

## CHAPTER 9 THE PEDAGOGICAL (EDUCATIVE) MEANING OF THE SCHOOL

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the first eight chapters of this introductory book, various theoretical aspects of the didactic activity and the way theory culminates in practice are dealt with. Thus, from a justification of the point of departure of didactic activity to a description of its essences, there is a move to practical examples of how a teacher can structure his/her lesson in a teaching situation. The emphasis is especially on an analysis of the phenomenon “teaching” as it is observed in the original experience of educating, and on the moments disclosed by this analysis which enable a teacher to account for and explain his/her practice in a lesson situation. In these considerations, the school is mentioned only casually and it is stressed that it is a second-order structure in that it reconstructs, in formal situations, the original experience of educating (in the home) where teaching is known for the first time.

Because the school is the terrain for a future teacher’s professional activities and because, in modern society, it stabilizes and perpetuates the culture and everything created by culture, it must be examined as a social institution. The school can be described from various perspectives, e.g., from an economic, a judicial, a cultural, a purely social perspective, etc. It also can be described in such a way that it appears as if the school has its own identity and sovereignty in that it, by virtue of its structure, has its own professional-pedagogical task which has little to do with the home.

However, when a community establishes a school, it is certainly reasonable to expect that it will have certain aims and goals it would like the school to achieve. Clearly, the community expects the school to further, promote and actualize (make real) what it considers to be valuable. This pronouncement is valid for any institution the community establishes, but it is incorrect to assume

that all social institutions have equal status or pursue the same aims.

The question which now must be asked is: What is it that makes the school an institution of society? Expressed differently: If the school, as a second-order structure, must reflect the original experience of educating, what is it that constitutes its pedagogical (educative) meaning? To penetrate this question to its essential coherence, it is necessary to disclose the structure of the school and its relationship to society as well as to the pedagogical, as such.

## **2. THE CONCEPT "SCHOOL"**

Etymologically, "school" is derived from the Latin "schola" meaning a "scholarly investigation" of a particular phenomenon. The Greek "schole" means "free time" which is not reducible to a person's material existence, but is used to indicate a striving for knowledge merely for the sake of knowledge itself. The institution "school", as we know it today, is derived from the Greek concept "schole", implying that a science is studied in free time for the sake of knowledge itself and not for the sake of some material benefit.

The current situation really is quite different from the original because both the science studied and the didactic profession in school are involved with a world of work and effort. In this sense, the school has become a social and economic means: one need only list the various types of schools such as vocational, business, subject and technical schools. The nature of the various types of schooling reflects the state and degree of a community's social differentiation. To the extent that a community develops and grows and, in doing so, makes new fields of human endeavor necessary, to that extent the community creates differentiations in types of schooling. For this reason, there is a direct relationship between the differentiation of types of schooling and the differentiation of labor in a particular community.

## **3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL**

That the modern school is clearly related to the cultural, economic, religious and social activities of a community leads to the

acceptance in certain circles that it has its origin in and can be described in terms of one or more of these differentiated activities. For example, if one accepts that the school has its origin in the differentiated occupational structure of society, this implies that if it is not oriented to or concerned with certain occupational fields, it will not have the status of a school. Such an assumption means that only one of the school's aims (i.e., to unlock reality in such a way that a child can create an accountable and responsible relationship to occupational reality) is elevated to ontic status. This means that the school is reduced to nothing more than its aim of orienting the child to occupational reality. The ontic status of the school is in the home, and in its turn, the home is integrated into the lifeworld.

The essential character of the relationship between parents and children in the home is pedagogical-didactical in that the parents intervene pedagogically in the life of their children so that they can didactically unlock or disclose specific values and norms while what they teach them (their didactic intervention) is pedagogically meaningful and accountable. (For a full discussion of this interaction, the reader is advised to read again carefully Chapter 2). It is within the framework of the pedagogic-didactic intervention of the parents in the home which the school can be accountable for its structure and teaching contents and, thus, in this respect, the school is an extension of the home.

The spontaneous and naïve lifeworld of parents and children at home must, therefore, be investigated to disclose the essences (meanings) of this pedagogic-didactic relationship. This investigation is the theme of Chapter 3 and, although certain aspects of it are repeated in what follows, a summary is important because it can better orient the reader to the matter of schooling.

The lifeworld of parents and children in the home is spontaneous in that a child spontaneously establishes a relationship with reality, i.e., a child experiences reality spontaneously (from a didactic perspective this means he/she learns spontaneously). His/her spontaneous learning directedness to reality awakens his/her parents' responsibility to create spontaneous learning situations for him/her because reality is not harmless for him/her. Thus, spontaneity is the primary characteristic of the parent-child

relationship as seen from a didactic-pedagogic perspective of the home situation. This relationship is also naïve in that, although the parent carries the responsibility for the learning situation which he spontaneously establishes, he/she does not necessarily have at his/her disposal systematic didactic knowledge about what he/she is doing.

The contents of these spontaneous learning situations change according to milieu, cultural background and cultural heritage. For this reason, these contents are particular. The form in which the didactic-pedagogic relationship appears is described as a didactic-pedagogic universal. In the description of this form, it is indicated that the didactical-pedagogical can never be realized outside of its universal form. The form in which the didactic is realized is differentiated into play, conversation, example and assignment.

The spontaneous creation of learning situations by a parent, as his/her teaching activities are correlated with his/her child's spontaneous learning activities, is realized in one or another (or combination) of these four ground-forms. These ground-forms are not purely didactic but are also ground-forms in which the pedagogical is actualized; no pedagogic intervention in a child's world-relationship is possible without an adult unlocking values and norms, and such unlocking is essentially a didactic activity.

The grounds for understanding the school must be penetrated to eventually grasp the pedagogical (educative) meaning of the school. The parent not only unlocks cultural contents, e.g., activity structures [behaviors], skills, facts, relationships, etc., but also norms, values, attitudes, dispositions, etc. He/she does this under the imperative (demand) of adulthood. A parent must orient his/her child didactically and pedagogically to reality because his/her relationship to it must change. As a parent unlocks the modes of living for his/her child, a common world ("Mitwelt") is created in which the child experiences acceptance, love, safety and security. These are the foundations on which he/she can build his/her own lifeworld ("Eigenwelt").

A parent and child are jointly involved in the latter's becoming. The parent creates opportunities for his/her child to explore reality.

In doing so, he/she enables him/her to eventually emancipate him/herself from his/her parental authority and accept responsibility for his/her own relationship to reality. By means of his/her didactic and pedagogic help, a parent accompanies or guides his/her child to eventual adulthood, the ultimate aim of his/her intervention in his/her child's existence. A parent (educator) guides his/her child in such a way that he/she eventually understands the meaning of his/her own existence; that he/she will be able to understand him/herself and, therefore, also be able to evaluate and criticize him/herself; that he/she is aware of his/her own human worth as well as the dignity of others; that he/she is capable of making independent, moral decisions; that he/she is responsible; that he/she identifies him/herself with the valid norms and values of the society within which he/she lives, and applies them in his/her relationships to reality as criteria for understanding and assessing his/her own existence.

In summary, the pedagogic-didactic intervention in a child's existence is directed to his/her becoming toward the idea of adulthood, or to realize or reach the world of adulthood in relation to reality. A child has his/her own destination; it is described as adulthood, as a mode or way of being-in-the-world.

#### **4. THE FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ADULT AND THE CHILD IN THE PEDAGOGIC-DIDACTIC SITUATION AND ITS NATURE**

In the previous section, the form and aims of the pedagogic-didactic intervention are briefly discussed. The question now is: What is the fundamental relationship between adult and child in the pedagogic-didactic situation, and what is its nature? An answer to this question will also provide the criteria by which the school can be evaluated as a pedagogical institution. In other words, the school must reflect the fundamentals of the relationship between the adult and the child in the pedagogical-didactical situation to have any kind of pedagogical (educative) meaning. A summary of the relevant pronouncements about the pedagogical-didactical discussed in the previous chapters can orient the reader to better understand the pedagogical meaning of the school.

