

## CHAPTER 6 DIDACTIC PERSPECTIVE ON LEARNING

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The task of the teacher with respect to learning is to systematically create formal situations within which it can occur. Starting with this premise, this chapter is not involved with a comprehensive and detailed explication of the phenomenon of learning. Learning, as such, is not described. Rather, the aim is to view learning as an activity which must be actualized by the didactic act.

In discussing the didactic ground-forms in Chapter 4, it is repeatedly indicated that, in the original experience of educating, adults spontaneously go out to a child's reality to the extent that they recognize that, based on ordinary forms of living, they create situations for their child within which they can direct his/her learning activities. The connection between a child's learning (modes of learning) and the parent's activities to actualize it are studied along these lines. The implication for the teacher is that the forms of teaching and the child's learning activities are closely related. For this reason, it is desirable that the reader study Chapters 4 and 6 together.

In an introduction to didactic pedagogics of this nature, it is important to say a thing or two about the point of departure for describing a child's learning activities. In this regard, many writers from different disciplines have emphasized that learning is not a simple process which necessarily follows a particular course to a learning effect of a particular quality. A synthesis of the most important views of learning indicates that, in its essence, it is a way of being, a primary form of living, i.e., a way of being a person-in-the-world.

In the usual practice of educating and teaching, it is conspicuous that, when a learning child is following his/her educator's didactic guidance, there are few reasons that this will lead to troubled educating. Consequently, there also should not be much difficulty

regarding the child's future. This is understandable if it is noted that, through teaching, a child acquires knowledge about reality. When a child cannot master these contents (reality), forming a disposition regarding them becomes impossible.

The relationship between the contents of teaching and educating has been discussed in Chapter 2. Without undue repetition, it is important to stress that educating without teaching is impossible because the educator expects the child to acquire appropriate knowledge, but also dispositions and attitudes in connection with these contents. Dispositions and attitudes ultimately give an indication of the child's judgment, and point of view which, in their turn, provide the opportunity for self-actualization in subsequent life situations (teaching situations) which give the child the opportunity to create a reality for him/herself. It is on this basis that teaching promotes the progress of the educative event.

The possibility of the educative event and, therefore, the teaching event, lies in Langeveld's pronouncement that a child is someone who wants to be somebody him/herself. In this regard, a child's task is to direct his/her intentionality (consciousness) to the surrounding reality. The child's intentional directedness to this reality is expressed in his/her learning activities, and this implies that if he/she will become somebody, he/she must learn. The adults guide these learning activities because, ultimately, they are responsible for the child. The child's learning activities are meaningful because they stem from his/her life situations and, especially from the pedagogic situation, which is of decisive significance for his/her progressing to adulthood. In learning, a child is continually involved in creating a lifeworld for him/herself.

Because a child must step out of him/herself to become involved with reality (because of his/her intentional directedness to reality), essentially, learning is a matter of Dasein, i.e., it is an existential matter, in the sense that the child enters the world. The fact that a child necessarily is going to enter reality implies that he/she is going to change regarding reality. It is in this necessary change that the adult sees his/her educative and teaching responsibilities. By educative teaching, the adults now must give form to this necessary change in the child.

From this introduction, certain conclusions are drawn: learning does not lead back to anything else because it is itself a primary

phenomenon of being human. Although learning is observable in a variety of ways of being a person, its original manifestation refers to the child as someone who wants to be somebody him/herself. The child's learning activities are observable in his/her intentional directedness. They also are visible in his/her openness to reality, in the sense that reality directs an appeal to him/her which he/she answers by learning. In this respect, regarding learning, there is a [simultaneous] "being open for reality" and a "going out to reality" as reverse sides of each other.

The precondition for learning is a person's existence (the fact that he/she can step out of him/herself) and, in this way, it is possible for him/her to master the surrounding reality. Since the adults direct the child's learning involvement with reality, to try to ensure that his/her relationship to it has a form; in this respect, the child's learning activity means that he/she and the adult anticipate a particular future.

Because a person is in the world as a totality (i.e., as body, as intellect, and as a lived experiencing and experiencing person), a person's existence cannot be described merely in terms of his/her intellect. Thus, learning is not merely a purely cognitive matter. Therefore, when a person exists by learning, there is learning as a bodily way of being human, it is also an affective (emotional or pathic) way, and a cognitive way as well. However, one cannot separate these ways of being from each other; they are merely indicated to point out the totality (whole) of a person's being involved with reality by learning. It must be further indicated that these differentiations are not a matter of growth or development but only are differentiations of the ways intentionality shows itself.

These pronouncements are particularly important to the teacher because they confront him/her with demands when he/she wants to create a formal learning situation. The greatest task is that the teacher must design and organize the lesson situation in such a way that the course of learning will progress spontaneously and ultimately end in a normal way. The problem for the teacher is that the lifeworld to which a child turns in the spontaneous act of learning in school is usually erected in an artificial way. This means that the teacher must study the child's learning didactically to come to know the categories of learning (which describe the learning activity, as such).

For this reason, it is meaningful if what is said about the learning activity is now systematized and elaborated on, where this seems necessary, and judgments made here and there. The child's learning has its origin in his/her openness to reality. This means that the ways a child learns will change because of the variations noted in a person's lifeworld; therefore, the modes of learning are extensive. For a child, the field of learning is the total surrounding reality or life contents. How he/she learns the totality of reality, and what aspects of it must be learned varies from person to person, from situation to situation and, as far as the school is concerned, this can vary from classroom to classroom.

Because the child's relationship to reality is open, his/her learning activities show a spontaneity, a venturing attitude, an exploratory journey, an encounter with reality, and an intentional directedness. These attitudes, attunements, and activities carry the learning. Further, these forms of manifestation of learning are described as categories of the act of learning, as such. One also notices that, on the one hand, these categories imply creating a secure space for the learning activities and, on the other hand, erecting an open field of the child's involvement with reality.

The categories mentioned emphasize that the learning activity has a dynamic, and that the child, in learning, can be described as a person-in-motion. The destination of the child's path of learning, from the nature of the adults' guidance, is the future. Thus, it is concluded that, in his/her learning activities, a child is involved in constituting his/her future.

The ways a child involves him/herself with reality (learning involvement) vary according to the appeal from reality. This means there is a close relationship between the way a child learns and the nature of the appeal which a reality directs to him/her. This is important for a teacher, in the sense that the appeal purposely directed to a child in the classroom will largely determine his/her response to this appeal/content. Essentially, teaching is appealing to the child to deal with the content being presented. Thus, the teacher should always be aware of this relationship. In this respect, there is a reciprocity between what the teacher offers and the child's learning activity, which can be of decisive importance for planning and executing formal teaching situations. Thus, the teacher must have insight into the learning phenomenon so that, from its

categorical structure (what constitutes the learning activity, as such) a coherent teaching situation can be designed.

It is understandable that the teacher takes as his/her point of departure the learning activity, as it is manifested in the classroom situation, to penetrate to its essence. Unfortunately, such a starting point can only result in a false, or prescribed methodology, by which the teacher deprives him/herself of his/her own creativity. For this reason, the teacher can do nothing else than bypass the formal class situation for the spontaneous lifeworld, to determine how the child's original openness becomes observable in learning activities. If this is not done, the learning categories, as such, can be obscured.

The idea of describing the categories of the learning activity is that they bring the essences of learning to the surface. Thus, the essences of learning are considered, rather than making the results or outcomes of the learning activity available for judgment. The teacher's task is to know precisely what is meant by the concept "learning intention", and how it is manifested outside the classroom. The teacher must know that learning activities are the most direct way a child gives meaning to the reality surrounding him/her. The question of giving meaning is of importance to the teacher because the didactic situation designed by him/her must, at least, be meaningful before it can be expected that the child can have a meaningful share in it. Then, he/she can give meaning to the contents being presented. The fact of the matter is that a child cannot intentionally and directly learn what is meaningless; at most, he/she can try to memorize it. For this reason, it is important to view intentionality and attributing meaning more closely in their relationship to the phenomenon of learning.

## **2. INTENTIONALITY IN THE COURSE OF LEARNING**

If the teacher is to understand the significance of intentionality for the learning activity in the teaching situation, it is important for him/her to know that learning is a matter of intentionality, in the sense that it is a form of existence by which a person is conscious of things around him/her. The child who is attuned to learning (intentionally directed to learn) is aware of a reality which, at this stage, he/she has not yet meaningfully penetrated to its essentials.

In this respect, intentionality, as the activity of the learning, can generally be described as consciousness (i.e., being-conscious). For this reason, the total structure of consciousness must be understood to grasp the essence of intentionality: consciousness (being-conscious) always means to be conscious of something--there is always something (contents) of which a person is conscious. Being-conscious does not mean that a person is only conscious cognitively (intellectually). Being-conscious is much more than a purely intellectual awareness. That is, a person does not learn to know something of reality by only being conscious intellectually. A person also can be emotionally (affectively) conscious of something, as well as bodily (somatically) conscious of an aspect of reality.

Therefore, being-conscious is a complex concept of "being". This means that a human being is involved as a total being, or person in a matter, object, or event. From this, it is concluded that a person becomes or is conscious of contents of the lifeworld which surrounds him/her, and that he/she acts in the situation he/she is in, and which always directs an appeal to him/her to act.

Conscious activities are the basis for the origin and meaning of intentionality. Just as consciousness can be differentiated into intellectual, affective, and bodily being-conscious, so can intentionality be differentiated into an intellectual, affective, or somatic aspect. This means that no human activity can be described as purely intellectual, affective, or bodily. Because a person, as a totality, is involved with reality, each of these aspects or moments are seen in his/her actions.

The question the didactician now must answer is what is the essence of intentionality? Existential philosophy describes it in terms of a person's conscious activities. To the extent that a person is conscious of reality, he/she directs him/herself to reality and learns to know and master it.

If the essence of intentionality is conscious activities, it is also important to know what the ground is of consciousness itself. The essence of consciousness is its synthesizing (compiling or constituting) function regarding all aspects of the reality the child learns to know. That is, the results or achievements of the synthesizing or constituting, are an essential feature of consciousness.

For the teacher, a very important conclusion can be reached from this: intentionality (as an essence of consciousness) is always directed to the meaning of a particular structure.

Further, consciousness assumes (intends) that the structure of the contents has a particular sense or meaning when it is directed to that structure, whether an object, or a matter, etc. In other words, consciousness is a being directed to the sense and meaning of contents which are pointed out in the lifeworld. Stated otherwise, consciousness goes spontaneously to the matters or objects at hand to sort out and order the meanings in them. It is for this reason that attributing meaning is so important in the teaching situation. It is also to be understood that intentionality has an achieving and, therefore, a learning character because the child's intentional learning activities are directed to achievement.

