

FOREWORD

The tempo with which contemporary science accumulates knowledge is overwhelming in many respects. Consequently, it is understandable that one of the most important problems that one faces is that virtually all sciences are difficult to survey. By studying a science, and on first acquaintance, the literature is inclined too quickly to present sophisticated and penetrating research that results in the basic insights failing to appear. The most important disadvantage of this is that the subsequent interpretation of scientific findings largely is impossible and this has the consequence of superficially forming students.

Pedagogics, and especially didactic pedagogics, is no exception to the rule. As an area of science, in various respects, it has an abstract-theoretical facet that is a very good orienting study necessary to be able to know the practice of teaching as it really is. However, the insights into and research on teaching theory are spread over a great number of publications that make it difficult to acquire a real synoptic grasp of the matter on first encounter.

In teacher preparation this is a particularly important consideration because the findings of pretty much all of the other pedagogical disciplines, in one or another way, must be brought to bear on a theory of teaching before it can be fruitfully particularized and implemented, e.g., in subject didactics. As such, didactics forms an unavoidable channel on the way to acquiring mastery of and mobility in the practical teaching situation.

What is offered here is an attempt to present the most important (i.e., the most basic) aspects of didactic pedagogics as synoptically and simply as possible in order to satisfy this need. The scope of this manuscript can be attributed largely to the explicatory and orienting treatment of these aspects in such a way that the text itself can guide students and teachers to study these aspects on their own without too much difficulty. Also, regarding teacher training, the ordering of the contents is an attempt to make a *capita selecta* possible in accordance with the various structures of training that everywhere have their own identity at universities and colleges.

It deserves emphasis that this is only an introduction. In the strong sense of “introduction”, this means that this work is intended as a first textbook for promoting an exploration and first acquaintance with didactic pedagogics. On this basis there is no claim of completeness and also no claim of particular depth in explanation and interpretation. The line of the elucidation simply begins with the reality of educating in order to indicate how, where and with respect to what teaching appears in a general human respect and in what way it again can be realized, as such, in school practice. The relevant and prevailing views of the various aspects of teaching are organized and elucidated around this matter. A penetrating study of any of the themes can be undertaken on the basis of the bibliography included.

The authors in this way gladly show gratitude to the large number of scholars listed whose knowledge represents a richly variegated field of knowledge. At the same time, we sincerely thank and appreciate colleagues at all universities and colleges with whom from time to time we carried on penetrating conversations about various aspects of didactic pedagogics. A special word of thanks to our associates in the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, where fruitful interdisciplinary collaboration and candor are the

order of the day. Thanks also to our family members who were content during the long periods of preoccupation. We offer special thanks to Academic for the publication and its nurturance.

We trust that with this a contribution is made to the stabilization especially of teacher preparation in our country and to putting it on the level that it belongs.

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The Authors

THE SECOND PRINTING

The fact that a second printing of this work has already become necessary after a relatively short time certainly testifies to the fact that it is a useful guide for teacher preparation. However, at the same time this is a tempting opportunity to revise, rewrite, supplement, etc. After thorough consideration it was decided not to do this especially in the light of fact that the text is not yet obsolete. Also one must take into account that this is an introductory textbook that must address basic details rather than sophisticated research. The authors also considered adding a chapter of questions and problems about evaluation. In preparing it the field appeared to be so extensive that the particulars could not be meaningfully summarized in one chapter. For this reason it was decided to leave such a chapter out of the second printing. The theme deserves a publication in itself, which is now being worked on.

The authors gladly show gratitude to all colleagues for suggestions, etc. about the manuscript. Unhappily, the cost factor prevents our following up on many useful proposals.

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THE AUTHORS