

CHAPTER III

ELIMINATING THE PROBLEMATIC EDUCATIVE EVENT AS A TASK FOR ORTHOPEDAGOGICS

1. INTRODUCTION

The adequate realization of the event of educating includes the child optimally actualizing his psychic-life-in-education. However, it is true that from the earliest of times educating has miscarried and also from that time the following questions arose, “What to do now? How can the ‘problem’ be surmounted? How can the distressful situation be changed? How must there be further action?”

“Providing help” to a child in his problematic educative situation also has its origin in a distressful situation and is directed to eliminating the distress so that he will adequately become adult. At the moment it is asked what must be done about a problematic event of educating, the terrain of *orthopedagogics* has been entered. Numerous people have devoted themselves to helping “the child with problems” without first asking the question of the essential ground of this “problem” and, consequently, it took a very long time before this “specialized help” would be qualified as pedagogically accountable.¹

A question that immediately comes into the foreground is how such “special” help ought to appear and how it progress in the practical situation between a provider of help and a “derailed” child by which, scientifically seen, the terrain of orthopedagogics announces itself as an integral part of an autonomous pedagogics.

In chapter one it became clear that the pedagogical has not always been central to the help given to a child impeded in becoming adult and also in chapter two it was shown that, in the main, recognition of the “special” help given to children with physical defects as *educative help* was further hampered.

The “discovery” of the *problematic* event of educating as that event in which a child inadequately realizes his becoming adult, and on

this basis becomes conspicuous, has led to the idea that as long as the provision of help in this connection is not executed from a pedagogical perspective, the elimination of this “distressful situation” in which a child finds himself cannot be handled accountably.

In the following there is a closer consideration of the pedagogical rootedness of the “special help” for a child-in-education whose becoming is *impeded*.

2. ORTHOPEDAGOGICS AS PEDAGOGICS

As a *science* pedagogics involves a purposeful, radical and systematic search of the reality of educating for pedagogical categories as *illuminative means of thinking* regarding its essential characteristics.²

The phenomenon of educating is a complex aspect of general human activities and it is obvious that pedagogues will concentrate on particular phenomena within this complexity of the reality of educating. Thus, one thinks of the phenomena of learning and of teaching that are more particularly studied by psycho- and didactic-pedagogics, respectively; and in addition to these two pedagogical disciplines other *par-* disciplines of pedagogics have developed. Thus, e.g., there is fundamental pedagogics that, in its *systematic* search for real pedagogical essences, arrived at the following categorical expressions of the educative situation, i.e., pedagogical relationship, sequence, activity and aim *structures*.³

The different part-disciplines of pedagogics, however, must not be arbitrarily investigated next to each other as if the one has nothing to say to the other, their problems have separate identities and their unity is lost in their multiplicity.⁴ Van der Stoep⁵ says there is only one educating, one educative reality and, therefore, only one science of educating. Orthopedagogics also has no other autonomy as a science than it has as an educative science.

When *educative failure* appears as an experiential fact, studying it is not of anything other than the phenomenon of educating. It also is clear that with the advent of orthopedagogics, a separate,

autonomous discipline was not established. However, because it also has the aim of disclosing different aspects of the phenomenon of educative failure, there also is more specific reflection on these aspects and such a perspective forms an integral part of this discipline that takes as its object particular aspects of the phenomenon of educating, e.g., fundamental-(ortho)-pedagogics – where, in particular, there is reflection on the educative structures; didactic-(ortho)-pedagogics – where disharmony in the event of teaching more particularly comes under the spotlight; psycho-(ortho)-pedagogics – where this has to do with disharmony in the psychic life of a child-in-education. There also can be reference to socio-(ortho)-pedagogics, physical-(ortho)-pedagogics, vocational orientation-(ortho)-pedagogics, historical- and comparative-(ortho)-pedagogics, etc.

As pedagogics, orthopedagogics presents itself with the aim of studying the phenomenon of educative failure and integrating this with the phenomenon of re-education. It can also be stated that it involves itself with the grounding of an orthopedagogical theory as the foundation for re-educating a child impeded in becoming in his problematic educative situatedness.

As far as the grounding of an orthopedagogic theory is concerned, in particular, it involves answering the following question: How must one *act* so that the child who now is not *adequately* becoming adult is able to do so? This specifically involves disclosing the *impeding moments of the educative dialogue*. With the help of its various autonomous part-disciplines, an *autonomous* pedagogics postulates pedagogical categories as illuminative means of thinking about the essentials of the educative event.

A cardinal question that the orthopedagogue asks is *in what respect the child, the adult or both participate inadequately in the educative event*. Thus, the orthopedagogue primarily directs himself to a *practical* situation in which the *pedagogical essences appear as disturbed or attenuated*, i.e., where the event of educating is *not* realized adequately. The appearance of the various pedagogical essences (as *adequate*) is studied by the various pedagogical disciplines. As soon as these essences do not appear as *adequate* and there is an inquiry about this, the terrain of the

orthopedagogic is entered. To answer these questions there is a linking up with the knowledge already established by the various independent disciplines because the *inadequate, disturbed, attenuated* appearances of the essences only are describable in terms of *disturbances* or *attenuations* manifested by the particular essences themselves—regarding what the disturbance itself entails as well as its magnitude.