Because intentionality is so particularly important in learning and, thus, for constituting and establishing learning situations, it is important to summarize the points made above: The ground or essence of intentionality is in a person's activities of consciousness. Activities of consciousness are characterized as having a synthesizing and constituting function. On this basis, a person's conscious activities are directed to the meaning of a structure, and it assumes that the lifeworld has intrinsic and immanent meaning which consciousness then sorts out and orders. Because giving meaning is so important in learning, a brief discussion of this topic is important if the teacher is to establish formal teaching situations in which the child can participate by giving meaning.

### **3. GIVING MEANING AS A PRECONDITION FOR, AND AS A RESULT OF LEARNING**

The teacher now knows that intentionality, through acts of consciousness, seeks the meaning of reality. Activities of consciousness are, therefore, directed to sorting out and ordering the meaning of the contents in the didactic situation. In this respect, the meaning of a structure [content] of reality is the inspiration of intentionality which the acts of consciousness place strongly or weakly in the foreground. In other words, if the teacher is to allow a child to participate meaningfully in the lesson situation, he/she must guide and help him/her attribute meaning him/herself to the learning contents. When the contents then are not meaningful, intentional consciousness cannot easily proceed to

construct a personal, unique knowledge of this reality--in other words, then he/she cannot achieve regarding reality by his/her intentional directedness.

This also means that the reality outside the meaning giving function of consciousness (which is directed to constituting or constructing) will have little significance. Hence, the meaning-structure of or the conscious attribution of meaning to reality (learning contents) is a precondition for purposive learning. To the degree that his/her intentional consciousness can discover, systematize, order, etc. the sense of a structure of reality (learning content), to that extent, the child is able to attribute meaning to it. For the teacher, this means that sense and meaning are identical concepts.

In addition, giving meaning is a matter which carries the [inseparable relatedness and] interaction of reality and intentionality-directed learning. In this framework, the child's learning activity is to give meaning to learning contents, which had remained unknown until this stage. In the learning situation, giving meaning also is seen in the child's life as a conscious striving to achieve the meaning of his/her own involvement with reality. This meaning giving involvement is observable in a learning child's continual search for a synthesis of the contents, which are unlocked for him/her; that is, contents which direct an appeal to him/her which he/she cannot avoid. When intentional consciousness discovers the sense and meaning of this appeal, the child constructs a personally individual disposition and lifestyle which directly bring about his/her self- actualization.

Therefore, it is important for the teacher to remember that a child's learning activities are an inherent part, and even a decisive factor, for his/her disposition toward life and his/her lifestyle. It also is important for the teacher to note that when he/she makes learning contents available which appeal to the child's intentional consciousness, he/she must realize that the child's giving meaning should first show that there is an implicit sense to the content itself. That is, the sense or meaning which lies in the content itself is presupposed by the child's achieving consciousness whenever he/she intentionally goes to the content.

Briefly, the child's achieving consciousness is directed to the sense of the contents at hand because he/she believes and knows that they are not meaningless. This means that his/her achieving



consciousness simply accepts that the contents presented to him/her are meaningful so that he/she can set for him/herself the aim of discovering, systematizing, and ordering the sense locked within them.

There also is an explicit sense in the contents presented to the child. In this respect, explicit sense means the sense the child him/herself attributes to the matter because of the ordering and meaning which achieving consciousness has already accomplished. This aspect of giving meaning is observable in the didactic situation when a child deepens, appreciates, assimilates, criticizes, restates, etc. the contents. The didactic implication of this is that the child's giving meaning to the totality of contents is closely and inseparably related to the lived experienced moment or aspect of its implicit and explicit meanings. Thus, a child is continually disposed to experience and deepen the sense of the teaching situation, which largely determines his/her attitude, interpretation, and command of such situations in the future. This means that the discovery of the sense or meaning of learning contents serve as an inspiration by which intentionality enters the foreground more strongly, and learning consciousness, as achieving consciousness, acquires more mobility and suppleness in the lifeworld.

The most important consequence of giving sense and meaning in the lesson situation is that the child is also actualizing him/herself; in other words, he/she is creating a world-for-him/herself, or a personally meaningful world. It is by giving meaning that a bridge is built between the life contents the child goes out to, and the form of living or lifestyle he/she eventually shows in his/her relationship to reality. The question which is now important for the teacher is where or how does the child's learning intention show itself, and in what forms can the teacher cast the achievement character of intentional consciousness so that the learning intention can be awakened and directed? To be able to answer this question, it is necessary to first become cognizant of the ways the learning activities are seen in the original, spontaneous, and naive life [family] situation of educating (teaching).

#### **4. LEARNING AS A WAY OF BEING IN THE ORIGINAL EXPERIENCE OF EDUCATING (TEACHING)**

The question the teacher must ask in this regard is how a learning child acts in a spontaneous life situation so that an adult can say,

without any doubt, that he/she has learned something in this situation? The teacher also remembers that the parent is continually involved in the child's lifeworld by providing guidance and protection; in other words, he/she is continually creating a secure space where his/her child can learn without all sorts of risks. This means that the teacher must recognize that the parents (adults) are always present in the situation when their child learns, i.e., they are always present when their child spontaneously engages in the learning activity. They want to protect him/her because reality is not without its dangers.

The point of this discussion is that the forms achieving consciousness takes (the ways it is observable for description) emanate from the activities of the child him/herself. Hence, these forms, as a primary factor, are introduced so that it can be verified to what extent they are allowed to function in various spontaneous life situations.

Since there must be a harmony between the spontaneous forms which achieving consciousness takes, and the forms of the learning situation created by the adults, the forms of the adults' teaching interventions also are considered. In other words, first, the ways achieving consciousness is manifested is considered, and then the ways in which the parents give form to the situation within which the learning activities of their child can be actualized.

By penetrating to the forms of the child's learning intention, the focus of the discussion is on the activities themselves. When the adults' (teachers') activities in this regard are investigated, the educative-teaching situation must serve as the point of departure. For orienting the reader to the matter of forms of expression of the learning intention, once again, it is important to indicate that the learning activity cannot be reduced to a simple process of intellectual consciousness.

In this discussion, learning is viewed as a person's way of being. For this reason, a person is involved in the learning activity as a totality, and this totality must be observable in the forms the learning intention takes. In an introduction of this nature, the idea is not to discuss each of these forms in detail. Thus, they are very simply typified and systematized to serve as an introduction to possible categories (essences) of learning.

The typification of the forms of the learning intention is established merely to focus on essential information. The aim is that, in this way, eventual gaps in the discussion of the categories can possibly be avoided. In this regard, this first discussion is simple, in the sense that the learning activity is seen in these ways in the lifeworld. Each adult can observe and order these forms in his/her interventions with a child without necessarily accounting for his/her observations and findings in a formal, scientific way. Scientific findings regarding the constituents of the learning activity (its categories) cannot be avoided in an introduction of this nature and are offered next.

#### **4.1 Observing (perceiving)**

A person has sense organs at his/her disposal which he/she can use while learning to discover aspects of reality, such as temporal duration, form, color, size, weight, distance, sound, and taste. Thus, it is in terms of these sensory abilities that a person can explore and learn to know the reality surrounding him/her. Hence, a person's ways of learning are possible because he/she can see, hear, feel, smell, and taste, and that these senses enable him/her to systematize and order the reality around him/her. At first, for a small child, this reality is undifferentiated and diffuse. However, later he/she learns, according to his/her own experiences, preferences, or anticipations, to relate to this diffuse or unstable structure, and its aspects in particular ways and, in doing so, he/she can master it.

Eventually, a child can recognize structures, and in the recurrence of certain situations, he/she can repeat an activity which he/she had carried out before and which, depending on the demands of the situation, is evidence of greater insight and proficiency.

A child uses all senses to perceive the reality around him/her. This perceiving, as an aspect or moment of the learning act, as it is spontaneously manifested in the child's lifeworld, is especially important because the child is forced to interpret reality, and to differentiate the sense or meaning of its contents and remember them. In perceiving, the child forms his/her own likes and dislikes, which are particularly important for his/her educating.

#### **4.2 Playing**

For any parent or adult who has anything to do with children, it is obvious that they play and, in playing they also learn. For a very long time, prominent pedagogues have described play as a way of being. The most important aspect of this description is summarized: A child lives spontaneously and completely in his/her play. In this way, he/she casts him/herself to reality and, in playing, he/she continually creates new realities for him/herself. It is especially exploration which appears clearly in his/her play activities and is of particular significance for the teacher. During this exploratory (play) activity, the child unhesitatingly turns to his/her field of perception, and the ordered identities (characteristics) which he/she has discovered about reality through perceiving are investigated further, and he/she learns to know them better. Even the smallest details captivate a child in his/her play and can keep him/her involved for a long time.

The fact that a child surrenders him/herself in spontaneous and affective (emotional) ways to the theme or object of his/her play is of didactic significance. However, the reader must understand that the child's exploratory activity is not merely limited to his/her play activities, although it is manifested in them.

### **4.3 Talking**

Various pedagogues have indicated that a child's greatest single achievement is acquiring language. Acquiring language puts the whole of reality in a child's potential grasp so that, by controlling his/her language, he/she also controls reality.

On the other hand, language is the most important factor which brings about good progress in the child's learning activities in the spontaneous lifeworld. An additional aspect of language in learning is that the child's possessed learning can be judged in terms of his/her language.

In his/her spontaneous learning activity, the use of language is conspicuous in two ways: first, by means of language, a child asks questions by which he/she places the whole of reality in his/her field of consciousness; second, he/she names things which appear in his/her field of vision. Giving names, which occurs by means of language, does not have to do only with naming, but also with the child giving reality an identity by means of language. When a child

gives identity to reality by means of language, it becomes meaningful for him/her.

The function of language has a further didactic meaning because, when a child names reality, he/she objectifies it or distances him/herself from it. This means that language makes possible the distancing and objectifying tendency of achieving consciousness.

#### **4.4 Imitating**

Each parent or adult who deals with a child is aware that the child imitates reality and the adult's activities. To the extent that the world, in its outward form and its contents has changed, to that degree, the child's imitations change to keep up with the changed reality.

It is understandable and correct that the adult supports the child in his/her imitating, merely because he/she is being gradually steered in the direction of the adult lifeworld. Even a perfunctory look shows that there is no aspect of the adult lifeworld which is not taken up in the child's imitating. In this respect, imitating also is a matter of the child's achieving consciousness. Accordingly, as themes of his/her imitations, one thinks of religion, social customs, sports, and recreation, economic activities, and transactions, death, sickness, and marriage. The child's imitation of the adult lifeworld is really evident in his/her play. On the other hand, it also is true that, in his/her imitating, he/she attempts, in practical and in meaningful ways, to apply to his/her everyday situations his/her experiences of what he/she has seen his/her parents and other adults practice. For this reason, his/her imitating also shows a truly creative aspect.

