

CHAPTER 1•

SOCIOPEDAGOGICS AS A SCIENCE

Genesis 2:18 – It is not good
that [the] man be alone.

1.1 Introduction

“Sociopedagogics is the most important science of the future.” It is remarkable that these words were uttered many years ago by a speaker at the opening of one of the most important natural science achievements of all time: the great observatory at Mount Palomar, California.¹

In our time, it has become possible to solve almost all natural scientific and technological problems. The splitting of the atom, the first moon landing and the contemporary exploration of space are evidence enough of this. The above speaker recognized that, amidst fantastic natural scientific achievements, the most important science of the future will be the one which must investigate the problem-rich relationship p between educating and society to find solutions to the urgent pedagogical-social questions of our time and of the future. It is an extremely difficult task to educate a child and youth in our modern society with its complex and dynamic nature, and to educate a child and youth *to* an adequate social life in a complicated, changed and changing society.

Our modern world has become problematic – it is extremely complicated as well as quickly changing with an awesome dynamic, and where a particularly demanding, concerted educating and teaching are required to link up to this condition. Educating and, thus, (socio) pedagogics are confronted with new tasks and are compelled to reflect on new educative aims and means.

In our society there are factors (forces and influences) which confuse and restrain the relationships between educators and youths such that the preconditions required for an effective educative situation have imperceptibly nearly been lost. An enormous schism has arisen between parents and youths because

• J. W. M. Pretorius, *Opvoeding, Samelewing, Jeug.* (1979) Pretoria: J. L. van Schaik.

they do not understand the societal factors of each other's situations and are no longer able to communicate with each other (the "generation-gap"). There is reason for uneasiness in the relationship between parents and youths – for many parents, educating has become an increasingly more impossible task, to the detriment of themselves and their children. The reason for this uneasiness is especially in the continually growing difficulty of communicating between persons, in general, and between parents and youths, specifically. There is a distressful situation which is expressed by youth in a variety of crisis phenomena (loneliness, uncertainty, suicide) and by parents and other educators (anxiety, despair). Here there is a societal problem of the unbearable nature of our society for parents and youths. Societal background and social situations influence the communication between parents and youths, and this restrains educating (Traas²).

1.2 Historical-critical view of sociopedagogics

In the history of sociopedagogics, especially four directions of thought are distinguished, of which the first three form the preamble to contemporary sociopedagogical thinking, namely:

- *social pedagogics in contrast to individualistic pedagogics
- *sociological pedagogics
- *government pedagogics
- *sociopedagogics as an autonomous part-science of pedagogics.

These four directions of thought are viewed critically below³.

1.2.1 Social and individualistic pedagogics:

Under the influence of philosophers of individualism such as Kant, Herbart, Montaigne, Jean Jacques Rousseau (see his works *The Social Contract*, *Emile*), a strong individualistic view prevailed in the pedagogics of the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe. For example, Spencer advocated the primacy of the individual: each person may do what he/she will, on condition that he/she does not infringe upon the equal rights of others. Everything revolves around the happiness of the individual person.

Near the end of the 19th century, social pedagogics arose in opposition to this pedagogical individualism (where the view of *self*-becoming and *self*-educating were central). Paul Natrop was the

most important representative of this change. In his *Sozialpaedagogiek* (1904), he proclaims the view that one only becomes a person through human society, and he shows how socially-bound all educating is. With this, he lays an important foundation for sociopedagogical thinking. Modern educative views, which Natrop had already advocated are:

- the important educative influence of the family
- the value of obedience based on an adequate relationship of trust in educating.

In addition, authors such as Lievegoed, Kohnstamm, Brugmans, Menicke and Diesterweg emphasize the importance of the social-societal.

1.2.2 Sociological Pedagogics:

From its origin, and still to today, sociology has involved itself with education. Especially Emile Durkheim approached the problematic of educating as a sociologist, and advocates a one-sided definition of education, sociological norms and aims for educating, and the sociological determination of teaching methods and aims. For him, a child must be educated *for* society. The objection to this view is that it is not feasible – no one can anticipate how society will appear in ten or twenty years, and what the concrete society will then demand of the individual. Once again, here the quick changes in society must be kept in mind.

This is especially an Anglo-American direction of thinking. With their “Sociology of Education” and “Educational Sociology,” the advocates of this view merely apply sociological insights to the study of education and its practice. In this way, pedagogics becomes nothing more than an applied sociology, and its autonomy as a science suffers (See 1.7.7).

1.2.3 State Pedagogics:

In this line of thought, political pedagogics, i.e., national educational doctrine, is placed first. It was already the policy of the old Spartan and old Roman Empire that a child must be educated to serve the state. Also, Nazi, Fascist and Communist educative aims hold that all education must be state education, and that the youth must be indoctrinated with ideologies for the benefit of the state.

About the time of the French Revolution, Talleyrand expounded a political education: in the first place, the child must be made a citizen; the child belongs to the State; the Fatherland has the first right to the child.

Communist pedagogics views education as a social function: it is there for and through society because a person essentially is a social being. The society, i.e., the State, has the primary and most fundamental rights. Education must prepare socially productive workers (Dialectic Materialism).

A criticism of this state pedagogical line of thought is that the state is made absolute, while the individual is undervalued (See 1.7.7).

1.2.4 Sociopedagogics as an independent part-science of pedagogics

A contemporary sociopedagogics has come into being as an independent part-science of the autonomous science of pedagogics. Although the author does not agree with all their terminologies and function-descriptions of sociopedagogics, the following educationists are persons who have contributed to the scientific grounding, establishment, justification and delimitation of the function and terrain of contemporary sociopedagogics: Perquin⁴ (Netherlands), Gielen⁵ (Netherlands), Nel⁶, Du Plessis⁷, Pistorius⁸, Van Zyl⁹, Gresse¹⁰, Botha¹¹, Viljoen¹² and Hoffman¹³. Each of these authors presents a particular function-delimitation of sociopedagogics, and these views are briefly compared below (See 1.4).

1.3 Etymological explication

The name “sociopedagogic” is derived from three words:

sociare (Latin verb)

pais (+child - Greek)

agogein (=guide, accompany - Greek)

The concepts *socio* and *(the) social* can have the following meanings:

- *socio*: persons in relationship with each other, e.g., intimate, personal, social, public
- *socio*: to share with;
to unite with - thus society or community
- *socio*: partner, companion in distress, ally
- *socio*: communication (interaction) among persons, e.g.,:

attracting	-	rebuffing
sympathy	-	antipathy
choosing	-	rejecting
affinity	-	disapproval

(“feelings of attraction”)

- *socio*: all phenomena of *living together* and cooperating; the mutual involvement of persons with each other.
- the concept *the social* includes:
 1. the social conduct of the individual (social behavior)
 2. mutual human relationships (social relationships)
 3. the social aspect of living together in its totality (the social totality).

From these meanings it is concluded that the three-fold compilation “sociopedagogic” refers to the science which studies the *accompaniment* of the *child* with respect to *the social*. The child and youth are educated in *relationships* and situations of living together (which simultaneously are educative relationships and educative situations) *to* adequately live together on all levels from the interpersonal to the international. By communicating with educators, age-mates and others, a child actualizes his/her social-communicative potentiality, and he/she learns to adequately communicate with his/her fellow persons and to deal with the most intimate and matter of fact social relationships. Thus, the social life of the child in education,¹⁴ as well as his/her total social-societal situation is dealt with in sociopedagogics. “An etymological understanding of “sociopedagogic” refers to the educating and becoming adult of the child as social involvement,” according to Botha.¹⁵

The following concepts which are important in sociopedagogics are briefly described:

- *Social-societal*: the social life of a person originates in family life but is actualized in the broader contexts of living together and society.
- *Socialization*: the child’s social-societal becoming mobile (flexible) so that he/she can hold his/her own in all social contexts (from the most intimate to the most objective).
- *Communication*: essential interpersonal contact.
- *Social affinity*: a “feeling of attraction” between people.
- *Living together and society*: all forms of living together such as in a family society, a school society, with playmates, in youth society, church, cultural society, national and world societies.

- *Society*: The social order.
- *Pluralism*: plurality of forms of life in which persons participate.
- *Polyvalence*: the divergent variety of norms of life.
- *Plurality of living*: a person participates in several sectors of life and, in each one, social relationships and patterns will differ; it becomes difficult for a person (youth) to determine his/her own place in society.
- *Social lability*: in our complex society, a person no longer knows either his/her own social position or that of other people; this gives rise to the ever-increasing difficulty in communication between people, in general (also regarding educative communication).
- *Contact inflation*: we know many people; we have a variety of interpersonal contacts, but they are superficial and impersonal and can lead to loneliness. We have very few genuine, intimate encounters with our fellow human beings, which may have a profound influence on and enrich both participants. The quantity of human contact is increasing while their quality is waning.

1.4 The function of sociopedagogics

About delimiting the *function* or *theme of study* of sociopedagogics, the number of educationists who have contributed to contemporary sociopedagogics are divided into three groups:

(i) Educationists who delimit the theme of study of sociopedagogics to the *pedagogical responsibility of society*:

Perquin:¹⁶ “the pedagogical responsibility of society” is the object of social pedagogics. •

Van Zyl:¹⁷ The core theme of sociopedagogics is “the pedagogical responsibility of society”.

Gresse:¹⁸ “A penetration of the pedagogical responsibility of society ... is the ground theme which sociopedagogics reflects on.” “The sociopedagogic theme thus is concerned with the task of society, as such, with respect to the becoming adult of children and youths.” “Sociopedagogics must:

• Here Perquin still uses the older, confusing, less acceptable name.

describe the contemporary situation;
indicate dangers and points of conflict;
point out ways of improving the situation.”