Moreover, this has to do with the question of *how* a unique child must now be helped to actualize his becoming adult as he ought to. According to the currently accountable practice of pedagogics, that constitutes various part-disciplines, the answer to this question cannot be answered by one particular part-perspective but all of the relevant moments of the disciplines must be integrated with the aim of conclusively answering it.

Just as the fundamental knowledge of the various disciplines is foundational for constructing an accountable *teaching* practice, they also are basic knowledge for constructing an accountable orthopedagogic practice.

From this it also seems that orthopedagogics has its *own standpoint* in that it indicates how the various categories of the pedagogical disciplines can be applied to practice in order to eliminate a specific *problematic* educative event and change it to a “problem free” one.

For example, when a child is identified as *restrained in his becoming* there is mention of the *inadequate realization* of the fundamental pedagogical structures, on the one hand, and of an *inadequate actualization* of his childlike psychic life, on the other hand (see chapter two). To now determine the *nature* of the *inadequacies* of *educating* as well as of *underactualizing* the child’s psychic life, the *moments of disturbance or attenuation* are illuminated in terms of the reality of educating and of actualizing the psychic life, respectively—in terms of *where* and *how* these *differ* from being *realized adequately*.

Since this specifically involves *inadequacies*, fundamental pedagogical and psychopedagogical criteria, respectively, are applied as *fundamental-(ortho)-pedagogical* and *psycho-(ortho)-*

pedagogical criteria for evaluating the *disturbed* or *attenuated* appearance of fundamental educative essences and the disturbed or attenuated appearance of the essences of the psychic life as such (see chapter six).

Thus to determine the nature and origin of a particular *failure* in educating, the relevant categories of the various [pedagogical part-] disciplines must continually be placed in an *ortho*-perspective and implemented as such.

Orthopedagogic practice is thus based on the resulting knowledge of the various disciplines that are integrated into a collective perspective. For this reason it is thus obvious that an orthopedagogue must have sufficient knowledge of all of the pedagogical disciplines (in particular of psycho-, fundamental and didactic pedagogics) so that he can “draw out” relevant *ortho-moments* from each discipline and organize them in his practice of orthopedagogic intervention.

Indeed, an orthopedagogue has to explain and interpret hermeneutically the relevance of the various pedagogical categories for a *problematic* event of educating and its elimination.

With this, it also is clear that orthopedagogics as *pedagogic activity* cannot be coupled with only one particular discipline as a subdivision. It can only be done justice as a *separate* pedagogical activity and it must be stated clearly that orthopedagogics is practiced as an *autonomous* pedagogical activity with respect to its organization and functionality.

Many authors also emphasize the fact that pedagogics is always central to intervening with a “derailed” child. For example, Vliegthart⁶ says that all “deviant children” also are committed to education, that orthopedagogics is part of pedagogics and that a general theory is formulated such that it will hold true for intervening with both a child who is becoming adequately and for one who is not. The essential point of contact between pedagogics and orthopedagogics is that a child restrained in his becoming in his problematic educative situation thereby has not lost his educability.

Valk⁷ says, for example, “where ordinary educating is deemed to be adequate because it attains its aim, one speaks of pedagogics. Where it is deemed to show the exceptional, one speaks of orthopedagogics”,* and Moor⁸ asserts “In general, special education first of all is little different from pedagogics. Indeed, special education is pedagogics and nothing more.”** Also, for Nel⁹ orthopedagogics is pedagogics.

The following is a closer consideration of the task and terrain of orthopedagogics, as such.

3. THE TASK AND TERRAIN OF ORTHOPEDAGOGICS

In the preceding section there is reference to the terms “orthopedagogics”, “Heilpaedagogik” [special education], “special” or “exceptional” help for a child restrained in his becoming adult and serves the choice of which of these terms is most accountable.

Until World War II the term “Heilpaedagogik” or also “Sonderpaedagogik” [special education] were very popular especially in German-speaking countries while for the most part, “special education” was mentioned in the Anglo-American countries. In South Africa there is particular reference to “special education” [buitengewone onderwys]. The term “orthopedagogic” strongly entered the foreground in the Netherlands during the 1960s¹⁰ as a comprehensive concept for studying a child in his problematic situation of educating. It also had a wide influence in this country.

By an etymological reflection on the word “orthopedagogic” it is seen that *ortho* and *pedagogic* are derived from the Greek words *orthos* and *paidagogia*, respectively. “Paidagogia” refers to *guiding a child* and aims to guide the child to adulthood, a guiding that essentially means that it will occur *adequately* and that the child will be guided “rightly” and not “wrongly”.

* [waar gewone opvoedkundige maatregelen toereikend zijn om dit doel te bereiken, spreekt men van pedagogiek. Daar waar buitengewone maatregelen zijn aangewezen spreekt men van orthopedagogiek]

** [Heilpaedagogik hast zunachst kein anderes generelles zul als die Paedagogik uberhaupt. Auch Heilpaedagogik ist Paedagogik und nicht anderes]

Orthos means *right, righten, straighten*¹¹, or *to heal, make healthy or correct*, and coupled with *guiding a child* the *inadequate or incorrect-guiding* of the child, or the *guiding that has progressed wrongly* is accentuated. The *guiding* or *educating* is not “right”.