In his/her imitating, a child experiences the enjoyment of success as well as the disappointment of failure. When he/she fails, he/she looks for tools and implements for creating a reality which is in harmony with his/her original perceptions. Since his/her imitating is rather a fantasized creation of reality, in this respect, this reality is not dangerous to him/her. Thus, imitating gives a child the opportunity to learn and achieve and, in this respect, it is one of the most important forms of his/her spontaneous learning intention. Because of its nature, imitating, which a child does so spontaneously, is of particular importance to the teacher, even in formal situations.

## 4.5 Fantasizing

Achieving consciousness is also realized by means of the child's fantasy (however naive it might be) to establish a unique lifeworld. Because fantasy usually functions naively and spontaneously, the learning activities which spring from it do not provide a child with a perspective on the matter. This also is understandable considering the foundation of fantasy.

On the other hand, however, it is true that by fantasizing, a child makes representations for him/herself of aspects of reality, and, in this way he/she anticipates the future, however unrealistic this also might be. What is of particular significance for the teacher is that this tendency to anticipation is so clearly observable in the child's spontaneous learning activities, and they are the basis for the teacher guiding him/her to better and more clearly deal logically with the anticipated reality.

Orthopedagogic research shows that a child who does not adequately implement his/her imagination feels lost in tomorrow's reality.

Although a child's flights of fantasy are often amusing to the adult, they are an extremely serious matter because, as a matter of achieving consciousness, they are of great significance for his/her spontaneous learning activities. On the one hand, in this way, a child creates a new reality for him/herself, but, on the other hand, in his/her flights of fantasy, he/she is anticipating his/her future reality.

## 4.6 Working

The child's imitation of the activities adults carry out in their lifeworld leads naturally to work. Although this work often is not productive, to the child it is very serious. When he/she spontaneously ventures into the work situation, he/she feels the urge to do something him/herself, producing something, experimenting with something, and, finally producing something visible, which shows a resemblance to the everyday activities of the adults he/she identifies with.

Just as in the adult's lifeworld, the child's work is characterized by skillfulness, insight, and the use of his/her powers of observation. The work which a child carries out in this/her spontaneous situation is, a matter of achievement, of being grown up, of ingenuity, of foresight, of judgment, and of self-criticism.

In this respect, it is important to note that the work he/she is led to in his/her imitating has the effect of accumulating and broadening the achievements, as aspects of his/her spontaneous learning. These ways of acting in the child's form of living, give the adult the opportunity to eventually give him/her tasks or assignments, and engage him/her as a person in full-fledged ways in the family's course of living. When this spontaneous learning is lacking, these simple acts of work cannot be actualized; and the child knows this intuitively. It is for this reason that he/she exerts him/herself in spontaneous ways by throwing him/herself into reality as a learner and, in doing so, he/she achieves as a person him/herself.

#### **4.7 Repeating**

In the spontaneous being together of adult and child in the original experience of educating, it is conspicuous that types of situations are continually repeated. For example, a child repeats the activity of tying his/her shoes, there is continual attention to table manners, clothing, cleanliness, etc. Repetition is peculiar to a child's life situation and, therefore, he/she also orients him/herself to reality in this way. In this respect, the child's task is that, by virtue of his/her involvement in life situations, he/she must be disposed to achieve with respect to this tendency to repeat, which he/she shows in the educative situation.

Achievements such as skillfulness and judgment are refined by repetition and, in this way, it offers him/her greater suppleness regarding the demands of reality. This tendency to repeat clearly is a matter of practicing and drilling, without which the spontaneous learning intention simply will not develop further and will stagnate on an inadequate level. It is interesting and important to note that repeating types of situations in which the child's skills are improved are not boring to him/her. The reason probably is that repeating the types of situations provides the opportunity for his/her skills to be put on a higher level. On the other hand, repeating the situations gives the child the opportunity to demonstrate his/her

achievements. In this regard, then, he/she shows his/her independence with respect to the activity.

Repetition, which also is so peculiar to the child's leaning activity, is of extraordinary importance for the teacher, especially because it so directly affects his/her ability to achieve, and the level of his/her achievement.

This discussion of the forms of the spontaneous learning intention is not necessarily complete. What is important though is that they certainly are basic or primary when one observes a child in spontaneous life situations. When the categories of learning are described later in this chapter, each of these spontaneous learning intentions is brought up again.

Before viewing the learning categories more closely and describing them in more detail, it is important to quickly view the parents' spontaneous teaching activities correlated with the child's spontaneous learning activities. The reason for this is that it is important in a didactic introduction of this nature to try to gauge the didactic implications of these activities.

Moreover, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, it is important to understand that a penetration of the learning categories must serve to enable the teacher to then create formal situations so that the child's learning activities (also spontaneous learning activities) can be carried out in them in the most effective and clearest ways. As also noted before, a parent does not simply allow his/her child to arbitrarily meddle with reality, but he/she creates situations within which this involvement of the child in surrounding reality (spontaneous learning activities) is given form based on the contents which are unlocked for him/her. This mutual relationship between the child's spontaneous going out to reality and the parent's spontaneous creation of teaching/learning situations is of primary importance to the teacher. For this reason, it is important to see how the parent's spontaneous teaching activities reflect the child's spontaneous learning activities.

## **5. THE PARENT'S SPONTANEOUS TEACHING ACTIVITIES BASED ON THEIR CHILD'S SPONTANEOUS LEARNING ACTIVITIES\***

---

\* Some paragraphs have been rearranged to correspond more closely to the four basic or fundamental forms of teaching.



To penetrate the spontaneous learning activities of the child, when we take as our point of departure the learning situation in which the child finds him/herself, it is conspicuous that the adult purposefully and consciously creates opportunities and situations for him/her to spontaneously learn. This spontaneous learning situation captures the nature of the original experience of non-formal educating. The adult intuitively senses the child's learning-directed intentions, and intuitively creates situations within which spontaneous learning can occur. Thus, in the original educative situation, the child is the recipient of teaching which arises and progresses spontaneously.

When we now shift to viewing the adult in this spontaneous learning and teaching situation, it is evident that his/her activities correspond to or correlate with the spontaneous learning activities of the child, and this is discernible in the ways he/she accompanies his/her child so the forms of learning can be actualized. The basis for the adult's teaching activities is very simple--because the child wants to learn, the adult wants to help him/her learn. The unity which arises in this way reflects a splendid harmony between the child's spontaneous going out to reality (learning) and the adult's spontaneous creation of learning situations (teaching). The harmony which the teacher strives for in the formal classroom situation comes down to the harmony between the forms he/she creates, and the child's potentialities for spontaneously learning in this situation. For this harmony in the original experience of educating to be possible, the adult's teaching activities must arise as correlates of the child's spontaneous learning activities.

### **5.1 The child plays--the adult shows him/her how to play**

The fact that parents play with their children in the everyday occurrence of life is obvious. However, what is less conspicuous, and often not even noticed, is that gaps arise in the child's play which can only be bridged by the adult. These gaps arise because the child does not necessarily have at his/her disposal adequate knowledge, skills, or judgment to allow the play to progress meaningfully, or to allow it to come to a meaningful conclusion. What, perhaps, is even less conspicuous, and of particular importance here, is that the authority of the adult is continually invoked to interpret the rules of play by which the child's judgment of right and fairness is developed, and decisions are made regarding the rules to be followed.

Adults are often stimulated to lead the child when he/she plays. The adult's leading has a strong character of teaching (a didactic character), and, in this regard, play offers a basic form within which the act of teaching can be actualized. One sees this when an adult dramatizes a course of play for the child. By dramatizing play, the adult presents the child with an aspect of reality with the aim that it is made available to him/her in a real, vivid, life-related way. The parent does this with the aim that, in this way, his/her child him/herself will appropriate the contents presented to him/her.

## **5.2 The child observes--the adult points out**

The adult has an intuitive insight into the meaning of perceiving (observing), as a child's way of learning and, therefore, he/she continually points out things (objects, etc.) to the child. The idea here is that the adult isolates and directs the child's attention to an aspect of reality, but not to the extent that the adult exemplifies the things or the contents to the child. Because the adult (parent) primarily is an educator in the educative situation, it is important to him/her that his/her child's observing becomes differentiated, reliable, and independent.

Pointing out, with the aim that the child will observe, certainly is one of the most basic, elementary aspects of the activity of teaching. Also, it is one of the most important aspects of teaching a small child, such as one meets in the family. This form of teaching is of particular importance for the child simply because it is concrete and direct. A parent, however, does not view this as teaching; rather, he/she sees it as an ordinary life occurrence which is commonplace and meaningful in his/her involvement with his/her child.

## **5.3 The child imitates--the adult demonstrates**

The imitation of the adult by the child in his/her spontaneous intention to learn, is possible because he/she identifies him/herself with the adult. This means that the child wants to be like an adult, but further, it means he/she him/herself wants to be an adult. The fact that an adult acts, does things, is busy, etc. is particularly important to a child, and he/she wants to imitate these activities. Thus, the adult's activities bring about a rich variety of possibilities for the child to imitate. The adult exploits this inclination by teaching the child in informal ways in the everyday life situation,

knowing that, in this way, he/she will learn. The reciprocal relationship between the child's imitating and the adults' demonstrating is of particular importance to the didactician. Once again, here, a harmony is indicated which provides the child with the possibility to spontaneously learn in a meaningful way.

The adult's demonstrations require patience, persistence, and tolerance. When the adult neglects to demonstrate, the child asks the adult to do so. For this reason, the adult's example or demonstration is often highly situation-bound, and this also is especially true of the child's learning activity.

#### **5.4 The child talks--the adult prompts**

In the usual course of the family situation, a child asks questions whenever he/she experiences problems, and whenever he/she doesn't know something. He/she expects an answer to these questions.

Where a child is learning by means of language, the adult is spontaneously busy helping and supporting him/her by answering his/her questions, by providing explanations, and motivating, by distinguishing objects and things from each other, by describing and showing the usefulness of objects, by guiding the child to attribute values to certain matters, etc.

The communication-idea of spontaneous teaching is seen in the ways an adult, through language, accompanies a child in his/her spontaneous learning activities, and encourages him/her to investigate and master the contents surrounding him/her. In the prompting by the adult, it is important to note that he/she must reduce for the child complex matters and structures, so the child's spontaneous learning intention is not negated by the complexities and intricacies of such structures.

#### **5.5 The child fantasizes--the adult narrates**

Because the adult is intuitively aware of the importance of the child's fantasy in spontaneous learning activities, and because the child's fantasy is characterized by naiveté, the adult continually tells the child certain things. He/she tells him/her of his/her family history, stories, fairytales, personal experiences of all kinds, etc.

which, for a child, are an important source of enjoyment and information.