(ii) Sociopedagogics is concerned with *the influence of society on the child's becoming adult*:

Nel:¹⁹

- a) The educative situation is the point of departure for study.
- b) The social relationships in the pedagogic situation.
- c) The social factors which influence the child or youth in his/her becoming adult.
- d) Social factors must be judged in terms of pedagogical norms.
- e) Social reality must be approached from a pedagogical perspective.

Pistorius:²⁰ “The particular field of study of sociopedagogics is the influence which society has on the child's becoming adult.”

Hoffman:²¹ “the particular field of study of sociopedagogics deals with the pedagogical healthiness and relevance of various instances in society which exercise an influence on the youth.”

(iii) Educationists who describe the function of sociopedagogics as the study of *the relationship or connection between educating and society*:

Gielen:²² the essence and scope of the pedagogical-social is the social aspect of the pedagogical phenomenon. (Compare the title of his work: *The social in educating and education*).

Du Plessis:²³ The concept “sociopedagogics” refers to a bipolarity in the function of sociopedagogics in the connection between educative reality and social reality with the first-mentioned as the point of departure.

Botha:²⁴ The theme of study for sociopedagogics is “the social life of the child-in-educating.”

“Sociopedagogics has its origin in wondering about the problematic relationship between educating and society.”

Viljoen:²⁵ *Educating in a social perspective* is the object of scientific penetration of sociopedagogics.

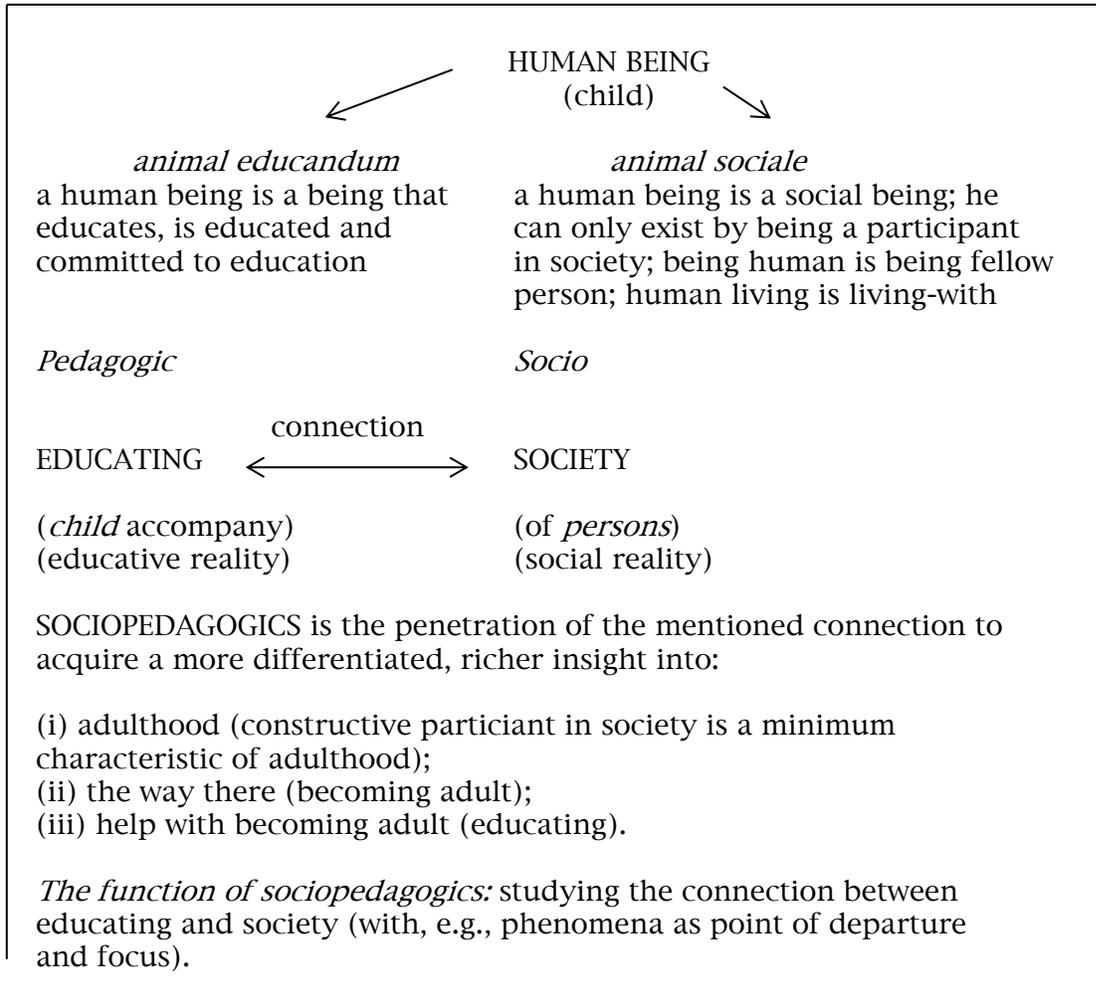
As criticism of the descriptions in groups (i) and (ii), the following is noted: Sociopedagogics, as its themes of study, clearly is involved with *the pedagogical responsibility of society* AND with *the influence of society on the child's becoming adult*. However, each of these descriptions implies a divisive delimitation regarding the function of sociopedagogics. By delimiting its theme of study as *the connection between educating and society*, more comprehensive and fruitful possibilities for sociopedagogical reflection and research emerge.

That is, sociopedagogics is primarily involved with two essential characteristics of being human, i.e., a person is a being who educates and is a social being who cannot exist without belonging to a society. It is unthinkable that a person can reflect on educating without attending to this latter fundamental fact.

In this connection, we can link up with a pedagogical statement by Langeveld²⁶ that educating takes place within the *association* between adults and children; the fact that a person is a social being makes him/her influenceable and educable.

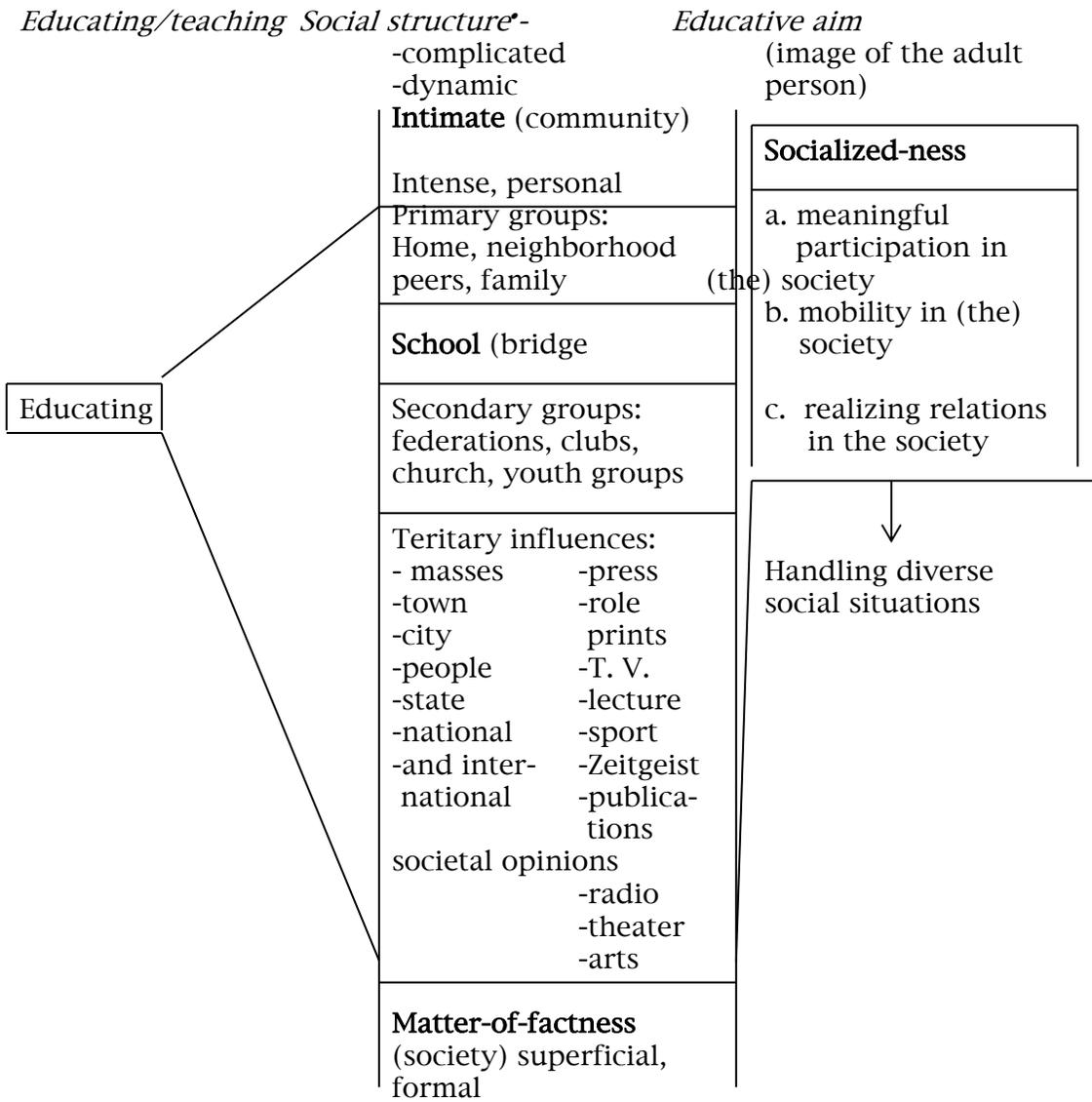
The basis of the social and the pedagogical is the *I-thou relationship*. Langeveld²⁷ describes this fundamental relationship between parents and children as the so-called *sympatheia*, the experience of *affective communication*, recognition of a person as a fellow person. *Sympatheia* disposes the child to be a fellow person and makes the association possible; this disposes the child to be influenceable and impressionable for what the other wills of him/her, thus, to receptivity for guidance (educability). Sociality guarantees the child's educability.