Since the child’s *handicapped-ness* was initially overemphasized to such a degree, a number of authors accepted, without further consideration, that “ortho” really refers back to the child’s *defect* or *deficiency* as such. In this connection it is sufficient to refer to Vliegthart¹² where he stresses that there cannot be mention of “curing” a child’s handicap and this is not about “healing” an illness and then he says, accordingly, there is a striving for “such a boy or girl to learn to live in a reasonable way with a de facto persisting defect.”^{13*}

When there also is a search for the nature of the “special help” executed by the “healing pedagogue” [heilpedagoog], it seems that a child’s physical handicapped-ness is central and the *details* of this help are found in the fact that the educative activities must be carried out under aggravating or difficult circumstances (arising from the child’s defect).¹⁴

Because it is accepted that “ortho” refers to the correction of one or another defect or deviation, the name *orthopedagogics* is objected to. For the same reason the term “Heilpaedagogik” has fallen into disfavor because the idea of *healing* that is brought into connection with “curing” is directly coupled with the defect because healing pedagogues have directed their work merely to the handicapped child.

There is wholehearted agreement with Ter Horst¹⁵ who says this is not about a deficiency or defect of the child that is “crooked” and must be “straightened out” because with respect to blindness, deafness or other defects there is no mention of curing. In addition, linked up with Lubbers, Van der Zeyde, Klinkhammer en Kwakkel-Scheffer¹⁶ who believe that the difficulty that has given rise to a restrained becoming can be removed and that “the good child life can become re-

* [zo ‘n jongen of meisje op een redelijke wijze leert te leven met een toch in feite blijvend tekort]

established.”^{17*} Thus, this has to do with “straightening” the *child guidance* because by implication it is “crooked”; it involves *correcting* the *educating* that is troublesome. Consequently, the term “orthopedagogic” emphasizes the *problematic* event of educating and that it must be corrected. Then there is mention of *special* ways of guiding that result and aids that must be sought to now *further* help a particular child restrained in becoming precisely because the “existing” guidance *is not adequate*.

The central task for orthopedagogic practice then also is directed to correcting the educative activity¹⁸ involving a child whose becoming adult is restrained by his problematic educative situation.

However, in the orthopedagogic literature this being restrained in becoming is not always clearly indicated as such and there still often is reference to the handicap that should be located in the child himself, and that has contributed greatly to the fact that even in 1970¹⁹ there was still general uncertainty about the unitary character of orthopedagogic theory and practice, and that the problematic educative event is not clearly recognized and acknowledged.

Thus, there is mention that a child has not actualized his becoming adult as it ought to be actualized in accordance with his given potentialities under the accompaniment of adults. In orthopedagogics a child’s *educability* is always central and not his deviation, handicap or defect as such.

Orthopedagogics studies and describes the disturbed appearance of the pedagogical, the disharmonious in an educative event, or the child’s being in a problematic educative situation and what its possible elimination entails. Hence, on the one hand, it searches for the “different” self-actualization by a child of his becoming adult, i.e., his own role in his becoming adult, and indeed as its under-actualization, and, on the other hand, for the “different” educating,

* [het goed kinderleven hersteld kan worden]

as an inadequate realization of the fundamental pedagogical structures.

Consequently, an orthopedagogue is confronted with a two-fold task, i.e., constructing an orthopedagogic theory and designing an orthopedagogic practice.

3.1 Orthopedagogic theory

As pedagogics, orthopedagogics also asks the fundamental question about the essence of being a child, on the one hand, and his destination [i.e., adulthood], on the other hand.²⁰ Furthermore, orthopedagogics studies the phenomenon of becoming an adult in a problematic educative situation and there is a search for everything that pertains to educative problems and distress but also for everything relevant to their possible prevention or solution. Hence, orthopedagogic theory is the result of the scientific penetration of the essence of the pedagogic situatedness of a child restrained in becoming adult and, as such this is essence-knowledge of a child whose becoming is restrained in a problematic event of educating.

It is only possible to arrive at this essence-knowledge phenomenologically and thus the phenomenological method has an important role in orthopedagogics.

From the above, once again it appears that general pedagogics has relevance for orthopedagogics and that general pedagogical theory also continues to be valid for orthopedagogic theory.

Also in orthopedagogics there is reflection on a situation where a child comes to stand opposite an adult and where the becoming adult of that child is realized in terms of the self-actualization of the child and the accompaniment by an adult to such self-actualization—now more particularly *inadequate* self-actualization by the child and *inadequate* accompaniment by the adult.

Because in one respect or another the child is restraint in *adequately* becoming adult, he finds himself in an educative situation that is *different* than that of a child who is becoming *adequately*, and now the scientific disclosure on the one hand is

attuned to the child's different situatedness as a *problematic educative situation* and on the other hand to the *different* educating as such. Such thought-work is performed by *fundamental- (ortho-) pedagogics* that is focused on the *inadequately* realized fundamental pedagogical structures and shows what is involved in *inadequate pedagogical trust, understanding and authority*; in an *inadequate pedagogical sequence and aim* as well as in *inadequate pedagogical activities*.