Through the narrations of the adult, a child experiences reality, although this reality possibly comes from the past or, at this stage, lies outside the child's field of experiences. Thus, the adult's narrative complements a child's experience, and the adult continually directs him/her, via the other forms of teaching/learning, to the contents in the adult's narration, which now have become important to the child. By means of this narrative form of teaching, the adult confronts the child with traditions, legends, opinions, beliefs, attitudes, etc.

Because a child's fantasy and the adult's narrative are so closely intertwined, there are few aspects of the spontaneous teaching activity which so completely captivate a child's attention, and so directly pique his/her curiosity as does the parent's narrations. In this regard, one cannot imagine that the spontaneous educative teaching in the family could be actualized without the parents' narration.

Irrespective of the source of the knowledge which narration offers the child, it often influences the intimacy of the relationship between the child and the adult, especially when one of the grandparents is involved. The narrative of a grandparent makes it possible for a small child to imagine and to build up a historical dimension for him/herself.

### **5.6 The child works--the adult gives assignments (instructions)**

For the parents, it is a well-known fact that when they are busy working (doing things) in the child's presence, often the child wants to help. He/she wants to help because he/she wants to do things for him/herself and, for this reason, the adult gives him/her assignments (instructions) to carry out.

The assignments themselves serve several aims in the spontaneous activity of teaching; the most striking is giving the child opportunities to display his/her skills, competencies, and talents. The parent also gives assignments (and instructions) to test each of these aspects in the child's life and, if necessary, he/she provides opportunities for their improvement. However, what is important here is that the child, in the execution of these assignments,

continually seeks and asks for the critique and judgment of the adults—he/she continually wants to know if his/her achievement of the assignment meets with the adult's approval.

The adult also offers criticism to the child in such a way that he/she eventually breaks through to self-criticism. On the other hand, an assignment has the effect of continually building up the child's sense of responsibility, especially regarding matters such as punctuality, obedience, neatness, accuracy, and enthusiasm. The parent's assignments meaningfully limit the child's freedom in the learning activity, and this provides the child with a feeling of stability and security in that his/her achievement of the assignment is delimited and made demonstrable.

### **5.7 The child repeats and so does the adult**

Because a child's learning activities must show a character of achievement (and this is expected by the adult), it is understood that the adult must continually repeat types of teaching situations to ensure that the child him/herself can acquire the ability to control and sustain the variety of contents which appear in his/her life-reality. These repetitions are not strange or unacceptable to a child; rather, he/she spontaneously welcomes them because they offer him/her the needed opportunity to practice. Repetition and practice are a part of everyday life where matters, events, and activities must be repeated.

The child's very nature requires that he/she participate in the occurring situation and, at the same time, that he/she demonstrates that he/she can hold his/her own in that situation. The adult repeats these situations to try to promote and eventually to ensure the child's independence.

The adult repeats these situations to try to elevate the independence of the child in such a way that this ultimately can be guaranteed. The adult knows that, even though a child possibly understands a matter, his/her understanding will not endure if there is no practice. The child's control of reality remains superficial, in the sense that he/she easily forgets important aspects of reality when they are not repeated and practiced.

In previous sections of this chapter, the spontaneous learning activities of the child in life situations are discussed briefly in terms

of his/her intentionality, as a directedness to learning and giving meaning, and as a precondition for learning are discussed briefly. Then, it is indicated that, in the original experience of educative teaching, learning is a mode of being (way of being or modus of Dasein).

The most conspicuous forms of a child's learning intention in spontaneous learning activities, namely, perceiving, playing, imitating, fantasizing, working, and repeating are described, and then the spontaneous teaching activities of the parents correlated with these learning activities are considered. It is important to indicate that these forms of the spontaneous intention to learn, and the parent's spontaneous teaching activities correlated with them, illustrate the mutual interaction between learning and teaching and that, in this interaction, they are in harmony with each other.

It is also important for the reader to realize that the forms of the spontaneous intention to learn now must be penetrated more deeply to disclose the categories of the learning activity as such. In that way, the implications of the categories of the learning activity and the task this confronts the teacher with to create formal learning situations in relation to the corresponding forms of teaching are focused on in Chapter 4.

In this respect, the question, now important for the teacher, is what is learning? The investigation and penetration of the learning phenomenon now must establish its constituents (categories which describe the phenomenon as it is). Separately and together, these categories must withstand the test of a person's experiential life that learning, indeed, is what the categories describe it to be.

Because the learning phenomenon is dealt with here from a didactic perspective, the intermeshing anthropological, psychological, and even philosophical backgrounds and findings related to this discussion are not involved in the descriptions. The reader must always realize that provision must be made in a formal [school] lesson situation for the categories of the learning activity which are described here by the forms which the teacher gives to the lesson situation so that learning can occur there.

## **6. THE CATEGORIES OF THE LEARNING ACTIVITY**

### **6.1 Perceiving**

Achieving consciousness, as discussed above, cannot achieve anything without perceiving. A person lives in a reality which directs an appeal so that it becomes available to him/her. A person becomes aware of surrounding reality through perceiving it. Here, perceiving is viewed as a form of being directed (intentionality). A person's being-directed concerns his/her consciousness and, as such, it is focused on the reality which appears to him/her. Through perceiving, it is possible that total impressions are constituted into meaningful details. It is important to note that perceiving, as such, is a primordial given, i.e., perceiving cannot lead back to or be reduced to a cause.

An additional aspect which perceiving makes possible, other than, e.g., its fantasy character, is that it is a judgment of reality (a judgment grounded in the reality at hand). Also, perceiving is not a purely physiological "process". In this respect, it must be indicated that even other important factors in the learning activity, e.g., a person's previous experiences, cannot restrict the sensing which stands out in perceiving. The reason is that perceiving is an intentional act of achieving consciousness. For this reason, it is focused on the question of giving meaning, which is necessarily present in each act of perceiving.

Giving meaning is not the result of a physiological process. A person lived experiences sensations when he/she perceives, irrespective of the quality of his/her knowledge about the matter previously acquired. The perceiver is focused on meaningfully clarifying [the object of] his/her perceiving, to the extent that he/she can place what he/she perceives in a meaningful field and order it. Perceiving also cannot merely be reduced to conceptualizing--the conceptual, regarding the perceived, arises formally when language is implemented as a system of ordering the perceived piece of reality. This is distilled out by verbally describing a structure of the nature disclosed by thinking.

It is in this way that perceiving brings about an order and classification out of the total surrounding reality and gives meaning to it. The fact that reality is ordered by perceiving means, on the one hand, that an object's place in the whole is indicated and, on the other hand, that the essence of an object is brought to the surface.

The question which is now asked is how perceiving appears in a person's learning. This is a question of the forms of perceiving as they manifest themselves in the lifeworld. Before the essential forms of perceiving are described, it is important to indicate the ways perceiving functions in learning.

Four functions of perceiving are considered briefly. Because a person also is present as a totality in perceiving, it is not strange that it has a strong subjective-dynamic character. That is, perceiving does not deal only with establishing the factuality of an object. Because of the totality of the perceptual act, a person is involved with the object perceived. Each person sees an object differently, and, in this sense, it is subjective. Consequently, perceiving leads to a unique assimilating and broadening of a perceivable reality. Further, perceiving continually offers details which are compiled into meaningful totalities by achieving consciousness, especially in their functional connections and relations. This is of didactic significance because the entire principle of object-teaching rests on this, in the sense that the presentation itself presumes an analysis of these meaningful connections. In the learning activity, that which is lifted out by the analysis is compiled into a synthesis or a structure, or insight into the essence of the matter.

Because perceiving is focused on analyzing the perceived into its essentials, finding essentials makes it possible for the perceiver to know the greater reality represented by the object. In this respect, perceiving is exemplary or categorical in nature. Because it is, it presents a synthesis of understandable generalities and perceivable concreteness. In this way, it is possible that an analysis, which occurs in perceiving a concrete matter, has validity in a general sense for the perceiver because the concrete is a representative illustration (exemplar) of an aspect of reality. To illustrate this matter, one can look at a stool, a palm tree, a bulbous plant, etc. Each of these objects is itself an example of stools, palm trees, and bulbous plants so that an exhaustive knowledge of all possible individual stools, etc. is unnecessary.

For the teacher, this is an extremely important matter. Because perceiving has an exemplary or categorical character, it is possible to reduce the contents to their essentials for teaching. In the learning activity, these essentials can be built up by synthesis into a structure or insight into the essence of what is being perceived. Closely connected with its exemplary and categorical character,



perceiving also is developmental in nature. The perceiving person searches for the first way or form of appearance of an object to understand its essence as it develops in time. The idea here is that a child's perceiving moves progressively from the simple appearance of an object to the more complex. From a model of the workings of an internal combustion engine, a child can acquire an understanding of the complex machinery which exists today. In this regard, a perceiver searches the simplest or earliest form of the internal combustion engine.

This discussion has significance for the teacher, in the sense that, now his/her task is to construct exemplary structures for perceiving so that its developmental nature is reflected in them.

Apart from the subjective, categorical, and developmental nature of perceiving, it also is comprehensive. This is seen in that many groups of perceptions can lead to a comprehensive understanding. For example, before a child can master a comprehensive and pure concept such as "climatic regions", he/she must be presented with many groups of perceivable material. In the same way, a child must first perceive and become acquainted with several sonnets before he/she can get a comprehensive understanding of "sonnet".

In the light of the functioning of perception in the learning activity, we can now view the various forms in which perceiving is manifested.

### **6.1.1 Pre-objective perceiving**

This form of perceiving is described well by the old expression, "He looks, but he doesn't see". Everyone stares at one time or another without truly seeing something. When he/she does this, in fact, he/she looks "through" an object or person which is before him/her merely because his/her thoughts are elsewhere.

With this kind of perceiving, he/she cannot give an account of what he/she is observing. Indeed, he/she can say what he/she thinks about it, and possibly his/her course of thinking is involved in the object before him/her. However, this means he/she does not "see," but "thinks" reality. If pre-objective perceiving is to become focused on [attended to], something must happen to focus consciousness. That is, something must occur to focus the looking, hearing, tasting,

feeling, etc. before there can be perceiving, as such. Only if there is a focus is there a field of perception.

Pre-objective perceiving cannot materialize the dynamic, functional ordering and integrating so peculiar to perceiving. In this respect, pre-objective perceiving has a clear character of "absence". It also is understandable that this pre-objective perceiving does not support the learning activity, as such. To focus pre-objective perceiving, it is especially movement which serves to delimit the staring field of visions, as passive, and focus attending on what is to be perceived. This is a particularly important matter for the teacher because a child's attention span does not always remain adequately focused on what needs to be perceived. For the focus to happen, especially in teaching young children, the teacher first lets the children carry out a movement, or the teacher moves him/herself in front of the class.

