

## TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

Even though this book was originally published more than 25 years ago and, in my opinion, should be completely rewritten to incorporate developments in psychopedagogical thought that occurred immediately after and since its publication, I believe it merits being made available in English. In the brief history of psychopedagogics, this work is a classic of pivotal proportions. By this I mean it was written at a time when psychopedagogical thought was still struggling to break out of the restraining shackles of the perspectives and paradigms of "traditional" educational psychology, viewed as the application of psychological theories to learning and teaching in the context of schooling.

A value of this book for an American audience is that it contributed to breaking away from traditional educational psychology and to the eventual development of psychopedagogics. Such a breaking away has not happened in the United States and much thought about educating is still rooted in perspectives outside of the reality of educating itself (e.g., in cognitive science). Among other things, this book presents a dialogue between a phenomenological psychology and a phenomenology of educating (pedagogics) that originated in Holland almost five decades ago and that remains virtually unknown here. Even a passing acquaintance with this literature will be refreshing to most educators interested in helping a child become a morally responsible, autonomous adult.

The absence of an appropriate vocabulary at the time the book was written contributes to a blunted treatment of the nuanced levels and qualities of lived experiencing revealed after this book was written. Indeed, Pretorius' thinking and explications of lived experiencing are hampered by his almost exclusive reliance on Straus' concepts of its pathic and gnostic aspects. Later research has indicated three levels of emotional and knowing lived experiencing with qualitative differences at each level. The correlated levels (and qualities) are:

### **Emotional**

Senso-pathic (impulsiveness)  
Pathic (lability)  
Affective (stability)

### **Knowing**

Senso-gnostic (diffuseness)  
Gnostic (disorderliness)  
Cognitive (orderliness)

What is more, in Pretorius' book, lived experience is mainly contrasted with experience; but since then, other aspects of the

psychic life of a child-in-education have been revealed and more carefully described; indeed, lived experience, along with the other moments of the psychic life function as a unity, and mutually define each other. For the above reasons, it is of value to present a summary of a current psychopedagogical understanding of lived experience within the context of a child's psychic life. This will provide the reader with a more recent perspective on the content of Pretorius' book.

### **What is the psychic life?**

The psychic life of a child-in-education is his/her wealth of potentialities that need to be cultivated and actualized under the accompaniment (guidance) of adults. Its actualization is accomplished through a child's relating to and being involved in the world, i.e., by living; its cultivation requires an adult's educative intervention and guidance. In other words, both child and adult play a critical role.

Several essential aspects of the psychic life have been disclosed by psychopedagogues (most notably Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987) and their descriptions follow.

By **experiencing**, a child turns to and becomes involved with some aspect (content) of the lifeworld and this actualizes or sets into motion his/her psychic life. To experience is to undergo, to be influenced by that with which he/she is involved. Through experiencing, an acquaintance with the lifeworld is initiated and this is the basis for all subsequent understanding of it.

**Willing** gives experiencing a course and direction. To will is to make personal choices and decisions; this means it is value-laden or normative in nature. Willing lends a dynamic and driving force to the actualization of the psychic life. In addition, it is codefined by the quality of one's emotional life (lived experiencing) because a stable affective life promotes a strong quality or power of willing while pathic lability weakens or even paralyzes it. If it is weakened, the quality of the direction willing provides to experiencing is deficient or lacking and the child becomes uncertain, indecisive, and not motivated to become involved [via sensing] or remain involved [via attending] with the learning content being experienced.

A child fulfills his/her involvement with (experiencing) lifeworld content by **lived experiencing** it. This amounts to *attributing* meaning to and *discovering* meanings of what is being experienced on sensopathic/pathic/affective and sensognostic/gnostic/cognitive levels of lived experiencing. In addition, since meaning always implicates norms and values, lived experiencing also is normative. This category or essential of the psychic life is returned to in greater detail because it is the pivotal or focal point of a child's psychic life viewed from a psychopedagogical perspective.

**Knowing** means acquiring (learning) something and as a result possessing acquired knowledge. Thus, it is directly related to a person's going out to and becoming involved in (experiencing) the lifeworld. Knowing results in a broadening and deepening of knowledge of aspects of the lifeworld.

