

PEDAGOGICS 2-2
THE PEDAGOGICAL METHOD
Part 2

2.3.2 THE REALITY OF EDUCATING

2.3.2.1 The relationships: reality, life reality, lifeworld, educative reality

The reality of educating in all of the places it appears can be found only in the world where persons live. Thus, it is present in the lifeworld and can only be seen there. Consequently, the reality of educating is characterized as being grounded (rooted, embedded) in the lifeworld and this means that it possesses anthropological status. In other words, pronouncements about *Anthropos* (human beings) can have relevance for understanding the reality of educating; that is, there are anthropological categories that have pedagogical meaning. These pedagogical meanings, for epistemological purposes (illuminating with the aim of acquiring and broadening knowledge), are called pedagogical categories.²²

However, it is not only human beings that live. There also is animal and plant life. That is, the lifeworld is an aspect of a larger life reality. Together, human life and the other forms of living constitute life reality. However, as soon as a human being attributes meaning to these forms of living he makes them part of his lifeworld.

The reality of educating is placed in the lifeworld and the lifeworld is a facet of life reality that exists next to and with non-living reality as a reality of things. Together, the world of things and life constitute reality and a human being (especially a thinker) is attuned to learning to know this comprehensive reality. Since this reality is particularly complex, a person usually selects an aspect of it to study. Thus, a pedagogue selects the aspect known as educating for phenomenological and philosophy of life approaches. The reality of educating, in its various places of appearance, is subjected to scientifically necessary and philosophy of life permissible steps of thinking in order to disclose *pedagogically*

meaningful ways of living (pedagogical essences). He does this with the aim of an ontological understanding of the reality of educating, ultimately for the benefit of the child-in-education.

2.3.2.2 Places where the reality of educating appear

The reality of educating, as such, is the source of knowledge about itself. Anyone who wants to acquire knowledge about educating approaches that reality, itself, in order to disclose its real essences. If one wants to determine which ways of living are meaningful to educating (accompanying a child), he searches for them in the reality of educating itself.

A question that now arises is where the reality of educating can be found so it can be investigated. This is a question about the places it appears.

In the pages that follow, an explication is given of the following places of appearance:

- A. the everyday reality of educating,
- B. literature,
- C. the social sciences,
- D. philosophical anthropology, and
- E. philosophy of life sources.

A. THE EVERYDAY REALITY OF EDUCATING (WITH EDUCATOR AND EDUCAND COMMENTARY)

1. *Characteristics of the everyday reality of educating*

The everyday reality of educating is characterized by a vague directedness to educative and learning aims. This vagueness can make the essence analysis (as disclosing pedagogically meaningful ways of living) difficult. The vague directedness takes many forms that the essence thinker (meaning discloser) must be aware of

- i. a conscious being directed that is guided by *tradition*.²³
The question that must be asked here is which educative activities within a particular tradition are valued and

which of them possess possible general validity and necessity. To determine this the phenomenological steps of thinking, that verify essence status, must be applied.²⁴

- ii. a conscious being directed that at the moment of acting is not very clear but is thought about on a later occasion. The *educator* thinks about what he has already done.²⁵ The *pedagogue*, as an expert educator, can do this reflection in light of the question of the universal validity and necessity of what he has done. He can do this in light of the Kantian question (as modified): “How can I declare that the way I act pedagogically has general validity?” In conversations with both educators and pedagogues, the pedagogician can verify the essence status by applying his phenomenological steps of thinking. In this way he can verify whether the educators (by educative commentary) and pedagogues (by pedagogic conversation) observe pedagogically meaningful ways of living.
- iii. an unconscious being directed that, thus, cannot be knowable²⁶ and can make no contribution to essence disclosure or essence status verification.
- iv. a conscious being directed that can be called pedagogic²⁷ and that ought to be found by the pedagogue. From this it is inferred that pedagogic conversation between pedagogue and pedagogician can be meaningful especially with the aim of verifying the essence status of the observed pedagogically meaningful ways of living.