### **6.1.2 Perfunctory perceiving**

In perfunctory perceiving, a person orients him/herself in a familiar setting or regarding something he/she knows or presumes that it must be of a certain nature. Here, there is no detail. Matters are viewed, ordered, and integrated in their general totality.

Here perceiving is directed to acquiring an overview of things in the field of vision by which the sense of the synoptic perception is eventually established. Perfunctory perceiving is implemented to search for meaningful relationships of the things as they thrust themselves into awareness. Perfunctory perceiving goes beyond the factual immediacy (imminence) of the things in his/her visual field. In this transcending, what is perceived is perceived as a whole, in anticipation of a situation which must follow, a situation which possibly must be brought about and within which perceiving will occur in a more refined way.

Through perfunctory perceiving, the connection of reality and the possibilities within one's reach are established and, for this reason, it brings about a reliable association between a person and the things around him/her.

As far as teaching is concerned, this is particularly important because perfunctory perceiving has a high orientational value. It also has unusual significance, in the sense that it establishes a

constant reality, and the constant possibilities of it. What appears in a person's field of vision is immediately recognized or known, as such, while the truly unique activity structure is immediately determined by it—thus, one can act with firmness.

Two important actions follow from this perfunctory perceiving which are particularly important for the teacher: here there is mention of verification and of schematization. Since a person's learning activity is continually moving from the known to the unknown, he/she reaches back to what he/she knows to be able to grasp what is not yet in his/her horizon of knowledge. In this regard, verification and schematization have didactic significance.

In perfunctory perceiving, there is a possibility that one reaches back (regressive move) to control known aspects to see if the perception of the new in any way corresponds to it. The schematizing which perfunctory perceiving leads to, also allows a person to grasp, in advance (progressive), possible connections of matters appearing in the field of vision. Perfunctory perceiving, because of the verifying and schematizing it makes possible, is particularly important for the pure orientation and anticipation which largely determine the further and attentive progress of the course of learning. Schematizing is very important for the progress of the learning activity, i.e., it creates the possibility to grasp, in advance, and to go beyond the data of the perceptual situation to understand the meaning of the object in the field of perception.

### **6.1.3 Objective perceiving**

Objective perceiving is linked to the perceiver's aim. In objective perception, the intention is directed to a matter, and it is possible that other relevant matters are shifted to the background. This means the perceptual intention (consciousness as intentionality) takes the object out of the background and makes it available for special and penetrating perception. It is for this reason that objective perceiving is so important for teaching.

In a teaching situation, the object of perception must summons attending so the object or matter will be of such a nature that the perceiver can place it in his/her experiential field as familiar. The quality of the appeal from the object also can be of such a nature that it awakens the perceiver's curiosity so that he/she wants to know what the nature of this object or matter is.

To satisfy this quality, the act of perceiving must ensure the perceiver that what he/she perceives is meaningful. As far as teaching is concerned, the object used in teaching must appear such that a clarification of its ways of appearing is or will be necessary, or desirable, or enjoyable.

If this must be reached, again, there is differentiating, ordering, and integrating. When a perceiver differentiates, orders, and integrates, the structure perceived is obscured, because the perceiver considers the qualities, judgments, choices, etc. regarding the matter as important. These qualities, judgments, and choices are evidence that he/she has attributed sense and meaning to the object. In this way, perceiving is a link in the total chain of learning activities. Therefore, this creates a unity with what is learned, and which now must be kept in view regarding what the person has yet to learn in the future.

The reader must understand that perceiving is not an isolated function. Thus, it cannot be viewed apart from other aspects or moments of conscious life, and there must be an awareness that perceiving also is determined by other aspects or moments of the learning activity.

One cannot talk of perceiving without considering thinking, and language. The reason is that what is perceived, in the first place, must be ordered. Ordering implies that important aspects of perceived reality must be differentiated from less important aspects, and what belongs together must be united. This differentiation also is a matter of perspective, in that what is important is more prominent in the landscape than what is less important. What is less important is not unimportant for the object, as such, because it provides the atmosphere within which more meaning can be allocated to the object perceived. Perceiving, therefore, is perceiving in a particular situation.

In this situation, meaning is given to what is perceived, which leads to perceiving as an event being exceeded in the interpretation which necessarily flows from it. In this regard, the close connection between perceiving and thinking is clearly noted. The thoughtful ordering of the perceived object and field of perception is possible because language is available to a person to accomplish an ordering of reality. This is important to the teacher: he/she must realize that

language is the immediate companion of perceiving. Language is how ordering neutralizes meaningless and chaotic perceiving. This guarantees that the learning child will form concepts and integrate them regarding a perceived reality.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that perceiving, language, and thinking are an inseparable trinity, a harmony which presents itself in the original form of the event of learning in the lifeworld. When a learning person gives sense to reality, this is permeated by his/her perceiving, and the interactions among perceiving, thinking, and languaging are shown.

Meaningful learning cannot occur without perceiving. Perceiving simultaneously leads to a broadening of and a broadened experiencing of what is in the learning child's reach. For the teacher, this guarantees the involvement of teaching.

Furthermore, the teacher must be mindful that the totality of perceiving is at the child's disposal, and what he/she brings with him/her to school, for a long time will be the basis of his/her learning activities. If perceiving in school is not recognized for its significance in learning, an unnatural separation is made between the child's learning activities and the schools learning aims. Such a separation has the effect that the learning activities will have an artificial and a foreign-to-life character. A further consequence is that the classroom is not true to reality. For the teacher, the implication is that the reality (contents) to be made available to the child's perceiving must be prepared.

The fact is that because perceiving is so subjective, a child sees the contents from his/her own lifeworld and, in this way, he/she perceives the learning contents. Thus, he/she concentrates his/her attention on matters which, to him/her seem important and interesting. However, there also is the possibility that the child will only perceive perfunctorily and will leave the classroom without really having constructed his/her own perspective on the perceived aspects about which the lesson is concerned. The teacher must remember that a child will base his/her perceiving on the fundamental activity of collecting, and ordering similarities and differences. This ordering of similarities and differences directs two tasks to the teacher. To collect and order the lesson contents, the child must analyze them. He/she also must compare the immediately preceding perceptions and experiences to be able to

integrate the presented learning contents with them. Here, the ultimate didactic aim is to use anticipation, and to help the child in terms of both aspects with the prospect of ordering future contents and problems of the matter which arise. It is only then that previous experience, as well as immediate perceptions are of real significance for the learning activity.

In practice, the teacher repeats already experienced and perceived learning contents so they can be linked up with the new learning contents because, without this, anticipating cannot become a purposeful activity for the child. Thus, in the first place, this does not have to do with practicing. There is repetition to promote the integrating and to bring about ordering again so the pupil can understand the future direction or progress (therefore, also the aim) and direct the way additional contents are presented to him/her and, in this way, direct the teacher's unlocking of contents.

The reader should note that the matter of experiencing, as it is also incidentally considered with the question of perceiving, is the second category of learning which must be penetrated.

## **6.2 Experiencing**

Aristotle noticed and typified the relationship and connection between learning and experiencing with the pronouncement that experiencing is the foundation of learning. Accordingly, experiencing is the necessary beginning of learning because perceived particulars are generalized in experiencing and, in this way, are affirmed as valid. From the nature of teaching, experiencing is of special significance because the learning activity, which is so peculiar to teaching, makes new experiences possible for a child.

A person's experiencing is not the sum of his/her separate daily life realities. It cannot be understood apart from the theory of intentionality. The relationship between intentionality (achieving consciousness) and experiencing is that there is a unity between learning and experiencing. It is for this reason that one cannot obtain a grasp of reality without experiencing it.

This has important implications for didactics because experiencing enables a person to interrogate unknown reality. Experiencing also is a person's possibility for being with reality. In this respect, it is a

matter which stimulates a person's original interest in surrounding reality and, therefore, is responsible for the fact that a relationship between person and reality continually increases in breadth and depth.

For a child, experiencing means an initial and penetrating grasp of the matters appearing in his/her life horizon. Simultaneously, it provides the primary and fundamental possibility for a relationship between him/her and the things surrounding him/her. The fact that experiencing makes it possible for a person to interrogate reality is just as important for teaching because of a person's experiencing, reality can be anticipated. When a person experiences reality, data about that reality are made available to him/her. For example, a child perceives that rain comes from the sky. This perception places certain aspects of reality in his/her relationships in the foreground as obvious or conspicuous; for example, a child perceives that rainwater flows into little streams and later into the river. The perception of this piece of reality (falling rain) is incomplete, as far as rain is concerned, because various other aspects of this cannot be seen (for example, patterns of air pressure and rising air, which cause condensation, and which results in rain), but this can be presumed or hypothesized by the child.

An aspect he/she cannot perceive, but which he/she can presume to be is known as anticipation. To discuss perceiving, as a category of learning, the meaning of anticipation is broached. However, what is of importance is that anticipating is an inseparable and essential part or moment of experiencing. In experiencing, anticipating works in a complimentary way, in the sense that it gives rise to pre-understandings and consequences which are not necessarily denotable. In this way, perceiving is transcended in experiencing, and a person can gain insights by anticipating what cannot be found in direct perceiving. Anticipating from experiencing, and the transcending of direct perceiving are of didactic significance because, in the first place, this is a matter of achievement.

The connection between learning and experiencing is recognized everywhere. The usual explanation of this connection is that the learning activity is to be understood from its achievement (learning effect), and that learning is available for evaluation in the learning achievement. This approach is logical and acceptable. However, when the phenomenon of learning itself is examined (i.e., viewed categorically), it is important to ask the question of whether the

learning achievement can be understood from the learning activity. The conclusion from this question is that learning is not merely the result of experiencing. It is possible that experiencing is also the result of learning. This means that the learning activity, in the sense of possessed learning, is not only a possible result of experiencing, but that experience is a necessary result of learning. It follows necessarily from experiencing that new or qualified learning activities will enter the foreground. In this respect, learning is a result of experiencing. This implies that each experience necessarily has learning consequences. Further, this conclusion means that, as far as learning is concerned, experiencing is not merely "learning to know", but also "a moving toward something new". Because of learning, the insights and concepts the child had constructed from previous experience are qualified or changed by his/her being able to investigate, penetrate, and understand the new reality presented to him/her in the classroom. In the spontaneous lifeworld, a child's experiences provide him/her with his/her first acquaintance with the world.

