

## CHAPTER III CHILD LEARNING\*

G. V. Ferreira

### 1. CHILD LEARNING: A PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

#### 1.1 Child learning: a genuinely human phenomenon

In searching for the foundations or origins of a child's learning, authors such as Guyer, Hillebrand, Bollinger, Sonnekus and others point out that learning is a *way* in which a child, as a *person, finds him/herself in the world*. As an original way of human living, it is a *potentiality* that is given with being a child (i.e., being human). He/she learns because he/she is a human being and *as a human being does*. Thus, child learning is reduced to the fact that he/she is an *openness-for* and *directedness-to* the world (intentionality). Learning as intentionality reveals itself from the beginning as a genuine child way of living. In the original and everyday relationship to the world a child directs him/herself in his/her *openness* to fellow humans and things surrounding him/her. In this way he/she not only discovers him/herself in the world, but also undergoes or *experiences* it or something as not him/herself. Such "self-and world-discovery" also plays out in the earlier moments of a child existence as indicative of his/her potentiality to learn.

Langeveld, who has done pioneering work in establishing a near-to-life child anthropology\*, indicates that a child is someone who wants to be and to become *someone him/herself*. This is the basis on which child learning and the impetus for his/her *willingness* to learn rests.

---

\* Partial translation (2021) by George Yonge of: Chapter III of M.C.H. Sonnekus & G.V. Ferreira (1987) **Die psigiese lewe van die kind-in-opvoeding**: 'n Handleiding in die psigopedagogiek, pp. 75-133. (Revised Edition). Stellebosch: University Publishers and Booksellers. An earlier and shorter translation appeared as chapter III in Sonnekus, <. C. H. (Ed.) (1985) **Learning**” A psychopedagogic perspective Stellenbosch: University Publishers and Booksellers..

\* Child anthropology studies the real essence of a child as a human being in relation to the world.

As an initiator-of-relationships (Buytendijk), the origin of learning thus is given with being a child. However, this initiative to learn implies effort in that he/she wants to actualize it. Learning has a task character requiring active participation in what he/she is in a learning relationship with. According to Langeveld, a child has the task of overcoming his/her given helplessness in order to attain the security that provides him/her with a willingness to participate in the world emotionally. His/her becoming, as realized by means of the moments of helplessness, security and exploration (Langeveld) is rooted in his/her willingness to become and to learn and also on a stable, trusting educative relationship between adult and child. To be a child who in time becomes an adult requires sustained educative support because he/she cannot properly learn or become without adult accompaniment.

A child actualizing learning, although rooted in his/her initiative itself and made possible by his/her given learning potential, presents a task for educating. An educator, who can vary from a parent at home to a teaching in school, notices this willingness to learn and thus addresses an appeal to him/her in his/her educative teaching, whether it is spontaneous, deliberate or more formal (school), precisely because of a child's potential to learn while he/she anticipates that he/she will actualize his/her becoming adult; thus, educating, becoming and learning are basic givens in his/her life and are the foundation for his/her becoming adult.

To elucidate the original phenomenon of child learning further it is necessary to attend to a child's involvement in the world that always takes its course in a *situation*. He/she learns because he/she participates in his/her situation (Langeveld). In Linschoten's terminology, a situation is the totality of related data to which there must be an action. A child acts when he/she learns in that, in his/her openness, he/she directs him/herself to the situational data that speak to him/her by *attributing sense and meaning* to them. This act of giving meaning to an object of learning or to learning material that he/she *experiences* in a situation is evidence of his/her *willingness* to learn to acquire a grasp of it. Indeed, learning is a child's *taking a personal position* as a *totality-in-function* directed to exploring, acquiring and mastering reality. It is aimed at discovering meaning, exposing the meaning that reality

itself possesses and through which reality acquires *meaning for him/her*. Thus, each child shows a given intention to learn. In this way he/she proclaims his/her openness and gives concrete form to the fact that he/she is on his/her way, someone who *accepts co-responsibility* for actualizing his/her becoming and learning. Bollinger also typifies learning as a *phenomenon of becoming* in as much as a child might not *change* properly if he/she does not *learn* (my italics).

It is indisputable that *adequate* change in a child is brought about through *educating*. Becoming as change that occurs in a child's life can be understood best if it is interpreted within the context of *double unlocking* (Klafki). To be able to become, a child must unlock him/herself for reality and, in turn, an adult must unlock reality for him/her. In other words, he/she realizes his/her becoming to the extent that he/she unlocks him/herself to reality, but this only can be realized adequately if an adult accompanies him/her through his/her teaching. If a child succeeds in making the unlocked reality his/her own, his/her change regarding it becomes noticeable in that increasingly he/she behaves as an adult.

The following is a summary of some essential moments of child learning, as a genuine human phenomenon:

1.1.1 Child learning is an original mode of living by which he/she finds him/herself as a human being in the world.

1.1.2 Learning confirms his/her openness-for and directedness-to reality (intentionality).

1.1.3 A child's learning act is rooted in his/her wanting to be someone him/herself.

1.1.4 Learning is a human potentiality that a child must actualize continually.

1.1.5 Child learning is taking a personal position as a totality-in-function.

1.1.6 Learning is a matter of meaning-discovery and meaning-attribution.

1.1.7 Learning is a phenomenon of becoming because his/her willingness to learn also is a willingness to become. Changing, an essence of becoming, is possible in that he/she learns.

1.1.8 Learning has its origin in a child's own initiative but he/she always is dependent on educating (upbringing) for its proper actualization. Without educating, he/she cannot learn as he/she should and thus also not become as he/she should. The significance of learning resides in his/her becoming a proper adult.

In light of the above brief grounding of learning, the question arises of what this means psychopedagogically.

1.2 Learning as a way in which a child-in-education manifests his/her psychic life

In chapter II it is shown that becoming and learning are the two ways in which the psychic life of a child in a situation of educating is manifested, that they are equi-primordially given with his/her psychic life, and that *he/she becomes as he/she learns and learns as he/she becomes*. Thus, to become adult, he/she must learn and his/her initiative to do this resides in his/her wanting to grow up.

Since becoming as a way in which a child's psychic life is manifested is discussed in chapter IV, in the following exposition, we concentrate mainly on learning.

Although a separation is made between becoming and learning for the purpose of scientific description, in their origin and actualization they form a unity in his/her psychic life. Therefore, during the following exposition of learning, its coherence with becoming necessarily is mentioned.

1.2.1 *A child him/herself learns*

As a child-in-education's *way of living*, learning is manifested as a *potentiality* given with his/her psychic life. For this reason,

learning is qualified as a manifestation of it. However, to be able to learn he/she must *actualize* his/her learning potentialities. This includes an active participation in learning and is a concrete manifestation of his/her *initiative to learn*. In addition, he/she is dependent on an adult's educative assistance for the adequate actualization of his/her learning potentialities. An adult appeals to him/her to learn and also accompanies him/her in this actualization. That is, effective learning rests both on his/her own participation and an adult's (parent or teacher) support-giving teaching.

A child's openness-for and directedness-to the world are reflected in his/her original learning relationship with reality. But what carries his/her learning activity in actualizing the initiative to learn? Viewed psychopedagogically, from the beginning a child learns by actualizing the different essences of his/her psychic life, i.e., by *experiencing, willing, lived-experiencing, knowing and behaving*. To the extent that these essences are realized, a child's learning activity comes into motion.

To take a closer look at a child *him/herself* actualizing his/her learning, the following coherent moments of its *course* must be kept in mind: when he/she learns he/she *experiences* reality by being involved with learning material, etc. In this experiencing he/she not only is *aware* of him/herself but especially of that with which he/she has a *learning relationship*. This motivates several *modes* of his/her psychic life such as sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining, fantasizing and remembering.