The matter of the *name* and *function* of sociopedagogics are schematically represented as follow:



1.5 The structure of sociopedagogics²⁸

Thus far it is indicated that sociopedagogics studies the connection between educating and society (in all possible forms of society); that the contemporary social structure is complex and dynamic; that the child is educated in various forms of living together to be able to handle the most intimate and matter of fact social relationships and situations. The theme of study of sociopedagogics can be structured as follows:



The child's educating, becoming adult and being socialized (socialization) occur within a total social structure which includes

* Forms of living together

social groupings within which social relationships can vary from the most intimate-personal to the most formal, matter of fact. The first named groupings are described as *communities*. The last-named groupings are found in *society*. Household, neighborhood, peer and family groupings are described as primary groups. The household, e.g., is the primary situation of living together, as well as the primary educative situation. Family life is the most intimate interactive occurrence or group event. The school has a bridging function and, for the child, must form a path between intimate and matter of fact groupings. In the above scheme, secondary and tertiary groupings and influences are indicated. "The realization of the social life of the child thus occurs between the pole of the intimate and the matter-of-fact, between which the primary and secondary groups, as well as the tertiary milieu lie," according to Botha.²⁹

Viewed from a sociopedagogic perspective, the aim of educating is to *become socialized* or *social-societally mobile*, and the event by which this is reached is *socialization* or *becoming social-societally mobile*. As an adult, the adequately socialized person will

- a) meaningfully participate in (the) society
- b) be mobile in (the) society
- c) be able to actualize changes in society – be ready, able and prepared for changes.

Such a person will then be able to handle the great variety of diverse, and often problematic, social situations within which he/she might find him/herself daily. It is a problem of our time that a person, in his/her everyday life, cannot see social situations clearly to adequately handle them. (Compare: "What do I now say to him/her?")

This ability to handle communication with fellow persons with openness and ease is highly valued anthropologically. Noted investigators in the human sciences have analyzed the matter of "personality," and each state, in addition to other human functions, the following as personal characteristics of a mentally healthy, adequately engaged individual:

Elizabeth Hurlock: - The ability to relate to others;

Abraham Maslow: - A unified personality, a firm identity – they know who they are and behave accordingly – The ability to develop intimate relationships;

Carl Rogers: - Relating well to others;

Erik Erikson: - Trust others and trust themselves – Have a clear, integrated identity – Can develop intimate, trusting relationships with others. (See below with respect to the meaning of one's own identity – 1.6.6)

1.6 Sociopedagogical categories

When it is said that the function of sociopedagogics is the study of the relationship between educating and society, it must be stressed that, in a sociopedagogical perspective, the point of departure and focus of study is the **phenomenon of educating**. Because this phenomenon is extremely complex, an illumination from various perspectives or points of view is required to understand this phenomenon as completely as possible in its numerous facets. Sociopedagogics is a part-perspective or part-science alongside other part-sciences of pedagogics such as fundamental pedagogics, didactic pedagogics, psychopedagogics, historical pedagogics, and orthopedagogics, each of which describes and illuminates scientifically the *same* phenomenon from a different perspective. Each part-perspective discloses and illuminates essences of the phenomenon of educating and uses its own categories or concepts to describe them from its perspective. These categories are **means of illuminative thinking** in terms of which pedagogical thinking occurs to disclose the essential characteristics and meanings of the phenomenon of educating.

To illuminate and describe the phenomenon of educating from a sociopedagogical part-perspective, sociopedagogical categories are needed. These categories are **concepts or expressions which describe and clarify the essences of the relationship between educating and society**. The following are proposed as sociopedagogical categories:

- * educating *in* society
- * educating *to* society
- * educating as evolving interpersonal communication
- * interaction between educating/society
- * educating as social-societal orientation
- * educating as guiding with acquiring an identity.

A consideration of each of these categories follows.

1.6.1 Educating *in* society (*in* living together)

Educating always is actualized in society--***in* social situations against a societal background**. Thus, all educating has a social aspect.

A child's existence and growing up are defined and influenced (promoted and/or restrained) by his/her life ***in* educative situations**, and by his/her life ***in* situations of living together**. For example, society constitutes the life and educative milieu of a child but is not, in itself, directed to educating him/her. As a matter of fact, the structure and dynamics of contemporary society often make educating problematic in many respects.

These categories indicate that educative situations always are embedded *in* social reality³⁰--all educating occurs in situations of living together. In other words, it occurs in situations which simultaneously are educative and social, e.g., the family, school, boarding house, children's home. The criteria, which hold for each such situation, evaluate two of its facets, namely,

(i) How adequately is **educating** actualized in this situation?
By this question, the educating is evaluated, especially in terms of educative relationships, association, encounter, intervention.

(ii) How adequately is **social life** actualized in this situation?
Here the following relationships of social life are evaluated:

- * marital living together (marital relationship)
- * educatively living together (family)
- * living together in teaching (school)
- * children living together (mutual relationships among children)
- * adults living together (all concerned adults).

The concept **educative milieu** refers to the

- * geographic-physical world
- * interpersonal world
- * cultural-historical world

in which the child is educated, and where we distinguish between a micro-educative-milieu (e.g., the family) and a macro-

educative-milieu (the society). The former always is embedded in the latter. As far as a child's educative milieu is concerned, there are countless possibilities: the home and surroundings in which a child grows up can be prosperous or poor; it can be culturally rich or poor; it can be a remote state in a developing country, or a high block of flats in a densely populated large city of a highly developed country; in his/her daily life, a child can come into contact with very few people or, as a pupil in a large school, each day he/she can have contact with hundreds of people.

1.6.2 Educating *to* society (*to* living together)

This has to do with the social aim of educating, namely, to bring a child up so that one day he/she can adequately live together with fellow persons as an adult in all social relations. The educator helps a child become a member of society by gradually linking him/her up with society. A child finds opportunities (e.g., in the intimate, personal family circle) to **practice his/her social life** under the guidance of his/her educators.

Social educating implies

- (i) ushering a child into society;
- (ii) awakening positive attitudes toward fellow persons, e.g., through the positive example of the educator;
- (iii) awakening an awareness of responsibility (social conscience).

A child has undergone adequate social educating and social forming if he/she **knows how to associate with persons**, if as an adult he/she eventually feels him/herself to be free and independent in his/her relationships with fellow persons but, at the same time, feels connected with them. He/she must adequately link up with society but maintain a critical distance from it. He/she must be able to deal with social situations with tact, insight and skill but, at the same time, preserve his/her own dignity. He/she must be socially sensitive and have an attunement to social situations, but not allow him/herself to be carried away into impulsive actions, to not uncritically "adapt" to each situation, but **fit in** adequately without the cost of his/her own independence and identity (Ten Have).

The category **educating *to* society** is explicated by Gresse³¹ as follows [in Afrikaans]: "Educating always is socially directed ... This means

that the youth, among other things, must be prepared for life in connection with the social, society and being a citizen."

Botha³² formulates [in Afrikaans] this category somewhat differently, but still with the same meaning: "Pedagogical going out to social reality." A child's entry into social reality is guided by the educator. A child must be prepared for the social relationships which he/she yet has to enter. The nature of the social reality which a child must go out to has to be considered. This going out to social reality is actualized between the poles

protect	-	expose
guide	-	withdraw
associate	-	leave
encounter	-	distance
intervene	-	withdraw

It is pedagogically correct to protect, guide, etc. a child, but it is extremely desirable that the educator periodically withdraw and distance him/herself from the educand so that latter he/she can be exposed to the influences of society, and gradually can proceed to independence (stand on his/her own) with respect to society. Overemphasizing protecting and intervening can degenerate into pedagogically unfavorable overprotecting and over-intervening. Inadequate protecting, guiding, intervening, etc. can lead to a child experiencing insecurity, according to Botha.

"Pedagogic going out to social reality" refers to the conflict between educative and societal influences with which educator and educand must struggle, and this emphasizes the **guiding function** of the educator. Societal influences are not allowed simply to flow through and to overwhelm the educative situation. The educator selects the influences which might affect the pedagogic and tries to adapt the influences which cannot be selected."³³ [In Afrikaans]. In this connection, the pedagogical task is two-fold:

- (i) Pedagogical **selection** of societal influences: the educator controls and selects societal influences (e.g., by permitting/forbidding, by approving and disapproving);
- (ii) Pedagogical **adapting** of societal influences: A child can never be educated in isolation from societal influences and, therefore, must be helped to interpret, and put in the right perspective negative

societal influences, e.g., the unfavorable and unacceptable content of reading matter, television programs, films, etc.

Educating to society is strongly coupled with the idea of **socialization** or a child's becoming socially-societally flexible (see 1.5), although these two concepts are not synonymous.

