

CHAPTER 6

SYNTHESIS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

In contrast to accepted practice, the theme of the present study is NOT to approach a child with learning difficulties as an isolated entity but to view him against the background of a disharmonious teaching situation. By fathoming a child in his situation of being blocked, guidelines for orthodidactic practice can be found for avoiding particular bottlenecks.

The following is a synthesis of the study and its recommendations:

2. CHAPTER ONE: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, AIM AND PLAN OF STUDY

2.1 Aim of the investigation

In spite of the remarkable progress in constructing orthodidactical theory and its gradual fruitful influence on practice, the latter still is influenced by archaic views and unacceptable activities. For example, the practice of providing orthodidactic assistance is very suspect when viewed from a didactic-pedagogic perspective and in some respects it is unaccountable.

Reasons for this, on the one hand, are a particular conception of learning difficulties based on an unaccountable (philosophical) anthropology. In a period when medical-psychiatric-psychological intervention ruled the domain of learning problems with an almost absolute dictatorship, the idea took root that these difficulties are the result of inherent disturbances and deficiencies that can be eliminated or controlled by training particular functional disturbances. Although this constitutes an important facet of a program for providing orthodidactic assistance, all such help cannot be limited to these activities.

This standpoint is not only a repudiation of the didactic-pedagogic situatedness of the child with learning problems but, in truth, it reduces his existence to that of a stimulus-response process.

On the other hand, this unfounded view of learning problems lacks a categorical pedagogical structure with the result that fundamental pedagogical, didactic pedagogical and psychopedagogical insights are not available as a collective perspective for interpreting the orthodidactic.

With the help of a categorical pedagogical structure, established phenomenologically in the recent past, various pedagogical perspectives arose and in this chapter an attempt is made to interpret the problem of learning difficulties in terms of them.

2.2 Methodological considerations

A few relevant methodological questions are discussed. As appears below, orthodidactics is a particularizing and interpreting science and this gives rise to questions about its scientific status.

This leads to a discussion of particular concepts such as perspective, part-perspective and collective perspective. After clarifying them, a view of the orthopedagogic, as the overarching part-perspective of the orthodidactic, is considered, the results of which are broached in the following section.

2.3 Conclusions and findings

2.3.1 It is concluded that a child with learning problems should not be isolated from his being involved in teaching. In the past, this child was viewed in this isolating way and this gave rise to serious absolutisms; consequently, intervening with such a child often took a distorted course.

The teaching situation of a child with learning difficulties is viewed as a disharmonious event of double unlocking. Although this “disharmonious event of double unlocking” presupposes the aspects

enumerated below, a disharmonious situation is further described as “disturbed relations among the essences of educating, teaching, learning, and the contents with the result that the essences of a lesson structure appear as disturbed”.

2.3.2 Because a disharmonious teaching situation is not an original “first” situation and can only be recognized in terms of the original harmonious teaching situation and, because “*ortodidaskein*” does not differ in its essential structure from “*didaskhein*”, it appears that the orthodidactic (respectively the orthopedagogic) cannot disclose its “own” categorical structure. Thus, orthodidactics is not an essence seeking and essence disclosing science.

Further, it seems that the orthodidactic is an *essence-aware* science. It is a practically directed science and is involved with the question of *how a child with learning difficulties must be dealt with*. In light of the description of a disharmonious teaching situation, it seems that the answer to this orthodidactic question can only be found if the pedagogical essences can be interpreted and particularized for its practice. By implication this means that orthodidactic practice is not accountable if the categorical pedagogical structure is not actualized. Thus, orthodidactics is the bridgehead between pedagogical theory and pedagogic practice.

3. CHAPTER TWO: CONSTITUENTS OF A DISHARMONIOUS TEACHING SITUATION

3.1 Aim and synthesis

The aim of this chapter is a search for the constituents of a disharmonious teaching situation. However, this is preceded by a brief reflection on the relationship between problematic educating and disharmonious teaching. Need for this is found in the experiences of distress, confusion and being blocked that often bring about or accompany the phenomenon of a learning difficulty. In more than one respect, the experience of affective distress has such a strong pedagogical side that the question can be asked whether a disharmonious teaching situation can be equated with a problematic educative one.

In a search for the constituents of a disharmonious teaching situation, a few “typical” children with learning problems, as they find themselves in normal didactic situations, were selected in order to design a thorough analysis of their situatedness. A neurologically handicapped child, an affectively disturbed child and a mentally handicapped child were selected because of the diversity of the images they display of the actualization of their learning, underlying causes and learning results. The common disharmonies disclosed in each of their teaching situations, consequently, can make the claim of being constituents of a disharmonious teaching situation.