To really experience means to *be or to become aware* of that with which one is in contact. Such a beginning awareness of learning content is a *sensing* of it. Depending on the degree to which a child's emotional life is *stable* (by means of a feeling of safety, security, self-confidence, etc) sensing *something* such as learning content, an object or a fellow person appearing in his/her field of vision can be sharpened to an *attending* whereby he/she purposefully perceives, thinks, remembers, etc. That is, a stable sensing, which is strongly *emotional*, makes it possible for him/her to give *attention* to something. This enables him/her to know and

eventually possess the learning content on a *knowing* or *cognitive level* by perceiving, thinking, remembering, etc.

However, experiencing reality, especially during learning, also is propelled by a child's *willingness* to learn. He/she only learns adequately if he/she is willing to do so. This *willpower* or *strength* supports him/her in experiencing effectively, and this implies that it influences the quality of his/her experiential learning material, for example.

If his willing is weak, his/her readiness to stay involved with the content, and thus paying attention to it, also is weakened. This leads to his/her emotions stagnating on the level of sensing because his/her attending fluctuates, interest wanes, concentrating is inadequate, and more. In this respect, *emotional lability* in his/her sensing results in ineffective learning. A stable sensing, the result of a stability in his/her emotional life (free of tension, feeling secure, self-confident, calm, under control, etc.), is the foundation for effective learning. Thus, a *willingness* to learn is defined by his/her emotional (affective) life by means of lived experiencing security, certainty, trust, etc. and this is the basis for a stable sensing as well as for effective learning. In contrast to this, labile sensing is characterized by "unrest" or problems in his/her emotional life by which the course of learning is impeded or even miscarries.

When a child's emotions are stable, he/she can attend and direct him/herself cognitively to the learning material by perceiving it, thinking about it, analyzing it, ordering it, and finally integrating it (via remembering) into his/her existing knowledge or *possessed experience*. Such making the learning content "one's own" means that he/she not only lived-experiences this content as meaningful but that he/she also invests it with meaning. It follows logically that if his/her emotional lived experiencing is *stable*, his/her knowing lived experiencing, via perceiving, thinking etc., is ordered and he/she lived experiences the totality of the learning event as meaningful; it also means that his/her willingness to get the learning content under control will be strengthened increasingly.

When experiencing the learning content from the level of sensing via attending to actualizing the cognitive modes of learning, a child

*lived experiences* the *experienced content*. That is, he/she gives *meaning* to what is experienced as learning content on an emotional as well as a knowing level. He/she lived experiences meaning in the experienced content and becomes emotionally prepared to venture, explore and learn to *know* and to remain knowingly or cognitively with the content. This meaning then “congeals”, as it were, in his/her lived experiencing of it by giving personal meaning to the content. He/she lived experiences it as valuable, serviceable, useful, interesting, or as senseless (e.g., too difficult, above one’s ability, of little meaning, etc.) and the sedimentation of these positive and/or negative meanings become integrated into his/her existing possessed experience. His/her possessed experience, in so far as these meanings are relevant to the current learning, include both the *positive* and *negative* lived experienced meanings of the learning event. Consequently, a child who achieves adequately in school generally has invested his/her learning activities (experiences) with positive meaning, although it can happen that periodically he/she lived experiences certain learning situations (content) as less meaningful. In contrast, a child with learning problems is someone who experiences problems in a learning situation, these experiences are invested with negative meaning (lived experiences), and he/she gets bogged down in the learning situation. As his/her sensing becomes labilized, he/she finds it difficult to *attend* effectively, and he/she is unable to adequately perceive, think and remember in his/her directedness to the learning material. Thus, a child really learns only to the extent that he/she succeeds in learning to *know* the learning material on a cognitive level.

To *know* the learning material assumes that he/she actualize his/her knowing modes of learning that make it possible for him/her, in ordered ways, to analyze, to think about, to synthesize, to structure and eventually to integrate the meaningful content into his/her existing possessed experience. Such *knowledge* of the content, however, always rests on a stable sensing and adequate attending, both of which accompany his/her effective learning.

When a child knows the learning content he/she not only possesses a specific piece of material, but now is able to use and employ this knowledge and skills in other learning (life) situations. His/her

newly acquired knowledge becomes meaningfully integrated into his/her existing possessed experience, he/she is empowered to continually *behave* differently. As he/she learns more, his/her possessed experience is broadened and his/her *behaviors* in school, at home or wherever he/she might be are more autonomous, responsible and of greater mobility in different spheres.

By learning, a child continually changes his/her *behaviors* in the direction of a more adult way of living. However, the totality of the activity of learning is carried by the fact that he/she *experiences, wills, lived experiences* and learns to *know*, each of which, separately and as a unity, are discernable in the ways he/she *behaves*. His/her actualization of these essences of his/her psychic life, seen in their coherence, is visible as particular *behaviors* and this actualization forms the basis for changing his/her behaving to a more adult way of living. The *course of learning* is possible because he/she is experiencing-ly, willing-ly, lived experiencing-ly and knowing-ly in a learning situation; this is actualized by the modes of learning and is reflected concretely by his/her present and future behaviors. This means that his/her modes of living *change* such that he/she increasingly *becomes* more adult. His/her behaving shows a progressive obedience to the requirements of *propriety* of the world of an adult [in a particular societal context].

Since the above has considered only how learning, as a mode by which a child's psychic life-in-education is actualized and takes its course, especially in terms of a child's share in this, it is necessary to attend to an adult accompanying him/her [in this learning].

### 1.2.2 An adult accompanies a learning child-in-education

Educating, as an inter-human event between an adult and a child who is becoming adult, manifests itself as accompaniment. A grown-up's task of educating is to accompany a child from the beginning of his/her life until adulthood. This accompaniment received by him/her while learning is recognizable in an adult teaching him/her. Van der Stoep says, "Educating is realized in teaching and the meaning of teaching is rooted in educating". In light of this, Langeveld's statement that a child only becomes



properly human if he/she is brought up means that a child's properly becoming adult is intertwined with the teaching he/she receives from the beginning.

Educating is realized hand-in-hand with content, and it is an adult's task to place this content within a child's reach by means of his/her teaching. To become adult, a child must learn this content and make it a part of his/her possessed experience.

Such content appears on a child's path as knowledge, norms, values, behavior codes, skills, etc. and this requires the effort of both adult and child for it to be learned. An adult must unlock the content for him/her, while he/she must learn it. Although he/she has the potential to learn, for its proper actualization he/she must be accompanied by an educator (parent, teacher, etc.). Educating is necessary for the proper actualization of his/her psychic life and the significance of this is that it leads eventually to him/her becoming an adult.

From a psychopedagogical perspective, the question now is, "how must an adult accompany a learning child such that he/she is assisted effectively to adulthood?" An answer is in the already mentioned differentiated modes of educating/accompanying, i.e., emotional (affective), a knowing (cognitive) and a meaning giving (normative) educating or accompanying.

Rienstra says that effective educating rests largely on a climate of warmth, intimacy, affection, trust and authority. A child needs a secure and safe space from which he/she can go out to the world and explore it. His/her lived experiencing of safety is supported by such a safe and intimate milieu of educating (teaching), and the emotional educating he/she receives is the direct outcome of this. When he/she is adequately supported emotionally, he/she is prepared to venture into an alluring, strange, sometimes threatening world. The concrete manifestation of this venturing relationship is seen in his/her wanting to learn and to become grown-up.