Orthopedagogics specifically has to do with a child who inadequately ("differently") realizes his becoming adult and its cardinal question is precisely how, in his problematic educative situation, he realizes his becoming adult differently. An answer is brought to light and verbalized by psycho-(ortho-) pedagogics in terms of psycho- (ortho-) pedagogical categories such as *disharmonious*²¹ or *different*²² exploring, emancipating, distancing, differentiating and objectifying. In essence, this entails a disclosing of the child's *different* actualization of his potentialities for becoming adult, and indeed as an *inadequate* self-actualization of his psychic-life-in-education. Thus, this not only involves the *fact* of actualizing his psychic life but especially its actualization as *inadequate* in terms of *self-under-actualizations* and moments of *inadequate [adult] accompaniment*.

Nel²⁴ says that as far as pedagogics and all of its part-disciplines are concerned it must be remembered that it is a science that not only wants to know how its "object of study" appears but also how one must act with respect to that object. Thus, there is a practice that rests on the accountable findings of pedagogics as a science.²⁵

Ter Horst²⁶ also emphasizes that "special" education only knows the question of practice and as such implies [it is] a practical science. He believes that orthopedagogics is practiced with the primary aim of eliminating the problematic and, e.g., says that "the scientific approach is used to change concrete problematic educative situations"²⁷ [de wetenschappelijke werkwijzen wordt benut om concrete problematische opvoedingsituaties te veranderen].

Hence, orthopedagogic theory also remains functional in orthopedagogic practice where there is an attempt to eliminate the,

problematic educative situation of a particular child restrained in becoming [adult]. However, here it must be understood that the *explication*, the *verbalization* of this orthopedagogic effort, as an effort to “correct” the problematic educative situation of a unique child restrained in becoming really is “theory”, but then as a description of a practice.

In addition, this leads indirectly to the approach of orthopedagogics as *historical- (ortho-) pedagogics* determining what “corrective work” was done in the past regarding the pedagogical situatedness of a child restrained in becoming adult and is still being done in the present in order to interpret and further illustrate it for practice.

Sonnekus²⁸ says in addition to scientifically reflecting on the investigation of and provision of help to a child in a problematic educative situation, as such, (i.e., the practice itself), orthopedagogics must also consider the possibilities of applying these results. This includes the scientific practitioner taking a child restrained in becoming adult in his problematic educative situation and arrives at a “theory” about this situatedness, and now he must return his findings to his practice and must establish an orthopedagogic practice in scientifically justifiable ways.

Alongside the justification of orthopedagogics as a science, the orthopedagogic ways of acting must also find justification in a view of life but which then signifies a post-scientific, particular couching of generally valid truths.²⁹

In the following orthopedagogic practice is explored.

3.2 Orthopedagogic practice

3.2.1 Introduction

From the previous section it appears that orthopedagogics also confronts the task of designing a scientifically accountable practice. Such an orthopedagogic practice has as its aim to make a problematic educative situation unproblematic again or free-from-educative problems. In terms of the *diagnostication* of and also *provision of help* to a child inadequately becoming adult, on the one

hand, a program of corrective educative action is established by which, on the other hand, the particular child can be supported to an *acceleration* in his *becoming adult* in order to reach that level of becoming adult on which he already should have been.

With respect to the field of work of orthopedagogics, Pretorius³⁰ mentions the physically and mentally handicapped and children with educative and learning difficulties. To gain greater clarity in this respect it serves once again to attend briefly to a child who is dependent on orthopedagogic intervention, where here *intervention* means the action by which a child is involved such that his problematic educative situatedness can be broken through and his childlike becoming adult can be “accelerated” to the level on which it ought to be. Thus there is mention of “a new educative connection”^{31*} that arises. This child constitutes a “skewed” lifeworld for himself and according to Vliegenthart,³² this is not “simply the result of growing to adulthood under difficult circumstances but besides [the child] is continually forced to take a distance from a once formed image. ‘Educating to taking a distance’ is for this circumstance.”^{33**}

The orthopedagogue concerns himself with any child who is restrained in becoming or in danger of becoming so. For example, this involves the fact that where a child has become impeded because of the presence of a psychotic mother in his pedagogical situation who is not ill enough to be institutionalized but not well enough for living socially enough to intervene with her child’s becoming adult,³⁴ as well as, e.g., where a child who on the basis of a handicap *can* become impeded in becoming adult. Any child whose pedagogically achieved [level of becoming] is not in accord with his pedagogically achievable level, or where there is the possibility that such a situation can easily arise is a task for an orthopedagogue. It can also be said that these children distinguish themselves as “different” from the adequately becoming child. They are “different” on the basis of an inadequately actualized psychic-life-

* [een nieuwe opvoedingsgemeenschap]

** [eenvoudig om daarvan in die groeiende volwassenheid onder bezwarende omstandigheden, die bovendien telkens het eenmaal gevormde beeld opnieuw opdringen, afstand te nemen. ‘Opvoeding tot distantie’ is daarvoor voorwaarde]

in-education that results in the child's becoming, *in comparison with the expected*, is not realized adequately and a *gap* arises between the achieved and achievable level of becoming.

Also when the findings of several authors are looked at regarding a child committed to orthopedagogic intervention, it is clear that it involves this "difference". Hence, Vliegthart³³ says for example "With children who have become 'very difficult to educate' primarily through an unfavorable educative situation and their further history, the definition of their view of the world from this background often is such a starkly negative influence that one is inclined to speak of 'necessarily being-different.' ""*

The *problematic situation of educating* as well as the *impediment in becoming* of a child are clearly suggested by Pretorius³⁶ when he comments that orthopedagogics directs itself the pedagogically *distressful situation* of the child and to his disturbed childlike *lived-experiences* and behaviors in their relation to this situation. Most authors do not always emphasize either the *problematic educative event* or the *impediment of becoming* of the child but indeed usually only suggest *where* the orthopedagogic commitment of the child in this context must be sought.