The concept "**socialization**" can refer to becoming socially-societally flexible or learning social life by **any** person (child and adult), and to the **help** he/she has received, as well as to the **changes** he/she has undergone to participate in social life. Socialization is the event by which values, socio-moral norms (rules of living), attitudes, social skills, knowledge and the culture of social groups are conveyed to and acquired an individual and used by him/her so that, in this way, he/she behaves and functions in socially acceptable ways (**learns social living**). This transmission and acquisition occur in communication with fellow persons. Thus, a person learns social life by participating in society. Also, a child can receive help to participate in social life, i.e., be socialized, so that he/she **learns to live socially**. Although the concepts **education** and **socialization** show a close relationship with respect to a child-in-education, they are not identical. Socialization is more than just education and education more than just socialization:

(i) Socialization is more than merely education: Educating is only **part** of socialization. When a person has become adult, his/her educating [upbringing] is discontinued, but his/her socialization continues until the day of his/her death. Consider, e.g., the possibility of resocialization (e.g., the old convict) and desocialization (e.g., the aged);

(ii) Educating is more than just socialization: Socialization is only **part** of educating a child. Viewed sociopedagogically, being socialized is an aim of educating, but the social is only one of its facets, along with other **distinguishable** facets such as the religious, moral, intellectual and physical. When the **educator** helps a child-in-education become a member of society (**learns social life**), he/she is involved with **educating to social life**, and then **socialization and educating to social life** are the same event. This amounts to the educator guiding a child's socialization. However, a child can be socialized in other ways than **educating to social life**, e.g., by independent social experience, by the influence and social forming

he/she undergoes from peers, by the influences of social groups such as classmates and playmates.³⁵

With the concept "**socialization**", Sandstrom³⁶ describes the event by which a young person acquires the forms of behavior which agree with the norms and values exemplified to him/her by the adults. The concept is closely related to the complex problematic of educating children to be good citizens of the society to which they belong. Socialization is the development of an asocial child into an adult with ordered sympathies and antipathies, obligations and concerns, and the ability to take his/her place in a complex society. Educating is concerned with this transformation in that it aims to create circumstances for developing a well-integrated individual who, in society, accepts responsibility for those matters suitable to his/her nature.

It is emphasized that an educator cannot educate **for** a particular social situation--in view of rapid changes, he/she does not know how things are going to look in 10 or 20 years. Even so, communistic pedagogics declares that educating is a societal function--it is there **for** and **by** society. Also, there is no educating by society. "Society" cannot educate a child; it only can form or influence a child. Only persons (adults/educators) who enter a special relationship with a child can educate him/her.³⁷

1.6.3 Education as evolving interpersonal communication (dialogue, conversation, interaction, contact)

Educating is a continuing "conversation" with a child; educating is an evolving dialogue (Ter Horst). "We shall define the educational process simply as the **interaction** between an educator (adult) and an educand (child)" (W. H. O. Schmidt, in English).

Educating cannot occur without interpersonal communication, and when an educator (parent, teacher, etc.) educates a child or youth for a shorter or longer time, it is nothing other than an interpersonal communication unfolding between them (educative communication). With respect to educating, the concept **communication** refers to the possibility of deep personal contact and communication, and in no sense is this mass communication or technical communication, but rather it is what one should call **personal or spiritual communication**. Without educating, a child's

being-a-person cannot materialize; and in its turn, educating only can be actualized where educator and child live together in an authentic **communicative relationship**. Other concepts which refer to this necessary **educative communication** are:

- * complementary child love - parent love (Langeveld)
- * the love-bond is rooted in the natural relationship (Waterink)
- * the personal love relationship (Carp)
- * the affective **I-thou** bonding (Hanselmann)
- * the loving bondedness (Wijngaarden)
- * the participation in pedagogic we-ness (Botha).

In contemporary human sciences (Sociology, Psychology, Pedagogics, Anthropology, Psychiatry, etc.), the following important fact is strongly emphasized: only in communication with fellow persons can a person: (i) exist; (ii) actualize his/her potentialities (also his/her social-communicative potentialities); (iii) learn to know him/herself (acquire a unique identity).

"Only through his fellow persons does one become a **person**. What a person is and ought to be, he experiences ... only through communication," according to Hugo [in Afrikaans].³⁸ Thus, educative communication means that educator and child each enter the world of the other; a common world arises. Essentially, there is interpersonal contact, the relationship between persons who want to know and encounter each other in their depths **as persons**, where the essentially unique reality (he/she is as he/she is) and identity (uniqueness) of the other is acknowledged. One loves the other and has an interest in him/her for the sake of the other him/herself. Each is captivated by the other's person, qualities and weaknesses.

When it is declared that educating is an **evolving** communication, this means

- (i) that the evolving occurs **horizontally**--as a broadening of the common world between educator and child;
- (ii) that the evolving occurs **vertically**--there is a continual **elevation in the level** of dialogue between educator and educand: an educator always communicates on a higher level with his/her fifteen-year-old in puberty than with his/her four-year-old child.

The educative event is an **interaction** between adult and child. There is a communicative field of tension between the child, who "wants to be someone him/herself", and the educator, who sets demands and expectations. Each has the task of attuning his/her behavior to the other by taking the other into consideration. The expression "parents bring up children" allows this **communicative moment** to appear to be too insignificant.

Kirstein³⁹ explicates educative communication as follows: We cannot educate without communicating, and we cannot communicate with a child without a preformed field for educating being created. Thus, **communication** is a key concept regarding the educative relationship.

Hence, the following statement is made: Communication-promoting/-obstructing factors are education-promoting/-obstructing factors in an educative situation. For example, that which obstructs the contact between parent and child also obstructs educating the child.

Kwant⁴⁰ grounds a person's life of communication in his/her ability to enter (empathize, enter the spirit of) the life and situation of another person. Every form of authentic human communication is the actualization of this fundamental "possibility of empathizing". Isolation is the opposite of communication--it refers to a person who shuts him/herself or someone else off (alienation); a person shuts him/herself off in his/her particularity, he/she loses him/herself so much in his/her own concerns which he/she cannot enter the spirit of and empathize with another's life. To be able to authentically **live together** means to be able to empathize adequately with another, to be able to **communicate** adequately. Real interpersonal contact, thus, is an **empathy** with respect to the life of another, and this also includes the ability to listen to fellow persons.

In authentic educative communication there is a profound contact and intense influencing, forming and enrichment of another person, and of one's own person.

Fundamental pedagogics describes the **educative relationship** as relationship [structures] of authority, trust and understanding. Viewed sociopedagogically, these educative relationship structures come **into motion** when educator and child communicate with each

other, and trust, authority and understanding are communicated. Thus, educative communication is

*the educative relationship-in-function, in motion, in its dynamics (dynamic course) and its actualization.⁴¹

For example, I have an educative relationship with my child, even when we are not in each other's presence. When we do appear together and begin to communicate, we again take up our educative relationship and it comes into motion (in a dynamic course).

The following **essences of the event of interpersonal communication**⁴² also are actualized in educative communication:

- (i) The **emotional moment**, which is described as the expression of positive and negative feelings (See the relationship of trust--Landman). This includes one's possibility of being able to empathize with another's feelings;
- (ii) the **power [authority] moment**, which is described as the intention of a person to try to draw attention to him/herself, and the intention to control others. (See the pedagogical relationship of authority--Landman);
- (iii) the **flexibility moment** described, as the possibility of actualizing a great variety of activities, feelings and ideas;
- (iv) the moment of **acknowledging the other**, which can be viewed as the fundamental social activity; it is the only complete response to a fellow person's hunger for acknowledgment. This moment is described by Landman as "regard for human dignity";
- (v) the **rational moment**, which is described as the possibility to understand another person, to **empathize** with him/her in his/her life (Relationship of understanding--Landman);
- (vi) the **moment of conversation**: In contrast to the "unidirectional communication" of mass communication, interpersonal human communication means a conversation or a
- (vii) dialogue by which mutual influencing and personal forming occur;
- (viii) the **transfer of values moment**: In communication, not only do the outward activities of concern play a role, but also the inner activities, namely rational and emotional moments. With adequate interpersonal communication, **meaningful interaction** (P. A. Sorokin) occurs, i.e., a transfer of values also occurs. Thus, proper communication is **normative** in nature.

When these essences of communication are actualized inadequately, various **forms of inadequate communication** arise in the educative situation which can work as educative-restraining factors. For example:

Essence	Inadequate actualization⁴³
The emotional moment	negative communication; expression of negative feelings; no empathy re the other's life.
The moment of power	autocratic communication; excessive control and domination; unpedagogic exercise of power; coercive exercise of authority.
The moment of flexibility	inflexible communication; authoritarian, oppressive and harsh behavior.
The moment of acknowledging the other	negative communication; the unique individuality of the other is denied.
The rational moment of communication;	incomprehensible no empathy re the other's life; inadequate understanding.
The moment of encounter	forced communication; those involved are relieved of obligations to each other; contact is stripped of naturalness, spontaneity and optimally being- oneself.
The moment of conversation	one-sided communication; monologue or moral lecturing instead of dialogue.
The moment of transfer of	meaningless communication;

values

values are inadequately transferred or unacceptable values are transferred: in other words, the educative content is inadequate.

Also, compare further:

The moment of intersubjectivity objectifying communication: the other is used only as an object or means to an end: making a child an object or a thing, e.g., driving a child to achieve to nurture one's own ego.

The moment of pedagogic distance communication without distance: the child is excessively bound to the educator. **Or:** it deteriorates into a loathsome familiarity. (Real encounter rests on contact that preserves distance).

In summary, the following four-point scale of possibilities of isolation-communication is proposed:

- (i) **Isolation:** you shut yourself off and lose yourself in your particularity (your own specific concerns) and do not empathize or get into the spirit of the other's world;
- (ii) **Inadequate communication:** for example, negative, autocratic, inflexible, incomprehensible, objectifying, meaningless, distance-less communication;
- (iii) **Adequate communication:** one is **open** to another—he/she can **empathize** with the life of the other. This spiritual universality is the foundation of a person's communicative life. The possibility to **empathize** is a human possibility which is actualized in authentic communication (real interpersonal contact) (Authentic **living together** = **empathy** re another's life);
- (iv) **Intense communication:** intensive influencing and forming of the person of the other and of oneself.