Another possibility is to look at the *pedagogic effects* in the everyday reality of educating. This means there is a search for particular *results*, namely, if the educand, as subject (person), perceives the pedagogic-as-such and responds to it. Has he perceived the pedagogic and assimilated it?²⁸ One way to find an answer to this question is to attend to the *educand's perspective* on the reality of educating with which he is involved. This can be done by analyzing his commentary about his being with adults. In this way, light can be thrown on the pedagogical essentials because the educand is always a participant in their reality. Which ways of living are seen by the educand as pedagogically meaningful, thus as supportive

of him in his being on the way to proper adulthood? Possible pedagogical essences that are laid bare in this way can then be verified by the pedagogician with his phenomenological steps of thinking. Because the educand is not yet adult, along with his non-purposeful reflection on education, the pedagogical essentials possibly (but not necessarily) will be more hidden in his commentary than that of the adults (educators and pedagogues) might be.²⁹

Another way to investigate pedagogic results with the aim of disclosing essences and verifying their essence status is to make a study of *educator commentary* about educating. In this connection, F. Bernard,³⁰ a D. Ed. student of the author, has done excellent research. From this research it is clear that educator (here mother) commentary about educating in unmistakable ways serves the verification of essence status.

2. *Status of the everyday reality of educating as a source of knowledge about educating*

The status of the everyday reality of educating can be described as the status it has because of the particular position it holds, i.e., the position of the primary *point of departure*. What does this mean?

In answering this question, it is especially the explications of C. K. Oberholzer that are insightful. The following statements are meaningful in this respect:

1. "... it must be emphatically noted that such a scientific practice (namely pedagogical thinking W.A.L.), just as any other, must have its point of departure in the lifeworld, otherwise there is no foundation on which to stand and from which to depart and proceed.³¹ The scientific nature of pedagogics is co-dependent on taking the everyday reality of educating as its point of departure, obviously in compliance with certain reductions³² that must be performed and the scientifically necessary and philosophy of life permissible steps of thinking that must be applied.³³ The everyday reality of educating has the status of

determining the scientific nature of the point of departure and of being foundational. In this light it is expected that this everyday reality will differentiate itself regarding the number of pedagogical essences that can be disclosed and also their quality (and this in spite of the vagueness with which the everyday reality of educating can be disclosed).

- ii. "... that the pedagogic reality occurs as a moment or a series of moments within the greater human reality and from the lifeworld, an eagerness to learn is thrust upon him, as it were, as a real interest. It is the common standpoint and point of departure for anyone who shows an interest about this reality: there is such a thing as educating; it actualizes itself only between persons; a person is a being who educates, is educated and who is dependent on being educated and lends himself to it."³⁴ The fact that the everyday reality of educating is taken as the primary point of departure for pedagogical thinking also leads to essential disclosures about it. To take this reality as point of departure already opens the pedagogician's eyes to the possibility of disclosing its essences. The everyday reality of educating is and remains the primary (original) source of the appearance of pedagogically meaningful ways of living that secondarily are dependent on being supplemented and verified by literature, philosophical anthropology, a philosophy of life, etc.³⁵
- iii. "The best point of departure for any branch of scientific practice is always that which is provided by experience because then the investigator has evidence of the facts themselves ... The authentic scientist, and this includes the pedagogician, always proceeds with this question on his lips: what is the evidence from the facts?"³⁶

To take the everyday reality of educating as point of departure leads to working in scientifically accountable ways in the sense that there is a beginning where the evident facts of this reality in their original ways of appearing come to light.

M. J. Langeveld, in his reference to the pedagogic situation notices, among other things: “There we find activities, there we find thinking about its origin and point of focus ... And no theory is worthy of us and this situation ... This situation is not something that we can devise while at our desk or infer from some nice theory; it is living itself ... Children develop this way and that, one says. But I ask you, how do you know? By looking in a glass retort? or by means of human educating? Ah exactly, but then why do not you begin there? ... and you should never be afraid to go there and investigate the empirical where it has its origin.”³⁷

Faithfulness to reality to which particular scientific value is attributed requires that the logically obvious primary point of departure be taken, i.e., there where educating occurs and thus there where pedagogically meaningful ways of living definitely are found. The reality of educating forces itself on the pedagogician as the most meaningful point of departure for his thinking about the pedagogic.

B. LITERATURE

1. *Appearance of the reality of educating in literature*

Literature as a particular place of the appearance the pedagogic action must not be overlooked. It has already been indicated that pedagogical essences appear in the family novel³⁸ and in the family drama.³⁹ The reason such non-scientific and non-philosophical pronouncements as these about the essentials are not considered pedagogically is because they do not form a logically consistent whole.⁴⁰ The question now is how the pedagogical meaningfulness of pronouncements about educating in literature can be determined. A meaningful way would be to subject such pronouncements to the phenomenological steps of thinking. The pronouncements that have passed this verification are then already contents of the pedagogical and must be further ordered into a logically consistent whole.