When an adult and a child are together in a pedagogical-didactical situation, it is a normative situation in that the contents unlocked must be accountable to the demands of propriety. It also is normative because the achievements of the child are always subjected to the values and norms relevant to his/her progress. The situation is embedded in the lifeworld because the contents presented in the pedagogical-didactical situation are contents of living, and the forms in which they are unlocked are forms of living.

In addition, the situation is invested with meaning. It is meaningful for parents to lead their child to adulthood, and it is meaningful for him/her to subject him/herself to their support and guidance. The parent knows the importance and meaning of the situation and, therefore, he/she leads his/her child to experience and understand this meaning for him/herself. Because the pedagogic-didactic situation is a normative one, it also is a situation of authority-- by virtue of the authority of the norms and values underlying the meaning of the situation, and by virtue of the authority of the parent (adult)--one of the criteria of being an adult.

The activities in the pedagogical-didactical situation are characterized by communication – the parent communicates reality to his/her child, and he/she ventures in their dialogue; with parental guidance, he/she communicates with reality. Because, in time, he/she approaches the adult's quality of communicating with reality, there is a qualitative and gradual [decrease in the] difference between adult and child [in the direction of] that [which] is represented by a parent's accountable and responsible [adult] relationship to reality.

Furthermore, it is a formative and orienting situation. It is formative because the parent gives form to the necessary changes in his/her child's relationship to reality. It is orienting because the parent orients his/her child in the light of the child's existing relationship to the world or reality, to a relationship which still must be assimilated.

The nature of the communication indicates that it also is open and dynamic. It is open because both parent and child initiate a relationship to reality in terms of the appeal it directs to them, and

it is dynamic because it is always in motion--the child is moving in the direction of adulthood.

The quality and nature of the relationship between adult and child characterize the situation as a unity because both are involved in and with each other. It also is rational because, in their united situation, they are involved with reality. Parent and child encounter each other in the world, and this encounter can periodically become a pedagogic encounter in the narrower sense. The preconditions for the possibility of a pedagogical-didactical situation are, first, that it must be an existential situation. The participants, as subjects, persons and openness, are ontically dependent on each other (this mutual dependence cannot be reduced to anything else), and the one stands open for the other where there is thus mention of each going outside of him/herself, as one standing open for the other, of a meaningful encounter aimed at realizing a common future. The human situation is always subjective, personal, interpersonal and ethical. As an existential situation, it is characterized by informality where even its formal aspects are not dominant (but it is dynamic and goal-directed). The situation is further characterized by its purposefulness and by experiencing and fulfilling its (pedagogical) meaning. Experiencing and fulfilling meaning indicate that it is an active situation in which the participants require particular activities of each other in the light of which particular criteria are realized in accordance with aims.

The situation is designed by both parent and child to be meaningful. In this mutual design, it is characterized by a plurality of meanings simply because human existence is multi-formed and heterogeneous. Regarding materials, the situation is oriented in time and space. It occurs in terms of a child's possibility to create a different relationship with reality, and in the light of the particular situation, also with respect to the participants' composition, which can change.

Because parent and child are subjectively involved with each other in the pedagogical-didactical situation, it is characterized by fundamental dispositions which affectively (emotionally) influence the participants' experiences. In the situation, the child is provided

with a safe, affective haven and, in this way, he/she is given a safe place.

Finally, each person involved in the situation constitutes him/herself as an individual, as do the other participants in their joint involvement.

The fundamental relationship between parents and children, and the nature of the educative teaching intervention in the home, as discussed earlier, is the point of departure from which the school, in its relationship to society, must be penetrated and described, because, as a social institution, it is merely an extension of the home where the original experience of “*didaskhein*” (teaching) is most clearly knowable. Because the school is an extension of the pedagogical-didactical situation of the home, and carries on, refines and further extends the aim of such intervention, it is a means for the child to create his/her own lifeworld.

This creation of a personal lifeworld is only meaningful by virtue of norms and values, and that is why the school is norm centered. Thus, the school is not only directed to a child’s intellect; it must generalize normative knowledge and normalize universal knowledge and, in this way, humanize it.

Above there is reference to the home-school relationship and it is indicated that the school must manifest the pedagogical-didactical categories which constitute the pedagogical-didactical relationship at home. This implies that if the school does not manifest these categories in its activities, it cannot function as a “school”; then it cannot have a pedagogical meaning. Over and above the fact that the school is a second-order structure which has its origin in the differentiated nature of society, the community makes an additional demand on the school: it must be relevant to the community within which the child exists and is going to exist. This implies that the school must unlock concepts which are relevant and realistic, in the sense that they must be true and faithful to life.

Any interpretation of what is relevant and true to life in this context is a matter of contents. The school unlocks these contents in terms of the following demands: they must be true in the light of the spirit



of the age and state of the culture; they must consider the child's situatedness; they must reflect the moral order of society and keep the future mobility of the child in the lifeworld in mind.

This implies that the lifestyle anticipated for the child in the future (i.e., as an adult), and the teaching style created by adults in the school must basically be in harmony. The lifestyle at which the child is aimed indicates a social situation which can be contextually extended or enlarged with respect to both form and contents in the pedagogic-didactic activities of the school. Therefore, it is possible that either the form or the contents can be overemphasized. The predominant factors exerting a strong influence on a community will necessarily influence which is emphasized. For example, in our contemporary technological-materialistic society, the natural sciences and their technologies are prominent. Therefore, these contents are given more emphasis and why, in our schools there is an emphasis on technical-didactical aids.

If pedagogic-didactic activities in the school are foreign to the demands of modern life, they cannot meaningfully contribute to the modern lifestyle. This raises the following questions: What demands are made of the school by the modern structure of society? Is the school meaningfully related to society? To follow these questions and their implications to their logical conclusions, it must be asked if modern society has changed radically. The answer to this question will define the pedagogical-didactical problem with respect to its enmeshment with a socio-pedagogical perspective, in the sense that historical concepts, alone, will only have a limiting function in evaluating and solving contemporary pedagogical-didactical problems.

The pedagogic and didactic intervention in a child's existence occur in a community-social, as well as historical context. The social structure, in its relationship to a historical period, is extremely important if educating and teaching are to be faithful to reality. Teaching occurs in interaction with a particular social structure and a particular historical period.

Because cultures are subject to change, a youth's situation is not static, and religious and moral interpretations also are subject to

change. It is for this reason that the pedagogical and didactical form changes in emphasis in different periods of time.

At this stage, it is advisable to briefly summarize the above. Forms of living and pedagogic-didactic forms cannot be separated. Forms of living (lifestyle) are recognized in different historical periods by different emphases. Pedagogic and didactic style change to the degree that social structure changes. To determine the pedagogic-didactic relevance of the school, what is fundamentally social must be revealed.

The pedagogical-didactical implications of the above for the school are manifold. Socio-pedagogics, as a perspective on the pedagogical reality, must describe the pedagogical grounds of the child's social relationships so that socio-*didactics* can interpret them within the framework of the school.

The relationship between school and society can be clarified somewhat by an example. According to the traditional German "Bildungsideal" (formative ideal), the school's task is to "produce persons"; society will train the "finished product" to be vocationally skilled. In contrast to this aim, modern society expects the school to anticipate the adult lifeworld, in general, in its relationship with the child to accordingly orient him/her to a realistic understanding of that lifeworld.