3.2 Conclusions and findings

3.2.1 It is concluded that in their real essential structure there is no difference between a problematic educative situation and a disharmonious teaching situation. However, a disharmonious teaching situation distinguishes itself in that it is a formal, reconstituted lesson situation, thus it does not have a haphazard character, it is specific in its purpose, it has a systematic course and is characterized by orderliness. Although problematic educating constitutes itself in a disharmonious teaching situation, it seems that the distinction between a problematic educative situation and a disharmonious teaching situation still is justified. It is more correct to view both as two *types of situation*.

3.2.2 The following constituents of a disharmonious teaching situation are disclosed:

- Disharmonious pedagogic relationships
- Affective distress
- The experience of being different
- Inadequate actualization of cognitive potentials
- Inadequate learning results
- Incorrectly anticipated didactic lesson designs.

4. CHAPTER THREE: SOME CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT DESIGNING AN ORTHODIDACTIC LESSON

4.1 Aim and synthesis

The aim of this chapter is to present particular aspects of the lesson design that must be thoroughly considered from an orthodidactic perspective in light of possible particularizations. The orthodidactic teaching aim is considered in light of the lesson structure and the course of a lesson and against the background of the constituents of a disharmonious teaching situation.

Previously there was a brief consideration of the possible relationship between subject didactics and orthodidactics that takes into account ordinary didactic and orthodidactic activities, respectively.

4.2 Conclusions and findings

4.2.1 It is concluded that subject didactics and orthodidactics show a high degree of agreement in their tasks. Each is directed to implementing the pedagogical constituents in a particular practice. The lesson structure, as an encompassing synopsis of general pronouncements (macrostructure), is transformed by subject didactics and orthodidactics into particularized microstructures. Thus, there are a number of intersecting points between the part perspectives and, indeed, it is equally true that each has its own identity, task and area of study.

4.2.2 It is found that the lesson structure implies a particular interpretation and particularization in light of the orthodidactic teaching aim. Where the orthodidactic teaching aim also points to the eventual adulthood of the child with learning problems, this is seen in light of the following factors, including other nuances and particularizations:

- Its immediate aim is to bring about an adequate learning effect that assumes an elimination of the child's educative distress and under-actualization of his psychic life. This implies that the aim continually is directed to what is attainable for a child with learning problems.
- The orthodidactic teaching aim also has particular educative aims in view that normally are not explicitly taken up in the teaching aim. Particular educative aims not emphasized in the

daily course of educating often are not realized by such a child and, therefore, must be taken up in the teaching aim (as a pedotherapeutic moment).

In light of the fact that the teaching aim is deemed to be of decisive importance to the nature of the teaching activity, the above comments imply that reducing the learning material, stating the problem, ordering the learning material, the lesson forms, modalities and lesson sequence must be designed in terms of didactic-pedagogic considerations and in light of the image of actualizing learning and learning results.

5. CHAPTER FOUR: THE INTERPRETIVE POSSIBILITIES OF ORTHOPEDAGOGIC-ORTHODIDACTIC MEDIA

5.1 Aim and synthesis

In this chapter the attempt is not so much to present current orthopedagogic-orthodidactic diagnostic practice but to take into consideration a few possibilities of interpreting particular moments and exploratory media for acquiring a learning image.

The data from the various media are considered against the background of the following postulates:

- Each diagnostic medium is a means for encountering a child with learning difficulties in his own world;
- No medium can be interpreted as if it provides exclusive data regarding a specific, isolated psychological function. Each datum is viewed as a facet of the communicative involvement with the world of such a child.

5.2 Conclusions and findings

The conclusion reached is that the diagnostic media discussed clearly and decidedly offer possibilities of interpretation. They make data available over the entire range of personal actualization. The available data are interpreted pedagogically with the aim of acquiring an image of the child's learning as an image of his lived experiences. This means that each datum with respect to the

cognitive, affective, volitional, bodily ways of functioning, etc. is judged and interpreted in terms of a disharmonious teaching situation. Only in this way can the orthodidactician come to an understanding and explanation of the actualization of learning and the learning results of a child with learning problems.