The above essentials of the psychic life are reciprocally interconnected and inseparable. That is, to have "**learned from experience**" means to have come to **know** by **wanting** (willing) to give meaning to some content by **lived experiencing** it. By actualizing the psychic life by means of these categories, there is an outcome (learning/becoming) called **possessed experience**. That is, a child possesses (retains) experiences that have become "congealed" by giving meaning to them (by lived experiencing them); at the same time, a child is "possessed" by these retained meanings. For example, after learning to read, write or tell time, he/she no longer can return to the level of experiencing when he/she didn't know how to do these things. He/she has become different, as has his/her possibilities and his/her world. As the accumulated "sedimentation" of previously experienced content that a child has gradually come to know by investing it with meaning via lived experiencing, and that was directed by his/her willing, a child's possessed experience co-defines **how** he/she **now** experiences, wills, lived experiences and knows. As his/her possessed experience deepens and expands as he/she actualizes his/her psychic life, it influences his/her future actualizations of it.

**Behaving** crowns the totality of a person's involvement with the lifeworld, via actualizing his/her psychic life. That is, knowledge resulting from his/her willful giving meaning to the content experienced is integrated into his/her possessed experience and shows itself in a change in behaving (i.e., becoming). Though

behaving is thus an outcome, it also co-determines, in its turn, the future actualization of the essentials of the psychic life.

At this point, it is evident that the above discussion is concerned with **how one learns from experience**. How experiencing, willing and lived experiencing are actualized by learning itself on a more micro level via sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining/fantasizing and remembering is a directly relevant but separate topic that exceeds the scope of this introduction to lived experience. Since behaving is the way the psychic life shows itself, if this behavior is to be understood, it must be grasped *how* a child actualizes his/her psychic life--the level and quality of this actualization is a direct function of the level and quality of lived experiencing. Then it can be understood what a child is experiencing, what it means to him/her (i.e., how he/she is lived experiencing it), etc.

The quality and level of actualizing his/her psychic life become evident in his/her directedness to (intentionality) and openness for reality. This directedness and openness come to fruition in his/her **lived experiencing**. Consequently, the levels and qualities of emotional, knowing and valuing moments of lived experiencing are now presented in some detail.

### **Lived experiencing as emotional, knowing and valuing directedness to and openness for reality**

What follows is based primarily on Sonnekus and Ferreira (1987), Strydom (1974) and Strydom (1977).

Self-actualization occurs by implementing and cultivating physical, psychic and spiritual potentialities, and this is how an individual's personality is formed. As Gunter, 1974, p. 70 says, "Every child is born as a person and as such **is** a bearer of dignity; yet his **personality** which indicates what is peculiar to him as an individual person and renders him unique and unrepeatable, **must be developed**. This is where education comes into the picture. Every child **is a person** but **becomes a personality** by developing it with the indispensable aid of education."

These psychical, psychic and spiritual potentialities refer to the fact that as a self-conscious being, a person always simultaneously directs him/herself to reality in knowing and emotional ways by

give meaning to it. What is involved in these modes of being directed (as well as open) and their interrelations now are considered. Then the third moment of lived experience, the normative, is discussed. For now, this much needs to be said about the normative: to give sense and meaning to his/her situation, a person needs guidelines or criteria by which he/she adopts a point of view, takes a position, decides, evaluates. In other words, *receiving* meaning from and *attributing* meaning to a situation and lifeworld content take place on the strength of values and their implied norms. Thus, the affective and cognitive modes of directedness are normative in that they are ways of giving and revealing meaning.

Finally, it is helpful to note that there is a direct connection between the affective, cognitive and normative moments of lived experiencing and the **fundamental pedagogical** relationship structures of trust, understanding and authority. Indeed, from a **psychopedagogical** perspective, this coherence leads Sonnekus to talk of the necessity for affective, cognitive and normative accompanying (guiding) or **educating** (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987).

## **Emotional directedness**

In his/her becoming toward adulthood, a child moves from a predominantly affective to a predominantly cognitive directedness, but the affective **always underlies** the cognitive. Indeed, the affective and cognitive are so intertwined that affective stability leads to and facilitates cognitive orderliness, and cognitive orderliness contributes to a stable affective life.