The problem which stems from this aim, among others, is the following: What does "general formedness" imply, i.e., what are the general didactical criteria for general formedness? What school subjects can guarantee general formedness? Are technical-, vocational-, and trade-schools formative, in the sense that childlike "Dasein" can be given form via these directions of study? Is a differentiated structure of teaching the consequence of previously justified pedagogical and didactical criteria? In what ways can differentiated organizational didactics be changed to be relevant to the pedagogical-didactical criteria?

Apart from these questions which the school must answer in one way or another to at least have pedagogical meaning, it is the case that a penetration of the relationship between society and school

announces particular concepts which are imperative for the practice of teaching in the school; e.g., that the school evaluate the distance between the school, church, city and society, in general, and that the school must take a standpoint regarding all of them. This demands that the school evaluate each of these extra-school institutions in terms of didactical-pedagogical criteria, either to promote their close collaboration with the school or to distance the school from them. Such an evaluation will necessarily force the order of the norm structure of society to the surface. For the orientation of the reader, it is important to illuminate more closely the relationship between this norm structure and society.

## **5. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE NORMS IN SCHOOL AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE NORMS TO THE COMMUNITY**

If it is accepted that the pedagogical (the educational) can never be separated from values, and that pedagogues always describe the pedagogic in the sphere of norms and values, then it follows that the value structure and value contents of a community, and the values it holds are an intrinsic aspect of the pedagogic intervention with a child of that community. If this is so, it can be asked if the school must accept the value structure of the community or if it must propose or present values to the community. Both possibilities are valid.

Further, where a community has surrendered to specific values, must the school necessarily agree with them to remain relevant to the community? In such a case, is it not the task of the school to propose values to the community? If this is so, does the school have the authority, influence and autonomy to make and carry through on such proposals? It must be remembered that the school essentially is an extension of the family, and that the family is anchored in the community. Thus, axiological (value) changes are reflected in the school and family since norms and values (especially moral and ethical norms and values) are elevated by the community to matters of achievement. If the school, accordingly, proposes values and norms (or their interpretation), from where must the school acquire these values, norms and interpretations?

In discussing the school-community relationship, the axiological integration of the two is acknowledged. Because the pedagogical-didactical activities of a teacher in the school are initiated by him/her, the implication is that he/she must be able to account for (justify) his/her value-preferences. The pedagogue (teacher), as norm-observing adult, who consciously and purposefully intervenes in a child's existence, who views a particular system of values and norms as good and true, is directed by his/her hierarchy of values in his/her educative activities. Without the normative, as primary pedagogical imperative, there is no possibility of meaningful intervention in a child's existence because the meaning of the pedagogic help and support for a child is found in the idea of adulthood. This idea can only be described by values. At this stage, the following question is meaningful: What is the relationship between the value-preferences of the pedagogue-didactician (teacher) and the becoming child?

Prominent pedagogues indicate that a child can only become through a personal encounter with reality. This personal encounter is the result of the adult's pedagogic-didactic intervention, and it is through the adult that a child can properly relate to reality—this includes the norms and values of the community within which the child exists. This means that a child's becoming is determined by the structure of norms and values of the community in which the child is educated.

The tasks that these pronouncements present the educator are briefly summarized as follows. The teacher must possess a penetrating perception of the norm-value structure of the community in which a child is educated. He/she must possess and respect this norm structure him/herself. He/she must be qualified to meaningfully interpret these norms and values for a child. The teacher must be qualified to anticipate the shifting emphasis of norms and values and accordingly relate these changes to the life of the child while continually respecting the demands of propriety.

A theoretical pronouncement about the relationship between school and society only has value to the extent that it reflects reality. In the previous discussion, reality is generalized. This can create the impression that it falls outside of practical considerations and

hardly influences the course of teaching in the school. Such an impression can mislead the teacher regarding the fundamental problems he/she must solve in his/her practice. The reality of the social conditions within which the values and norms must be realized via pedagogical-didactical intervention deserves special attention.

### **5.1 The social order**

The above explanation makes the question of the nature of the spirit of the time and the quality of the culture and how they are manifested in our society unavoidable. What is the youth's situatedness? What is the moral order of society and how is it knowable to the teacher? From the nature of the matter, are the grounds for these questions so intertwined that an answer to the one must be sought in the other? The spirit of the time and the moral order of society are the background against which the situatedness of the youth must be projected. In other words, the youth's situatedness is understandable and even explainable against the background of the spirit of the time and the moral order of the society in which they live.

This should limit unjustifiable optimism for an introduction of this scope and nature to try to provide a complete and fundamental answer to the above questions. Consequently, only a broad indication of the scope of the problem is indicated. For a good ordering of the explanation, the spirit of the time in which we exist today is first attended to.

### **5.2 The prevailing spirit of the time**

The type of community in which the future teacher will have to teach cannot be predicted accurately. However, the social circumstances of the whole world are changing and there are strong indications that the changes which have taken place during the past two or three decades will multiply and increase in diversity at the end of this century. There is little historical evidence that a community can ever really remain static (although some historical periods can be described as relatively static). During relatively static periods, educating and teaching are characterized by a need

for solidarity and convergence because then it was generally accepted that the existing order would be equally valid in the future.

The opposite is true for communities subject to rapid change. For such societies, educating the next generation will require greater divergence. It must invite the child and the teacher to be aware of the conditional relevance of what for the children are interpreted as norms and values.

The following generation will also experience an additional differentiation in reality because of the increasing technological development originating in the Industrial Revolution. This not only has the consequence of revolutionizing the material world, but it also takes the form of deeply and radically changing contemporary Western society.

Indeed, most social historians accept that contemporary Western society enjoys its world position thanks to (or because of) the technological developments (also known as the Second Industrial Revolution) associated with it. Some of the results of these developments are: the uprooting of rural communities; breaking away from cultural traditions; urbanization; the disintegration of an old and established rural lifestyle; the change of social relationships on which the community was established and which, in turn, led to a social differentiation based on economic factors, etc. The consequence of this was materialism and its different variations.

In addition, the Industrial Revolution resulted in increased tension between the “haves” and the “have-nots” and between the individual and the state. These tensions resulted in unrest in the social, economic, industrial and political fields. Modern persons are often lonely because they cannot manage to create an intimate community within this industrial culture. This resulted in the social alienation of the individual. A modern human being is confused by the overwhelming technological developments and achievements.

The above influences on the existence of modern persons result in him/her preferring to avoid these individual and societal problems. In this way, he/she loses him/herself in an existentialism where

freedom without responsibility prevails. He/she maintains the appearance of diligence and keeps involved by losing him/herself in the procedure, while ignoring the aim and essence of his/her involvement.

This degeneration is evident in most spheres of life, but educative teaching certainly offers the most noteworthy example: Amidst an impressive quantity of available teaching techniques, as well as teaching- and learning-aids, there is an obvious weakening of convictions with respect to the ultimate aim of educating and, thus, of teaching. In the wider social sphere, this weakening of convictions ends in a chaotic value-structure, which certainly is the most alarming character of our contemporary society. The eventual result of such a chaotic value-structure is nihilism, and by annihilating his/her values, a person loses his/her personal structure. The individual's surrender to the State or to the community can be explained from this because, in his surrender, he/she avoids personal responsibility.

What is the origin of this condition? Sociologists and other scholars agree that modern human beings have difficulty integrating technological developments into the structure of their system of values. As a consequence of this inability, they have tended to ascribe a godlike quality to technology, under the assumption that what cannot be experienced by the senses need not be seriously considered. The "soul", "consciousness" and "conscience" cannot be experienced or clarified by the senses or measured and ranked technologically and, therefore, their existence is doubtful. Hence, these concepts do not have important implications for a person-world relationship. This attitude is manifested in materialism, in hedonism (the view that only pleasure is worth striving for), in utilitarianism (in the sense that the basis for moral differences is in those actions which result in success) and in a sensualism.