Thus, for example, Dumont³⁷ notes that orthopedagogics has as its object the educating of aggressive, asocial, restrained, insecure, nervous, anxious, behaviorally disturbed, impulsive children and makes it very clear that this has to do with children who *under-actualize* their becoming adult.

The problematic educative situatedness and also the restrained becoming of a child comes strongly forth when Nel and Sonnekus³⁸, and also Stander and Sonnekus³⁹ refer to the fact that the child must be *re-educated*, which also suggests a *problematic* educative event as well as that the child inadequately actualizes his becoming adult.

* [By kinderen die primair door een ongunstige opvoedingsituatie en door hun verdere historie tot 'zeer moeilijk opvoedbaren' zijn geworden, is de bepaaldheid van hun kijk op de wereld vanuit deze achtergronden veelal zo sterk in negatieve zin beïnvloed, dat men de neiging krijgt om te spreken van een 'noodzakelijk anders-zijn']

Also where Hanselmann⁴⁰ describes Heilpaedagogiek (orthopedagogics) as “die Lehre vom Unterrichts, von der Erziehung und Fursorge aller jener Kinder deren koperlich seelische Entwicklung dauerend durch individuelle und soziale Faktoren gehemmt ist”, the restraint in the child’s becoming is clear although he does not clearly show that impediment in becoming must mainly be attributed to a problematic situation of educating, as such.

For Vliegenthart⁴¹ it involves help and support to a child who is in a state of communication where the course of educating has become seriously impeded. Then he also describes orthopedagogics as the science “whose object is educating children who for a variety of reasons remain or for a long time are so seriously impeded in the progress of their being educated that in a cultural community for the great masses of youth, the usual forms of educating do not provide results acceptable for the child and/or the community.”*

Although he demands that there be mention of “deviant”⁴² children, it seems that what he means by this is nothing more than “inadequate becoming”.⁴³ Thus, when he says orthopedagogics has to do with educating “handicapped”⁴⁴ children, “handicapped” really refers to a *hindrance* regarding the child’s becoming adult, hence also his emphasis of the fact that it is children where “alarming behavior” arises that impedes their *expected* adulthood either on the basis of the “mis-forming of the person” exclusively under the influence of the circumstances under which he lived in the previously given period, or on the basis of organic disturbances (deafness, poor hearing, etc).⁴⁵

Although a child’s *handicap* as such does not make him dependent on orthopedagogic intervention, he indeed is a task for orthopedagogics for the following reasons, among others:

- (i) Most parents experience an impotence regarding the task of educating their handicapped child;

* [die tot object heft de opvoeding van kinderen in wie door zeer verschillende oorzaken blijvend of gedurende lange tijd zo ernstige belemmeringen voor het verloop der opvoeding aanwezig zijn, dat de in een cultuurgemeenschap voor de grote massa van de jeugd gebruikelijke opvoedingsvormen niet tot een voor die kinderen en/of voor de gemeenschap aanvaardbaar resultaat voeren]

- (ii) A handicapped child very easily becomes emotionally labilized;
- (iii) From the beginning a handicapped child must be involved in special education just to prevent his being restrained in his becoming [adult];
- (iv) A handicapped child readily experiences his being-different as a being-inferior and the surrounding world as deceptive and hostile, by which his world-image also becomes *different*,⁴⁶ and his pedagogical situation becomes problematic.

The first task of orthopedagogics then will be a penetation into each of the “surroundings experienced as different and thus as different children.”^{47*}

3.2.2 Orthopedagogic diagnostication

The orthopedagogic program of providing help begins with a search for insight into the problematic event of educating in which a child who shows a *gap* between the achieved and the achievable finds himself and in particular into its origins. However, to be able to speak of a *gap in becoming* it must first be determined that there is a gap between a child’s *possible* and *actual*, or, for example, as Dumont⁴⁸ states it, between [his] intelligence and learning.

Determining a child’s impediment in becoming implies a *pedagogical* diagnostication. Each educator, but particularly each *pedagogue*, can determine *that* a child is impeded in becoming in terms of pedagogical criteria and that a child thus finds himself in a problematic educative situation. However, irrespective of the weakness or strength of the *supposition* of what might underlie the restraint in the child’s becoming, the educator [is not in a position to] know with scientific certainty why the child’s educative situation is problematic and thus it is the task of an orthopedagogue to determine the *nature*, *scope* and *origin* of the *impediment in becoming* of a particular child.

* [het omringende zo anders belevende, en dus zo andere kinderen], an activity that is qualified as orthopedagogic diagnostication]

In reality orthopedagogic diagnostication is a difficult task in that exploring and gauging restraints in becoming and unsuccessful educating cannot be done mechanistically.

In the first place, the impediment in becoming, as such, is determined as is its nature in terms of the quality of actualizing the various ways of becoming adult as ways of actualizing the psychic life of a child in his being educatively situated. This requires that there must be a penetration into the lifeworld of the child restrained in becoming as a world of experiencing, willing, lived-experiencing, knowing and behaving on the basis of which an image can also be acquired of the attained level of becoming, and through evaluating this in terms of pedagogical criteria an indication is gotten of a particular child's attained pedagogical level.