Two meanings can be attributed to the concept experience, in so far as learning is a matter of experiencing. On the one hand, experiencing means a simple, first acquaintance with [sensing of] something, i.e., a matter about which one acquires knowledge. On the other hand, experiencing grows and increases, and enables one to acquire something new, based on previous experience [by lived experiencing it].

In this sense, experiencing continually turns back on itself, especially to judge the possibilities of the new experience, and to give it meaning. This retrospective nature of experiencing is of didactic importance because it is in this way that formal learning occurs. Without the first acquaintance with something, this retrospective return to itself is not possible. For this reason, the act of learning is strongly attuned to foreknowledge, and the learning person is continually confronted with his/her foreknowledge when he/she learns via experiencing.

Experiencing and perceiving are the cornerstones of the spontaneous learning activity of a child in the lifeworld. However, both would be meaningless if the learning person could not proceed to the learning contents which come to him/her by way of experiencing and perceiving, order it objectively, and place it in his/her horizon of living and knowing. Ordering the contents is



possible because the child has language and thinking at his/her disposal, which allow him/her to build a meaningful structure of reality from his/her experiencing and perceiving.

The brief discussion of language in this chapter shows that it makes it possible for a person to distance him/herself from immediate reality. Without objectifying and distancing, ordering cannot occur, and if it doesn't, learning cannot be actualized. In this light, a third category of the activity of learning is exposed, namely, objectifying.

### 6.3 Objectifying

Learning is a matter of communication because the relations among language, thinking, and learning in the learning activity, form a solid unity. It is in the child's communicating with others, especially adults, that it becomes clear whether the child has learned. However, communicating is equally important in that a conversation is always about "something". In each conversation, there is always talk of objects, matters, or persons. In these conversations, the speaker talks "about" something; the conversational partners talk about some aspect of life reality. A conversation about things indicates that the conversational partners already know the matters about which they speak because these matters have been encountered before, and they have an attitude toward them.

The fact that persons talk "about" reality means that they have distanced themselves from it; that is, they remain "objective" about the matter. The fact that people talk about things means that these things have become objects for them; this is a product of understanding. In conversing about them, the "objects" are purely abstract concepts, and, for this reason, abstract concepts belong to the scientific thinking of persons.

However, it also is the case that, irrespective of the so-called "objects", there are "things" which loom up in a person's lifeworld which have a pre-scientific meaning, i.e., the person has not yet rendered a predication or judgment about the so-called thing. As far as the lifeworld of a child is concerned, in his/her pre-scientific world, there is little mention that objects exist in an abstract or purely scientific sense. Things in a child's pre-scientific world are concrete. The question now is how "things" in a child's pre-scientific world find a place in his/her lifeworld.

Before this question can be answered, it is necessary to consider three aspects. In the first instance, a “thing” in a child’s pre-scientific world is something about which he/she can talk, but which he/she cannot talk to, and where the thing also does not join in the conversation. Secondly, a “thing” is a matter of daily practice. It is something with which one can act, in the sense that it possibly can be a tool, but it cannot act itself. Third, especially in the child’s lifeworld, there is talk of things because they have an identity which can be talked about. As an example, a fork is something about which a person can talk, which does not join in the conversation and does not itself speak. Irrespective of the fact that one eats with a fork, it can appear to a person in other ways. For example, he/she can use a fork to remove a cap from a bottle, etc.

In this way, things are disclosed as objects, practices, and identities in one’s lifeworld, and it is especially important to indicate that, when one talks about these things, at the least, there must be an objectivity regarding them which amounts to a definite distance between the person and the things with which he/she is involved.

The fact that there is a distance between a person and the things which appear in his/her lifeworld means that he/she consciously directs him/herself to things and, by this reasoning, it follows that objectifying is a question of an intentional achievement. The question of importance here is how this minimum objectivity arises. In other words, mindful that objectivity also is a question of achievement, what intentional achievement realizes this distance between person and things?

Regarding this question, there are at least three aspects of a person’s intentional achievement required to accomplish minimum objectivity. One must first isolate the objects from him/herself, then identify them and, finally, he/she must name them. The intentional achievement (conscious directedness) exists, in that one can distinguish a person from other persons, a thing from other things, and a situation from other situations. The distinctions can be made perceptually or by practical actions. In other words, the learning person can make these distinctions in his/her perceiving a person, object, or matter, or he/she can do so in his/her everyday actions and, especially in the way he/she handles objects. The otherness of a person, matter, or activity makes isolating possible

because one person is not another, one thing is not another, and one activity is not the same as another.

Therefore, if there is no isolating, it is not possible for achieving consciousness to be able to objectify something. This means that consciousness cannot be fixated on one matter or another. Where isolating is absent, things among other things, or persons among other persons cannot be brought to the fore.

The deduction is that isolating, as activity, is a precondition for the fact that a person, or thing can be ascribed an identity; for example, “This person is my son”, or “This thing is a motor”. Now, it is important for the reader to note that identifying flows naturally from the act of isolating, because to attribute identity means to identify.

It also is important to indicate that identifying must not be confused with isolating. Identifying is primarily directed at determining the nature or character of something, with the aim that thereafter this matter or thing can be recognized. Where the child’s achieving consciousness is involved in learning, isolating, and identifying are clearly there, such that he/she can talk about the things. In his discussion of the matter, or thing, a child must name it, and, because the matter has a nature or character, and, therefore, an identity, the naming is consistent because the same thing is indicated with that name. In this way, naming is an essential activity, and is observable in language. Because the thing is named, it is possible to be able to talk about it without the thing itself having to be present. In this way, the thing becomes a concept and is added to the child’s possessed concepts. For example, if one recalls to awareness the concept “hammer”, it is a thing which one can strike something with, but one also knows that it is made of steel and is heavy.

If there isn’t an objective attitude, this means that achieving or intentional consciousness remains stuck in concrete experience and stagnates. Consequently, the learning child will be held fast by concrete things in such a way that, in their presence, he/she can only learn in terms of them. This also means that his/her perceiving and experiencing without distancing merely have immediate value for learning, and there will be no transferability to or recognition in other situations. Really, the matter is much worse—the child will not learn because he/she is so totally lost and

locked up in the concrete things that they only can have any meaning for him/her in the same sorts of situations. Thus, the child must learn to know each possible variation of the matter separately so that he/she can master the situation.

But since a child is continually involved in distancing (objectifying) him/herself from reality (by isolating, identifying, and naming objects), it is now possible for him/her to know an object such as, e.g., a “table” without learning to know it in all possible situations it can be involved in. The fact is that the table was isolated, identified, and named long before, and when a child is asked to say what a table really is, he/she can handle the concept, as such, although he/she possibly thinks of a specific table. A person’s objectivity makes it possible for objects to “arise” for him/her. This means that the child gives the matter or object its objectivity and not the other way around—nothing is objective for a child without him/her declaring it as such.

Objectivity makes it possible for a person to consciously take into view the surrounding reality. Objectivity has the additional effect of putting the totality of one’s experiencing and perceiving functionally within his/her grasp to reach things and look further, anticipate, order and, finally, learn about them.

Objectivity is not the same as an objectivistic attitude. As a category of learning, objectivity is a matter of ordering. The objective ordering of surrounding reality does not mean that these things can be placed alongside each other on the same level. In the learning situation, as it does in the spontaneous lifeworld, the child’s objective attitude has more to do with perspective. This means that certain things, matters, or events are placed in the child’s conceptual landscape where certain ones are more important than others. In his/her activity of objectifying, the child gives significance and meaning to the total reality which surrounds him/her, precisely because he/she has isolated, identified, and named its separate characteristics. For this reason, it is not possible to talk of learning without the objective attitude of the learning person also being there. The learning person’s perceiving in the learning situation confirms this statement.

Although the child him/herself objectifies the matters and things in a situation, it is possible that he/she can transfer his/her objective attitude to other situations. A child’s objective attitude makes the

accumulation and the progression of learning possible, in the sense that, in a situation where he/she is dependent on learning, because of his/her objective attitude, he/she can reach back to the experiences and perceptions which he/she has previously undergone, and implement them in the prevailing situation and, because of his/her insights, he/she can transfer the new insights to a possible future situation. For this reason, learning in the spontaneous lifeworld of a child also involves objectifying. The reader must understand that the child's subjective involvement in the matters which surround him/her rescue him/her from objectivism. This means that, although he/she distances him/herself from the matter, its appeal certainly remains directed primarily to his/her subjectivity (affectivity, or emotionality).

In the same way, the child's objective attitude protects him/her from being delivered to his/her own subjectivity—because he/she distances him/herself from matters, and can talk about them, their immediate presence is not necessary for him/her to give them meaning. The child's distancing from and objectifying of reality means that he/she “revokes” it and this necessarily gives rise to learning achievement. However, objectifying reality is incomplete if a child does not immediately establish a new reality for him/herself. This means that the learning activity, as such, cannot be realized if there is not mention of establishing or creating (constituting) reality. With this, we arrive at the following category of the learning activity.

#### **6.4 Constituting**

The concept constituting means that a person, to the extent that he/she is involved with reality, goes out to it and, because of its available structures, creates, or builds up or brings about his/her own insights, relationships, appraisals regarding that reality. In this light, perceiving, experiencing, and objectifying, as categories of learning, culminate in this act of constituting. Despite this, it also is true that there can be little mention of “achieving consciousness”, or of “intentionality” because the achievement of the achieving consciousness is visible in the fact that a person creates reality for him/herself. The quality of the created reality refers to the quality of the achievement.

Now, it must be understood that the creation of a personal reality by a child is not obvious. The fact is that to create reality, it must

already be known. And this means that there must have been previous learning. It is in the category of constituting that the interactive course of “knowing” and “learning” is most clearly evident.

For the teacher, this means that a child, by means of his/her achieving consciousness, continually creates a new reality for him/herself. If he/she does not constitute a reality for him/herself, there is no learning. Now, it is important to indicate that this activity of creating (constituting) a personal reality is seen in everyday life in terms of five facets. These five facets (communicating, synthesizing, transforming, lifestyling, and emancipating) are of exceptional significance, and are discussed further.

#### **6.4.1 Communicating with reality**

By means of language, a child can isolate, identify, and name aspects of reality, or things in it. In the previous discussion of language, it is noted that a child’s acquisition of language certainly is one of his/her greatest achievements.

It is almost obvious that this first aspect, language acquisition, is of primary importance in constituting a personal reality. It is also logical that the naming which the child does in learning, also must be further broadened to bring about distinctions and relationships with respect to things. The distinctions and relationships of the things the child encounters in learning, also require that he/she acquire an increasing notion of time. For example, a child must acquire and master concepts such as the days of the week, the months of the year, yesterday, and tomorrow, early and late, because he/she also must create a reality for him/herself with respect to them.

