elemental contents. This implies a change in meaning, not so much with respect to the conceptual content but indeed with respect to the acoustic and visual image of the word. The lesson content “loop” now appears as the *aim* in so far as it involves changes in its meaning.
- Functionally the orthodidactician takes a position nearer to the child because here his guiding and controlling [verifying] come to the fore more strongly.
- The lesson tempo becomes slower.
- The lesson remains very structured.
- A greater appeal is now directed to attending, imagining and remembering.

To work against monotony in this important phase of the lesson, the child’s pronunciations can be tape-recorded. By playing them back to her, she acquires not only the opportunity for an adequately attentive perceiving but greater self-control is also inculcated. In this connection the reader is reminded that she is inclined to pronounce unclearly.

*Fourth step:* Susan is given the task to use “Baas” and “loop” in a sentence. Perhaps her response will be “Baas loop”.

In order to firm up the concept of “loop” [run] as moving or acting, she is instructed to make a sentence using “loop”. Owing to her strong egocentric disposition, perhaps she will say: “Ek loop” [I run].

Question: “Who else can run?” The aim of this question is that she must use the word in various sentences. In this way a change in meaning must begin. Thus, a change in meaning begins in so far as

the word appears conceptually on her learning horizon. In this way the word becomes stripped of strong personal experiences and acquires a “universal” meaning.\*

Thus a child must make a large number of sentences in which the word “loop” continually appears.

Functionally the orthodidactician now takes a position *behind* the contents. The moment of self-actualization comes strongly into the foreground and attending and thinking become very prominent.

*Step five:* In order to further establish a connection between auditory perception (*listening*) and *talking*, the child is given assignments in which she must carry out sequences of activities.<sup>20)</sup> For example, “Run to the door. Run to the window. Run back to your chair”. When the assignment is carried out correctly she must communicate everything that she has done.

When the connection between listening and talking is adequately established, (that by the nature of the matter *requires continual control and repetition of assignments*), there is a move to the written image.

*Sixth step:* Because visual perception, as a mode of learning, is less readily available, functionally the orthodidactician must take a position *beside* the child in order to (initially, at least) adequately support and guide her with respect to the learning assignment.

In linking up with the foreknowledge, first of all, Susan must be able to discriminate among the various word images. Handing a flashcard to her on which a “standard” or “example” word is introduced on one side. Slowly four different words [are presented], one of which corresponds to the example word:

baas / plaas loop baas speel  
loop / plaas baas speel loop

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\* This procedure was borrowed from Nanninga-Boon,<sup>19)</sup> who, in teaching her deaf child through *numerous experiences*, had success in breaking up so-called “complex entities”, thus, in learning to use the words as concepts.

Assignment: “Now show which word is the same as the first one”.  
Repeat with a number of other examples.

And for the sake of a finer discrimination, the following are presented:

baas / plaas raas baas gaas  
loop / loot loop sloot groot

*Seventh step:* When the above discrimination exercise is repeated, it is combined with the spoken word by remarking:

“Now let’s say the word that is the same as the first one”.

With this assignment the visual and the auditory images are coupled and since this constitutes the essence of reading and writing, the child must be intensively supported and guided to integrate them. The lesson tempo will be slowed down considerably and many repetitions of the mentioned example are carried out.

*Eighth step:* As soon as the coupling of the visual and auditory images are brought about to such a degree that a “collective” notion has resulted, the child is ushered into an analysis of the word “loop”. This can occur in the same way as above:

loop / koop noop loop doop  
loop / loot loop loos lood  
loop / laap leep loep loop

*Ninth step:* As soon as the letters in the global word are analyzed they must again be synthesized into a unity.

Three separate cards on which are affixed “l”, “oo” and “p”, respectively, are then built up *together* with the child *while the word [loop] is continually said*.

This exercise is repeated continually until the child is able to correctly put the three elements together. To make sure that the word-elements are distinguished adequately, the following exercise can be given:

oo / aa oo ee oo  
p / d p p b

“*Show and say* which letters look the same as the first one”.

### **c) Actualizing the lesson contents**

A flashcard with “loop” written on it is given to Susan with the assignment to divide it into three sounds after which she must synthesize it again as in reading.

When she can do this without difficulty it can be accepted with a relative degree of certainty that she will be able to “read” or recognize the word.

### **d) Functionalizing**

The words known to her such as “ek”, “os”, “Susan” and even “baas” are now coupled with “loop” by creating simple sentences:

Show the following flashcard, “baas loop”, and read it aloud. Next let her read it. With scissors let her divide the sentence into two separate words. Let her put them together again and read [the sentence].

Question: “Wie kan nog loop/” [Who else can run?].

Answer: “Ek kan loop” [I can run].

Write “ek” on a flashcard, let her couple this with “loop” and ask her to read the sentence.

In this way, when she has composed a few sentences, the sentences are in her presence while the orthodidactician sits beside her and writes on a card between them. “We have now made our own reading book. Now read the lesson for us”.

A logical step is then to write the word. The word “loop” is written on the chalkboard and Susan is given the assignment to write across

it with a colored chalk. After that the word can be traced and then transcribed until eventually she can write the word herself.

With the help of the two basic words such as “loop” and “baas” new words can be constructed. A very effective way is, e.g., to let Susan make words that rhyme:

“Name another word that ends with -oop, or -aas, or begins with loo-, or baa-”.

When she says the word but can't write it, the word- and sound-image are exercised in the same way as was the case with “loop”.

In this way a natural classification of words arises and accordingly they are affixed to separate cards that then results in a personal spelling list for her.

### 3.3 Synthesis

The foregoing serves as an exemplary explication of an accountable orthodidactic practice. Where the orthodidactic practice aims to harmonize a disharmonious teaching situation, it seems that there is no other point of departure than to make a thorough analysis of the learning situation.

Such an analysis discloses two sets of data without which no help can be provided accountably:

- An image of the learning results provide the guidelines for the content-aspect of the program.
- An image of the actualization of learning provides indications for the formal planning of the lesson(s). In the broadest sense of the word, this image represents the state of a child's actualization of his/her entire psychic life. Played against the background of a disharmonious teaching situation, this provides clear information with respect to possible restraints in the affective-cognitive-normative-meaning giving structure.

On the basis of the data it seems that an orthodidactic program must continually provide for pedotherapy, making a child ready to learn and corrective teaching. However, these are only distinguishable strategies that, depending on individual factors, can show mutual individual nuances.

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