Sonnekus⁴⁹ says this includes a search as a grounding of the essences in a child's world constituting, more specifically as a child in relation to an adult.

Also it must be determined what the child's potentialities are for becoming adult and what at a particular age can be expected of him, then it can be determined what his achievable level now is and ultimately what his pedagogically achievable level is or possibly will be.

The term *diagnosticing* is derived from *diagnose* that refers to determining or distinguishing an illness according to its characteristics or symptoms. To *diagnose* then means to determine an illness by diagnosing it; i.e., defining it according to its symptoms.⁵⁰ Thus diagnose is really a medical term that refers to identifying symptoms of an illness in order to determine its nature and causal factors as a foundation for healing practices or therapy.⁵¹

Because *diagnose* has a strong mechanistic and natural science connotation,⁵² the word *diagnostication* is preferred.

Diagnostication does not refer to identifying and studying an "illness" as a locally isolated phenomenon but to penetrating a disturbance in the child who is personally involved in his deficiency in relationship with the world, according to Sonnekus.⁵³

Rumke⁵⁴ already in 1935 indicated that diagnostics is “the penetration of a unique, concrete case in its totality.”*

The activity of orthopedagogic diagnostics first focuses on an exploration of a child-in-education which means that the moments of impediments in becoming are identified,⁵⁵ i.e., everything in a child’s situation of educating that makes it problematic. On the one hand, such an exploration includes a penetration of the child’s “different” realization of his psychic life-in-education and, on the other hand, a penetration of the inadequate realization of the fundamental pedagogic structures and the meaning he gives to them. His *different experiencing, willing, live- experiencing, knowing* and *behaving* must also be gauged.⁵⁶ Briefly, *orthopedagogic diagnostics means exploring the lifeworld, as a personally significant world of a child impeded in becoming in his situation of problematic educating with the aim of estimating the nature, seriousness and origins of his being impeded in his becoming.*

In light of the above it must be strongly emphasized that this does not merely involve identifying deficiencies or deviancies on the basis of particular symptoms but an estimating and evaluating of a child’s lifeworld; as an indication of the restraint in becoming as part of his relationships to the world that as a person he has constituted as a totality-in-function in his communication with the reality of educating.⁵⁷

Because the orthopedagogic diagnostician also tries bring under control as many moments as possible that lead to adjusting the problematic, according to Ter Horst⁵⁸ multi-disciplinary work can be done because “it is completely superfluous to usurp the neighboring orthopedagogic disciplines.”** To this it can be added that the orthopedagogic diagnostician’s work of exploring a child in a problematic educative situation can be distinguished from the haphazardness and unreliability that characterizes the work of a non-scientist sine he himself must justify his findings in various ways such as also conversing with other orthopedagogues.

* [het doorschouwen van het enkele concrete geval in zijn totaliteit]

** [het is volkomen overbodig dat de orthopedagogiek buurdsisciplines usurpeert]

In a practical orthopedagogic situation of diagnostics strives for true objectivity and a voids subjectivism by not simply applying tests but “projects” himself into the child’s world via the fundamental methods (e.g., pedagogical observation, encounter, intuition) and then distances himself once again.⁵⁹

The sole aim of orthopedagogic diagnostics is to eliminate the problematic educative situation of the child restrained in becoming and to then support him in the adequate actualization of his becoming in a pedotherapeutic event.

3.2.3 Pedotherapy

When a reliable image has been obtained of the lifeworld of a child impeded in his becoming within his problematic situation of educating an orthopedagogue can proceed to support him in a purposeful, planned way in order to accompany him to optimally actualize his becoming until he has reached his pedagogically attainable level and the orthopedagogic once again reverts to pedagogic accompaniment.

In order to distinguish this *special* help from *ordinary* educative help it is referred to as *pedotherapy*. When the term *therapy*, that usually refers to treating or curing illnesses⁶⁰, is combined with *pedo* this in no way means curing an illness⁶¹, but helping a child “catch up” in his becoming.⁶²

Thus, this entails *exceptional* help because here there are exceptional circumstances in the sense that in one way or another the child is impeded in his becoming adult, and on this basis he finds himself in a problematic situation of educating. Hence, the educative approach differs somewhat from that of a child adequately becoming adult.

Consequently, this is also qualified as an *act of re-educating* because the child restrained in becoming cannot in his present situation attain that level of adulthood of which he is capable.⁶³ Thus, the aim is to make the problematic educative situation of the child bearable once more so he can again acquire a perspective.

According to Sonnekus⁶⁵ this essentially involves the child *accepting* and *assimilating* his different lifeworld as a world of experiencing, willing and lived-experiencing. It is continually directed to correctively educating the child to accelerate his becoming adult so that he can reach what is pedagogically attainable. This is not applied psychotherapy.

Thus, for example, a child who is pathically-affectively flooded is helped to strengthen and build up his feelings of safety and security and as a consequence also his venturing attitude in order to try to bring him to more meaningful, acceptable and accountable relationships with his world. As a whole a child is supported via purposeful experiences of the sense and meaning of life contents in order to proceed to discover more meaning in his task of becoming adult.⁶⁶

The support from the parents and teachers is always of particular importance but the pedotherapeutic event must be viewed as establishing that situation in which an encounter occurs between the orthopedagogue as pedotherapist and the child impeded in becoming during which he is purposefully helped to reconstitute his lifeworld as a world of meaning.