### **1. Particular levels and qualities of emotional directedness**

#### **(a) Senso-pathic directedness**

A human being directs him/herself to reality by means of his/her body. In actualizing the psychic life, in learning, etc., a person's body is the center of his/her intentionality. This is especially evident in a very young child (infant) who directs him/herself to the world via seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, etc. all of which indicate a senso-pathic directedness. These bodily modes of intentionality show a strong quality of **impulsiveness**. As a child becomes more

adult, there is a gradual distancing from this senso-pathic, impulsive directedness to a greater stabilization of his/her affective life. However, an adult has an essential role to play in promoting this stabilization by accompanying a child such that he/she feels safe and secure in his/her bodily directedness (e.g., a crying infant feels comfort and security when fondled and caressed). This adult accompaniment does not yet qualify as "true" educating because an infant is not yet a co-participant. However, it is an essential **precondition** for a child to become ready for and receptive to educative intervention. Such accompaniment points to a spontaneous, pre-reflective relationship of trust and provides the basis for such a relationship to become explicit, purposeful and mutual.

### (b) Pathic directedness

Increased stability of a child's impulsive, senso-pathic directedness amounts to an elevation to a **labile** or **fluctuating** pathic directedness. This intermediate level bridges the preponderantly impulsive senso-pathic directedness of, say, an infant and the preponderantly stabilized affective directedness of, say, an adolescent.

The acquisition of language allows a preschool child to distance him/herself from his/her corporeality and express and embody his/her pathic directedness in ways other than bodily. Even though the acquisition of language is a preponderantly cognitive directedness, as a "way of singing the world" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), there is a close connection between language and emotion. Via language, we interpret, clarify and even create feelings, and it allows us to share our emotions with others (and with ourselves).

A stabilized affective life depends on the degree to which a child feels safe and secure that especially is facilitated by the parents via affective educating or accompaniment. Indeed, the experience of security is a precondition for an increased stabilization of his/her pathic directedness whereas insecurity labilizes it and then he/she becomes pathically flooded or emotionally overwhelmed.

### (c) Affective directedness

A **stable** affective directedness is characteristic of maturity. In addition, an emotionally mature person does not fluctuate from one

emotional reaction or mood to another, and this implies a distancing from primarily pathic feelings to a greater cognitive control of feelings and emotions.

To say that affective stability is a characteristic of maturity is not to claim that such a level of directedness unfolds "naturally" or in a strictly biological way. Thus, even though a high degree of affective stability is expected of adolescents (and generally is), this stability depends on the adequacy of self-actualization **and** on the quality of affective accompaniment or educating.

In summary, a child's emotional directedness moves from a predominantly impulsive Senso-pathic via a labile pathic to a stable affective directedness. What is more, these levels and qualities are influenced by the nature and quality of affective educating provided by adults **and** by a child's own self-actualization of his/her emotional potentialities.

### **Knowing directedness**

A child is born with the potential to direct him/herself to the world cognitively but, as with any potentiality, it has to be cultivated by means of educating **and** by self-actualization. Not only is a child knowingly and emotionally directed to reality from birth but, as with the emotional, the level and quality of knowing directedness vary from, say, an infant to an adolescent.

As Pretorius notes in his book, to reach maturity, a child has to change from a habitually emotional to a habitually knowing lived experiencing. This means a child gradually will give sense and meaning to reality in a more planned, logical, reasoned, systematic and abstract way. In other words, his/her cognitive directedness will increasingly be characterized by orderliness.

Regarding the interdependence of the affective and cognitive modes of intentionality, an earlier point needs repeating. An increased affective stability is a precondition for an increased cognitive orderliness; but it also is the case that cognitive orderliness can contribute to affective stability. Or, on the negative side, a labilized pathic life promotes a disordered gnostic (knowing) life.

The relationship between language and affect has already been briefly mentioned. Here the connection between language and

cognition is noted. It is widely accepted that language is a preeminently powerful medium for the interpretation and cognition of reality via expressing it in worlds. As such, it is central to human existence and is a medium of communicating, thinking, actualizing intelligence and affectivity. Because a child uses language to reveal or discover (i.e., to know) reality and to organize it, language is said to have a discovering and ordering function. In the present context, the point is that language allows a child to distance him/herself from a predominantly affective to a predominantly cognitive directedness to reality. Consequently, language facilitates the level and quality of the entire range of cognitive intentionalities and especially thinking, actualizing intelligence and remembering.