1.6.4 Interaction between educating and society

The educative situation is almost entirely determined by societal influences. Educating has something to do with society on at least two points: the preconditions which must be present in society to give educating any chance of making the aimed for results possible, and the way in which educating can contribute to a better social life in which there is more room for justice and human wellbeing.

Only if society is directed to (is responsible for) educating can educating be directed to (be responsible for) society. In this way, Traas'⁴⁴ pronouncement is a good illustration of the interacting connection between educating and society. Thus, this category has two sides to it, namely, the fact that society influences educating and that educating, in its turn, influences society.

1.6.4.1 Society's influence of education

This has to do with the social-societal influencing (promoting or restraining) of educating. Further on, when society is dealt with from a sociopedagogic perspective, it is seen how society's structure and dynamics can be responsible for many educative problems. However, there also are societal factors which can be educatively promoting; for example, a child will benefit from the fact that he/she finds him/herself in a society which is socio-economically prosperous so that good medical services, adequate housing, a high standard of teaching, recreational facilities, etc. are available.

In his consideration of the theme "the pedagogic responsibility of society", for Perquin⁴⁵ this has to do with the following question: what does the nature of society in its dynamics mean for educating? In answering this question, Perquin arrives at four conclusions:

- (i) Society has responsibility regarding problematic educative situations;
- (ii) Educating always occurs in a particular societal situation. Society must be of such a nature that adequate educating remains possible amidst rapid changes--that it makes educating possible;
- (iii) Sociopedagogic task: The sociopedagogician (educationist) has the task of pointing out unavoidable obligations, and to pass on means which society can use so that no situation is allowed or created which can work as education-impeding.
- (iv) Society must be *bearable* for children and youth.

Gielen⁴⁶ states the implications of societal influence as follows: Educating must take into consideration everything from society which can work as a pedagogical factor.

The following quotations of various authors serve as explications of the ways in which educating is influenced by society:

Van Zyl:⁴⁷ The social structure intervenes in the primary pedagogical situation, the family, and, to a great extent, in school life. Becoming adult is restrained and even obstructed by social phenomena. Thinking through the influences of social change, an investigation of impediments of becoming adult, and a search for ways which counteract pedagogical neglect are part of the terrain of pedagogical thinking. Critiquing the social situation, as a situation which influences the becoming adult of child and youth, is necessary. From the pedagogical, the necessity of viewing social change from pedagogical norms can be shown.

Gresse:⁴⁸ Every society exercises influence on the way and nature of becoming adult and, thus, on educating. The period of becoming adult in our modern society has become a long and drawn-out matter because of the many and complicated “stumbling blocks” which separate childlike existence from being adult (compare the long period of study which a physician, minister, teacher, etc. must cover). Educating is always situation-bound and, consequently, the nature of a macro-situation of educating (the society) will also influence a micro-situation of educating (e.g., the family). Not all societies contribute what they ought to children and youth in their becoming adult.

Hoffman:⁴⁹ Thus, youth do not live in isolation only within the beneficial spheres of influence of the various educative institutions. They are continually confronted in a variety of ways with, and influenced by ways of living and viewing [which often conflict with Christian norms of living]. Modern communication media have invaded the living room of each house and, thus, often liberal, permissive and even revolutionary points of view are conveyed. The alarm is that, in contemporary times, to an increasing degree, there is a vigorous and purposeful attempt made [by advocates of non-Christian directions of thinking] to influence the general public’s and, therefore, especially the impressionable youths’ norm-idea, integrity, loyalty, patriotism, character, idea of moral values, religion, etc., i.e., the entire psyche and personality of youth.

1.6.4.2 *The influence of society by education*

Educating also influences society. That is, the way in which a society's children are educated will codetermine how that society will appear in a few years. The children or youth are not merely engaged in the society; they also are co-formers and co-creators of their environment. Through inadequate educating, a child's participation in society one day will be attenuated, inadequate and even destructive, instead of meaningful and constructive.

For example, inadequate educative communication can mean that the child "one day must enter society as an adult individual for whom communicative possibilities are not actualized optimally and, thus, contributes to making an already communication-less society even more communication-less ... that the educand later, as socially 'untrained' or inadequately socialized, cannot realized a meaningful and mobile participation in society and, thus, contribute to the social lability characteristic of society. In this connection, this raises the following question: how meaningful and mobile will the child's participation in society one day be, and how can he/she help form and create a bearable society if his/her communication potentialities are realized or develop in defective ways, or if he/she even enters society as a communicatively distressed individual?" according to Kirstein.⁵⁰ [In Afrikaans].

Nel⁵¹ points to the power of the influence emanating from an educative situation. He states "that milieu-forming influences can emanate from the educative situation, that is, an influence which brings about change, a revolution, in the social environment. Our conclusion is that milieu-forming ... is one of the most important tasks of educating." [In Afrikaans].

1.6.5 Educating as social-societal orientation

The next two categories describe facets of the event of educating which especially are real to the youth, i.e., social-societal orientation and identity acquisition. In his work *Persoonlikheid in Wording* (Personality in Becoming) (1970), Kohnstamm describes the periods of a child's becoming adult as follows:

- the suckling = vital period
- the toddler = esthetic period

- the school child = intellectual period
- puberty and adolescence = *social* period

According to Kohnstamm, puberty and adolescence open the access to life in the full human community. The period of youth is the final “rush in the stream” in the youth’s socialization and, therefore, the study of the period of youth and of contemporary problems of youth clearly are the function of Sociopedagogics.

According to Perquin⁵², the entrance into society and being accepted by society is of the greatest significance for the development of the young person.

Of the various life periods (child, youth, adult, aged), it is *youth* which is most strongly subjected to societal influence, and which asks the most urgent question: What is my *place* (position) in society?

In the youth period, he/she is an independent participant in society, and the following events regarding him/her are more important than ever:

- choice of social position (social role)
- social emancipation – *becoming independent* and *free*, which are related to becoming adult.
- social exploration – the exploration, trying out and experimenting with social rights, obligations and relationships.
- social evaluating – of self and others in terms of norms and values acquired through social experience.
- social experience – to be adequately socialized to enter adult life.

What then is still expected of the adolescent? He/she is not yet adult because he/she must yet first become a *participant in society* in its full sense. He/she must step out of him/herself to take his/her place among persons, not as a spectator, as curious or as a child, but as a participant. He/she has the task of maintaining him/herself in encountering with others (social). *Thus, he/she must search for his/her own place in society.* The inner development of his/her personality is threatened when he/she does not answer his/her calling (place, position). The adolescent makes new and extremely important discoveries:

- he/she belongs indissolubly with another, that the being-with of persons has sense – it is the birth of *social feelings*;
- the *meaning of religion* and, thus, it seems that he/she has moved beyond the religious individualism of puberty for good. From the experience of human limitedness, insignificance and guilt, his/her concept of the social evolves from his/her religion;
- *love* in its highest form of the wonderfully marvelous hetero-sympathetic understanding (with the related surrender of him/herself);
- labor spiritually, daily life in its modest reality, in its earnestness and costliness. For him/her, it becomes clear how uncertain life is, and anxiety, care and tedium manifest themselves (Perquin).

Educating, among other things, is accompanying the child and youth with this event, i.e., to help him/her to determine his/her own social-societal position to take and maintain a clear place in society. A person (child, youth) must know where he/she stands because adequate intercourse with others is only possible if one knows where one stands (J. H. van den Berg).

Botha⁵³ provides the following profitable explanation of this category: the guiding principle for a child's *orienting or determining his own place* in society are the relatively constant religious norms that are acquired primarily within the family that serve as the point of departure according to which *choices* are made of friends, circles of friends, associations, recreation and types of sports. A child not only chooses but is chosen by others, e.g., he is included in or excluded from a group. However, identification with and participation in a group largely rests on the initiative and choice of the child. The child also can choose against (because of alienation) his own cultural group. Factors that determine the quality of the child's social-societal orientation, among others, are

- (i) the child's given person-structure: the native potentialities of the child (regarding temperament, intelligence, etc.) must be actualized with the help of the educator so that he can become increasingly mobile in society.
- (ii) the quality of educating: how adequately is the child understood and supported in this respect?

- (iii) space and time placed at the child's disposal: opportunity for the child's going out to and exploring social reality, e.g., through play and playmates; adequate time to spontaneously associate with other children and with adults—e.g., the time educators spend with their children.

The youth's social-societal orientation is made difficult and even problematic by three phenomena, namely,

life-in-multiplicity:

In each sector of life social relationships and social patterns differ; this makes it more difficult for a person (youth) to determine his/her own place in society.

social lability:

in this complexity a person no longer knows his/her own social position and that of others; this gives rise to a continually increasing difficult communication among persons in general (also regarding educative communication).

contact inflation:

we know many people; we have many interpersonal contacts, but they are superficial and impersonal and lead to loneliness. We have little authentic, intimate encounters with fellow persons that intensely influence and enrich one's own person and others. The quantity of interpersonal contact thus increases and the quality decreases.

Finally, a quotation from Kirstein⁵⁴ [in Afrikaans] regarding the connection between inadequate educating and the social disorientation of youth:

“Adequate pedagogical communication is a precondition for a child to become increasingly mobile in his/her social relationships. Inadequate pedagogical communication can also mean that the child is confronted in injudicious and uncontrolled ways with matter of fact and impersonal relationships in society.

Autocratic, one sided and inflexible communication by the educators can, e.g., allow youth to grasp at demonstrations as the final and only way to draw the attention of society to the fact that

injustice has been perpetrated on them. Compare the phenomenon of student demonstrations at universities.