In a pedotherapeutic situation there is a conscious implementation of educative means and the optimal realization of the fundamental pedagogic structures. Hence, there are planned pedagogic activities as activities of re-educating and this does not occur haphazardly or as something obvious but, as Lubbers⁶⁷ says, it occurs by means of *guided symmorphosis* or a *planned mutual [adult and child] giving form* to life contents. Thus, now there is *meaning* [i.e., form] given together with the child and in this way he is helped to give meanings “other” than his “distorted” ones to life contents so that gradually he also attributes to them the meanings that adults do.

This also implies [attributing] *different* meaning to his own anxiety, tension, insecurity, uncertainty, etc. This involves using symmorphosis as an educative means, as a purposeful, planned act of educating by which the child is helped to escape from his educative distress.

The moments of [attributing] revised meanings provided by the orthopedagogue serve as a bridge by which the child impeded in becoming can take a short-cut to his pedagogically achievable level [of becoming] on which he should have already been; at the same time, this provides him with a short-cut for escaping his affective distress and he can attribute “new”, “different” and “favorable” meanings to his own situation. This is what Vliegenthart⁶⁸ qualifies as “giving meaning on the basis of positive lived-experiencing.”* These few ideas about pedotherapy must suffice and the interested reader is referred to the work of Pretorius⁶⁹ on the foundations of pedotherapy.

3.2.4 Additional tasks for the orthopedagogic practice

As a result of the event of diagnostication, the orthopedagogue knows whether a particular child is impeded in his becoming and if so something now has to be done about it.

An important task that he now confronts is advising the parents and other educators of the child regarding their pedagogical accompaniment of the child, particularly regarding the constituents of the problematic situation of educating. Because it also usually is the parents who can bring about a favorable constituting, it is necessary that they should be fully informed by means of an orthopedagogic conversation during which their child’s being restrained in becoming is fully disclosed and the moments [in need] of adjustment are thoroughly discussed.

The child impeded in becoming also primarily directs an appeal to his parents see to it that the problematic event of educating is “set right” again that also includes a “change” in the activity of accompaniment because, as Lubbers says it is only the communication between parents and children that can prevent the child from “an inclination to withdraw himself into fear and underhanded behavior” [neight zich in vrees en stiekem gedrag terug te trekken].⁷⁰ The conflict in trust between parent and child

* [zingeving op grond van positieve belevingen]

must be eliminated. Lubbers⁷¹ also says that the aim, among others, of pedotherapy is to bring the child impeded in becoming back to his parents.

Since the parents are co-responsible for the development of the problematic situation of educating, it is obvious that they will not always be aware of *what* the underlying problem is and *how* to make it “right” again. In this regard they are committed to the professional advice of the orthopedagogue. Often the orthopedagogue finds that it is not even necessary to involve the child restrained in becoming in pedotherapy because the “different” behavior of the parents that has led to the problematic situation of educating can be eliminated because of the insight they have arrived at during the orthopedagogic conversation.

Thus, it is clear that the orthopedagogue must be up on all possible origins of impediments in becoming in order to be able to exercise his comprehensive task. Therefore, he also continually conducts a search for the origins of a problematic educative situation, how there are purposeful ways of exploring and arrive at insight into the problematic situation on, the one hand, and the child’s actualization of his psychic life in it, on the other hand; and how the emergence of a problematic educative situation possibly can be avoided, also by making use of the knowledge of possible helping sciences.

It thus can be stated that an orthopedagogue is confronted with a complex task. He must keep himself widely informed. By means of the diagnostics he must determine the particular problem in terms of its nature, scope and origins. Furthermore, he must provide corrective educative help for accelerating the child’s impeded becoming adult and the elimination of his problematic situation of educating. He also accompanies the child’s parents and teachers in the problematic situation of educating whether by means of orthopedagogic advice or by actual *parental accompaniment*, by which is meant that the parents are accompanied in the practical problematic educative situations with respect to their educative tasks, a terrain that is more specifically entered by a *socio-orthopedagogue*.

However, he also studies the various handicaps or so-called specific forms of disturbance, on the one hand, because any handicap can easily lead to an educative situation becoming problematic, and, on the other hand, he studies the best ways and means of disclosing the ways in which a handicapped child can be accompanied to adequately actualize his potentialities of becoming.

Knowledge of the forms of disturbance is necessary with the aim of determining the potential moments of corrective possibilities a specific sort of handicap might contain.

Nel⁷² clearly indicates that the handicapped child also is a task for orthopedagogics just because it has to do with identifying difficulties or hindrances in a child's being-on-his-way to adulthood and the pedagogical help offered.

Also a handicapped child has a need for "special" pedagogic help because on the basis of his handicap he is "different" from the non-handicapped. Thus, a blind child's blindness demands that "special" help be given with respect to it so he can adequately realize the potentialities of becoming at his disposal.