The fact is that a child not only creates reality for him/herself in space, but also in time. Therefore, he/she comes to all communicating with a notion of time. However, this notion of time remains isolated unless he/she also learns to broaden his/her communicating with reality into a spatial orientation. In his/her communicating with reality, he/she experiences things as near or far, high or low, flat or deep, etc. These examples are given merely to indicate that, in his/her communicating with reality, he/she is compelled to talk about these matters and, through language,

notions of time and concepts of space to proceed to order the things with deliberation. For example, there are types of food which he/she must be able to distinguish in his/her world of ideas and in talking about them. Eventually, he/she must be able to talk about the cloths he/she wears in terms of the materials they are made of and for what part of the body they are intended.

However, a child cannot communicate with or question reality if he/she cannot distinguish forms from each other. In his/her lifeworld, for example, there are objects which are round, flat, and thick, but there also are such things as circles, triangles, squares, etc. which are given meaning, which often emphasizes their function in the everyday lifeworld. A child's acquisition of language, notion of time, orientation, and differentiation of forms eventually lead him/her in his/her communicating to create his/her own lifeworld, and to make judgments. The child's judgments involve matters such as beautiful or ugly, better or worse, etc. and they eventually lead to the idea of what is right and wrong.

The fact that a child has acquired language, has a notion of time, can orient him/herself in the world, can distinguish forms from each other, and can make judgments are evidence to the adult that he/she has acquired specific insight into a particular reality. When a child's changed relationship to reality and to time is examined, the great scope of the everyday lifeworld, and his/her making it his/her own by means of his/her achieving consciousness, it is largely done by actualizing these aspects individually and collectively.

As for the didactic implications of this, the school subjects are organized in such a way that the constituting communication of the teacher's presentation of them serves to help the child actualize his/her relationship to reality. In this regard, language teaching is conspicuous. In history, and related subjects, the child is oriented to time. Subjects such as arithmetic, physics, music, and literature greatly promote his/her ability to order and distinguish various forms from each other. Finally, subjects such as religious teaching, guidance, and literature help him/her to decide what is beautiful, ugly, right or wrong.

#### **6.4.2 Synthesizing**

A child's communication with and about reality cannot be realized if he/she also is not able to synthesize or summarize information.

In the discussion of objectifying as a category of learning, it became clear that the things surrounding a child have a separate identity and meaning for him/her. However, he/she must be able to synthesize the things around him/her to be able to classify them according to everyday experience. Synthesis leads to concepts which make him/her much more flexible regarding that reality. A simple example of this is a concept such as “path”. “Path” in a child’s lifeworld is not merely limited to paved paths; they also are dirt paths, gravel paths, footpaths, or little animal paths. The most important aspect of learning in this respect is that the synthesis leads to new insights into and mastery of reality. The synthesis which a child arrives at eliminates his/her initial naiveté: to the extent that what he/she learns is, in time he/she will not be satisfied so easily.

Syntheses which let the child consciously work through the surrounding reality, force him/her to fathom the essence of the things which appear in his/her landscape, and to add this to his/her available knowledge. It does not matter if this occurs perceptually or experientially. What is important is that, in these ways, he/she eventually creates a lifeworld.

It is important to indicate to the reader that, in particular ways, constituting, in this respect, enables the child to anticipate reality and to intercept problems which would not be solvable without the synthesis. Synthesis also has a progressive or even prospective character, in the sense that it enables the child to unite two experiences such that a third possibility can be constructed from the synthesis.

### **6.4.3 Revising/changing**

To the extent that a child is involved in creating a personal lifeworld, he/she is involved in changing. This change is seen in that now he/she has a different outlook, attitude, or behavior toward reality.

The changes in the child during the learning act are matters of revision because he/she is continually involved in changing, or revising the image of reality which he/she has acquired. The revision to which he/she arrives from his/her own insights, relationships, involvements, etc. are a radical turn-about which affects his/her religious knowledge and conduct, and social-



normative actions. On the other hand, this revision brings about a differentiation in already existing insights; this means that they are refined and assimilated and establish a changed view of a particular reality. As far as the didactic is concerned, the revision which a child arrives at in learning is of significance, for the simple reason that if he/she has learned, he/she no longer is the same—the reality which he/she has learned does not leave him/her untouched.

#### **6.4.4 Lifestyling**

When a child changes and his/her relationship to reality has been revised, in constituting his/her own lifeworld, he/she acquires his/her own lifestyle. The revision he/she arrives at is unique because this is an enlargement and amplification of his/her own lifeworld. His/her personality is expressed in his/her own lifestyle and is seen in his/her act of learning. Quality in his/her going out to reality is particularly clear in his/her personal lifestyle: caution, hesitation, forwardness, self-confidence, recklessness, etc. are tendencies in his/her own lifestyle without which his/her learning could not be realized. In this respect, factors such as character, temperament, social background, etc., and their relationships are strongly emphasized in constituting as a category of learning.

#### **6.4.5 Emancipating**

Elsewhere it is stated that the younger a child is, the more “open” he/she is to reality. A little child naively accepts what an adult presents to him/her. It also is said that, possibly a child never learns as much as in the first six years of life. His/her open relationship to life is narrowly limited by his/her achieving consciousness. Over time, and to the extent that he/she learns, he/she shows a more closed attitude toward life by which he/she has become more formed, and shows better judgment. In this way, learning is a matter of attributing meaning, and of progressing to responsible judgments, and this assumes that he/she can eventually make independent choices and decisions.

In this respect, learning is emancipating. In this context, emancipating refers to a child purposefully, but also spontaneously, proceeding to delimit reality more closely and, at the same time, determine more closely his/her participation in it. Emancipating, in the sense of constituting, refers to giving an account of reality, and taking a standpoint with respect to it. Ultimately, emancipating

refers to the child him/herself giving an account of and taking responsibility for his/her actions and relationships to reality.

If one now examines constituting as a category of learning, along with its different aspects discussed above, in his/her achieving directedness to reality, a child is eventually able to give an account of and take responsibility for his/her actions. Educatively, this means that, with respect to the lifeworld he/she has created, or constituted for him/herself, he/she is able to responsibly answer the demands of the norms which speak in this reality. Where a child can him/herself answer the demands of norms, it is evident that he/she must be able to judge and criticize him/herself in his/her relationship to reality. Thus, the question of self-criticism is the grindstone of learning. For this reason, it deserves a brief discussion.

## 6.5 Criticizing

A child grows up in a milieu where norms are central in educating him/her. For this reason, exercising criticism is evident in educating, teaching, and learning. To the extent that criticism is involved in educating, it is important to indicate that learning is a matter of drawing distinctions and making decisions. Hence, learning is a matter of making choices so that, in this way, learning comes under criticism.

The core of the matter is the child's disposition—disposition is the basis of a child's activities and, therefore, it is the first aspect for judging them. Concerning the didactic, the child's disposition in the learning event, and how it is seen there are exceptionally important.

Criticizing comes to the foreground early in a child's life. However, it becomes clear in the form of self-criticism, when a child is involved in justifying his/her own actions in connection with the moral authority and judgment of his/her parents, who he/she imitates in his/her actions. A child is continually involved in making judgments about his/her learning activities.

Self-criticism of his/her own learning activities is important to understand because learning is a matter of ordering reality, and it is, by its nature, a question of norms and values.

The yardsticks or criteria inferred from these norms and values do not automatically find their way into a child's judging. A criterion functions in learning only if it is explained to and accepted by the learning person. This means a child him/herself must appropriate the criterion and apply it in his/her own judging. For this reason, it is important to understand that a child, where his/her own critical attitude is not yet possible, continually, and readily asks for criticism and judgment from adults. During learning, criticism is exceptionally important because, when it does not exist in the child, or outside him/her (in the adults), learning stagnates, and he/she cannot progress.

However, in the act of learning, intentionality or achieving consciousness cannot be directed against the voice of conscience, or against the norms of the milieu in which a child lives. It is in this light that the reader can understand the problem of criticism in the spontaneous learning situation, whether it is now self-criticism or is from outside.

The yardsticks and criteria inferred from norms offer achieving consciousness a security because a child feels that he/she is free to investigate the things he/she experiences in the lifeworld without fear that a moral account is going to be required. This means that, in a moral sense, the achievement is guaranteed by the prevailing criticism, so that the learning activity in other terrains, such as practice, can proceed relatively freely. Without this guarantee offered by criticism, in this sense, judgments (objectifications) in learning are not possible for a child because his/her perspective does not arise without considering already existing norms. Here it does not matter whether these are ethical or material norms. The child intensifies the criticism in the learning event by adopting for him/herself the norms which prevail with respect to things (contents). When this happens, it implies that a child uses criticism to give direction to his/her intention to learn to help direct its course. In this context, when criticism is accepted, the total human being does so, but a decline is seen in the child's emotional (affective) experiences which are closely connected with the role of criticism in learning.

The role of the affective (pathic, emotional) in the progress of the learning event is nowhere clearer than here. The reason is that, in this respect, there also is an inner learning attunement, i.e., an emotional surrender to the appeal of reality in the situation.

Surrender is possible because it creates a safe distance from criticism for a child and for achieving consciousness. Once again, here there is harmony between the external climate for learning and the inner attunement to learning. The adult sees this harmony as the child's intense directedness to learning.

However, it is important to indicate that the criticism unique to the learning person creates tension in the intentional act and, therefore, in the learning activity. The reason is that these two matters enter the foreground, namely, reality and the possibilities of the situation, and the learning child relates them to each other. In this regard, learning is always a matter of evaluating reality, and anticipating possibilities. However, neither evaluating nor anticipating is possible if criticism is not part of the learning. Criteria or judgments are necessary for both. Without criticism, the earlier experiences and perceptions of a child are largely isolated and, for this reason, cannot contribute to learning.

It is important for the teacher to note that the significance of this discussion for the classroom situation is that, without criticism, the accomplishments of a child and the quality of his/her activities fade away. For this reason, criticism has two aims in a formal teaching situation: first, it prevents complacency by a child and, second, it maintains a balance of learning with respect to meaningful achievement. Thus, here criticism serves the aim of elevating the level on which achieving consciousness moves. The teacher must take note that criticism is only valuable if it is timely, in accord with the child's readiness, and is clear and distinct. A child cannot intensify or accept vague criticism.

A teacher also must be selective in his/her criticism and direct it in accordance with the aim stated for the learning activity. Irrespective of the conciseness of criticism, the teacher must always remember that a child experiences the criticism as criticism of him/her as a total person.