Our highly developed and differentiated society has several social forms in which the boundaries among social institutions overlap (e.g., church, family, school, youth organizations). The aims of these institutions are often either vaguely formulated or are not in harmony with each other. For this reason, it is not strange that conflicts occur among them. Our technological culture also

promotes conflicts, albeit unconsciously, because it creates a plurality of relationships and values which, in turn, create further tensions. In this context, one thinks of pollution, the depletion of natural resources and even the menacing extermination of mankind. It can rightly be said that these tensions have placed modern persons in a boundary situation regarding whether their decisions are true and valuable, that is, where the sense and meaning of their existence is at issue.

The importance of the above for the teacher cannot be underestimated. The teacher must not only orient the child in such a way that he/she can establish a relationship with reality; he/she must also lead him/her to choose values and to identify with a certain view of the world and of life. The modern teacher cannot depend on contemporary values being valid in the future. The spirit of the time demands that the teacher help the child to accept and understand those values which will be flexible and applicable to the future, and which will be capable of meaningful integration of the changes which so rapidly follow one another in his/her own existence. This is especially true for developing countries. Changes which took ages to occur in the developed countries must be given meaning and integrated in developing countries within decades. Expectations, therefore, are often had of education which sometimes can be met only with great difficulty. A good example of this dilemma is the rapid urbanization in developing areas which creates crises in housing, sanitation and health services, transportation and education. The same problems occur where the economy changes from a rural to a manufacturing-industrial based economy.

This brief sketch of the social order, and the prevailing spirit of the time, within which teaching must progress meaningfully, is the background against which the contemporary situatedness of youth must be understood. Once again, a complete explication of the youth's situatedness is not possible within the scope of this work, and the following cursory discussion must suffice.

### **5.3 The youth's situatedness**

To understand the situatedness of youth, the teacher must be thoroughly acquainted with them in spheres outside of the formal



school situation. He/she will have to determine the relationship between the school and other social institutions like the church, athletics and other recreational activities, politics and the media. He/she will have to determine how these institutions influence the child, and what contribution they make to his/her forming (being influenced) in these situations.

The teacher's task of leading and supporting a child to adulthood in our modern society and circumstances is difficult. His/her task is difficult because youth in the secondary school are inclined to identify themselves with the norms and values of working youth, i.e., with the world outside of the school. Some researchers in this field even go so far as to describe modern youth as the skeptical generation: they are skeptical of the established order, and actively attempt to replace it with their own views. In addition to this, their world-relationship is described as anti-traditional, without the romantic, radical and realistic.

The inclination of modern youth to lose themselves in the masses, by which they give up their individuality by identifying themselves with their contemporaries on a horizontal level, is an additional matter of particular importance to the modern teacher. Existential decisions are all the less a personal matter for these youth; they readily allow themselves to be led by others. Even in their everyday existence, they cannot escape their continuous confrontation with superficial cultural forms, and unintegrated sources of knowledge.

These tendencies are partly the result of modern communication media, by which knowledge is disseminated, but in such a way that the youth often view it as sufficient. This makes the school and what it presents particularly irrelevant to their lives as prospective adults. Whatever the teacher may do to attempt to vitalize and make his/her teaching more interesting, apparently he/she does not make a clear impression on the already satiated outlook on life of his/her pupils. This classroom atmosphere is so widespread in Europe that it appears that teaching in school cannot offer an answer or solution to contemporary and possible future problems of youth and society.

The mere fact that the teacher recognizes these circumstances does not mean that he/she is entitled to capitulate or surrender his/her responsibilities as a teacher. The fact that he/she will acknowledge them is really a proclamation of his/her resolve to reinterpret his/her role in teaching, but in such a way that his/her ultimate pedagogical aim remains unchanged (to help and support the youth toward full-fledged adulthood). This also means that the teacher teaches in school in such a way that the child must experience the values and norms which describe adulthood, and in terms of which an adult, as such, must be evaluated. To present these matters more clearly for the reader, the meaning of the school for the child's experience of normative reality is now considered.

## **6. THE MEANING OF THE SCHOOL FOR THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE OF NORMATIVE REALITY**

Because of an increased intellectualization resulting the early technological era, over time, the school drifted away from the surrounding reality, and established a separate identity. The danger of this for the teacher is that, if he/she thinks about the school as a concept, he/she will attribute an identity to it which is not necessarily true. In other words, where a separate identity is ascribed to the school, it is not necessarily in harmony with the reality which surrounds the child. When a teacher thinks about the school in this way, there is a tendency to fall into a didactic objectivism and, e.g., to present norms which hold for the school as an institution, but which do not necessarily have validity outside of the school situation. When this occurs, the school becomes estranged from life, and it can only contribute to the child's forming in haphazard ways. The child in school is not a different child from the one in the family, the church, or the one on the athletic field, or the one who must participate in social life.

To arrive at the essential meaning of the school in the life of a child, it appears that there must be a return to an "uncontaminated" way of get to the original pedagogical givens [essences], and to derive from them the sense and meaning of the school [and schooling]. In this way, it is possible to arrive at a purer perspective on the school as a social institution. Although a good deal of what follows has

been considered in other chapters, the idea here is to place these findings within the framework of the school as a social institution.

In the previous chapter, it was stated that the child begins to learn from the moment of birth. From the day of his/her birth, he/she is involved in learning to know the reality which surrounds him/her and, in one way or another, to make him/herself familiar with it. To put the matter as clearly as possible, a child goes to "school" from the first day of his/her life although, naturally, this is not meant in the normal sense of the word. To go to school is an inevitable activity [in our society] which awaits each child. To go to school also is not a matter about which he/she has a choice.

A child's first school is his/her home. From the beginning, the home is the place where he/she is taught certain contents which must be mastered to become a full-fledged adult one day. Our experience, confirmed by scientific analysis, shows that a child's primary intention is to become an adult. When we observe a child in life situations (during play, in his/her relationship to his/her parents and other adults, in church, when he/she eats and dresses him/herself, etc.), his/her need and resolve to be independent are conspicuous. The parent offers sufficient teaching in natural and spontaneous ways for their child to explore and grasp the immediate world (reality) in and around the home.

The reality within which the family exists is only part of the greater whole which a child must learn and know if he/she is to show progress in his/her resolve to become an adult him/herself one day. He/she explores the reality in and around the home spontaneously, intuitively and without obligation, and this gradually enables him/her to acquire and master that reality. However, as he/she becomes older, and enters his/her toddler years, it is evident that this/her exploration and mastery appear to be inadequate. The quality of mastering language, quantitative relationships, social activities, etc. in the home are not adequate because the complex and systematic reality outside of the home also must be mastered by him/her.

The cultural structure of a people or a society within which a child must grow up is closely related to the complexity and composition

of this reality. The richer the cultural heritage, and also a person's command of the technological terrain of the reality outside of the home, the more complex and difficult it is for him/her to acquire that reality. This reality outside of the home is an ordered and systematized whole which eventually can be mastered only by adults because it is categorically structured and ordered. As far as the categorical structure of reality is concerned, it is manifested, e.g., in terms of religious, economic, social, physical and esthetic categories with respect to which the adult (the teacher) also manifests specific points of view, preconceptions and dispositions. When a child is now educated in a life situation, this also means that the adult will be attuned to orienting him/her to these aspects of reality, to force his/her own standpoint on him/her, and to expect that he/she will display a particular positive disposition toward these various aspects of reality. This orientating him/her to reality is the adult's educative task.

If the adult or teacher ignores these aspects of reality in complex, modern society, this means that the child's reality will not only be incomplete, but it will be foreign to and removed from reality. It is for these reasons that the child's natural educators (parents) necessarily attend to harmonizing the world outside of the home with the world within, if they are to contribute to his/her most fundamental intention, namely, to become an adult.