## 1. Particular levels and qualities of cognitive directedness

### (a) Senso-gnostic directedness

Langeveld indicates that "the young child is totally sensual, that is, completely dependent on his senses: sense of temperature, balance, touch, taste, vibrations and gradually also sight and hearing indicate to him what is happening in his environment." At first there is little evidence of the cognitive intentionalities such as thinking and remembering and even during the second half of the first year of life, an infant reveals a noticeable ability merely to distinguish.

Because of a young child's preponderant sensory orientation, the actualization of his/her cognitive directedness revolves around his/her bodiliness. That is, knowing is bodily knowing, and pre-linguistic utterances (e.g., crying) generally refer to physiological, bodily conditions such as hunger, pain and discomfort. A young child's cognitive life is dominated by an orientation to the world of objects. In addition, his/her initial discoveries are mainly bodily (e.g., hands, feet).

This initially cognitive-distinguishing directedness is primarily diffuse and is affectively (senso-pathically) colored. That is, the intentionalities actualized on a senso-gnostic level are characterized by a large degree of **diffuseness** since they tend to be permeated by senso-pathic intentionalities of an impulsive and labile quality. Feelings of safety and security are necessary otherwise a child's senso-gnostic intentionalities will tend to become senso-pathically

flooded such that he/she stagnates on this vital, physical level and his/her knowing modes will remain inadequately actualized.

### **(b) Gnostic directedness**

Bodily or physical growth increasingly allows a child to direct him/herself to the world differently. For example, with an increased coordination of bodily movements (e.g., walking) there is an elevation in his/her relationship with things, and he/she can more easily initiate exploratory behaviors that become more ordered and differentiated.

Hence, the discovery and mastery of language indicates a distancing from a mainly senso-gnostic to a mostly gnostic level of directedness. That is, the quality of diffuseness characterizing the senso-gnostic level, in progressing to the gnostic, takes on a quality of disorder. Even though a child's directedness is still primarily on a concrete-perceptual level, now there are occasional moments suggestive of a dawning abstract, distanced level. In addition to this change in directedness, the mastery of language also enables a child to ask questions of and about reality and thus to increase his/her versatility of exploring his/her lifeworld.

Owing to the close connection between a person's affective life and the acquisition of language proficiency, if his/her lived experiencing is characterized as pathically labile, the emotional precondition of stability will be inadequate to support his/her cognitive directedness. For example, a child who feels unsafe and insecure will not easily be able to distance him/herself from his/her labilized pathic lived experiencing in order to adequately acquire language both quantitatively and qualitatively. This has broad negative implications for the effectiveness of his/her self-actualization since an impeded mastery of language will adversely influence his/her other cognitive intentionalities such as thinking, remembering and implementing his/her intelligence.

Language is such a powerful medium for actualizing and fostering cognitive potentialities that a language-poor child will tend to lag behind in his/her cognitive becoming, and in the long run he/she may reach the same low level of achievement as a less gifted child. In addition, language mastery that is hampered can impede the stabilization of a child's emotional life such that the actualization of his/her personality structure will not progress adequately.

### (c) Cognitive directedness

As a child progresses to adulthood, his/her gnostic lived experiencing is directed less to the concrete-perceptual. The initial obviousness of reality no longer is accepted as obvious by an adolescent. Rather, he/she tends to question reality and to be critical of it. That is, he/she reasons and thinks about what he/she feels unsure about, and he/she is able to maintain a high degree of objectivity in the sense that he/she can distance him/herself from his/her subjective involvement in reality. Then he/she can take a point of view on it that transcends his/her own wishes and desires. This is an indication of a cognitive, ordered directedness that shows itself in such modes of intentionality as thinking and remembering.

An older child becomes aware of a need for logical, orderly and critical thinking. An adolescent often thinks abstractly and thus is more able to make valid judgments about relations, causality, etc. than a younger child. Consequently, his/her arguments often are objective and critical which, in turn, lead him/her to examine him/herself, his/her beliefs and values and this encourages him/her to explore reality and learn in orderly, cognitive ways.