An adult's task is to affectively accompany a child so that he/she is prepared to "navigate" in the world, to learn to know and give

meaning to it. A stable educative situation, whether at home or in school, is a condition for effective learning. To the extent that a parent or teacher succeeds in stabilizing a child's emotional lived experiencing, adequate learning can occur. A stable sensing, which is both the basis for and the onset of all learning, is inseparably connected with an adult's affective accompaniment. Mutual trust, consistent authority, affection for and understanding the child-ness of a child are the pillars of a healthy emotional life. This provides a child with the *will to experience* his/her world (learn content), learn to know it and lived experience it by giving meaning to it him/herself. A stable sensing makes it possible for him/her to pay attention to the learning content, and attending is a condition for eventually possessing it cognitively.

The complexity of an adult lifeworld and the content at its base simply are not accessible to a child. Hence, teaching is required to unlock and clarify this content for him/her. To encounter him/her in his/her willingness-to-know and to understand, an adult must accompany him/her knowingly or cognitively. As he/she experiences reality many questions arise and an adult has the task of answering them. The meaning he/she gives to the content of the lifeworld largely is supported by the way(s) in which an adult succeeds in laying open this meaning for him/her. This especially is valid for acquiring a cognitive grasp of it. By teaching, an adult continually directs a child's *attention* to the meaningfulness of the learning content. This implies that while cognitively accompanying him/her, he/she appeals to a child to perceive, to analyze, to think, to order, to remember and eventually to integrate the meaning of this content into his/her possessed experience.

An adult's successful cognitive accompaniment is supported greatly by the extent to which he/she succeeds in adequately accompanying a child affectively, i.e., in stabilizing him/her emotionally. Both the affective and cognitive modes of accompaniment not only support a child to learn *successfully*, but they are also ways of helping him/her interact with the learning content in order to receive meaning from as well as give meaning to it. Mastering this content has moments of knowing, understanding, grasping, insight and remembering that are the basis for his/her future learning. The cumulative effect that the meaning-filled content has and that

becomes embodied in his/her possessed experience is the source from which he/she draws each time he/she is confronted with new learning content. By means of the different mode of accompanying, an adult unlocks the meaning of the content to which a child gives meaning, and the result of this is observable in his/her behaviors.

From the above brief comments, educating as accompanying forms the necessary obverse side of a child's [self-] learning and [self-] becoming. Thus, he/she learns because of his/her learning potentialities that are given with his/her psychic life, but for self-learning and self-becoming, he/she is continually dependent on an adult's educative teaching that effectively actualizes his/her learning and becoming on affective, cognitive and normative levels.

The discussion has been directed mainly to the fundamental bases of learning as ways in which the psychic life of a child-in-education are manifested. Child learning is possible because of the essentials given in his/her psychic life, i.e., experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and behaving. It is necessary to clarify further the different modes of learning in order not only to see what each essentially is and contains, but also to see how they, in their inseparable interwoven-ness, constitute the totality of a child's learning event.

## 2. CHILD MODES OF LEARNING

To show the coherence of the essences of a child's psychic life (i.e., experiencing, willing, etc.) and the modes of learning, it is necessary to point out that the psychic life functions as a unity. In a child's relating to the world, his/her psychic life is actualized as a totality. Thus, when he/she experiences reality, especially in so far as he/she learns, he/she senses it. That is, he/she is *aware* and *becomes aware* of the material that must be learned. If his/her emotional life is stable, he/she pays attention to the learning material with which he/she is concerned (experiences) and he/she comes to know it on a cognitive level by perceiving it, thinking about it, by remembering it, etc. Thus, the modes of learning are means by which and through which he/she experiences the learning material and learns to know it.

At the same time, a child's *willingness* to learn is observable as his/her initial sensing proceeds to attending and this makes it possible for him/her to effectively perceive, to thinking-ly gain insight into the learning material and eventually to remember it. Thus, a child's willingness is observable in his/her actualization of the modes of learning. On the other hand, the level on which they are actualized also is an indication of his/her willpower. If it is weak, an effective actualization of the modes of learning is unlikely while, in contrast, a strong willpower makes this possible.

As a child *experiences* learning material and *will* learn it, he/she also is involved in giving it sense and meaning (i.e., *lived experiencing* it). Sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, etc. are not the only ways in which he/she reveals his/her willingness to learn; he/she also shows this in the ways he/she gives sense and meaning to (lived experiences) the learning material. This lived experiencing of sense and meaning primarily is pathic/affective (emotional) on the level of sensing and, to the extent that his/her sensing is stable, he/she proceeds via attending to a gnostic/cognitive level of perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing as well as remembering.

Knowledge, as the outcome of all learning, assumes that a child comes to *know* and master the material. Now the question is how he/she learns to know it. He/she learns to know the material by first sensing it. Sensing provides him/her with the foundation on which all knowing rests. Even though "knowledge" on this level is vague, unstructured and without detail, and even though there is little understanding and insight, it is the "birth" of all knowing. Sensing *initiates true* learning to *know* the material which, via attending, first is actualized on the level of the cognitive modes of learning such as perceiving and thinking. Thus, objective knowledge is the outcome of actualizing the modes of learning from sensing via attending to and with the cognitive modes of learning where a child becomes aware, understands, grasps and remembers. He/she thus learns to *know* the learning material via actualizing the *modes of learning*.

To the extent that, via the modes of learning, he/she *experiences* the learning material, *will know* it and give meaning to it (*lived*

*experience* it), he/she also is expressing the fact that he/she *behaves* in a particular way in a learning situation. The modes of learning also are modes of behaving by means of and through which he/she expresses his/her initiative to learn. An example of this is that a child who is motivated to learn *behaves* decisively in a learning situation. Consequently, his/her learning is goal-directed and this implies that he/she is actualizing the different modes of learning effectively.

In summary, this means a child finds him/herself in a learning situation as a totality-in-function and he/she actualizes his/her psychic life accordingly.

Before turning to the modes of learning, as such, it is emphasized that the event of learning takes a unitary course. Because the actualization of the different modes of learning has a definite course, they should not be thought of as being actualized apart from each other. This must be kept in mind when, below, we discuss the modes of learning separately. They are only distinguishable from each other and each one constantly intersects, supplements and predisposes the others.

## 2.1 Accompanying [sustaining] modes of learning

### 2.3.1.1 *Sensing*

From a learning point of view, sensing is the *beginning* or *onset* of all learning. Thus, Sonnekus and Van Niekerk correctly qualify sensing as the mode of learning that precedes or *initiates* all learning. From the beginning, a child has the initiative to learn (learning intention), but this initiative contains the possibility to learn that first becomes actualized only when he/she senses something. Sensing is an initial becoming aware of the learning content with which he/she is concerned. Thus, content exists only in so far as he/she senses. A bare beginning or becoming aware of content, however, means that he/she does not yet know or understand. Hence, essentially sensing is foreknowledge (pre-cognitive) which means that he/she merely has a vague “knowing”, not yet a real knowing or understanding. On this level, knowing still is intuitive, vague, diffuse and unstructured. Even so, it not

only contains the possibility that eventually he/she will comprehend or understand, but in fact it is the precondition for actualizing that possibility. Consequently, sensing is the onset or beginning of all learning and provides the foundation for all gnostic/cognitive (knowing) learning.

Secondly, a stable sensing always *accompanies* or *escorts* a child's learning on all levels of its course; therefore, sensing also is labeled as an accompanying/sustaining mode of learning (Sonnekus, Van Niekerk). A stable sensing is the outcome of a stable (restrained, calm, controlled) emotional life and is the basic precondition for effective learning. Without a stable sensing, a child's learning cannot take an effective course or be effectively actualized. In contrast, symptoms of a labile sensing are feelings of anxiety, tension, uncertainty, frustration, etc. that have the effect that a child cannot learn as he/she should be able to. Such sensing interferes with attending (concentrating) and thus hinders adequate perceiving, thinking, remembering, etc. Hence, sensing can either contribute to the promotion or to the failure of the course of learning. Hence, one can deduce that although sensing is essential for all learning, each child senses differently because of the uniqueness of his/her being a person.