To try to guarantee this aspect of the child's life-course to adulthood, adults (parents), through the ages and in all societies, have proceeded to establish schools, i.e., specific places where the child is systematically given the opportunity to learn to know and understand the world outside of the home thoroughly so he/she can master it. In this way, the adult places the school on the child's life-path with the direct aim of helping the not-yet-adult fulfill his/her journey and, in this way, to try to guarantee his/her future (his/her full-fledged adulthood). It is for this reason that the child, in his/her way through the world, must inevitably arrive at the school, and that it forms an inseparable part of his/her experiencing of, orienting to and eventual mastering of reality.

Therefore, the school must be seen as a facet of the child's lifeworld. It also must be seen as an opportunity created for him/her to give

meaning, under the guidance [accompaniment] of an adult, to what he/she experiences as world and life. In this way, the essential aspects of being an adult (an educator) and being a child (a being-committed-to-education) are harmonized in the school. However, a school is only a school, in the pedagogical sense of the word, when it makes possible the meeting and interaction between adults (teachers) and children (pupils).

In our modern society, the pedagogical meaning of the school can only be understood properly if it is interpreted in terms of the educative aim, which the adult has in view, and of the need for educating, which is present in each child. Also, to become an adult, the child has a need for educating, in the broader sense of schooling. Viewed in this way, the school can never be a child-centered institution. The aim of the school is always the eventual adulthood of children. For this reason, it is rather an educative-centered institution, by which not only being a child, but also becoming an adult, constitute the meaningfulness of the mutual involvement of child and adult. The path along which, and the way in which a child becomes adult, is not determined by the child, as such, but rather by the idea of adulthood which his/her educators aim for in his/her becoming.

For a child, going to school means to bring to a completion certain aspect of his/her educating, and for the adult it means to intervene in and influence his/her becoming adult. The aim of the school's activities is the eventual adulthood of all pupils.

The point of departure of the school's activities is adulthood, and the school's aim is also for the child to reach adulthood through its interventions with him/her. This amounts to the events in school beginning with the decisions of adults, and are meaningful because they lead the participants (children) to greater adulthood. This does not mean that the school is established merely for the sake of the children, but neither is it established for the sake of the children remaining children.

The task of the school is to complete the educating which the child has had in the home. Educating is manifested as being involved with norms; the contents of these norms are inseparably rooted in

the life- and world-view of the adults who educate the child. These norms, and the teacher's interpretation of them, are the central aspect of all the school's activities. It is for this reason that the school's activities, and especially its character, are described as norm-centered. This is not necessarily in contrast to being child-centered, but it shifts the emphasis with respect to the school's aim.

When a school is established for the sake of children, this does not necessarily mean that it is directed to child-centered teaching because, with such a claim, one would elevate the child to a norm for the school which, because of the nature of things (in an educative sense), is not possible. On the other hand, a school without children is no school, but a school without adults also is no school. Consequently, one of the constituents (children, teachers) is not more important than the other.

The quality and nature of the activities in the school emphasize that it is an institution where adults systematically and purposefully provide answers to the questions and problems which appear in the child's lifeworld. As far as the child is concerned, the school is a place where he/she learns. It bridges the world of the child to the future world of adulthood. Therefore, the school provides him/her with the opportunity to move from a naïve, spontaneous and not yet responsible involvement in reality to the more closed, normative, obligatory lifeworld of adults. The school supports him/her to establish a *specific* image of reality. In addition to this, it is the school's responsibility to help him/her order the images and conceptions of reality. Furthermore, the school aids and supports him/her to create his/her own image of the world.

In formal terms, the previous statements are reduced to the fact that the school supports the child to establish his/her own lifeworld. Because his/her experience is always central to his/her relationship to reality, the above responsibilities of the school are of decisive importance. Since the aim of this book is primarily to orient the student teacher, the following aspects of the dynamics of the school are briefly described and ordered.

## 6.1 The school anticipates the child's future

The distance between the world of the child and the adult's world is equivalent to the distance between the child's world and the cultural world. The school bridges this distance in formal ways because teachers are concerned with helping the child master the form systems and life contents of a culture which lend a particular lifestyle to a particular life- and worldview. This amounts to the adult using certain methods as well as contents (learning contents) which place the form systems within the child's reach.

However, this is not the only task of the school. The contents which the school presents to the child are artificial because the school situation must continually attempt to imitate or represent life situations which occur outside of the school. To overcome this artificiality, teachers expect children to go beyond or exceed the reality imitated in school. This means they must apply and interpret the contents mastered in school in situations outside of school. His/her knowledge of the calculation of area must, for example, enable him/her to calculate the number of floor tiles for a bathroom. But this is not all. It is also expected that he/she gives meaning to contents. The sense and meaning given to reality are evident in his/her life in that the reality exposed to him/her in school is the basis for him/her creating his/her own image of reality.

The most important learning task the child must master is to create a normative image of reality for him/herself. Reality (also cultural reality) is normative; it is in terms of it that his/her future forms of living must be discovered and acquired such that in his/her activities he/she can show the image of adulthood. From this, it is concluded that the school is an anticipatory bridge between two forms of living, namely, that of being a child and that of being an adult. In essence, the school offers the child the opportunity to learn to become an adult, i.e., to learn to know and master the adult form of living.

## **6.2 The school is an intermediate world for the child**

When a child goes to school, he/she enters the world of formal time and ordered contents. One can, therefore, understand the child's apprehension when entering the intermediate world of the school

for the first time. Although he/she is fearful of leaving the safe and stable climate of his/her home, few children have a negative attitude toward school. The reason is that he/she wants to become an adult. He/she also knows that this means he/she will have to learn, i.e., learn to know, appreciate and, eventually, to master life contents. His/her fundamental resolve to become an adult is shown in his/her willingness to learn, i.e., a willingness to answer, with the act of learning, the tasks which the reality in and out of school present to him/her.

The dynamics of the child's readiness and willingness to learn provide the teacher the opportunity to offer him/her help in going out to reality. In other words, in school he/she will venture into reality, and the adult will support him/her in this venturing activity. By creating opportunities for the realization of his/her willingness to learn and venture, the school offers intermediate opportunities for him/her to broaden his/her horizon and extend the boundaries of his/her existence. In this way, the school is an intermediate world for the child who is on his/her way to adulthood.

In the school, the child acquires the opportunity, under the protection and guidance of the adult, to construct a gradual, but systematic, image of reality which makes his/her eventual going out to life reality less risky and, thus, also pedagogically more accountable. In school, the teacher offers the child help, support and guidance to master contents so that he/she can safely enter the lifeworld of the adult.

### **6.3 School activities always are (should be) purposeful and never haphazard**

All activities in the school are carefully planned, conscious and purposeful. The reality which is unlocked for the child in the school is carefully structured according to a definite plan. The dynamic meaning of this is summarized well by indicating that no educative event really can be done justice if it is not also an activity which is thought through didactically. The spontaneous unfolding of these activities is the ground structure of the matter, but this spontaneous unfolding is not a deterministic matter; that is, the result of the



didactic activities in the school cannot be compared with a mechanistic result.

In contrast to a deterministic result, the school shows various developmental moments which, through an accumulated system of guidance, is analyzed, managed and motivated by the adult. The guidance the teacher provides the child must be thoroughly anchored and justified, if haphazard educating or teaching is to be avoided.