The degree to which an adolescent can actualize his/her intentionalities on a cognitive level is closely linked to the breadth and quality of his/her vocabulary. If an adolescent is deficient in his/her mastery of language, it will likely hamper the adequate development of his/her cognitive intentionalities in that he/she will tend to be unwilling to leave the concrete-sensory, the certain and familiar and venture into the abstract. Thus, he/she will tend to stagnate on a gnostic, disordered level of directedness.

#### **Integrated and increasingly stable affective and ordered cognitive directedness**

By way of completing this discussion of the levels and qualities of the emotional and knowing aspects of lived experiencing, the inextricable connections between them is underscored once again.

1. Affective intentionalities have a cognitive side and cognitive intentionalities are affective.
2. The affective and cognitive life of a child becoming adult are

correlated across the different levels and qualities of each and show an integrated progression in the direction of a stable affective and ordered cognitive directedness.

3. An integrated affective and cognitive directedness is to a great extent noticeable in the adolescent. His/her intentionalities habitually are actualized on a cognitive level that is supported by his/her affective lived experiencing.

### **Valuing (Normative) directedness**

To become, a child must take points of view on, give meanings to and make choices and decisions about his/her lifeworld. Every act of becoming requires that a person *give* sense and meaning to his/her situation. This requires implicit or explicit "beacons", guides, criteria in accordance with which meanings are given, choices are made, etc. In other words, human existence is based on values and confronted by norms.

Since educative intervention of adults also is required, self-actualization is necessary but not sufficient for becoming an adult and it involves *receiving* meaning from and attributing meaning to experiences based on one's values and their implied norms. From a pedagogical perspective on becoming an adult, a child has to increasingly acquire the norm-image of maturity [from his/her educators] through the self- and guided-actualization of his/her potentialities in accordance with values and norms.

Receiving or deriving and giving meaning occur according to the ways a person directs him/herself to reality. As already noted, this is accomplished especially by a person's affective and cognitive intentionalities and their coherence. Because a child directs him/herself to reality via his/her affective and cognitive intentionalities with the aid of and while further forming his/her values and norms, the normative moment of human existence are considered. In fact, the normative is an inseparable moment of one's affective and cognitive being-in-the-world.

### **1. The normative significance of affective and cognitive directedness**

#### **(a) Affective directedness as normative (valuing)**

In a person's affective involvement with reality, he/she gives affective **meaning** by attaching emotional **value** to what is experienced. For example, a child experiences something as pleasant or unpleasant, as repulsive or attractive, beautiful or ugly, cold or warm. Sometimes he/she also "feels" cheerful or depressed, exhausted or full of energy, ill or healthy. Thus, he/she can form for him/herself a "value image" by appropriating what he/she finds meaningful or by avoiding or rejecting what he/she considers less meaningful or even meaningless. This resulting value image strongly influences his/her self-actualization; even so, accountable educative intervention is critically important in his/her forming this value image ("sense" of values).

A person can **direct** him/herself to the world in terms of values and norms. Yet, as a valuing, normative being-in-the-world, owing to his/her openness for them, values and norms "speak" to him/her and give **direction** to his/her life. But these values must be acquired, learned. So, it is not surprising that educating primarily is a matter of inculcating values and their implied norms.

When reality makes an emotional "appeal" to a child, he/she must give meaning to that reality in terms of his/her emotional life. For example, he/she must **evaluate** whether a picture is beautiful, whether a pizza is tasty, whether he/she "feels" proud about a story he/she wrote. Thus, human existence essentially is a normative matter.

#### **(b) Cognitive directedness as normative (valuing)**

Deriving or receiving meaning from and giving meaning to reality merely on the basis of feelings is not possible. This is because affective involvement includes cognitive moments (and the cognitive includes the affective). A person **knows** that he/she is affectively involved. In addition, valuing to some extent involves evaluating, reflecting and deciding that are predominantly cognitive activities in that they require thinking, reasoning and implementing intelligence. Thus, although normative lived experiencing is founded on the pathic-affective, it also is gnostic-cognitive in nature.