The nature or structure of a child's sensing while he/she learns can be influenced by his/her personal situation, his/her potentialities, the quality of his/her interpersonal relationships at home and in school, etc. He/she continually gives meaning to all facets of his/.her existence and to the extent that this meaning is favorable or unfavorable, it can stabilize or labilize his/her sensing [via the resulting quality of his/her emotional life].

Hence, sensing primarily is actualized on a pathic/affective (emotional) level, and because of its nature, it forms the warp and woof of the further course of learning on a gnostic/cognitive level. Thus, sensing not only initiates all learning but it continually accompanies [and sustains] learning on a knowing or cognitive level.

A child's experiencing, the structure of his/her willing, the extent to which he/she lived experiences sense and meaning, the quality of

his/her activities of knowing as well as his/her behaviors thus are discernible and evident in the way(s) he/she finds him/herself as a sensing child in a learning situation. Moreover, because of the nature of sensing as a mode of learning, it is important to consider a few modalities or essential categories of it that already have been referred to briefly. Here the aim is to illustrate concisely the nature, structure and level on which sensing is actualized.

The following modalities [functions] are distinguished:

a. Sensing is the beginning , onset and initiation of all learning. As the beginning or onset of all learning. A child becomes involved with what he/she will learn by sensing it.

b. Sensing accompanies [sustains] all learning. A stable sensing accompanies learning to a knowing or gnostic/cognitive level. To effectively attend, perceive, think, etc. always presupposes a stable sensing.

c. Sensing is permeated with the emotional (the pathic/affective). Stability, calm, certainty, control, a level-headedness in his/her emotional life stabilizes sensing, while anxiety, tension, uncertainty, confused educational and interpersonal relationships, frustrations, etc. labilize it. Sensing is subjective and always is *my* unique sensing.

d. Sensing is pre-cognitive. This means that it does not result in real or objective knowledge but is on a level of pre-knowing. This “knowing” is very subjective, vague, diffuse, unstructured, intuitive and unordered. As the first concerned involvement and being aware of something (content), it is the base on which all knowing, structuring, ordering, etc. is built. Understanding and insight on a gnostic/cognitive level, therefore, only are an extension of what a child initially senses. In this light, sensing is the “birth” of all knowledge.

e. Sensing is time-space bound. Erwin Straus and Sonnekus, who each have made an extensive study of sensing as a mode of living and learning, stress its time-space

nature. Child modes of living such as touching, smelling, tasting, hearing and seeing are concrete sensory, in their totality become sedimented as a unity in sensing as a mode of learning and indicate this being time-space bound as a matter of “here-and-now”. Consequently, a child has a wealth of sensations (positive and negative) that he/she builds up with the passage of time also within a definite space or spaces (house, school, church, society, etc.), the effects of which are evident in his/her learning activities.

This time-space nature also means that it takes place on a concrete level, especially with a younger child, and has far-reaching consequence for his/her learning.

f. Sensing is preponderantly subjective.

It is stressed once again that each child’s sensing is unique in that it is a way by which he/she gives personal meaning to all with which he/she has a concerned involvement. A child’s (person’s) sensing mostly is a-rational and not always explainable. Thus, he/she gives a unique meaning to the learning event and this is evident on the level of sensing.

In conclusion, the different modes [or functions] of sensing are actualized as a unity in the act of sensing. Finally, in so far as it is a mode of learning, sensing is inseparably connected with the further course of learning, i.e., with the other modes of learning [sustained by it].

### *2.1.2 Attending*

Van Niekerk views attending as an important precondition for all gnostic/cognitive learning. A child can only learn adequately, i.e., really learn to know the material, by attending. This mode of learning accompanies and sustains all cognitive learning (knowing).

The effective actualization of the knowing modes of learning is determined by the extent to which a child succeeds in attending to [the content to be learned]. Without attending, an effective



actualization of the cognitive modes of learning is not possible and, necessarily, the learning effect also will be delayed.

Where sensing is the *first* concerned involvement with the content, attending is a readiness to *remain* concerned. The original intention to learn, as this shows itself on the level of sensing, now is accentuated because of a child's willingness to master the learning content. Thus, he/she *decides* to pay attention and consequently it never occurs automatically. A precondition for adequate attending, however, always rests on a *stable sensing* because the latter removes obstacles that prevent a child from paying attention. Obviously, a labile sensing results in attending fluctuating, being weakened and diminished; then the possibility for effective learning is excluded.

When a child attends, the gnostic/cognitive modes of learning are directed to the content because his/her *will* to master the material is strengthened. In everyday language, we say that he/she is "motivated" to learn when he/she fixes his/her attention on his/her work. It is not strange that parents and teachers continually admonish and appeal to children to pay more attention to their work.

Where sensing involves a child in learning content, attending is directed to unraveling and analyzing learning material. A child will want to remedy a situation via attending whenever he/she experiences wonder on the level of sensing – such as when feeling that he/she does not have complete knowledge or understanding. This aim is reached when the quality of his/her attending is such that he/she can adequately perceive, think, remember etc.

It must not be overlooked that a teacher has the important accompaniment task of stabilizing a learner's sensing and to directing his/her attending on this basis.

By means of a brief synthesis, below some of the modalities [functions] of attending, as they arise during the course of learning, are considered:

a. attending is an accentuation of the [original] intention to learn.

Based on a stable sensing, attending is viewed as a continuation of the original intention to learn found on the level of sensing and as an accentuation of it. Attending is a mode of behaving that directs a child's total learning potentialities to the object of attention. It is supported by a stable sensing, and it predisposes a child to take a gnostic/cognitive attitude. Thus, attending is an elevation in the level of his/her intention to learn in that it is supported by a decision to remain involved with the content;

b. attending accompanies (sustains) gnostic/cognitive learning. As already mentioned, it is a basic precondition for, and an accompanier of all gnostic/cognitive learning. Thus, effective learning by means of perceiving, thinking, remembering, etc. only can be actualized effectively when a child attends. At the same time, a diminished attending is a reduction in the quality of his/her perceiving, thinking, etc. Although a stable sensing lays the foundation for attending, its quality also can be influenced by the valence of the learning material, an instruction, external factors, etc. Whether the data in a learning situation positively or negatively influence a child's decision to pay attention always depends on the stability or lability of his sensing. However, if his/her attending has a positive direction, then, at the same time, the gnostic/cognitive modes of learning are directed and this makes effective learning possible. Hence, attending implies intensified gnostic/cognitive activities such as concentrating, increased attending and making an effort.

c. attending is a selective activity. As already noted, attending is a mode that directs a child's *gnostic/cognitive potentialities* to an object of attention. This means that something specific becomes the *focal point* of his/her attending and surrounding data temporarily recede into the background. Attending is directed to something specific. In everyday life we say we cannot give attention to more than one matter at a time. That is, in essence it is *selective*, and the moment attention is paid to something, that something becomes the *center* of one's immediate field of interest. By attending, a child's *knowing modes of learning* are actively turned to the matter. Consequently, it is possible for a child to really learn to know the content since moments such as identifying, delimiting, comparing, ordering and

integrating are always present. The eventual learning result of sustained attending is understanding and insight, what we can call *knowledge*.

Next is a brief discussion of the gnostic/cognitive modes of learning that, in the course of learning, in their actualization always are preceded by and also accompanied [sustained] by sensing *and* attending.