Negative and objectifying communication gives rise, e.g., to the child not finding his/her own place in society and consequently the existing established societal order is experienced as meaningless.”

For the child to be able to adequately orient him/herself socially-societally, high demands are placed on the parents; they must *themselves* be oriented to a world which is much broader than the family, and they must have a particularly balanced attitude regarding it.

1.6.6 Educating as accompanying to identity acquisition

This concerns the accompaniment task of the educator in the event of youths’ acquiring their own identity, an event which is only possible via interpersonal communication and identification, and which especially is actualized via pedagogic communication and identification. During puberty a youth is aware of him/herself as a person, and for the first time the following questions become actual for him/her in terms of deeper life questions:

Who am I? (Also, who am I for myself?)

Where do I fit into life?

To where am I on a path?

What is my place among others, and in the complex structure of society?

Is there any sense to world events?

What is the sense and meaning of my personal life?

Getting answers to these questions is closely connected with the acquisition of one’s own identity.⁵⁵

The concepts *identity* and *identification* have common linguistic as well as anthropological roots. Linguistically, both are derived from the Latin word *idem*, which means *the same*. Thus, identity is that “something” in the individual which remains the same owing to a person’s ability to experience him/herself as a continuum. Pedagogically, identification means that the educand will be the same as the educator – “One day I will be a man/woman such as (the same as) my father/mother is.” With the child, the first form of identification is that he/she attaches him/herself to his/her parents

(pedagogic identification). It is one of the most important events in educating the child and in his/her person forming. Indeed, the child cannot adequately realize him/herself without identifying with his/her educators.

Identity is my awareness of myself as a unique and unrepeatable person who remains the same. My identity is the “I”, the “core” of my personality. The child’s and youth’s identity acquisition are a pedagogical-social matter since his/her identity is acquired in communication with fellow persons, and especially with his/her educators, and his/her identity is determined by the extent to which he/she feels him/herself acknowledged *by others* (social). The concept *identity* only has meaning if one is among others because the question “Who am I?” really is “Who am I in the eyes of another?” Thus, a personal identity is unthinkable without fellow humans—it is fed through associating with fellow persons (*pedagogically* and *socially*).

Senekal⁵⁶ states the following as essences of the event of identity acquisition:

- (i) Fundamental trust
- (ii) Communication
- (iii) Identification
- (iv) The creation of a self-image
- (v) Social-societal orientation
- (vi) Meaningfulness of one’s own existence.

These essences are now briefly dealt with in terms of Senekal’s explication:

(i) *Fundamental trust*: Identity is formed within interpersonal relationships in which one bestows fundamental trust on another in life, and this is the fundamental precondition for an undisturbed development of identity. Thus, the path to the self is through fellow persons.

Trust already takes hold in infancy and is determined by the quality of the loving care received. His/her deep sleep, relaxation and first smile are initial demonstrations of social trust, the earliest mutual recognition of the other. The child who experiences trust and security is ready to explore and distance him/herself from his/her parents and, in doing so, find him/herself. This trust also serves as

the basis for identification because a child readily identifies him/herself with the adults in whom he/she has trust.

(ii) *Communication*: It has been stressed that a person only can exist, realize potentialities and acquire his/her own identity in communication with fellow persons. Consequently, authentic communication is a precondition for youth acquiring their own identity—to find him/herself, the child and youth must arrive at an encounter with fellow persons. A youth involved in acquiring an identity shows an intense interest in and seeks intimate communication with the educator (educating as evolving interpersonal communication) because this intimate contact provides

- security
- an opportunity to discover the sense of life—“Youth wants meaning through intimacy with other people.”⁵⁷
- someone who can mean something to him/her
- fulfillment of a person’s basic social need (need for fellow humans).

The connecting line actualized here is: communication → identification → identity. A youth also readily identifies him/herself with the educator with respect to his/her participation in adequate pedagogic communication—he/she cannot identify him/herself with an adult he/she has not learned to know well (via communication).

(iii) *Identification*: The child can only acquire his/her own identity via identification. For example, he/she needs images to which he/she can direct his/her growing up; he/she is in search of norms meaningful to him/her. He/she *will* identify with an adult and choose on his/her own initiative an educator with whom he/she can identify, with whose image of adulthood he/she can *feel* at *one*.

In addition, the child must proceed from person identification to norm identification. For the young child person and norm are a unity, but during puberty he/she distances him/herself from his/her parents, and he/she distinguishes between person and norm. He/she selects acceptable values and norms with which he/she will identify.

Initially, the adult functions as a substitute conscience for the child, later his/her own conscience completely indicates his/her direction based on norm identification.

The child identifies with parents, teachers, etc. and in this respect, the peer group is more important than ever. Seen from a life view, Christ is for the youth the infallible Identification model. A clear image of adulthood contributes to

- the life security of the child
- the ordering of his/her life as a whole
- positive future expectations
- experiencing his/her existence as meaningful.

But if the adult (as identification figure) is invisible, the youth live in a haze (Van den Berg).

Beets⁵⁸ expresses the meaningful connection between identification and identify acquisition as follows:

The search for one's own identity is an attempt to find *your own face* through looking at the faces of others.

(iv) *The creation of a self-image:* In his/her awakening self-consciousness, the child in puberty forms a *future or ideal self-image* (an image of the person he/she will be one day), and a *present or real image* (an image of the person he/she is now). As far as this is concerned, he/she is involved in a no-man's-land and, therefore, adulthood seems attractive. Through identification, he/she designs the image of the person who one day he/she gladly will be. There must be a synthesis of the present and ideal self-image. In puberty, the present self-image naturally is not stable.

One's own *name* is of special importance here: this provides awareness of a distinct individuality; it is the anchor of self-identity; for the person it is warm and central; it is the symbol of his/her total being-there (Dasein).

Other factors which play a role in forming a self-image are: comparisons with others, self-knowledge, self-confidence, self-esteem, academic achievement, athletic achievement, physical appearance and emotional stability/lability. Norms and demands which are not met can lead to feelings of inferiority. But the *eyes of*

others are the most important—the self-image develops out of interpersonal communication (compare the influence of recognition, appreciation and denunciation—“making or breaking people”).

The youth *must* have an ideal self-image to give direction to his/her life.

(v) *Social-societal orientation*: The youth’s social-societal orientation and identity acquisition are inseparable events because, for the latter event it is important for him/her to acquire clarity about his/her own, unique position with respect to fellow persons and in society. He/she searches for self-affirmation and questions such as the following are of importance: Do I have a specific contribution to make in society? Does society have a need for me? What is my place? Where do I fit in? (Also see 1.6.5)

(vi) *Meaningfulness of one’s own existence*: The youth (puber) searches for the sense of world events and the meaning of his/her own existence. He/she searches for the essential, for what gives life its highest meaning so they can serve as beacons and limits for his/her own way of living, and as certainties and standpoints for self-discovery, disclosing meaning and disclosing aims in his/her life.⁵⁹ He/she often experiences conflicting values and this can have an overpowering effect and lead to loneliness.

Now a youth discovers him/herself as *fact* and *norm*; he/she exercises *freedom of choice* and enters the domain of personal responsibility, obedience to his/her own conscience, and the fulfillment of his/her own calling. *Responsibility* is the central concept in acquiring one’s own identity, and a *search for the sense of life* is the central task. The sense of his/her own life for him is found in the acceptance of responsibility and in the task-character of his/her own existence, which are inseparably bound with fellow persons. [Also, the youth must see the Authority which has given him/her his/her task (the Great Task-giver), and his/her relationship to God gives a deeper meaning to his/her life].

The accompanying task of the educator with respect to the youth acquiring an identity is summarized as follows:

- conveying norms and values;
- making the child aware of being addressed as a person;
- conscience forming;

- forming responsibility;
- help with accepting independence and acquiring freedom;
- help with interpreting the sense of world events and also the meaning of his/her own life;
- the significance of religious education in this connection can be difficult to over-rate.⁶⁰

In addition to acquiring *personal identity* via identification, *group identity* or cultural identity must also be distinguished. The child quickly learns if the cultural group within which he/she finds him/herself is also the one in which he/she feels at home. Cultural identity is acquired via identification with parents, peer groups, youth associations, athletic teams, etc. If identification with parents miscarries, it also is possible that the child or youth can identify with groups in opposition to the cultural group to which his/her educators belong, according to Botha.⁶¹

The realization, in the various forms of living together, of the sociopedagogic essences described above are schematically presented as follows:

FORMS OF LIVING TOGETHER

Essence 1. Educating *in* society

Family (primary): educating in the family as a form of living together; structure of the family; dynamic of family life.

School (bridge): educating/teaching in the school as a form of living together; structure of the school; dynamic of school life.

Society: educating in society as a form of living together; structure of society; dynamic of societal life.

Essence 2. Educating *to* society

Family (primary): the socializing task of the family.

School (bridge): the socialization task of the school.

Society: the socialization task of society.

Essence 3. Educating *as* an evolving interpersonal communication

Family (primary): Family interaction. Communication in the family. Interpersonal relationships in the family structure.

School (bridge): School group interaction. Communication in the school. Interpersonal relationships in the school structure.

Society: Societal group(s). Communication in society. Interpersonal relationships within the structure of society.

Essence 4. Interaction between educating and Society

Family (primary): Interaction between educating and family life.

School (bridge): interaction between educating and school life.

Society: interaction between educating and society.

Essence 5. Educating as social-societal orientation

Family (primary): social-societal orientation of the child in the family.

School (bridge): social-societal orientation of the child In the school.

Society: social-societal orientation of the child in society.

Essence 6. Educating as guiding to identity acquisition

Family (primary): identity acquisition in the family.

School (bridge): identity acquisition in the school.

Society: identity acquisition in society.