**Increased normative directedness by means of more ordered cognitive and more stable affective directedness**

We now know that a child's affective and cognitive becoming progress through different levels ranging from the senso-pathic/senso-gnostic, via the pathic/gnostic to the affective/cognitive. We also know that there are qualitative differences among these levels. At a senso-pathic/senso-gnostic level there is a quality of pathic impulsiveness and gnostic diffuseness, at the pathic/gnostic level there is a quality of pathic lability and gnostic disorder, and at the affective/cognitive level, the quality is affective stability and cognitive order.

Since meaning is given via affective and cognitive directedness, a child's normative directedness (and openness) will be attuned to values highly correlated with the level and quality of the actualization of his/her emotional and knowing intentionalities.

Accordingly, the normative directedness to (and openness for) a very young child (baby) will be attuned to (and open for) mainly sensory-emotional values. A baby primarily is attuned to what to him/her is pleasant or unpleasant, agreeable or disagreeable. The physical condition of his/her body is lived experienced as valuable (meaningful), less valuable (less meaningful) or worthless (senseless). It is noted that in the case of a baby there is not yet **moral forming** in the strict sense of the term.

As a child's emotional and knowing directedness progress, his/her normative directedness (and openness) also is elevated. For example, with a preschool child's increased pathic stability (i.e., from impulsivity to lability) and gnostic order (from diffuseness to disorder), he/she can appropriate some of the higher values for him/herself, although most of the time he/she cannot rationally consider their meaningfulness. Such appropriation (reception) mostly occurs when an adult (parent) holds a particular value or values up to a child by personal example. Since a preschool child to a large extent already is capable of gnostic directedness, he/she can make a specific value his/her own by **knowing** it, especially as this knowledge is embodied in a practical situation of upbringing. His/her parents or other educators point out its meaningfulness for him/her and, at first, this acquisition is a mere acceptance of the knowledge (e.g., cleanliness).

Accountable normative directedness primarily is accomplished by means of a stabilized affective and an ordered cognitive directedness. What is noticeable at this level is the increased

abstract understanding of values. Also, with the development of intellectual potentialities, a child becomes capable of a more critical, objective and rational approach to values. He/she may also exercise self-criticism based on the same values and norms by which he/she judges the behavior of others.

During puberty and especially adolescence, a child shows great affective stability and cognitive order. Now he/she is capable of relating to values at a "distance". That is, he/she no longer unconditionally accepts the ideas, say, of right and wrong conveyed by parents and other adults. He/she now builds up a moral code of his/her own based on the moral concepts established during earlier childhood but that are changed and modified to meet his/her more mature level of becoming. A young person also evaluates in practical situations the values impressed upon him/her and often is confused by the inconsistencies he/she sees in the concrete exercise of norms and values.

It is especially during adolescence that a child's values are established. The actual values that an adolescent honors are characterized by his/her qualities of personality, but sometimes there is a disparity between the values an adolescent (not to mention some adults) pretends to honor and those that govern his/her actions. Nevertheless, an older adolescent, because of his/her predominantly stabilized affective and ordered cognitive life, is capable of accountable normative directedness. The moral concepts of an older adolescent closely approximate those of an adult. He/she knows what society expects and even though he/she disagrees with some of the moral concepts, he/she follows them because he/she realizes that no one can be a law unto him/herself.

Self-actualization by way of increased accountable normative directedness is a norm-establishing and norm-established activity that means a child should increasingly live according to the norm-image of maturity. As accountable fundamental pedagogical (Landman et al., 1982) normative criteria for a child's actualization of adulthood, he/she should increasingly:

(a) be able to interpret his/her existence meaningfully in terms of an accountable (among other things, objective) act of deriving from and giving meaning to work, social relationships, recreational activities, etc.;

- (b) be capable of critical self-evaluation according to which he/she can make moral judgments of his/her own choices and actions;
- (c) live in accordance with the conditions of propriety as expected of him/her as a human being;
- (d) choose and act according to values which he/she has appropriated for him/herself and for which he/she accepts responsibility;
- (e) come to an understanding of what responsibility entails, make it his/her own and practice it;
- (f) replace identifying an adult as the source of authority with identifying norms as that source by which he/she shows signs of an individually independent and accountable actualization of what is proper, and:
- (g) choose and act in terms of a hierarchy of value preferences as contained in an individual philosophy of life.

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