Teaching is the means for realizing educating by orderly and systematically supporting a child in actualizing his/her intention to learn. In this way, the school ensures that the learning contents he/she is confronted with are not beyond his/her reach. The purposeful, planned and protective character of the school avoids all fortuitousness or haphazardness (in so far as this is possible); this means that all casual or accidental learning or achievement is avoided. Fortuitousness in this sphere results in the child casually creating and establishing his/her own world. However, should this be the case, the implication is that the teacher, as the one who accompanies, helps and supports the child, can be excluded from teaching. When the teacher is excluded from the event, he/she cannot be accountable for the child's fulfillment of his/her learning and, thus, also for his/her safe passage from the world of his/her childhood to the cultural world of the adult.

The school is, therefore, the place and space within which the child creates his/her world as well as his/her future. In this context, going to school means that he/she accepts the challenge which the future holds for him/her; that is, he/she is dynamically involved in creating his/her own future to be able to live the image of adulthood, but with the support of his/her teachers. All of this is possible for him/her because the school he/she enters is not completely unfamiliar.

The child in our culture identifies early with the idea that eventually he/she will attend school. One need only take note of how intensively the preschool child "plays school", especially if he/she has an older brother or sister. This "playing school" expresses his/her expectation to which he/she looks forward,

although he/she may be anxious or tense on the day he/she actually starts his/her school career.

It is important for the teacher to know that the child's expectations of the school can be explained by the fact that it represents an opportunity for him/her: going to school is the first step to becoming an adult! To become an adult means to become emancipated, to create one's own future, and to learn to know one's potentialities and limitations. The school is the place where one is squarely confronted with one's own potential, and where one learns to know oneself. The quality of self-knowledge will be a determining factor for the way he/she becomes an adult. Another determining factor is the quality of his/her learning intention.

The child's learning intention is normally so strong and intact that the usual failures every child experiences cannot disturb or neutralize it, and these failures are often used to motivate a positive learning result. Every learning situation appeals to him/her to venture into the future. However, in the school situation, the future is a matter of the immediate. There is an aspect of reality which must be understood and mastered here and now. Therefore, the teacher's unlocking the contents for him/her must be meaningful for his/her present existence.

The child's directedness to come to terms with immediate contents is a meaningful and creative aspect of his/her development toward adulthood. However, to the extent that he/she progresses, i.e., to the extent that his/her conquests increase, he/she also gradually works through to a reality which is not immediately present. This is a reality which lies more remotely in his/her future.

The adult knows this future reality as one of values and norms. The realization of values is apparent early in a child's life. This realization appears as knowledge of, a feeling for or sensitivity to, and an obedience of the demands of values. Learning correct table manners is a good example of what is meant. In essence, values are a matter which is projected toward the future in terms of which the quality of the child's eventual adulthood will be measured.

The above pronouncements are extremely important for the school. In educating, norms cover and include every facet of the lifeworld. In this way, the norm, in the broadest possible sense, is central to all teaching and school activities. As a pedagogical institution, the school must create the opportunities for the child to create a miniature world in the classroom. This little classroom world serves as an analog of the larger world outside of school where everything normative and valuable is exercised. The world in the classroom is, therefore, a reflection of the world from which the school chooses when it orients and directs the child with respect to reality.

In this respect, the task of the teacher is that, in his/her teaching, he/she continually nourishes the child's expectations of mastering. This means that it is only when the child fully ventures with the learning or school contents that he/she will eventually proceed by means of his/her mastered activities to venture with the life contents from the lifeworld.

#### **6.4 The school must complete the initial educating in the home**

Usually, the child enters school directly out of the home. For him/her, the school is an intermediate or "between" world in the sense that he/she is systematically introduced to the greater reality outside of the school as well as the home. In this way, the school bridges the spontaneous, naïve and informal experiencing of reality to the more calculated and formal command of reality by the adult. To achieve this, the school must make provision for certain pedagogical foundational principles and incorporate them in its/her activities because the child's going out to reality is influenced by them.

The first of these principles is that the school situation must provide security and protection for the child. He/she will feel secure only if he/she is accepted. If the school does not provide security, if there is not the necessary attitude to and inclination toward acceptance, and if no opportunities to emancipate are present, then it is not a pedagogical (educative) institution. In this case, the school misses its basic aim. For this reason, the child's experience of security in the home must be continued in the school. As we know, the educative situation in the home is a matter of playing, learning and

working. In fact, these three activities express the nature of the basic characteristics of a child's existence. The child's lifestyle cannot be adequately or accurately described outside of playing, learning and working. The child also nourishes him/herself and breathes, but his/her pets do the same. The identity of the child is clearly revealed in the fact that he/she plays, learns and sometimes also works. It is only logical that the school must provide for these forms of existence. As far as children in the home are concerned, play is certainly stressed. Yet, parents continually transpose the playing activities to the other forms of existence, namely, learning and working.

The activities which the parents initiate are actually sporadic. From time to time, they lead their children from playing to learning and working activities. The school has an important completing task in this transition of activities. Where there is no regular task acceptance and task completion, the child's transition to an adult form of existence is hindered. The school is specifically the place where a child is continually confronted with specific demands and tasks for a certain number of hours of every school day. He/she is supported in the execution of tasks, but, at the same time, he/she is expected to behave responsibly. In this way, the school completes the initial, sporadic activities of educating in the home concerning task acceptance and fulfillment by creating situations in which the child must accept tasks and subject him/herself to the evaluation of the teacher, but always with the aid, help and support of the teacher.

The task of the school to complete the educating started in the home has important meaning for the child's future occupation. However, the value of this task of completion is not only confined to his/her future occupation. In every facet of life outside the school and the home, task acceptance is of paramount importance. The systematic organization of time in the school day, school week and school year offer opportunities to lead his/her educating onto a more closed path.

The meaning of each one of these aspects is that a child enters a specific relationship with reality in the school. This relationship is of decisive importance in the eventual image he/she will have of

reality, and of the image of a person which he/she will show one day as an adult. The question of whether the school will be a life reality for him/her is inseparably linked with the question of whether the school will adequately and accountably support him/her in designing his/her own image of the world. As a social institution, there are many dangers the school will have to contend with in this context. If, in fact, the teacher is to aid and support the child, he/she must be thoroughly aware of these dangers.

In the first instance, there is very real danger that the school acquires its own identity for itself. That is, it attempts to create its own autonomous character which, especially because of its academic attitude and involvement, can easily degenerate into activities which are foreign to the child, i.e., foreign to the home and to the world outside the school. Where this happens, the child becomes lonely and solitary in the school situation, and this hinders him/her in his/her attempt to break out of the smaller (confined) world of the home to become involved in the greater social structure. In this case, the school is obviously not a pedagogical institution, but merely a teaching center where educative aims are achieved only accidentally. This kind of school creates a greater distance between the child and the world, instead of bridging or narrowing the distance, and leading him/her into reality.

A second and related problem [danger] is that the school does lead the child into reality, does accompany him/her in his/her examining and exploring it, does assess and evaluate his/her achievements, but without creating opportunities for or supporting him/her to transcend reality. When a child grasps and understands reality, he/she must be able to objectify it. This means that out of this reality he/she must attain a new structure, find new application possibilities, master new situations; that is, he/she must constitute or create his/her own new reality.

A good example of this misconception is that teaching which is strongly examination-directed, and which the evaluation of the school's contribution to the child's becoming a person is judged in terms of examination results and provides the child with no opportunity to transcend reality. This does not involve him/her in his/her security or exploration and, therefore, it damages the

opportunity for emancipation in such a way that he/she is hesitant and even will refuse to enter the broader lifeworld of the adult outside of the school situation. If this occurs, the school cannot guarantee the future adulthood of its pupils, and also there is no mention of vocational adulthood and full-fledged socialization during the child's school years.