1.7 Interdisciplinary communication of sociopedagogics with contemporary sociology and social psychology

1.7.1 Introduction

The present section considers three *social sciences* involved with the living and experiencing person. From the present perspective, sociology and social psychology are viewed as auxiliary sciences of pedagogics.

The aim of this section is three-fold: First, the author briefly *describes* the three sciences of concern. From the descriptions of the areas of study of sociology and social psychology there is a preliminary indication of how these two sciences refer to sociopedagogics, and what interdisciplinary communication among them can mean. Second, the *significance* of communication with contemporary sociology and social psychology is explained. Third, several preconditions for this communication to occur are stated.

1.7.2 Sociopedagogics

Two of the more acceptable descriptions of sociopedagogics are the following:

Gielen:⁶² the essence and scope of the pedagogic-social.

Both:⁶³ the social life of the child-in-education.

Against the framework of the following description, these definitions are extremely meaningful: fundamental pedagogics is concerned with the pedagogic life of the child-in-education; in didactic pedagogics the focus is on the didactic (teaching-learning-educative) life of the child-in-education; in psychopedagogics it is the psychic life of the child-in-education; etc.

However, the author prefers to describe the function of sociopedagogics as the study of the *connection between educating and society* (with the phenomenon of educating as the point of departure and focal point). This agrees with the view of Viljoen,⁶⁴ who views *educating in a social connection* as the object of scientific penetration of sociopedagogics. Also, for Du Plessis,⁶⁵ the concept sociopedagogics refers to a bipolarity in its function and involves the connection between the reality of educating and the social reality, with the first-mentioned as the point of departure.

The significance of the concepts *socio* and *(the) social* already give an indication of how strong the phenomenon society and social science arises with respect to the sociopedagogic. (See 1.3)

1.7.3 Sociology

Sociology is the science of social reality; it is the science which studies the factual relationships in society; it is the science of societal phenomena.

Sociology studies the forming, characteristics and functions of various forms of living together (society): it is involved with social development and with the laws explaining it, with the systematic description and interpretation of present-day social facts, with the nature and scope of the influence the milieu exercises on the individual and with the individual's influence on the milieu.⁶⁶

1.7.4 Social Psychology

This is the science of the behaviors and experiences of the individual as a member of the society which a person will understand in his/her communication with fellow persons. Among other things, it investigates the question: What psychological powers are activated or paralyzed by particular social requirements? It will explicate the psychic life of a person within the different forms of human society.

The field of study of social psychology also can be described as follows: human society as effect of psychological conditions and as the condition of psychological effects (Beck).

1.7.5 Significance of interdisciplinary communication with sociology

The sociologist attempts to make him/herself and others sensitive to the importance of the social aspect of the human situation and to continually realize anew a more nuanced vision of the various societal questions. Thus, a sociopedagogic perspective also implies a directedness to the social-societal life of the child and a nuanced perspective on society and its problems without which an adequate penetration of the connection between educating and society would not be possible. Pronouncements of a few authors ought to suffice to elucidate the necessity of communicating with contemporary Sociology and of the value and significance of sociological facts, pronouncements, and findings for sociopedagogics.

De Heij:⁶⁷ Educating to society (sociopedgogic essence—JWMP) is only possible when a pedagogue has a differentiated insight into the various societal connections within which a child finds him/herself or is yet to find him/herself.

Therefore, he/she must have close contact with sociology and social psychology without allowing these sciences to determine him/her (Note the preconditions stated in 1.7.7).

Each society leaves its impression on the phenomenon of educating, and to the extent that societies differ with respect to culture and time, the concretely appearing forms of educating will differ.⁶⁸

Changes in society influence the development of youths to adulthood and, thus, also the phenomenon of educating. Becoming adult lasts much longer in our society and adolescence is an extremely drawn-out period. Society continually places more hindrances between childlike existence and adulthood, and adulthood continually becomes more complicated (multi-formed and multivalent). According to De Heij,⁶⁹ the distance between youth and adulthood is becoming continually greater.

Gielen:⁷⁰ For studying the social and societal aspects of the pedagogical, sociology and social psychology are the most important auxiliary sciences. Sociology can sometimes make important and even essential contributions to the science of pedagogics and to practice. "Socialization" of a person, however, can never be education and, therefore, one can never derive educating and pedagogics from purely sociological facts because these facts, in themselves, are an incomplete view of the total person, which pedagogics *must* have. In addition, these facts only have value for pedagogics if they have pedagogical significance and aims. Sociological knowledge is not identical to knowledge of humans. Sociology, moreover, studies the pedagogical phenomenon as *social fact*.

Perquin:⁷¹ To talk about education has little sense if one does not know the concrete societal situation and take it seriously into account. Sociology has a relativizing function which is valuable for pedagogics. It confronts pedagogics, as a dynamic normative science, with the relativity of apparent certainties. For example, it relativizes the apparent absolute validity of value systems. In addition, e.g., sociology studies the problem of change and the fact that a quickly changing society plays an important role in sociopedagogic thinking. Also, sociopedagogics must give full attention to the complementary function of sociology. Sociology is attentive to all matters regarding society and the pedagogician can refer to aspects which perhaps should not be distinguished.

Knowledge of society is important for pedagogics. For example, a pedagogue cannot only benefit from what the psychologist imparts to him/her for an adequate school education; he/she must also listen to what the sociologist learns about what society demands. According to Perquin⁷² pedagogics is thankfully beholden to sociology for a deeper insight into the social structure, into its development and its consequences. However, one who defines the

function of sociopedagogics as the study of social life of the child-in-education; and the connection between educating and society; educating in a social connection, such a definition implies relationships between pedagogical and social reality and, therefore, refers to society as social life and social reality in their different forms. Pedagogic reality is always also social reality and to be able to grasp the total educative situation as completely as possible, knowledge of society is necessary. Thus, a science of educating is not possible without a science of society (i.e., sociology).

All the things, actualities, and persons (e.g., educators and age mates) which have pedagogical significance in the life of the child, are part of social reality. The total educative situation of a child cannot be imagined apart from its social distinctness. Educator and educand give sense and meaning in terms of socially acquired norms and values. Both are influenced socially in their outer and even in their most inner behaviors. For example, the family is situated within a narrower as well as wider social context and is socially determined in its pedagogical significance for the child and youth. Nuanced social factors exercise an influence on the structure and dynamics of family life. In family life pedagogical norms are strongly directed to (the) society. Educating influences social life and is determined by social life (see the interacting connection between educating and society). Therefore, the reality of educating cannot be adequately understood without knowledge of social reality and a study of the connection between the two is a necessity.

Sociology can help the pedagogician to penetrate the pedagogical situation in all its facets and to fathom the pedagogical significance of the total situation. The primary question which the sociopedagogue must ask in this connection is: What do the sociological data and the social situation of the child mean for educating him to adulthood? Dealing with this question is (socio) pedagogical activity.

Sociology, e.g., compels the pedagogue to think about the practical feasibility of pedagogical ideals in concrete social circumstances.

Further, reference is made to the many points of contact which, understandably, exist between sociopedagogics and the sociology of families and of youth.

1.7.6 Significance of interdisciplinary communication with Social Psychology

If the sociopedagogue will penetrate the experiences and the behaviors of the child as a member of society and if, he/she will understand him/her in his/her communication with fellow persons, a dialogue with social psychology is necessary. In this connection is the following explanation of Perquin:⁷³ Educating is realized in a social situation (class group, community, milieu) and, thereby, social-pedagogic structure-elements arise such as cooperating, sharing work, guiding, following, helping, etc. The class, as a didactic-pedagogic situation, is also a social situation, and the pedagogue must understand the significance of the social situation for his/her educative work. Understanding the social situation can come from social psychology, and the pedagogue must avail him/herself of each accountable contribution. The modern pedagogue cannot see the child-in-education as other than a social being. He/she cannot exist without being a participant in society, he/she breaths in it, is formed in and through it. He/she can take a position (experience) against it, but he/she cannot leave it.

Especially with respect to realizing the sociopedagogic essence of *educating as an evolving interpersonal communication (participating in pedagogic one-ness—Botha)*, a meaningful and fruitful communication with contemporary social psychology can occur. Formal teaching, e.g., is realized in an organized social milieu, mainly as an event of interpersonal communication, as educative communication. Factors such as organizational structure and social climate of the school, norms in the classroom, communicated expectations and aims, the influence of educators and age mates, cooperating, competing, conflict, authority, etc. influence the achievement and behavior of the pupil in the classroom.

According to Johnson⁷⁴, “Social psychology has two contributions to make to education. First, the body of knowledge contained in social psychology provides insights into educational processes which, if applied, will increase the effectiveness of educational organizations. Second, the methodology of the scientific method as it is used in social psychology provides educators with a problem-solving method which, combined with social psychological knowledge, will enable them to diagnose problems in educational organizations more accurately and initiate more effective solutions.” [In English].

1.7.7 Preconditions for interdisciplinary communication with Sociology and Social Psychology

From what follows, the primary preconditions for communication are the avoidance of -isms which threaten pedagogics as an autonomous science by which the identity of the science of educating then can become difficult to recognize.

(i) *Pedagogism*

It is possible that the pedagogician advocates a pedagogistic attitude in communicating with other sciences. Pedagogism means that the pedagogician, for some reason, refuses to engage in a conversation with other sciences, or that he/she has the view that only pedagogics can make scientific pronouncements about educating. Also, the pedagogue who so absolutizes the phenomenon of educating and his/her own science is guilty of overlooking social, psychic or other sub-phenomena, and also practices pedagogism. Most certainly, the sociologist and social psychologist can make valid pronouncements from their investigations about the phenomenon of educating. Compare, once again, the sociology of the family and of youth. The pedagogician has the task of accurately verifying whether these pronouncements are pedagogically correct, and to provide an accurate interpretation of, e.g., social and psychic sub-phenomena regarding their pedagogical significance; it is only from the pedagogical meaning of these sub-phenomena that their value for educating is derived.