## 2.2 Gnostic/cognitive modes of learning

The gnostic/cognitive modes of learning, sustained and accompanied by a stable sensing and attending during the entire course of learning, is the crowning of a child's learning activities. Together with sensing and attending, they constitute the entirety of the course of learning and the resulting effect congeals in and shows itself in his/her possessed experience.

Even though, in its actualization, the course of learning is a unity, still, for the sake of greater clarity, the nature of each individual mode is examined separately. However, the coherence of the different modes is considered later.

### 2.2.1 *Perceiving*

According to Erwin Straus and Sonnekus, perceiving, as all of the modes, is qualified as an original mode of living. It is not a stimulus-response process but rather is a means by which a person is intentionally directed to the world. During perceiving, a person (child) is not aware of one or another process that takes place, but rather is aware of the object of his/her perceiving. Thus, perceiving always is a perceiving of something (Husserl), something in relation to a perceiver, something with meaning.

Erwin Straus calls sensing the first seeing and perceiving the second seeing. As such, perceiving is a more distanced, objective view compared with our original sensing something. It is directed to reality as it is, to what is true for everyone. Hence, it is related to the universal, the objective and the generally valid as these are

found in the matter, object, the learning material, etc. itself (Sonnekus).

The vagueness, lack of clarity and structure that exist on the level of sensing become clearer and more ordered during perceiving. As a *gnostic/cognitive mode of learning* it is directed to what is problematic, especially to [perceptually] analyzing, comparing, considering, ordering and synthesizing what is perceived.

A person who perceives is willingly directed to the real nature of what he/she experiences. He/she wants to be aware, to know, to grasp, to understand it. Here the question is how perceiving is actualized during the course of learning.

A child perceives when he/she attends to something of which he/she is aware (senses). As with all gnostic/cognitive modes of learning, perceiving is accompanied [sustained] by a stable sensing and is actualized by attending. The quality of a child's perceiving is related directly to the degree to which he/she succeeds in attending effectively. With a diminished attending, there also is a decline in the quality of perceiving.

When perceiving is scrutinized more closely, some of its most important modalities [functions] are distinguished next:

a. Perceiving is global-identifying.

As noted, in perceiving, a child is directed to reality as it is. An act of perceiving occurs within a framework of time and space. By attending, his/her perceiving is directed to something specific that comes into the foreground. The data encompassing his/her perceptual field temporarily recede into the background and the object of perception becomes delimited, defined and outlined, that is it is identified globally. The perceived object is identified within a definite space and time (here and now). This results in the object becoming the focal point of his/her attending and is perceived as it is. In truth, identification means the eventual exposure of the real identity of the object or a recognition of its essentials. However, it is emphasized that at first this global-identifying activity is a mere recognition of "something" as an object, a thing, learning content, etc.; it is the identification of "something" as a *whole*.

Although this activity is still characterized by vagueness, inadequate recognition of something specific, rudimentary ordering, etc., still, it is the beginning of the gnostic/cognitive moments in perceiving with respect to analyzing, synthesizing and ordering. Secondly, it is important to keeping mind that the different moment [modalities] of perceiving are actualized as a unity and that one modality inevitably implicates the others. Consonant with this view, the real or actual identity of what is perceived first is laid bare (identified) to the extent to which this initial global-identifying, as the beginning of gnostic/cognitive activity, is completed by analyzing, synthesizing and ordering [perceptually].

**b. Perceiving is analyzing.**

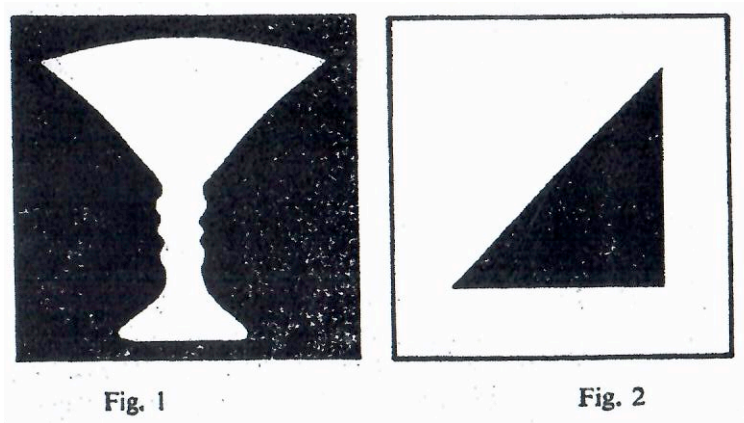
Connected with the activity of global-identifying during perceiving is analyzing where the learning content (object) is stripped of its global quality, especially as this is experienced on the level of both sensing and global-identifying. That is, the at first vague and unstructured nature of the object of learning experienced by a child on the level of sensing (e.g., hearing, seeing or touching) now, by attending, is elevated to listening, looking and feeling. This analyzing enables a child to perceive detail or finer details, and to strengthen his/her grasp of a larger whole. That is, in analyzing, detail is brought out while, at the same time, the structure of the whole becomes more graspable. Analyzing the learning material makes understanding and insight possible and promotes gnostic/cognitive learning.

**c. Perceiving is synthesizing.**

Synthesizing means to form a comprehensive whole from parts or subparts. It revolves around the activities of combining, uniting and putting together. As a modality of perceiving, synthesizing is united with the initial global-identifying and analyzing moments and is enabled by them. Synthesizing is the crowning of what a child perceives via global-identifying and analyzing. The gnostic/cognitive understanding of the nature and structure of a perceived object is ascribed to the synthesizing power (function) of perceiving. By synthesizing, the different parts of a larger whole, laid bare by analysis, are put together again into a whole, the result of which is more than the sum of its parts.

However, the different modalities of a child's perceiving are *not actualized separately* but as a total activity.

The following example is used to illustrate this unitary activity within perceiving:



Taken from Bigot, L.T.C., p.32

When a child is asked to look at figure 1, immediately it is delimited or defined. This implies a perceiving activity during which figure 1 is brought to the foreground and surrounding details (figure 2, the different words and sentences, the table on which the book lies, the different items in the room, etc.) become vague and temporarily are in the background. Figure 1 is something on a general level in the midst of other particulars surrounding it. The specific identity of figure 1 (what it precisely is) is not necessarily ascertained because it is a global unity that is seen. When this unity is analyzed, the following subparts might be noticeable: a white and black background, a square, a white vase and two black faces. Synthesizing, which arises spontaneously out of the analysis, makes possible the judgment that it is two black faces against a white background. In this way, the real identity of the matter (what it really is) also is laid bare. The perception of figure 2 can be described in precisely the same way. This example also is valid for

other learning events, e.g., learning to read, to write, to figure, etc. However, attending, based on a stable sensing, always is a prerequisite for actualizing perceiving as a gnostic/cognitive mode of learning and the different modalities of concern.

d. Perceiving is ordering [organizing].

Peculiar to each act of perceiving is ordering. Following Straus, Sonnekus indicates that during perceiving different questions arise as well as answers (descriptive speech) to these questions. Perceiving, then, already is a way of ordering, especially in and by descriptive speech (Sonnekus). By naming something perceived, not only is it delimited from surrounding details, but its real identity is laid bare.

Perceiving a book on a table and calling it “book” is an act of delimiting, synthesizing and identifying. This ordering is not only concerned with the object in focus but also the data immediately surrounding it. Also, perceiving any learning material, a specific object, etc. gives rise to an inexhaustible source of references. For example, perceiving a book also refers to an author, to specific content, to its owner, to its publisher, etc. Within this frame of reference, there is further ordering by which the essential nature of the matter itself is illuminated.