By viewing the pedagogical significance of the school, as discussed above, it is possible to infer that the responsibility for the school's occurrence cannot be thought of apart from the initiative, insight, aims and ingenuity of the teacher. Where the teacher is not present, the child can experience the school as a museum or an archive or even an encyclopedia, but not at all as a school in the pedagogical meaning of the word. The child's passage to the adult lifeworld, i.e., his/her constituting his/her own lifeworld in terms of what the school offers him/her, moves the adult (teacher) to the center of the activities in the school. In the light of what was said at the beginning of this chapter about the pedagogical and the school, it certainly is important to look more closely into the encounter between adult and child in the school situation.

## **7. THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN ADULT AND CHILD IN SCHOOL**

The sense and meaning of a child's attending school lies in the opportunities the school offers him/her for his/her use to reach his/her destination as a person (adulthood). The child cannot be held responsible for what the school offers in formal ways. The contents, as well as the organizational structure of the school are and remain the responsibility of the teachers who, in school, aim to establish the child's way to adulthood. Where the child enters the school to learn, the adult enters school to teach with respect to the child's learning activity—this means the teacher directs the child's learning intention by unlocking things for him/her which are life valuable.

Irrespective of the differences between adults and children in the school, both enter it as people. This means that the relationship established in the school is, above all, a human and interpersonal relationship. The teacher presents an important image (example) of adulthood which, in fact, reflects the image of the future world the

child is aimed at. The encounter of the child with the teacher, therefore, means there is an encounter with the contents the teacher unlocks; these contents are matters still to be grasped, understood and applied by the child in the future.

It is important to clearly understand the concept “encounter,” and what it implies in the school situation. The real question is: How does the teacher realize an encounter in the learning situation in the school? The importance of the concept “encounter” in the school situation is discussed below so that it can be clarified as a constituent (category) of the pedagogical in the school-didactical situation.

In modern pedagogics, there is the danger that the word “encounter” is used commonly and as a platitude in the human sciences. As in the case with the concept “school”, the teacher must be aware that “encounter” is used with a definite meaning. As a concept, it is a description of a human being’s involvement with reality.

To be able to penetrate to the essence of the concept “encounter” it first must be remembered that a person always stands before everything which really is. That is, the whole of reality is continually thrust upon a person, and he/she accepts, as a task, the ordering of this reality, and by ordering and thinking, he/she discloses, discovers and grasps it for him/herself. A relationship between person and reality arises and exists because he/she turns him/herself to reality in intentional (conscious) and directed ways. The fact that a person continually comes forward to meet reality is a person’s original form of living. (In this connection see the discussion in Chapter 4 of a person’s original relationship to reality). There is no human being who does not continually come forward to meet reality in one way or another. This does not mean coming forward to meet reality, as such, but indeed the pedagogical task is that an adult in the school must design reality for the child into which he/she can enter without the danger of being harmed.

In this respect, the adult is aware that, by entering (encountering) reality, the child experiences a unique and personal connection with it and, therefore, also proceeds to discover its meaning within this

relationship. It is from the sense which a person has of reality that his/her joy and clarity of life spring. In this connection, it is important to indicate that the entry into reality of each individual is a personal matter. This encounter with reality continually demands decisions regarding three aspects of reality: the metaphysical, the interhuman, and objects and things. The decisions made depend on a person's knowledge of the phenomena and the meanings he/she attributes to them.

The task which a person's relationship to reality presents to him/her is that, in the above-mentioned ways, he/she must penetrate to the essences of reality. This means that here he/she encounters the mysteriousness of life itself, and from his/her appreciation of it, he must try to clarify and master it. The mysteriousness of life also forces his/her being bound to time and space on him/her. His/her insignificance with respect to all that is, his/her impotence with respect to a particular piece of reality usually strikes him/her in his/her deepest, innermost being. [In this moment, a person encounters his/her God and fellow persons, and he/she also has an intense experience of reality.] It is during this moment that a person changes and becomes different. Consequently, it also is the moment when the form of living of each person comes to fruition. This essential relationship to reality is of particular significance for pedagogics and, therefore, for didactics.

A brief explication of what the encounter implies can be expressed as follows. When concrete reality imposes itself upon a person in a particular way, this is a moment of encounter. Thus, it is a moment when a person stands squarely before a given piece of reality with respect to which he/she must choose and decide—reality demands that a person act; the encounter is a mysterious event but, as such, it also is necessary in teach persons course of life and living.

The moment of encounter is thus unavoidably on a person's path of life. Because a person encounters, as a person he really has no choice about it. A person encounters reality because he is a person; in the encounter he exceeds and transcends reality i.e., places it in



the sphere of the metaphysical and extra-personal. In the encounter a person is confronted with the most fundamental questions and problems of his existence such as those involving eternity, his helplessness as an individual human being and his concept of life. For this reason, the encounter is also a ground-form or ground-situation in the person's existence and it appears to be given with being human. In this context, the encounter is an ontic given.

Now the question is: What has encounter to do with the meaningful course of the situation and activities in the school? The answer is that if the school from time to time places the child in ground-situations, it must design its practice in such a way that it will compel the child to develop a growing or maturing style of making decisions.

In school the adult is in fact aimed at providing the child with the opportunity to change, to become different, i.e., to become an adult. For this reason he confronts the child with contents in terms of which he must choose and decide. Very often the adult (teacher) represents these contents in his own person. In his encounter with the teacher as an adult, the child encounters his own future. Therefore, the adult must create purposefully and with insight an atmosphere or climate of encounter in the classroom.

It is important to indicate that the encounter includes communication, i.e., communication between persons that clarifies the meaningfulness of the communicative situation for them.

Now it is the case that the classroom is not necessarily a place of encounter. However, it can be one if the events that occur there are really meaningful to the child. As far as the adult is concerned the classroom situation is always meaningful. However, where the situation in the classroom can be called a place of security and accompanied protection, when it really is a home and a place where the child is accepted and feels welcome the teacher has already accomplished much to prepare the child for an encounter.

**In light of the above, the teacher must be aware that he must continually implement particular pedagogical-didactical means in Abstract**

With the almost exclusive focus on schooling in the literature on education, a recognition of a parent-child/adult-child relationship of upbringing, rearing, educating a child to independent adulthood, as the ground or foundation of educational theorizing and practice, virtually has been overlooked. In fact, an integrative, comprehensive perspective on educating (including schooling) has not been found by this approach and only seems possible if this primordial educative relationship is taken as one's point of departure in studying educating. To take the formalized/institutionalized extension of upbringing, i.e., schooling, teaching and learning, as the main focus is to remain within a variety of perspectives which perpetuate the *ad hoc*, piece-meal nature of the study of "education" currently characterizing the Anglo-American literature. By taking upbringing as the point of departure and phenomenology as the primary but not exclusive method, categories and structures essential to educating are disclosed which can serve as criteria for evaluating and improving the practice of guiding a child to adulthood, including educative schooling, as well as for evaluating the *educative* relevance of particular psychological, philosophical and other theories and techniques assumed to be illuminative of and applicable to formalized practice, while overlooking the original reality of which educative schooling is a formalization.

An evaluation of the Premack principle is presented as a concrete illustration of how a genuine pedagogical perspective on educating, rooted in a relationship of upbringing leads to a very different and even somewhat negative educative appraisal of a solidly established, practically useful psychological technique.

An important implication is that educating need not be prescribed to by psychology and other disciplines. Thus, there is a need to become familiar with an authentic pedagogical perspective arising from and supported by the essential structures of this primordial relationship, and which has been investigated thoroughly by the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria in South Africa from the mid-1960's to the mid-1990's. They were inspired by, elaborated on and contributed significantly to the phenomenological findings of M. J. Langeveld at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands in the mid-1940's.

situation. Didactic means, as far as possible, must serve the aim of presenting the mysteriousness of life to the children. The most important didactic means the teacher has at his/her disposal most certainly is language. There is no aspect of reality which cannot be presented to the child through language. For the teacher, language not only reflects his/her relationship to reality but also especially discloses his/her disposition toward his/her pupils. It is no small or easy task to verbalize a particular aspect of reality. When the teacher wants to make the classroom a place for encounter, in his/her preparation and actions, he/she must continually give careful and close attention to the way he/she is going to verbalize the contents he/she is going to present. It is with such actions that the teacher often guarantees an encounter between him/herself and the child.