In the novel (and also the drama, poem and short story)

particular meanings are present. Phenomenology discloses the how and what of these meanings and primarily involves a becoming aware of them; it also identifies the essential moments in the novel, etc. It is these moments that have ontic-ontological status that are sought.⁴¹ The phenomenological steps of thinking are applied to determine the ontic-ontological status of the pedagogically meaningful ways of living that appear in the *family novel*, etc. Another method is to compare these essences with an essence table constructed from already verified essences. This is the method followed by Jubelius and by Swanepoel.

In this connection, e.g., Jubelius notes: “the study of a number of novels in which educative situations are depicted in the normal course of circumstances can serve as a verification of whether the already described pedagogical essences are life realities or not It is not adequate for a phenomenologist to depend only upon the phenomenon or to enrich his experience by observing another’s. Use also must be made of other means of verification that give fundamental insight into the structure of human existence, and here the novel is of invaluable worth.”⁴² E. M. Swanepoel finds: “In the seventeen dramas studied the dramatists continually showed how the children who suffered defects in the essences of growing up after that continually pined, sometimes to such an extent that they did not become proper adults but were themselves forced to live in an illusive world. In the dramas where the essences indeed were indicated, the children grew up in the embrace of parental love.”⁴³

It is clear that ignoring literature as a place of appearance of the reality of educating will lead to an impoverishment in understanding educating.

2. *Status of literature as a source of knowledge about educating*

The pedagogician who takes the everyday reality of educating as his primary point of departure for his pedagogical thinking, thus also for applying his phenomenological steps of thinking, in spite of careful application of the steps of

thinking, still runs the risk that the pedagogical essences he discloses can merely be rational constructions, thus mere intellectual creations that have no quality of reality. In this context, literature (novel, short story, drama, poem) that deals with the family situation can serve as verification. This means that particular verification status can be attributed to literature. In this regard, the following conclusions of Jubelius and Swanepoel are meaningful:

i. S. I. Jubelius⁴⁴

“In studying the nine *novels* the pedagogic essences are disclosed in such a striking way that there can be no doubt that the essences indeed constitute an essential part of an authentic educative situation. The analysis of the novels has shown without a doubt and in a striking way that the fundamental pedagogic essences have reality status in the life world and cannot be viewed as mere constructions of rational thought.”

ii. E. M. Swanepoel⁴⁵

“This study of the dramas in which the pedagogic essences showed themselves so clearly is proof that the essences are lifeworld realities. This completely refutes the assertion that they are merely rational constructions. The dramas indeed served as essence verification, and to such an extent that they once again underlined and emphasized the importance and necessity of the pedagogic structures and essences for successful educative activities.”

Thus, literature has a particular status because of its characteristic of “verification of reality status” and this occurs by showing that the pedagogical essences are not merely constructions of thinking that do not consider the reality of educating itself. If in studying literature possible pedagogical essences come to the attention of the pedagogician that he had not seen in the everyday reality of educating, it is advisable to follow the phenomenological steps of thinking with such essences in order to verify their essence status in scientifically accountable and philosophy of life permissible ways.

C. THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

1. *Appearance of the reality of educating for the social sciences*

In the social sciences⁴⁶ often pronouncements about educating are found that rightly must be verified by the pedagogician. Pedagogically meaningful pronouncements that come to his attention in this way must be ordered into a logically consistent whole to become pedagogic contents.

The pedagogician is inclined (and rightly so) to have certain requirements for those social sciences he deems worthy of taking knowledge from with his essence disclosing and essence status verifying. His scientific practice is essentially applied phenomenology and therefore is preeminently anti-naturalistic⁴⁷ and anti-Marxist.⁴⁸ Thus, the pedagogician will at least demand that the psychology from which he will take knowledge, from an autonomous pedagogical perspective, will be a phenomenological psychology, phenomenological sociology, etc. He knows beforehand that naturalistic and Marxist (i.e., neo-Marxist) talk about the reality of educating will have little or no chance of being relevant to his essence disclosing and essence status verifying. Here there is mention of a strong phenomenological bias especially against naturalism and Marxism.

