

CHAPTER IV  
MODES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

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1. INTRODUCTION

Actualizing the lesson structure amounts to two kinds of activities, namely, teaching and learning. These activities can be reduced to general forms of human action that also occur outside of a strictly didactic framework with other than just the aims of teaching and learning. Thus, children and adults, in their spontaneous life world conversations, ask questions, investigate things and in one way or another describe objects and experiences to someone else. These conversations always are about something; a person poses questions in order to know and another person points out or describes something to him. This "something" is the content or substantive component that is the learning content within the framework of a lesson.

The learning content (and all life content) is largely colored culturally and personally. All dealings with content are a normative matter because unlocking and mastering it is prompted by a fundamental relationship and directed by the teacher in order to establish particular fundamental relationships. A life- and world-view also permeates each of our efforts regarding content. A hierarchy of values or priorities greatly determine which aims are posed and the ways they are going to be pursued.

In this way, a hierarchy of values determines the relationships that are established so the lesson can proceed. This means that in each teaching situation, the teacher and the child establish a particular relationship with each other. If one reasons didactically, this means that the relationships established constitute the operational component of the lesson and that, within these dynamic relationships, certain modes of teaching and learning occur. By successively actualizing certain modes of teaching and learning within particular relationships the lesson takes on a particular pattern or form. The forms of teaching that the relationships

assume in a lesson can be referred back to three basic relationships, namely:

- (i) a relationship of language-dialogue with **conversation** as the basic form;
- (ii) a searching relationship with **play** as the fundamental form; and
- (iii) a demonstration relationship with **example** as the form.

## 2. THE MODES OF TEACHING

From the above, it is clear that in teaching, particular relationships will be established. This means that in a particular phase of a lesson, there is a particular way of teaching but, at the same time, corresponding modes of learning are actualized. The teacher's preference to allow his teaching to progress in a certain way will, to an informed observer, characterize his teaching style. These insights are of great importance for teacher training. **The modes of teaching can only find expression in three predominant relationships, namely, a language-dialogue, a searching or a demonstration relationship.\***

Should a student teacher's attempts to give lessons show that they usually can be typified as emanating from a demonstration relationship (e.g., showing, pointing out are dominant), the teacher educator can indicate the dangers of an autocratic way of teaching where the tendency is for the teacher to have too great and the pupils to have too little a stake in the lesson. A student whose teaching in the training lessons usually is typified by viable search tasks being launched within searching relationships most likely will be complemented (and hopefully with a high evaluation) from the teacher educator because of his readiness to allow the modes of learning to progress as meaningfully as possible and to trust the pupil to find out about and look into things for himself.

From the above, all teaching and all learning activities, in the course of a lesson and within a lesson structure, can be reduced to one of three relationships. However, it is important to recognize that these three relationships carry broad connotations. Thus, **a language-**

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\* Assignment is considered to be a fourth fundamental form of teaching but can cut across or include the three relationships mentioned.

**dialogue relationship** includes all examples of symbolized language (language expressed in symbols)--which means that reading and writing as well as mathematical symbols and numbers are included. All nuances and variations of saying and listening or of establishing communication and understanding as modes of instruction are included--among which are such activities as narrating, talking, reciting, discussing, asking questions, representing, writing, naming, replying, clarifying, summarizing, listing, outlining, interpreting.

Again, **the demonstration relationship** is differentiated by the way the particular and the general are handled. This varies from pointing out the particular for the sake of the particular to indicating the particular for the sake of the general. Also, a model can be shown as a **representative** case because the general as well as the particular are expressed in it. Modes of teaching that typify the demonstration relationship are described by verbs such as showing, demonstrating, exemplifying, illustrating, introducing, modeling.

### 3. MODES OF TEACHING IN THE SEARCHING RELATIONSHIP

A person really is in a searching relationship with reality for his entire life. This search is a search for meaning. Thus, it is logical that this human inquiry of the world be used as a teaching modality. With this modality, there is a delving with the child into the wonders of being human and there is a search for answers behind what is apparently obvious.

Modes of teaching that can have a consequence for a searching relationship are the use of competitions, puzzles, experiments, literature studies, inquiries and interrogations.

Characteristic of the modes of learning (the child's role) that arise from a searching relationship is the active and total involvement of the learner in the problematic questions. This brings our discussion to the modes of learning.

### 4. MODES OF LEARNING

The second aim of this introduction is to consider the ways learning occurs (in contrast to teaching). In a broad sense, the modes of learning correspond to the modes of teaching. In addition, the

modes of learning occur in particular relationships. Thus, it is easy to see that in a **language-dialogue relationship** the modes of learning will typify the learner as a language using, communicating person: this means a person who can (and will) be a conversational partner with others, who can ask and answer questions, who can acquire the deepest human thoughts from spoken or written language, or who can put deep thoughts into language.

Also, the learner who is in a lesson situation within a **demonstration relationship** engages in modes of learning by which things can be demonstrated. In this case, the modes of learning are attuned to activities of noticing what is shown and penetrating to the essentials of what is demonstrated. The optimal use of the learning opportunity established by a demonstration relationship lies in the pupil being able to follow what is being explained and to see the sense of what is exemplified in the lesson.

There also are nuances of modes of learning that can be described as **searching**, thus learning activities within a searching relationship. In this case, learning will be characterized by a pupil's questioning attitude directed to searching for what is true, what is meaningful or discovering how things are put together.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

What is important to notice in this entire discussion of the modes of teaching and learning is that the relationship established between teacher and pupil always accentuates one of three aspects, namely, a predominantly language-dialogue, a demonstration or a searching relationship. Obviously, these are only distinctions that are made and, in fact, aspects of all three are present in any teaching-learning relationship.

Whoever views the lesson structure as external to establishing certain relationships does not yet have a correct perspective on it. It is hoped that this introduction has conveyed the insight that a lesson structure only can be implemented when a particular relationship has been established between teacher and child because it is from this relationship that the modes of teaching and learning are actualized.