Every other didactic means strives to present or represent reality anew for the child. For this reason, the above pronouncements about language are valid for each form of observational material which the teacher implements in the lesson situation. When the classroom has become a lifeworld, it can also be the place for an encounter. Thus, it is understandable that the encounter with the teacher really is a precondition for realizing the assumption which the didactic event should affect the child in his/her deepest inner being and allow for him/her to change.

The encounter cannot be planned purposefully and with certainty and, therefore, it requires of the teacher particular knowledge about the life form of his/her pupils. In this respect, the teacher must be aware that there is no facet of child life which is not relevant to an encounter arising. His/her religious experiences, his/her social relationships, his/her play, his/her language, his/her fantasies, his/her intellectual abilities, his/her affective (emotional) experiences, the/her totality of his/her possessed experience, etc. are factors which must be considered if the teacher wants to establish a classroom atmosphere which also can be a field prepared for the encounter.

Where the child actualizes the encounter through the learning situation from his/her side, the teacher must realize that the child enters this situation of encounter as a person. The child does not experience the encounter through separate aspects of his/her being a person; encounter in the classroom also is a matter of a person-in-motion and, in this respect, it involves the totality of his/her being human. The teacher's thorough knowledge of each child's way of participating in the learning situation is of particular significance and, for this reason, it is a precondition for the encounter in the learning situation. Where the didactic event creates opportunities for the encounter, it most certainly also must be a help-providing situation. When the teacher provides help to the child, he/she comes close to him/her, not only with respect to his/her intellectual command of the contents, but also especially regarding the child's innermost relationship and attitude with respect to learning as a task of life, and to the contents as life contents.

Moments of the teacher providing help to the child in the didactic situation are the purest moments by which the "I" of the teacher and the "you" of the child merge into a "we" in the situation. When the "I" and the "you" merge into an "us," this means that the teacher and child have found a common point of departure to explore and master a certain aspect or aspects of the situation. Moments of providing help in the didactic situation are often the purest moments of encounter between teacher and child.

From this brief explication of the encounter between adult and child in the teaching situation, which ultimately establishes the pedagogical possibilities and character of the school, it is important to indicate something of the school's task in the child's constitution of a personal lifeworld.

## **8. THE SCHOOL'S TASK IN A CHILD'S CONSTITUTION OF A PERSONAL LIFEWORLD**

A child spends about twelve years of his/her life in school. However, the importance of the school is not that it is an important part of his/her life history. It is true that the period in which the school influences the child's becoming adult is of particular significance because it coincides with his/her formative years. It

also is the case that these years are a sensitive period in his/her life. It is a period in which he/she proceeds to a greater rational and intellectual mastery of reality. In addition, it is a time in his/her life when he/she becomes conscious of his/her own being a person, of him/herself as a person, as a human being, as a man or a woman. Also, it is in this period which he/she strongly questions the valid and acceptable aspects of the world and life because, as a person, he/she comes increasingly under the appeal of valid and accepted norm structures as proper ways of living.

What is more, the school is an aspect of his/her lifeworld where things continually happen. This does not distinguish the school from other aspects of his/her lifeworld. Indeed, there is no terrain which he/she enters as a person where there is not a continual sequence of events. In contrast to other events in the child's lifeworld, those occurring in the school have a particular character. Above it is mentioned that the school is a place where the future is created. In this respect, the school is not only a place where things happen, but it is a place where adults (teachers) allow things to happen. The events or activities in the school are planned, purposive, systematic matters, and the child's activities are directed and controlled externally (by the teacher).

The playful casualness, which is characteristic of so many aspects of a child's out of school activities, are not identifiable with the school as a teaching-educating institution. The school activities can possibly be accurately described by asserting that they allow the child to appropriate something which is so far-reaching in nature that it radically influences and changes his/her entire perspective on reality. The school allows things to occur in systematic and purposeful ways and, in this respect, it contributes to allowing the child to distance him/herself from his/her naïve, pre-rational and even diffuse perspective on reality.

To be a teacher means to confront children with aspects of reality in a successive series of situations with the aim that the children will eventually master the contents themselves. For this reason, the teacher continually places them before aspects of reality and, in clear and undisputable ways, pairs these aspects he/she offers with particular tasks for the children to carry out. The design and

provision of help in carrying out these tasks is an essential and integral part of teaching. At the same time, the school-going child continually, and with an orderly succession of situations, is placed under the appeal of these tasks. Accepting and carrying out these tasks is evidence to the teacher that the child answers the appeal directed to him/her in particular ways. Consequently, judging and evaluating the child's achievement to bring this to a close really is a judging of the way he/she has come to an ordering and mastery of particular aspects of reality.

This course of action in the school situation is perhaps understandable in the sense that the teacher is continually involved in representing reality to the child such that his/her orderly mastering of it can progress. In this way, teacher and child jointly formalize particular aspects of the human cultural world, in general, but also particular aspects of it.

In its curriculum, the school does not offer the entirety of reality to the child, but selects from it the most important and necessary aspects which he/she must master on his/her way to adulthood. The formalizing which flows from this helps the child divest him/herself of the naïve perspective on matters because the school forces him/her to assimilate these aspects, with understanding and appreciation, into his/her way of living. Thus, the school makes a particular contribution to the child's education. In this way, the school completes the education of the child which is begun in the home. In the most literal sense of the word, the school is an extension of the family because the orienting and socializing, as well as formative aspects of educating are always directly included in the school aims. These three facets do not constitute the totality of the school's influence on the child's form of living. The fact is that the school must realize all the didactic categories in its activities so that the quality of the child's mastery of reality can be determined in terms of didactic criteria (See Chapter 3).

In linking up with the previous sections, finally, it is indicated that the school must implement the principles of the didactical-pedagogical (as explicated in the beginning of this chapter) in its activities to be able to have any pedagogical significance in the life of the child. Apart from the pedagogical demands placed on the

school as imperatives, the school must thoroughly consider the societal order within which the teaching must progress meaningfully, as well as the prevailing spirit of the time which illuminate the youth's situatedness—that which the school must interpret for the child as a future lifeworld must, at least, be faithful to reality. It is only if the school answers positively to these tasks that it can have pedagogical significance and, in this respect, can guarantee the child's experience of a normative reality.

The analysis of the school situation emphasizes the fact that the school anticipates the future for the child, that it is an intermediate world or reality for the child on his/her way to adulthood, that the purposeful teaching in the school should never have a haphazard character, and that the school really completes the didactical and pedagogical activities which had begun in the home. It is in the light of these aspects, as the background against which the school's pedagogical significance is found, that the school must realize the encounter between child and adult because the child identifies him/herself with the appeal of reality via the person of the adult (teacher)—the child really identifies him/herself with the way in which the adult relates him/herself to the appeal which, in the adult's activities, is observable to the child. This implies that the school must realize didactical categories in its activities which, in their criterial evaluation, must corroborate the quality of the learning achievement.

This chapter is not meant to present a final or complete pedagogical explication of the school. Rather, its purpose is to orient the reader to understand the pedagogical significance or meaning of the school so that he/she will be able to evaluate, didactically-pedagogically, pronouncements about the school. This means that the teacher must also be able, among other things, to evaluate the organization and administration of the school. To further orient the reader on this matter, the problem of teaching strategies is attended to in the following chapter.