The pedagogician will involve himself with a psychology and sociology that at least meets the following requirements:

- i. It must be anti-naturalistic and anti-Marxist;
- ii. It must not be involved with predicting and controlling behavior but with understanding the structure⁴⁹ of the psychic life and social life, respectively;
- iii. It must not be system-thinking which means that being human is equated with one or another system and by which being human is made into a caricature. Here one thinks of so-called *model—thinking*. For example, a person is viewed as a machine (machine-model) or as

surrendered to structures (structure-models, structuralism).⁵⁰

2. *Status of the social sciences as a source of knowledge of educating*

Under certain conditions the social sciences warrant the pedagogician's attention. The reality of educating, as it appears for these sciences, can serve as a verification of the reality status of pedagogically meaningful ways of living (pedagogical essences) that are found in the everyday reality of educating and thus determine whether the essences that are phenomenologically disclosed by the pedagogician are not merely thought-constructions that have nothing to do with the reality of educating.

It is even possible that in these sciences potential pedagogical essences appear that have not yet been noticed by pedagogicians. Such possible pedagogical essences will then be verified by him through his phenomenological steps of thinking in order to determine their real essence status.

D. PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY (INCLUDING CHILD ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHICS)

1. *Appearance of the reality of educating in philosophical anthropology*

That philosophical anthropology has the possibility of making meaningful pronouncements justified by pedagogic verification appears so from the following quotation: "Philosophical anthropology, as a regional ontology, involves itself with the primordial given of being human as becoming human whenever the task is seen as a hermeneutics of the onticity being human as becoming ..."⁵¹ Among other things, philosophical anthropology concerns itself with explicating the fact that being human also shows itself as *becoming a person*. Educating as assistance in becoming⁵² is a particular way of giving support to this becoming⁵³ and pedagogics is the

science of this event. Consequently, philosophical-anthropological pronouncements have the possibility of being pedagogically meaningful.

Child anthropology, as a form of philosophical anthropology, will further investigate what being a child really and essentially is as a form of being human, i.e., it will interpret child life within the whole of the image of being human⁵⁴ apart from the aims with the child in such a way that an un-childlike image of a child from which the child is absent is avoided. Pronouncements about the essences of child being as an expression of a child's being human must necessarily catch the attention of the pedagogician and definitely call him to verify them pedagogically. He applies his phenomenological steps of thinking to determine the pedagogic meaningfulness of such pronouncements. This means that a philosophical anthropology in which no child, no family, no personal past and future, no activity that is described as "educating" can be anticipated can have no relevance for the pedagogician.⁵⁵ In this there appears nothing that justifies verification by his steps of thinking.

Ethics is a science that concerns itself with a person's "appearing as ethical-existential subjectivity, i.e., his existence as a normative-norm-using being."⁵⁶ The child is a becoming subject who lives and is ethical-existential, normative-norm-using. Pedagogics is the normative science⁵⁷ of educating that is a being concerned with the child in normativity.⁵⁸ Thus, there are particular points of contact between ethics and pedagogics that ethical pronouncements warrant pedagogical verification. Possible meaningful ways of living that are disclosed by ethics are subjected to the pedagogician's verifying steps of thinking, followed by a logically consistent ordering.

In light of the above it is now asserted that there can be mention of:

2. *Status of philosophical anthropology and ethics as sources of knowledge about educating*

The reality of educating indeed can be observed from these perspectives in the lifeworld. The pedagogician then verifies these appearances to determine whether his own disclosures of pedagogical essences by his phenomenological approach to the everyday reality of educating are real pedagogical essences with anthropological status and not mere rational constructions without taken into account this reality.

If possible pedagogically meaningful ways of living are disclosed by these perspectives that have not yet been brought to light by the pedagogue himself, he can subject them to his phenomenological steps of thinking in order to determine their essence status.

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 23. Imelman, J. D., op. cit., 21.
 24. See Chapt. 4.
 25. Imelman, J. D., op. cit., 21.
 26. Op. cit.
 27. Op. cit.
 28. Op. cit., 23-24.
 29. Also see: Robbertse, J. H.: *Die kind-in-opvoeding in fundamentele pedagogiek-perspektief*, unpublished D. Ed. dissertation, University of South Africa, 1975.
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 32. See Chapt. 3.
 33. See Chapt. 4.
 34. Oberholzer, C. K., op. cit., 26.
 35. See sect. b), c), d), e), f) above and following.
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 43. Swanepoel, E. M., op. cit., 203-204.
 44. Jubelius, S. I., op. cit., 204.
 45. Swanepoel, E. M., op. cit., 204.
 46. Imelman, J. D., op. cit., 30.
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