It is important to keep in mind that perceiving, as a gnostic-cognitive mode of learning, is inseparably connected with language—the medium by which the generally valid meaning of what is perceived is brought to the fore. Further, perceiving is intertwined with thinking, remembering, imagining and fantasizing—all of which are gnostic-cognitive modes of learning. Perceiving, as it were, is the beginning of thinking while, to a large extent, thinking completes perceiving. Our possessed experience, as the sedimentation of memory, influences our perceiving. If we already know something, our perceiving is facilitated, while a deficient possessed experience (knowledge) restrains and impedes effective learning.

### *2.2.2 Thinking*

A person's relationship to the world is a questioning-answering [dialogical] activity. From an early age a child asks questions and seeks answers to them. Such a questioning attitude shows that, early in life, he/she is acquainted with the problematic in reality.

Straus refers to this questioning attitude as the origin of thinking since it is a search for answers and solutions. He says, "(t)he ability to question, to speak, and, it should be added, to think, point to a common source. An investigation of the act of questioning necessarily leads to an investigation of thought and speech. The act of questioning is the beginning and the origin of thought".\*

Thinking is preeminently a gnostic-cognitive mode of learning that complements perceiving and is directed to ordering, to conceptualizing and to attaining solutions. It is initiated by a problem. This thinking confrontation with the problematic (learning content) compels a child to seek solutions by such actions as planning, analyzing, comparing and ordering. Thinking is a gnostic-cognitive activity that is interspersed with moments of exerting, struggling, resisting, reversing and overcoming, each of which, separately and jointly, must lead a child to a better understanding of and solution to a problem.

Sonnekus states that a thinking child is directed from his/her perceiving reality, as objective reality, to the world of thinking—a world in which the objective, the conceptual, insight and understanding are in the foreground. Also, Straus emphasizes thinking as a mode of living directed to knowledge of and knowing something as it is. Thinking has the character of breaking-through (Straus) involving a distancing from an initial *sensing* to a level of *attentively* trying to master the learning content.

For a good understanding of this break-through character of thinking, it is helpful to consider the inseparable coherence of thinking and language. Langeveld and Nel indicate by the so-called "genetic [developmental] parallelism" between language and thought that language serves as the steppingstone or channel for thought even though thought is genetically [developmentally] prior

---

\* See Straus, E W.: *Phenomenological psychology*, p.167.



to the course of language acquisition. If a child's acquisition of language does not progress as desired, his/her thinking is handicapped accordingly. Conversely, the effective acquisition of language means to bring about a gnostic-cognitive access to the conceptual (Bollinger, Dufrenne). By means of language, a child can distance him/herself from a sensory world and, by thinking, enter a world of the abstract, of thoughts and concepts.

Against this introductory background, some important modalities [functions] of thinking are presented:

a. Thinking is abstracting.

A leap from concrete reality to a world of the abstract is possible on the basis of the active function of thinking as a mode of learning. Although, as a mode of learning, thinking cannot be separated from perceiving, still, to a large extent, it is complementary to it and is a further analyzing, ordering, synthesizing, and especially abstracting data that have become available during perceiving. During thinking, the concrete data, e.g., that come to the fore while perceiving are exceeded and handled in terms of concepts and thoughts. Also, the objectivity peculiar to perceiving is not possible without the active support of thinking.

Essentially, abstracting is distancing. That is, in thinking, a child distances him/herself from the concrete data that now remain in existence only in terms of symbols and thoughts.

b. Thinking is conceptualizing.

To abstract means to think on the level of the conceptual. To understand this modality of thinking, attention is given to the coherence of thinking and language.

Dufrenne puts this connection as follows: "We cannot think without speaking, and the way in which we use language reveals the way in which we think, and ultimately it is the measure of our intelligence". By means of language, we distance ourselves from the immediately perceivable while this distance also is partially abolished by a meaningful concept. The concept becomes, as it were, a substitute for the concrete object, while the latter, in its turn, is the origin of this meaning-imbued concept.

Thinking transforms the world of the concrete-visible into a world of concept, and this implies abstracting from reality that, at the same time, means a distancing from it.

By thinking, we also order reality, and this occurs by means of language since for us it is the “means” (concepts) for establishing the basis on which meaningful ordering is possible. Thinking by a child thus is handling reality (learning material, content) on a conceptual level and it is preeminently a gnostic-cognitive affair.

c. Thinking is ordering.

Although ordering also is a modality of perceiving, it also is viewed as an inherent function of thinking since perceiving already is the beginning of thinking and since the activity of thinking itself brings about order.

Thinking is a gnostic-cognitive activity directed to ordering reality from a multiplicity to a unity. However, this ordering during thinking rests on implementing language that serves as a means for ordering. Thought achievements such as analyzing, schematizing, synthesizing, comparing, generalizing, etc. are possible because this ordering is inherent to language itself.

Ordering reality from a multiplicity to a unity means that a thinking child is busy analyzing, reasoning about, comparing, etc. reality with a view to a synthesis or understanding of the essential nature of reality itself.

Child thinking is directed to the order that is in reality itself. By thinking he/she will disclose it and give [explicit] order to it and thus strengthen his/her grip on and understanding of it. Without such ordering, he/she stagnates on the level of the concrete and a symbolic world remains inaccessible to him/her.

d. Thinking is solution-directed.

Child thinking is directed to reality as a problem. During thinking, he/she searches for a solution to the problem. This implies a pathic-affective readiness to overcome gnostic-cognitive resistances and stumble blocks. This activity is carried by a strong willing-ness

that makes it possible for him/her to have and to show the perseverance and cognitive effort needed to solve the problem.

However, the entirety of a child's psychic life is functioning during this thinking activity and thus the totality of his/her learning potentialities is in function. In his/her thinking search for a solution, he/she calls on his/her possessed experience (memory), i.e., on all relevant knowledge, means and skills at his/her disposal as well as on his/her immediate perceiving, imagining, and fantasizing, all of which make it possible for him/her to clarify the problem.

By means of a synthesis, thinking, as a gnostic-cognitive mode of learning, is not only abstracting, conceptualizing, ordering and solution-directed, but also it strongly supports and supplements the other modes of learning.

### *2.2.3 Imagining and fantasizing*

In attempting to understand imagining as a gnostic-cognitive mode of learning, it is first necessary to show the difference from and connection with perceiving. Lersch, Sartre and Sonnekus have shown that perceiving is a mode by which a person is directed to the *real* world. A perceived object is self-present and directs an appeal to a perceiving person. On the contrary, imagining shows an entirely different relationship to reality in that an imagined object is not actually present but is, by an act of imagining, *represented*\*. Lersch puts it as follows: "In contrast to the reality character of perceiving is the copying character of imagining." By this "copying" character, Lersch means that the vividness of perceiving, with its richer differentiations, sharper outlines and superior details, is never realized in an act of imagining. Perceiving assumes an involvement with a real world, while imagining constitutes an unreal

---

\* Compare Lersch, P.: *Algemene psychologie*, Aula: Utrecht, 1966, pp. 412 et al.

world (Sartre) or a “reality-in-distance”. Thus, imagining stands in a special relationship to perceiving and, as such, represents a more distanced relationship to reality.

On the other hand, no matter how “irreal” imagining might be, necessarily it is influenced by previous perceptions since *someone* imagines *something* him/herself (Minkowski) and this imagining finds its origin (fully or partly) in reality. This implies that the “content” of what is imagined, in one way or another, leads back to reality. However, this latter statement does not mean that imagining always needs to be merely “reproductive, but it also can contain creative moments.