Finally, pedagogism can also mean that in conversing, the pedagogician would promote the omnipotence of pedagogics.

(ii) *Sociologism*

One must guard against practicing sociopedagogics as an “applied” sociology or sociology of education similar to the typical Anglo-American “Sociology of Education”, where sociological insights are merely applied to educating, and how the practice of educating ought to appear is prescribed to pedagogics and by which the autonomy of pedagogics and the independence of sociopedagogics are interfered with.⁷⁵ Also, sociology should not be guilty of a subject matter imperialism (Gielen) in which everything about a person is considered to be a social matter.

The structure of the pedagogical phenomenon is disturbed if the social sub-phenomenon is given a disproportionate or exclusive role or too much value, according to Gielen.⁷⁶ Compare: Auguste Comte who sees conscience is merely the product of society; Emile Durkheim who sees nothing more in educating than the “influence” of the parents on the younger generation”; Herbert Spencer, who says that what is worth knowing is determined only by the needs of society; Dewey, who characterizes the school only as “an embryonic society”.⁷⁷

Gielen⁷⁹ compares sociology and pedagogics as follows: sociology will give as accurate a report as possible of the social and societal reality, of the ways in which persons exist “socially”. Pedagogics, however, will be something else: the *total person* must be supported to adulthood—as an individual, moral, social, physical, esthetic, religious being.

Durkheim’s⁷⁹ sociological perspective and definition of education serve as an additional interesting explanation in this connection. His view that sociology must present the norms for educating is evidence of a serious one-sidedness as, for example, in pronouncements such as: Sociology determines the aims of educating, as well as the teaching means and methods. Society is the source of all pedagogic life, and it is the needs of society which must be learned and presented. Durkheim⁸⁰ explains, e.g.: “I regard as the prime postulate of all pedagogical speculation that education is an eminently social thing in its origins as in its functions, and that, therefore, pedagogy depends on sociology more closely than on any other science ... It is always to the study of society, then, that we must return: it is only there that the pedagogue can find the principles of his speculation.”

Durkheim⁸¹ weighs the significance of psychology and sociology for pedagogics against each other. According to him, people like Kant, Mill, Herbart and Spencer view educating as an individual matter and have made pedagogics a part or branch of psychology. They disregarded the circumstances of time and place and of the social milieu and for them, as pedagogicians, psychology (as the science of the individual) was sufficient.

Psychology is an inadequate source for the pedagogician. It does not give an indication of the aim which the educator must strive for.

Sociology does this well (forming a person as a *social being* is the aim of educating). According to Durkheim, society (and, thus, sociology) sets the guidelines for what the individual must realize through education.

(iii) *Social psychologism*

This also means that the sociopedagogician cannot be guilty of allowing him/herself to merely submit to absolutes, applications and prescriptions from social psychology. (See below).

(iv) *Sociologism*

When it is stated that these isms must be avoided in communicating with other sciences, this can mean:

- the social aspect of the pedagogical must not be viewed as isolated;
- the social aspect of the pedagogical and the social situation of the child must not be absolutized, e.g., at the cost of the individual and the individual situation. The social is merely one facet of being human, however much it also is an essence of being human. If we should absolutize the social aspect of the pedagogical, (socio)pedagogics can only be an applied area of sociology and of social psychology. Irrespective of how important the social is as help for pedagogics, it still is not pedagogics;
- that the social must not be stated as the only educative aim;
- that socialism, as a political-ideological system, might not be valid for a particular society. It is system-thinking, which can be catastrophic for educating; compare the educative aims of Nazism, Fascism and Communism.⁸² This means an absolutizing of state-directed educating, and a misunderstanding of individuality.⁸³

(v) *Naturalism*

In interdisciplinary communication, the pedagogician must not fall into an unacceptable image of being human such as, e.g., naturalism, which views being human as nothing more than a being of nature, merely a chain in a cosmic and biological evolution, as an “element” of “social processes” and as a psychophysical organism (closed image of being human).

(vi) *Area of application*

There has been reference to the precondition, which in its conversation with other sciences, sociopedagogics should not take the position of being an applied area by which it, its autonomy and its point of departure would be abandoned. According to Viljoen⁸⁴, “Sociopedagogics, as an accountable *pedagogics*, however, only can settle in if it takes an *accountable* or *justifiable* point of departure. This point of departure for pedagogics and, thus, for any pedagogical part-perspective, can be nothing other than *educating*. *Educating, in its social connection*, is the object of scientific penetration. With this, a social pedagogics which is nothing more than a sociological-psychological-philosophical ecleticism is brought to an end”.

“Pedagogic sociology ... at the very least is pedagogics, it still is and remains sociology ... i.e., sociological data are applied to the area of educating.” (Nel⁸⁵)

Perquin⁸⁶ warns that sociopedagogics is neither applied sociology nor social psychology. There are reasons to be thankful for these two sciences in that they want to work toward a common end: however, sociopedagogics cannot leave it to these sciences to do its own work. It must address its problematics in terms of its own questions. If this occurs, the pedagogician will become aware that the sociologist, social psychologist and the sociopedagogician must speak in a cognate, but not in the same language.

(vii) *The normative character of pedagogics*

Pedagogics is a normative science, and in the conversation, its normative (and also its pedagogic-normative) character must not be abandoned.

Sociology and social psychology do not express any value judgments, and do not present any norms—they only describe the factual relationships in human society and in no respect come under the authority of pedagogical norms.

De Heij's⁸⁷ view in this connection is as follows:

Educating always has its own norm: growing up to adulthood. The danger is that the demands of the norms society presents for educating can be labile and changeable, and sometimes even anti-pedagogical.

In this connection, Van Zyl⁸⁸ remarks: “The danger is that pedagogics can give in to sociology to such an extent that educating becomes so threatened by (reducing it to) socialization that it loses its true character as a *moral* intervention by an adult which is directed to a willing- and valuing-life (the moral life) of the educand.” [In Afrikaans].

Perquin:⁸⁹ Sociology does not govern pedagogics, and when this does occur, this is not sufficiently accountable since sociology describes the facts and cannot be normative for educating. It has no right to set an aim for pedagogics; it can only provide information about factual situations so that pedagogics can take them into consideration.

(viii) *Terminology*

It was indicated that the three sciences in question must speak in a cognate language, and an important precondition for an adequate and meaningful interdisciplinary communication is that the concepts of the three sciences must connect with each other so that the conversation or communication does not deteriorate into lack of communication.

(ix) *Causalism* (the ideology that everything has a cause—GY)

When Sociopedagogics, in its attempt to penetrate and describe the connection between educating and society, enters a conversation with sociology and social psychology, the result of this should not fall into establishing causal relationships, and, e.g., accept causal social and psychic lawfulness regarding “cause” and “effect” about the connection between educating and society. Within educating and society, as well as between them, there is a dynamic reciprocal interaction of each influencing social and pedagogic factor (factually operating powers). Also, one must guard against absolutizing and generalizing the validity of relationships.

(x) *Verification*

By the investigation and testing of pronouncements and findings, sociopedagogics must continually provide accurate [pedagogic] interpretations of social and psychic sub-phenomena regarding the pedagogical aims.

Sociological and social-psychological conclusions, pronouncements and findings cannot merely be used in sociopedagogics. Each human science has a different perspective, approach and aim for studying the human being. This requires critical investigation and relativizing conclusions with respect to communicating with the other two social sciences. From fundamental pedagogical insights (sociopedagogical insights also are fundamental pedagogical insights [--from different perspectives—G.Y.]) evaluated regarding if and to what extent sociological and social psychological conclusions are adaptable for educative use. Attaining the educative aim must be justified by the pedagogician him/herself. From his/her own perspective he/she must provide guidelines in terms of pedagogical values and norms, among others.

Perquin⁹⁰ indicates an important point of difference between pedagogical and sociological thinking: [they] agree about the aim of educating, namely, adulthood. The sociologist, e.g., would view the period of youth as a stage between child-being and adulthood (compare Hollinghead, Schelsky, Van Hessen). For the pedagogician, this is not adequate. He/she seeks the *relevance of the period of youth* for becoming adult. He/she has need of a much more differentiated insight to be able to see the significance of youthful becoming a person in a pedagogical perspective. He/she must know what forms of educating in this period offer possibilities for a full-fledged future adulthood.

1.7.8 Synthesis

Our modern society is extremely complicated and quickly changing, and it requires a particular education to link up with it. The sociologist Ernst Zahn correctly views sociopedagogics as the most important science of the future.⁹¹

Amidst radical social renovation, sociopedagogics has taken on a difficult responsibility regarding educating and society. Interdisciplinary communication with contemporary sociology and social psychology can facilitate and allow the results of this to progress more effectively. Therefore, the above conversation is

necessary, and it can be meaningful and fruitful provided that the precondition is met that -isms are avoided, and that sociopedagogics does not abandon its independence, point of departure and normative character.

1.7.8 The sociopedagogical question

From a sociopedagogic perspective, *educating* must be viewed as the phenomenon and *society* as the sub-phenomenon. Thus, the sociopedagogical question is: what is the pedagogical significance of the social sub-phenomena; i.e., what do the social phenomena mean for a child's and youth's educating and becoming to adulthood? What is the pedagogical meaning of *the social* with respect to pedagogical relevance, pedagogical aims, pedagogical norms and pedagogical questions? In other words: what is the educative significance of society and of societal factors (= factually operating social forces).

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