

## DISCUSSION\*

### 1. P. van Zyl:

In using the term **discipline** with respect to orthopedagogics, didactic pedagogics, etc., I eagerly ask a question: Does this not create the impression that they are separate, i.e., independent subjects? Yet it is pedagogics that is the science or discipline. Even **discipline** is found to be unacceptable because it not only distinguishes but separates, delimits too sharply, and thus divides. The unity is violated. **Part-perspective** is a tautology because a perspective implies that the whole is not in the point of view. Perspective does not separate observable from unobservable parts. Preference is given to perspective. A sense of overlap is included in the term and perspective accepts or recognizes that which does not show itself in the moment as being present in order to complete the whole, and this promotes unity.

### 2. M. C. H. Sonnekus:

[Establishing] the unity of pedagogics is in the past but still today there are particular threats from followers of one or another trend in psychology, e.g. educational, developmental, child or learning psychology. These advocates hold the outdated view that psychology, irrespective of its underlying anthropology or origin, is a comprehensive science that can be applied to all life situations, including educating and teaching. Obviously, this is an extremely objectionable practice, such an applied psychology has no validity, and there is no mention of a meaningful relation with pedagogics.

In particular, reference also needs to be made to the erroneous view that if psychology concerns itself with "the child", it then possesses application value, which still does not qualify it in any sense as pedagogical since it has not originated from the reality of educating.

A serious objection also has to be made against the practice where in various circles the name "psychopedagogics" is used without the content qualifying in any sense as pedagogical. In some instances there are so-called part-disciplines of pedagogics that do qualify as pedagogical such as fundamental pedagogics, historical pedagogics, didactic pedagogics, while at the same institutions

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"psychopedagogics" is taught where the contents are psychological and not pedagogical. The unity of pedagogics does not exist at such institutions in so far as the relations of the part-disciplines with "psychopedagogics" are not what they ought to be and the student becomes rather confused. This is not to say that the pedagogical, in particular the psychopedagogical, cannot and must not enter into discourse with psychology which can occur under certain conditions, but the latter still cannot be summarily applied [to educating a child].

### 3. T. A. Viljoen:

Each of the speakers in his search for the **unity of the pedagogical** stressed that the keystone for possible unity revolves around the question of "What is **essential** for educating, **as such**?" It is precisely the answer to this question that already has brought us far on the way to a unity. Now, however, there is a new call for unity that requires a **radical empiricism** with respect to the stated question. That is to say, it requires the use of **phenomenology** as an overarching method along with the application of other methods, as techniques, that have to be phenomenologically interpreted for the sake of the unity of the pedagogical.

However, there are two slogans that threaten this unity:

(a) It is said "The word 'phenomenology' must not be used too assuredly. We must follow its course without saying so." This slogan really stems from the dwindling of phenomenology in Europe and especially in the Netherlands.

(b) The second slogan is "The time of practicing science for the sake of science is forever past--especially in pedagogics." Accordingly, we must practice science for the sake of improving practice.

Only as a pure science can pedagogics promote its unity--not with the question of practical needs but with the question of the essentials of educating, as stated above. Indeed, a pedagogue is called to show the **implications** of his findings for practice, but this does not mean these implications are the aim of his science.

In addition, a pedagogician remains a pedagogician. There really is no such thing as a fundamental pedagogician, a sociopedagogician, a psychopedagogician, etc. They always remain pedagogicians (as

builders of the unity as a systematic whole of pedagogical knowledge) but each from one or another perspective. Therefore, there also is no such thing as the **pedagogical** outside of its perspectives. It is precisely in its perspectives that pedagogics (as a unity or not) is embodied.

#### 4. M. J. Bondesio:

There is little trouble about the unity of the pedagogical in so far as its driving motive primarily is the "clarification" of the phenomenon of educating because:

(a) all particular problems of the distinguishable perspectives figure within the framework of a general pedagogical problem;

(b) conclusions or judgments formulated from a particular perspective implicitly or explicitly overlap the terrain delimited by a particular problem or question because the hermeneutic involvement with this piece of reality asks for an authentic synthesis within the framework of the general problem.