In this respect, imagining can exceed the data of perception since something new or additional is added that does not exist in the original perception. However, it is possible that such imagining can be true to or foreign to reality, the latter when it is strongly connected with one’s fantasy-life. Thus, by imagining, a child can exceed reality and place him/herself in a world of the irreal, also on a gnostic-cognitive level. Imagining not only contains the possibility of distancing oneself from and exceeding reality, but it also makes room for creative intercourse with it. In addition, it is clear that although imagining in essence is not thinking, it does make thinking possible (Sonnekus) and it can give rise to and initiate it.

With respect to fantasizing as a mode of learning, it is, in comparison to imagining, an even more distanced relationship with reality. Fantasizing or fancying is an important dimension of a person’s irreal, imaginary world (Sonnekus). In this connection, often there is *imaginative fantasy* because of their affinity.

According to Lersch, fantasizing is an activity by which someone distances him/herself toward the unknown, the future, what is not real and may never become real. For Lersch, fantasizing is a “free play of images” significant and meaningful to that person. In this way, a fantasy world is a “productive” world that can have a strong pathic-affective flavor but that still makes gnostic-cognitive creations possible. On this basis fantasizing is an activity by which a child can “escape” reality and “lose” him/herself in a world in which pathic-affective feelings, wishes or desires run rampant. On

the other hand, this also embodies the possibility for a predominantly gnostic-cognitive creative level, to think creatively, understand, penetrate, etc. Evidence for this is found in the fact that science, to a large extent, is served by original and creative fantasy dreams.

Although, as modes of learning, imagining and fantasizing have a strong pathic-affective side, as far as the course of learning is concerned, both are actualized on a predominantly gnostic-cognitive level. This means that actualizing these two modes during the course of learning is directed primarily to knowing, planning, creating, etc. Thus, fantasizing also enables a child to distance him/herself from reality, to exceed it to a “new” reality for him/her to understand, but especially one in which he/she can think and work productively and creatively. All of the preceding activities primarily have a cognitive flavor and stand in direct or indirect “service” to a child’s course of learning.

Below, some modalities of imagining and fantasizing are considered:

a. Imagining and fantasizing exceed reality.

When it is stated that these two modes of learning make exceeding reality possible, this does not mean they have nothing to do with reality as such. Besides, their content itself largely is “borrowed” from reality. However, it is possible that the forms their content takes can be unreal, real or never can be real. Such imagining and fantasizing usually have a strong emotional or affective flavor recognizable in human strivings, desires, wishes, expectations, etc. Although such image- and fantasy-moments are not always in step with reality, this is not necessarily a negative connotation because often this gives rise to original or new thoughts, ideas, projects, creations, etc., each of which not only has relevance for learning but also can be *culture-creating*.

Especially as far as learning is concerned, imagining and fantasizing are on a gnostic-cognitive level by which a child distances him/herself from reality and exceeds it. Especially it is imagining that enables a child both to *represent* reality to him/herself and to transform it into a “new” reality. By means of imagining and fantasizing, he/she exceeds the immediately perceivable world and

finds him/herself in a world of the abstract with its primarily gnostic-cognitive flavor.

b. Imagining is representing.

As noted, imagining is an activity by which a child can represent reality (objects, learning content, etc.). This implies creating something on a gnostic-cognitive level without an object or content being present concrete-visibly. Such representative imagining is stripped of concrete-visible elements while also being based on a child's possessed experience being represented anew on an abstract, non-perceptual level. This act of imagining rests first on previous perceiving while the possibility of representation is based on the active support of thinking and remembering as modes of learning. Whether this imagining an object, content or event is faithful to reality depends on the quality of previous perceptions, on the significance or meaning a child has given to what is imagined, on whether he/she has effectively integrated this into his existing possessed experience etc. That is, the quality of a child's possessed experience (i.e., the outcome of his experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing-life and behaviors) is a decisive factor in whether imagining is faithful to reality.

c. Imagining and fantasizing are creative.

Imagining and fantasizing, as modes of learning, both can have a creative moment. Thus, a child, by means of imagining, can not only represent reality but also to transform it into a "new" reality. In this respect, he/she exceeds the data of his/her previous perceptions since he/she has added something "new" to them. Such imagining, then, is as combination of existing and new data. It is evident that this creative moment peculiar to imagining can be extremely fruitful from a gnostic-cognitive perspective.

When fantasizing is examined, it is seen as a mode of living and of learning that preeminently lends itself to creativity on a gnostic-cognitive level. It is a means by which a child can express original thoughts and a new reality can be created. By means of fantasizing a child is supported by his/her possessed experience but he/she also exceeds it because he/she is busy creating.

#### *2.2.4 Remembering*

In fathoming remembering as a child's mode of *living* and *learning*, the latter qualification indicates we are not dealing here with the obsolete notion of memory as a function of consciousness but rather as a genuinely human phenomenon.

In contrast to the psychology of consciousness that remembering is a cognitive function along with others such as perceiving, thinking, etc. and that it has the functions of imprinting, of retaining and registering past impressions, Straus describes remembering as a human mode of learning that is entwined inseparably with one's being situated in time.

By analyzing remembering as a phenomenon in a human child's lifeworld, Straus shows that remembering is, first, a being conscious of the *past*. Thus, a person remembers the past (e.g., memorized learning materials) in the *present*. Things, occurrences and persons remembered thus are not present but they are *re-presented* and are "present in absentia" (Sonnekus, Straus).

Second, remembering is a description of events in the *past tense*. It is a temporal (time) relation describing events in the past in relation to the present and future. During acts of remembering, past and future meet each other in the present.

Third, remembering is an activity of someone in the *present* in contrast to the past and future. Basically, remembering thus means self-awareness, i.e., he/she is aware of his/her *actual present* and reflects on him/herself as someone who has done this or that in the past, or things happened to him/her. In the words of Sonnekus, remembering is a reflecting, viewing or thinking by a person as seeing him/herself as he/she was, from a distance. Thus, through remembering, a person can examine his/her becoming in time (historicity) and judge and evaluate it in relation to his/her present and future.

This human mode is especially interpreted as one of learning because remembering is preeminently a gnostic-cognitive mode. As with *all* knowing modes of learning, the adequate actualization of a child's course of learning relies on both *a stable sensing* and on *effective attending*.

As already noted, remembering, as a knowing mode of learning, is a mode through which a child can "call up" or recall in the present learning content that he/she had acquired in the past. Remembered learning content is specific content that was experienced in the past when it was given meaning through lived experiencing and that he/she already knows. Thus, it is *willed* into the present by remembering, representing and putting in the present in "absentia". As it were, a child "stimulates" a relevant possessed experience and implements it here-and-now in a learning situation. Such possessed experience and also the relevant fore-knowledge mentioned enable a child to establish meaningful relationships with, to obtain nodal points of and to find connections with the new knowledge (learning content) with which he/she is confronted in a present learning situation.

Further, concerning the course of learning, remembering is an act by which a child *willingly integrates* the newly experienced learning content with his/her existing possessed experience that he/she meaningfully lived experienced and knows. Thus, remembering is not only an act by which a child revives existing possessed experience in the present, but it also is an act through which the newer learning content is *integrated* in the present with his/her possessed experience. To the extent that the course of learning is effective, and especially if remembering is actualized effectively, the effect is that a child's possessed experience is continually expanded, broadened and deepened. However, it must clearly be understood that a quantitative increase as well as a qualitative deepening in his/her possessed experience is an outcome of the successful actualization of the modes of learning during the course of learning. None the less, remembering is the crowning of a course of learning in that coheres with the other modes, it enables a child to integrate the newer knowing with his/her existing knowledge (possessed experience).



In light of the above, attention now is paid to some of the most important modalities [functions] of remembering:

a. Remembering is putting [something from the past] into the present (recalling).