6. CHAPTER FIVE: EXAMPLE OF A SITUATION-ANALYSIS OF A CHILD WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND THE RESULTING DESIGN OF AN ORTHODIDACTIC PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE

6.1 Aim and synthesis

Providing orthodidactic assistance can only claim to be accountable if the orthodidactician can bring into motion a lesson that is attuned to actualizing the modes of learning to such a degree that they will harmonize with the teaching activities. For this, first, an accurate determination is necessary of a child's level of actualizing his learning and his learning results. Second, the teaching must be planned in light of the above. In particular, this includes the considerations discussed in Chapter three.

The aim of this chapter is to exemplify a situation analysis with respect to a particular child with learning problems and, flowing from this, to proceed to design a program for orthodidactic assistance. Finally an example of designing an orthodidactic lesson is presented. Introductory to the above, attention is given to the possibility of an orthodidactic lesson model.

6.2 Conclusions and findings

6.2.1 It is concluded that not only is an orthodidactic lesson model possible but, in truth, it is necessary. However, because an orthodidactic lesson does not differ essential from an ordinary one, this means that the orthodidactic lesson model must necessarily be based on the lesson structure.

The orthodidactic model eventually presented distinguishes itself in that the most important particularizing possibilities are adopted as moments in the model. For example, the diagnostic data are

deemed to be so cardinal that the image of actualizing learning and of the learning outcome are taken up in the model. In this way not only is the importance of these data emphasized but also it is indicated that each orthodidactic lesson implies a continuous situation-analysis.

The orthodidactic teaching aim is particularized into three distinguishable strategies, namely, pedotherapy, learning readiness programs and re-teaching (corrective teaching). It is concluded that no act of assisting can occur outside of these three strategies and that one strategy does not exclude the others.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Recommendations regarding orthodidactic diagnosis

Although current orthodidactic diagnostics succeeds in disclosing an image of actualizing learning and of learning results, the fact to be faced is that the contemporary orthodidactic instrumentation is not directly *pointed to a child with learning difficulties in a disharmonious teaching situation*. The media are directed to a child as an isolated entity and all diagnostic data must be subjected to a strict orthodidactic interpretation in order to acquire insight into the disharmonious teaching situation. Therefore, it is recommended that:

7.1.1 Research needs to be done with the aim of designing authentic orthodidactic diagnostic media. It can correctly be asserted that, in this respect, the orthodidactic has still not become self-reliant and still largely makes use of particular psychological media designed for entirely different purposes. The design of media that have the disharmonious teaching event in view will not only elevate the quality of research but also make a useful contribution to making the diagnostics more efficient. A streamlined diagnostics that is directed to specific aims is urgently required.

7.1.2 Existing media must be thoroughly evaluated in light of the new insights into the problem of learning difficulties in order to determine their usability. This does not mean that all of the media must *merely or only* make data available with respect to a

disharmonious teaching situation. What this means is that data acquired from particular media must be relevant and interpretable with respect to a disharmonious teaching situation.

7.1.3 Findings from allied disciplines such as medicine, neurology, optometry, speech therapy, occupational therapy, etc. must be carefully evaluated in light of a disharmonious teaching situation. With the lack of such a frame of reference, findings from these fields often are made absolute, medications are prescribed without determining their effects for a teaching situation, training programs are worked through with difficulty and great expense, etc. without determining whether the alleged loss, deficiency or disturbance is related in any way to a disharmonious teaching situation. Thus, whoever intervenes accountably with a child who has learning problems must take note of the pronouncements and findings of the present study.

7.2 Recommendations regarding orthodidactic assistance

7.2.1 Where the present study has followed a global approach and has established particular macro-structural beacons, future research must be directed to particularized or specialized orthodidactic lesson models. This means that models must be designed for specific categories of such children. This includes lesson models for:

- the restrained child;
- the handicapped child; and
- the restrained child who also is handicapped.

7.2.2 With reference to the above, research must be done regarding the possibility and desirability of particular lesson models in light of the three stated strategies of pedotherapy, learning readiness programs and corrective teaching.

7.2.3 The problem of curriculum must be carefully examined from an orthodidactic perspective in order to indicate its relevance in terms of the problem of learning difficulties.

7.3 Recommendations regarding [orthodidactic] training

It is recommended that prospective orthodidacticians, teachers of auxiliary classes, etc. not only have knowledge of the theoretical insights discussed in the present study but receive thorough practical training in putting these insights into practice. This implies training in interpreting diagnostic data in terms of a disharmonious teaching situation as well as the analysis and evaluation of existing helping practices. Finally, they must receive in depth training in designing programs and lessons for providing orthodidactic assistance.