Regarding the part-disciplines (particular perspectives) that explicitly "control" practice as a final motive, they presume that the unity of the pedagogic is troublesome. In order to plan and design a particular educative practice(s) requires that they give form to the unity of the phenomenon of educating in the most concrete sense of the word. A synthesis of insights from the various disciplines thus is necessary to maintain the unity of the pedagogical in designing a particular practice and to guarantee the course of this practice-in-function.

With respect to phenomenology as a comprehensive method of scientific research, problems are anticipated if all methods are viewed as steps or techniques of the phenomenological method. The question arises about where the identity of phenomenology and other methods lie if the differences are not **methodologically** demonstrable. In this case is phenomenology nothing more than a scientific research method, namely, a philosophy of science?

#### 5. C. J. G. Kilian:

This evening it strikes me that all speakers and participants have a need to stress the unity of pedagogical thinking. One now can ask

the question of why at this stage there is such an ardent search for unity in pedagogical thinking. I believe many this evening have already answered this and I think one answer is that we want to maintain the character of independence of our scientific discipline. Under no circumstances do we want to be an applied science. Professor Sonnekus has stressed this again so aptly.

In this sense, I also think we can try once again to return to the original object of study of pedagogy, namely "the pedagogic".

However, in all modesty, I will ask that we not throw overboard thoughts of perspective; that is, there has to be a unity in multiplicity. This means that there also can be a fundamental pedagogian, psychopedagogue, etc. The important thing to remember here is that possibly we must give up the whole idea of **part**-perspective or **part**-discipline. The easiest way is to emphasize the word "pedagogical" each time and talk of a **pedagogical** perspective, a **pedagogical** discipline and to refer to "various" pedagogical perspectives and then entirely eliminate the word **part** and in doing so emphasize the **unity**.

Regarding an incidental remark about the whole idea of structure vs structures about which Professor Van Zyl also spoke, for me it was encouraging that Professor Van Niekerk talked about "macrostructures" and also "microstructures" (plural form), because I plead for the use of the plural form, not to arrive at a splintering, although this is a danger connected with its use. I readily concede that the use of the plural form (i.e., structures) easily can give rise to an "absolutizing", to use Van Zyl's term, but even so, I feel that all of the important aspects mentioned by him and that can be called possible "pedagogical truths" still can each form a structure. His entire explanation of what "time" is, when and how it elapses separately, together and within each other is a construction of each of these pedagogical truths. In other words, there is something such as a **time-structure**, a **space-structure**, an **educand-structure** each of which is a distinct, distinguishable structure that has to be organized within the unitary structure of the pedagogical. I believe that one can talk of a **unitary** structure with distinguishable **sub**-structures (**infra**-structures) or, to use the words of Van Niekerk, **macro**-structures with distinguishable **micro**-structures.

6. P. van Zyl:

With respect to colleague Kilian's plea for the retention of the use of the plural form **structures** only the following is clarified:

The interpretation that each of the components mentioned by me has a unique structure and that those of time, space, educand, etc. each can be subjected to a separate structural analysis is underlined. Time, educand, educator, aim, etc. each show a unity that has to be respected. However, when they are related in an educative situation as a situation of relationships, they appear as **components of this interconnected unity**. Allow me to illustrate this in terms of a building without comparing educating to a building. A window, a door, a wall each has its own structure, but window, door and wall as part of a whole are something else. A new unity or structure is formed. In the **interconnected whole** of the building, the meaning of each is different than it is outside of this structure.

An analysis of relationship, sequence and aim is possible but educating is a structure-in-function in which relationship, sequence and aim are tied together and then there can be talk of sub-structures. In such a context they are components of a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. The same holds true for the educative relationship. There is general reference to three relationships: authority, trust and understanding. The educative relationship simultaneously is a relationship of authority, trust and understanding. In their particular connections within an educative relationship, a new meaning is manifested that cannot be brought to light by each component or sub-structure separately. The whole always says more than the parts. Naturally, it is a problem that in the distinctions, the simultaneity of all of the features of educating cannot be expressed. In the course of time, one can be expressed after the other. In the phenomenon, they are simultaneous and, as such, a unity. They presuppose each other. The fact that the situation and the relationship change lies in the essence of the situation of educating. During the course of time it is attuned to elevating its level, as well as in the being of a person (educator and educand) as initiative of relationships.