Remembering makes it possible for a child to recall or put relevant possessed experience into the present. Here the act of remembering reaches back to knowledge based on former perceiving, thinking, etc. and revives it in the present. Placing such possessed experience in the present means that the learning material memorized [learned] in the past, is remembered here-and-now is at a child's disposal.

With respect to the quality of remembering, or putting existing knowledge in the present, the following are noted:

First, it is influenced and determined by the quality of a child's sensing and attending. A stable sensing and attending, the latter resulting from the former, make it possible for him/her to remember effectively. In contrast, a labile sensing, and paired therewith, a deficiency in his/her attending, hinders remembering learning content. This implies that certain gaps (forgetting) will be noticeable in putting learned content into the present.

Second, and in connection with the above, the quality of his/her remembering is influenced by the way past learning was actualized. If there is an indication of effective learning, i.e., effectively actualized modes of learning in the past course of his/her learning, it is likely that he/she will remember better. That is, effective learning counteracts so-called forgetting. Adequate learning assumes a real understanding of the content and that it has been meaningfully integrated with existing possessed knowledge (possessed experience).

Third, it is important that the so-called "recalling" of previous knowledge or putting it in the present during remembering assumes an active functioning of the other gnostic-cognitive modes of learning. In addition to a child reaching back to his/her [previous] perceptions, thinking, etc., when remembering, he/she also is actively thinking, making representations, etc.

This coherence with the other modes of learning confirms again that learning is actualized as a unitary event and that the modes of learning at most can be distinguished but not separated from each other.

b. Remembering is integrating.

As mentioned above, remembering also is characterized by the function of integrating. This function refers to the acquisition of *new* knowledge. That is, the new learning content a child has learned to know through perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing, and to which he/she has attributed personal meaning, is “added” to his/her existing knowledge. That is, this integrating is not only “adding” *new* knowledge to it, but it also is an act by which new knowledge is connected meaningfully with existing knowledge. That is, through this integrating function, existing possessed experience is continually expanded and there is a qualitative deepening as well as a quantitative increase of a child’s possessed experience.

Regarding the controversial question of whether *repetition* promotes remembering or not, repeating more recent content promotes remembering in so far as it is practicing particular skills or insights. Of course, this does not imply “meaningless” repetition, pure drill-work or imprinting but rather practicing certain skills or knowledge that enables a child to perform effectively, e.g., a volley in tennis, tumbling in gymnastics, a step-by-step solution to a scientific problem, etc. Thus, in itself repetition is not meaningful, but meaning is found in the new knowledge that is practiced becoming more functional or can be applied by a child to perform or demonstrate a definite activity properly in a learning situation. In this respect, there is a meaningful connection between remembering and repeating.

### 3. A SYNTHESIS: CHILD LEARNING

Against the background of the preceding psychopedagogical perspective on a child’s learning, it is emphasized again that learning is a way in which the psychic life of a child-in-education is manifested. It is actualized as a totality because of the initiative

from a child him/herself and also on the basis of the educative support received.

By means of a brief synthesis, it is seen that the following important points are contained in the above explications:

3.1 Learning together with becoming are given potentialities of a child's psychic life and he/she learns and becomes in a situation as an experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and behaving child;

3.2 As a totality, learning is actualized in terms of the particular modes of sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing as well as remembering, each of which, together and separately, is a manifestation that a child experiences, wills, lived experiences, knows and behaves in a learning situation;

3.3 When actualized, a child's learning takes a particular course (course of learning) that begins with sensing. If his/her sensing is stable, attending becomes possible and is actualized that enables a child to perceive, think, imagine and fantasize as well as remember in an ordered way. Also, actualizing the modes of learning as a totality is seen as culminating in or emptying into a child's possessed experience. In this way, his/her possessed experience continually is filled, enlarged and qualitatively deepened;

3.4 A child's possessed experience is the sediment of what he/she has learned (content) and invested with meaning. It influences and determines greatly his/her future learning activities. That is, it can have an influence (positive or negative) on his/her experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and therewith his/her behaving in future or new learning situations;

3.5 Because of the profound coherence of learning and becoming, a child's becoming is actualized as he/she learns. An elevation in his/her becoming points to changes occurring in his/her life precisely because he/she learns. Possessed experience as sediment or outcome of his/her learning is reflected in his/her becoming and is reflected in his/her finding him/herself progressively behaving as an adult;

4.6 It is important to note that a child him/herself actualizes his/her learning, but for its proper, accountable actualization, he/she always is dependent on the educative teaching of an adult (e.g., parent, teacher) as accompaniment during learning and becoming.

Without such educative teaching, he/she cannot become a proper adult.

#### LITERATURE CONSULTED AND RECOMMENDED

- AUSUBEL, D. P. (1963) *The psychology of meaningful verbal learning*. Grune and Stratton, New York.
- AUSUBEL, D. P. (1968) *Educational psychology: A cognitive view*. Rhinehart and Winston, New York.
- BIGOT, KOHNSTAAM and PALLAND (1967) *Beknopte leerboek der psychologie*. J. B. Wolters: Groningen.
- BIGOT, T. L. C. (Ed.), BIJL, J. and VLIEGENHART, W. E. (1966) *Het kind*. J. B. Wolters: Groningen.
- GIELEN, J. J. and STRASSER, S. (1967). *Leerboek einer Opvoedkunde*, LCG Malmberg s-Hertogenbosch, Nijmegen.
- KLAUSMEIER, H. J. and RIPPLE, R. E. (1971) *Learning and human abilities*. Harper and Row, Ne York.
- KOUWER, B. J. and LINSCHOTEN, J. (1966) *Inleiding tot de Psychologie*, Bom, Amsterdam.
- ,LANGEVELD, M. J. (1967) *Ontwikkelingspsychologie*. J. B. Wolters, Groningen.
- NEL, B. F. et al. (1963) *Grondslae van die psigologie*. University Publishes and Booksellers, Stellenbosch.
- PULLES, J. A. (1968) *De ontwikkeling van de kleuter*. LCG Malmberg s-Hertogenbosch.
- RIENSTRA, Y. (1962) *Kind, school en gesin*. J. B. Wolters, Groningen.
- SONNEKUS, M. C. H. (Ed.) (1973) *Psigopedagogiek: 'n Inleidende orientring*. University Publishers and Booksellers, Stellenosch.
- SONNEKUS, M. C. H. (1974) *The learning child*. University Publishers and Booksellers, Stellenbosch.
- SONNEKUS, M. C. H. (1977) *The teacher, the lesson and the child*. University Publishers and Booksellers, Stellenbosch.
- SNIJDERS-OOMEN, N. (1968) *Kleine kinderen worden groot*. Malmberg, Den Bosch, Haren.
- STRAUS, E. W. (1963) *The primary world of senses*. Macmillan, London.

- STRAUS, E. W. (1968) *Phenomenological psychology: Selected papers*, Tavistock, London.
- VAN DER STOEP, F. (1969) *Didaktiese grondvorme*.  
Academica, Pretoria.
- VAN DER STOEP, F. (Ed.) 1973) *Die lesstruktuur*.  
McGraw-Hill, Johannesburg.
- VAN NIEKERK, P. A. (1971) *Aandagsluktuasie as verskynsel by die onderaktualisering van intensionaliteit met spesiale verwysing na die agterlike kind*. Ed. D., Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria.
- VAN PARREREN, C. F. (1962 AND 1963) *Psychologie van het leren* (two volumes), Arnhem.
- VAN PERREREN, C. F. (1968) *Leren op school*.  
Wolters-Noorhoff, Groningen.
- YELON, S, L, and WEINSTEIN, G. W. (1977) *A teachers World*. McGraw-Hill, New York.