As soon as educating or teaching can be qualified as "special" or "exceptional" it distinguishes itself from "ordinary" teaching or educating. In particular, with *special* or *exceptional* teaching the emphasis falls on the "different" methods related to a particular handicap than with a non-handicapped child. A group of *weak-sighted* children indeed cannot read from a chalkboard as can adequately seeing children, etc. With respect to a group of children of one type of handicap, in the sense that they are all, e.g., deaf or have cerebral palsy, etc. there is mention of "similarity" only in so far as there is reference to one type of defect.

In special or exceptional teaching there is concentration on the nature of the particular help necessitated by the particular handicap with the aim of carrying on an optimal dialogue with each of these children. The specific defect must be taken into account by the teaching in order to properly support these children to broaden their lifeworld via their available and given potentialities.

In the first place special teaching has to do with helping a specific handicapped child with a lasting defect to learn to live in the best way possible. Such help is still not authentic orthopedagogic help but this is only so as soon as the expected level of becoming adult is not reached. Special teaching is not directed to *accelerating becoming* but, on the one hand, to the child's adequate actualization of his given potentialities, and, on the other hand, to the *purposeful* prevention of possible impediments in becoming of a handicapped child.

However, it is a fact of experience that handicapped children often surely show restraints in becoming irrespective of special teaching. Then the child in a special school also is committed to orthopedagogic accompaniment.

Special teaching and orthopedagogic help, however, are still seen as the same matter by a number of persons. *If indeed this is the case, then this means that special teaching in advance of the inadequate accompaniment of the handicapped child allows him to adequately actualize his potentialities.* It must be emphasized that "blind-pedagogics, deaf-pedagogics, debilitative-pedagogics"^{73*} essentially are no less authentic orthopedagogic work than teaching the gifted.

Because the blind and deaf child are "completely" educable,⁷⁴ they are committed to *special* educating that will *take into account* their defect and support them to self-accountable, self-determination⁷⁵ because in spite of their handicap there also is for them a personally dignified form of adulthood to be attained. Thankfully, and irrespective of special and exceptional teaching, a number of handicapped also attain independent adulthood. The fact that many of them reach adulthood only later than the non-handicapped does not in any sense mean they are retarded in their becoming; it is expected that an intellectually handicapped child will take longer, e.g., to arrive at an adequate gnostic-cognitive grasp of life contents and thus also to grasp life's demands of propriety than the highly gifted. Only when he *under*-actualizes his given intellectual potentialities (whether limited at all) and/or a number of other potentialities is there mention of an impediment in becoming.

* [blindenpedagogiek, dovenpedagogiek, debielejnpedagogiek]

If a handicapped child, however, is involved in an “ordinary” didactic situation along with non-handicapped, from this the usual result is that he under-actualizes his learning potentialities. Because his “deficiency” is also so burdensome, it often happens that a number of handicapped children, also irrespective of special educating, are impeded in becoming. Then, indeed, they are committed to orthopedagogic help in addition to special education. Also, in a special school it cannot always be shown with certainty where special education ceases and orthopedagogic accompaniment begins. For this reason, it is necessary that a teacher in a special school also must be a thoroughly prepared orthopedagogue.

4. SYNTHESIS

In this chapter an attempt is made to show that a child who finds himself in a problematic situation of educating, on the basis of which his becoming adult is inadequately realized, is a phenomenon to be studied by pedagogics, and in particular orthopedagogics. Also, the orthopedagogue, by providing practical help, can eliminate the problematic situation of educating.

Orthopedagogics is that science that specifically has as its object of study the problematic educative reality and the child impeded in becoming within it.

Orthopedagogic practice then includes disclosing and interpreting the event of restraints in becoming adult in terms of pedagogical categories with reference to attenuated and disturbed appearances of pedagogic essences by which the educators and child find themselves in a problematic situation of educating. Also it includes an investigation of eliminating the phenomenon of problematic educating, and, in connection with this, what accelerating becoming adult entails.

As a science strongly directed to practice, orthopedagogics provides guidelines for how *activities* must be taken for eliminating the problematic event of educating. It indicates how the experiential world, as world of meaning, of a child impeded in becoming can be gauged in an orthopedagogically diagnostic way; how the essential

nature of a unique child's impediment in becoming can be fathomed; how his pedagogically achieved level can be evaluated in terms of pedagogic criteria and how an indication of his pedagogically achievable level can be found; how the most important constituents of his problematic situation of educating can be disclosed; how there can be an accountable planning to re-educate the child by means of the pedotherapeutic event on the basis of which a child is supported to an *acceleration* in his becoming adult via a redefining of life contents in such a way that they will mean what they *ought* to mean; how to advise the educators and, where necessary, accompany them in assimilating and eliminating educative problems and in particular regarding their adequate realization of the fundamental pedagogic structures; how, in general, to help them avoid contributing to a problematic educative situation; and how to teach and accompany a handicapped child in a "special" way so that he is not impeded in his becoming.

Thus, it is evident that a person who will dare provide help to a child impeded in becoming in his problematic pedagogic situation, in the first place must be thoroughly acquainted with the essences of the educative event in order to be able to determine criterially [i.e., in terms of these essences] if indeed there are educative problems and, if so, also be able to know how he can realize these essences in his actual intervention with such a child. This also requires that he will know what childlike becoming essentially includes and how it is realized by the child himself with the aim of gauging moments of its under-actualization. If in this context he has determined criterially that becoming has not occurred adequately, he must also be able to determine *where* the problem is, *what* underlies its distorted course, and *how* it can be corrected.

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