The progress and course of purposive and directed learning become clearer if it is remembered that, early in a child's life, he/she experiences which he/she must comply with certain norms and, therefore, must be subjected to criticism. This means that what a child learns to do must be learned and carried out in accordance with certain norms or pronouncements, otherwise there is little learning in a positive sense. Learning activities not directed by

norms limit the child instead of providing him/her room. The aspects, among others, which are open to criticism are the direction of the learning activities, the meaning of the things which he/she learns to know, the relationship of the contents which he/she encounters and the images of reality which he/she constructs. A child's learning achievement remains provisional and tentative until he/she has subjected it to criticism. This verifies the achievement, and he/she can then be accountable for it.

The aim of distinguishing and describing these five categories of learning is to provide a more formal explication of the spontaneous, everyday learning acts and activities of a child. A child objectifies the reality surrounding him/her through perceiving and experiencing, and via implementing language and thinking. However, objectifying reality is inadequate if a child does not immediately create a new reality for him/herself. This constituting also is not valid until he/she verifies that it is real and valid through criticism. This means that criticism of the spontaneous learning act indicates that the adult shows a formal approach to the spontaneous learning which forces a child to give up his/her naïve activity structure and learn in a purposeful (conscious) way.

The five categories of learning taken up in this chapter, namely perceiving, experiencing, objectifying, constituting, and criticizing are not necessarily all the categories there are. It is important for the teacher to be aware of the findings of a general pedagogical-psychological nature, and even findings from the psychology of learning, because they also can influence the form of planning a lesson. For this reason, categories from these domains are briefly indicated.

## **7. A SUMMARY OF PEDAGOGICAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL DESCRIPTIONS OF CATEGORIES OF LEARNING WHICH DIRECTLY CONCERN DIDACTIC PRACTICE**

### **7.1 Memorizing [remembering] and reflecting**

When a child is consciously and purposefully directed to mastering knowledge which he/she already has acquired in such a way that he/she can reproduce it, there is mention of memorizing [remembering]. Memorizing and reflecting are closely related, where reflecting means consciously recalling representations, visual images, or already existing knowledge.

A child often carries out memorizing and reflecting by repetition. He/she repeats again and again to have contents directly and easily available for use in the further course of learning activities. In this respect, a child has definite limits; for example, he/she cannot evoke the information immediately, or in their entirety. However, he/she also has definite possibilities, e.g., he/she easily evokes experiences or specific details. In classroom practice, the practice lesson, or drill work, is the form in which both memorizing and reflecting can be realized. The experimental psychologist of learning believes that there is a very clear relationship regarding the quality and scope of the learning results and whether the acquired insights and knowledge have been memorized.

## **7.2 Fixating**

Because a learning person in a learning situation is addressed by either a general or specific problem, and to the extent that it demands his/her attention, he/she is inclined to deal with the problem with greater concentration or intensity. In this sense, one thinks that there is fixating, if there is learning. Fixating, as a category of learning, is especially visible when the learning person is emotionally involved in the problem. This is because then he/she is inclined to exclude other things or matters from his/her field of concentration, and to attend only to the problem before him/her. Then, achieving consciousness excludes problems, things, or matters for specific attention to which achieving consciousness can be directed.

It must be understood that fixating is not necessarily profitable or detrimental for learning; it is only peculiar to it, in the sense that the learning activity cannot come to a positive result without it. A concept such as “accentuating” information in learning explains fixating, without which a matter such as constituting is not possible.

## **7.3 Analyzing and synthesizing**

When learning is seen in thinking, then analyzing and synthesizing are two important aspects of the conscious learning activity. Analyzing and synthesizing are reciprocally related, and thus mutually influence each other.

Analyzing a whole which appears to the learning person, always depends on the characteristics on which its subparts rest. The implication of this is that pure analysis is not merely directed to investigating the parts, elements, or characteristics of the whole, but it also searches for the mutual relationships or connections among the parts, elements, or characteristics. In this way, the analysis is carried out, not merely to constitute the whole from its parts, but also to restructure the whole. Restructuring refers to showing new connections (correlations) among the parts, elements, or characteristics and, in this respect, it also is a matter of synthesis. Thus, a synthesis will form a new, meaningful whole from the parts.

#### **7.4 Integrating**

When a child learns, there is always an acquisition of knowledge. One sees this in the everyday lifeworld in which a child's expressions make us mindful that the knowledge the child has acquired becomes his/her own possession, i.e., this knowledge is unique to him/her.

The conclusion is that there can be no learning if a child has not made the knowledge his/her own possession. Integrating, as a category of learning, means that the learning child has previously acquired amounts of knowledge at his/her disposal, and the newly acquired knowledge is taken up and integrated with this already existing whole of knowledge. This integration is not only directed to the intellectual or cognitive aspect of a child, but it simultaneously involves his/her cognitive and affective aspects. Thus, in this way, it influences all the activities of the achieving consciousness. In this sense, integrating, once again emphasizes that the total person of the child is involved in learning.

#### **7.5 Restructuring**

The concept restructuring is used to show that, in the progress of learning, when the learning person has so changed a concrete-visible field or totality of observable data which now forms a new whole or structure because of abstract insights into the relationships and possibilities which he/she has shown, there also is learning. To better understand this statement, it is indicated that, by an abstract solution to a problem in concrete data, e.g., when a person reads a map to visualize the area of the other side of a mountain, the image of the whole of the observable data is changed into a new structure.

The new structure is formed on the abstract insight into the matter shown by the learning person. For example, the insight that the map-reader has in contour lines makes it possible for him/her to infer the topography of the area.

## **7.6 Reducing**

Reducing, as a category of the learning activity, means that the learning person strips a matter of everything which is superfluous or incidental so that it can be reduced to its simplest form. It is important to note that fixating, along with analyzing and synthesizing, as categories of learning, are attuned to seeing the essences of the matter. When, in learning, a child strips the matter to its essences, he/she proceeds to analyze complex matters to their most simple or most essential data. He/she does this by deducing the relationships which constitute this structure.

## **7.7 Concentrating**

Experience, as well as the findings of the psychology of learning and psychopedagogics indicate that learning is a matter of problem solving. The problem claims the child to such a degree that he/she must direct his/her achieving consciousness in such a way and fixate on the problem so that there is mention of concentrating. Thus, a child must show a sustained attentiveness regarding the matter or theme of the learning task so that, especially regarding relationships, he/she mobilizes his/her powers and potentialities of reflecting and thinking, with the aim of an adequate solution.

Without concentrating, the course of the learning activity is haphazard. From the nature of the tasks of the formal didactic situation (school situation), a haphazard course of learning is not acceptable.

## **7.8 Actualizing**

Actualizing means that the learning person recalls contents or knowledge which he/she previously learned in a haphazard way and uses them to master the data of the new situation. What he/she previously learned haphazardly, he/she now makes actual for application in the new situation.



For example, in everyday experience, one haphazardly encounters a person without purposefully striving to learn his/her name. In a subsequent situation, e.g., when he/she again encounter the person, he/she immediately is remembered, and he/she can use (implement) his/her name so that he/she can recognize and place him/her. This means that the name learned incidentally in the first situation is actualized in the second one. In this way, actualizing is “evidence” that earlier there was learning in a haphazard [incidental] way. The fact is that there is no learning without actualizing.

## **7.9 Reproducing**

Actualizing and reproducing are closely related. Actualizing has special reference to remembering matters which were learned spontaneously and haphazardly. Reproducing involves recalling something in a new situation which had been previously learned and memorized purposefully. Thus, reproducing involves contents or things which the person him/herself previously had purposefully exercised. For example, one thinks of a poem a child had learned by heart or, of the times tables. In this sense, reproducing is a form of actualizing, but actualizing is not necessarily always a form of reproducing. The reason is that everyday forms of actualizing can occur without any discernible links to consciousness.

## **7.10 Transferring**

Actualizing and reproducing can result from repetition, but this is not necessarily so. Irrespective of cases where a repetition of an earlier relationship or experience occurs, actualizing a learning effect also can take place as a whole action which is new to the learning person. In this respect, transferring means that what one has learned in one situation, under certain circumstances, contributes to the activities in a subsequent situation.

The fact of transferring means that there is no need for new learning; insights, solutions, methods of solution, etc. from one situation are applied to another to solve a new problem. Transferring also ensures the linking together of subsequent learning activities.

## **7.11 Anticipating**

When a person intentionally learns, one can note that he/she often chooses his/her answers or activity structures in terms of a totality he/she is aware of. Thus, a person does not always proceed immediately to analyzing. He/she selects his/her answers or activity structures possibly because of some particularities which intrude themselves in his/her thinking. In the case of a totality, a learner anticipates or runs through the particularities of the whole on which he/she is working in advance. When he/she concentrates on the subparts of a whole, he/she again anticipates the whole on which he/she is working. This means that, in his/her learning activity, he/she makes leaps of thought by anticipating aspects of the contents without spending direct time or energy on them. Anticipating is of the greatest significance in learning because it quickly increases the level of thinking.

The reader must understand that the categories of learning are of great significance in a formal didactic situation. He/she also must note that since the learning activity, as discussed in this chapter, continually is involved with the question of thinking and language, it is not possible to think about the learning activity without the two overarching categories of insight and generalization.

Insight relates to learning to the extent that it also is modified by the immediate grasp of the relationships among matters and the relations, causes, and functions of an event or activity. There can be little or no learning if there is no insight. Generalizing also relates to learning because the learner continually recognizes that the valid findings of one matter or situation are valid for another related matter or situation. This means that the learner continually draws connections, makes applications and, in his/her generalizing, he/she works through to generally valid findings which help him/her to understand and clarify for him/herself the essence of the matter with which he/she is working. For these reasons, insight and generalizing arise, to some extent, with all categories mentioned and, in working through the categories of learning, the reader must always keep this in mind.

This explication of the categories of learning, in the first place, is focused on because, separately and together, they directly influence the ground-forms of teaching. By again studying the teaching ground-forms in Chapter 4, the reader notices that there is frequent reference to the learning phenomenon in the child's spontaneous

going out to reality and the forms of spontaneous teaching which the parent creates to realize or actualize learning.

Because a teacher in a second order or formal teaching situation (school situation) cannot exceed the forms of teaching of the original teaching situation in the family, he/she must know the essences (categories) of the learning activity before he/she can establish the most effective teaching forms for the child, and select content for the lesson situation. The relationship, and especially its harmony, between the lesson form, which a teacher chooses to unlock contents for a child, and the contents is determined, the learning activity which can most clearly be directed to the essences of the contents in that lesson form must also be considered.

In the following chapter, an explication is given of the aspects of the theory which a teacher interprets in a particular lesson situation to guarantee, as far as is possible, positive learning results. In Chapter 7, an explication is offered of the theoretical source of the different aspects of various aspects of lessons which, in their eventual integration, guarantee the good progress of teaching. The reader will note how emphasis is placed on the mutual effect of learning and the teaching form, and how a teacher must set about to guarantee bringing about the harmony between the two to guarantee the eventual learning achievement of a child.